**GRADE 12 SL SELECTED SONNETS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**



**SONNET 1**

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory: 4
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel. 8
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, tender churl, mak’st waste in niggarding.  12
    Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
    To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

*Guiding Questions:*

*How does this sonnet distinguish attitudes towards life?*

*How does the language of the argument convey this?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/1detail.html>

<http://shakespeare.about.com/od/studyguides/a/Sonnet-1-Study-Guide.htm>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/1**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/1)

**SONNET 2**

When forty winters shall beseige thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:  4
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days;
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise. 8
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer 'This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,'
Proving his beauty by succession thine!  12
    This were to be new made when thou art old,
    And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

*Guiding Questions:*

*How does this sonnet caution the addressee?*

*In what ways is language used to convince the intended recipient?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/2.html>

<http://shakespeare.about.com/od/studyguides/a/Sonnet-2-Study-Guide.htm>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/2**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/2)

**SONNET 18**

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  4
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd; 8
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;  12
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

*Guiding Questions:*

*Explore the argument presented in this sonnet?*

*How does the language capture this?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/18.html>

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/18detail.html>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/18**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/18)

**SONNET 29**

When, in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,  4
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;  8
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate; 12
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

*Guiding Questions:*

*Trace the speaker’s state of mind in this sonnet?*

*How do poetic techniques help in mapping these thoughts?*

<http://shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/29.html>

<http://shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/29detail.html>

<http://shakespeare.about.com/od/studyguides/a/Sonnet-29-Study-Guide.htm>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/29**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/29)

**SONNET 30**

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste: 4
Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:  8
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.  12
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restor'd and sorrows end.

*Guiding Questions:*

*Discuss the speaker’s thoughts in this sonnet.*

*In what ways do poetic techniques accentuate these ruminations?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/30.html>

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/30detail.html>

<http://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/s/shakespeares-sonnets/summary-and-analysis/sonnet-30>

<http://www.gradesaver.com/shakespeares-sonnets/study-guide/summary-sonnet-30-when-to-the-sessions-of-sweet-silent-thought>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/30**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/30)

**SONNET 43**

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And darkly bright are bright in dark directed;  4
Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright,
How would thy shadow's form form happy show
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so?  8
How would, I say, mine eyes be blessèd made
By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay? 12
   All days are nights to see till I see thee,
   And nights bright days when dreams do show thee me.

*Guiding Questions:*

*Examine how the speaker experiences contradictions in this sonnet.*

*How do poetic techniques expose these?*

<http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/43>

<http://nfs.sparknotes.com/sonnets/sonnet_43.html>

<http://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/s/shakespeares-sonnets/summary-and-analysis/sonnet-43>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/43**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/43)

**SONNET 55**

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time. 4
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory. 8
'Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom. 12
 So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

*Guiding Questions:*

*Explain how the main theme is treated in this sonnet?*

*How does the poet’s craft accentuate this?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/55.html>

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/55detail.html>

[**http://www.shmoop.com/sonnet-55/summary.html**](http://www.shmoop.com/sonnet-55/summary.html)

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/55**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/55)

**SONNET 73**

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  4
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day,
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by-and-by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  8
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.  12
   This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
   To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

*Guiding Questions:*

*What is the speaker declaring in this sonnet?*

*How is this captured in the craft of the sonnet?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/73.html>

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/73detail.html>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/73**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/73)

**SONNET 116**

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove: 4
O no; it is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken. 8
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom. 12
   If this be error and upon me proved,
   I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

*Guiding Questions:*

*How does the speaker endeavour to define true love in this sonnet?*

*How do poetic techniques enrich our understanding of what is being expressed?*

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/116.html>

<http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/116detail.html>

<http://shakespeare.about.com/od/studyguides/a/Sonnet-116-Study-Guide.htm>

[**http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/116**](http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/sonnet/116)