



“I have no enemies. But my friends don't like me.”

— [Philip Larkin](#)

‘Afternoons’ - Symbolism

Learning Outcomes:

1. You will be able to explain what symbolism is
2. You will be able to analyse how the poet uses language in ‘Afternoons’

What is symbolism?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8-RjhZH-8U>
- Give an example of symbolism from watching this clip

Symbolism

- In literature, symbolism can take many forms including: A figure of speech where an object, person, or situation has another meaning other than its literal meaning. The actions of a character, word, action, or event that have a deeper meaning in the context of the whole story.
- What did Autumn symbolise in 'To Autumn'?

The Big Question

- What do 'Afternoons' symbolise in this poem?

Reread the poem

On the random picker are quotes from the poem.

You must write a comment on your whiteboard about the quote and what it makes you think about

The quotes

1. 'Summer is fading:
The leaves fall in ones and twos'
2. 'The hollows of afternoons'
3. 'Setting free their children'
4. 'Behind them, at intervals,
Stand husbands in skilled trades'
5. 'An estateful of washing'
6. 'And their children, so intent on
Finding more unripe acorns'
7. 'Their beauty has thickened.'
8. 'Something is pushing them
To the side of their own lives.'

Write about how language is used in this poem

- How does Larkin present the lives of the women in this poem?
 - Show you **remember** something about the women's lives.
 - Show you **understand** feelings/ideas expressed
 - Embed quotes as **evidence**
 - **Explore** links/differences relating to your point
 - Evaluate **why** the poet has expressed himself this way

Back to the Big Question

- What do 'Afternoons' symbolise in this poem?
- Do you think the poet is always talking literally about afternoons?

How does Larkin write about life in 'Afternoons'?

- Remember
- Understand
- Evidence
- Explore
- Why?

How does Larkin write about life in 'Afternoons'?

- Show you **remember** something about what happens in afternoons
- Show you **understand** feelings/ideas expressed
- Embed quotes as **evidence**
- **Explore** links/differences relating to your point
- Evaluate **why** the poet has expressed himself this way

Plenary

Talk for as long as you can – explain to somebody what ‘Afternoons’ symbolise in this poem.

(They will time you)

Then:

With such an advantage, surely you can talk longer than your partner. Give it a try!