



HOW TO ANALYZE A TEXT

Come analizzare un testo



1. TITOLO

- Il lettore legge il titolo, riflette su di esso, si pone delle domande e fa delle congetture. Ipotizza quale potrebbe essere il topic del testo. Leggendo, poi, il testo, verificherà se le congetture fatte sono esatte.

2. LAYOUT E SCHEMA METRICO

- Il lettore guarda il testo e riconosce il numero di strofe (se si tratta di una poesia), paragrafi (se si tratta di un testo argomentativo) o altro.
- Se si tratta di una poesia, si analizza lo schema metrico e si identifica il testo come “Elizabethan sonnet”, “Shakespearean sonnet” o “Petrarchaeon sonnet”.

3. LIVELLO DENOTATIVO

- comprensione
- topics
- rapporto lettore - testo

4. ANALISI STRUTTURALE

- layout
- parti che compongono il testo (stanze o capitoli o atti)
- funzione di ogni singola parte
- relazioni delle singole parti fra loro

5. LIVELLO CONNOTATIVO

- livello fonologico
- livello semantico
- livello sintattico
- livello retorico
- ipotesi tema - tematiche
- messaggio
- idioletto dell'autore

6. CONTESTUALIZZAZIONE E INTERTESTUALITÀ

- analogie temi e motivi ricorrenti del testo oggetto di analisi
- analisi comparate (elementi di somiglianza e di differenza)
- intratestualità e intertestualità
- rapporti diacronici

7. CONCLUSIONE

- il lettore riflette sulle conclusioni e verifica se le congetture fatte nella fase 1. sono coerenti con l'analisi effettuata

Dulce et Decorum Est

The title of the poem is written in Latin, it confers authority to the text. Probably the reader of the poem might be an aristocratic person.

The poem is a sonnet, indeed it is arranged into an octave and a sestet.

The boys are bent over like old beggars carrying sacks, and they curse and cough through the mud until the "haunting flares" tell them it is time to head toward their rest. As they march some men are asleep, others limp with bloody feet as they'd lost their boots. All are lame and blind, extremely tired and deaf to the shells falling behind them.

Suddenly there is gas, and the speaker calls, "Quick, boys!" There is fumbling as they try to put on their helmets in time. One soldier is still yelling and stumbling about as if he is on fire. Through the dim "thick green light" the speaker sees him fall like he is drowning

The first stanza is made up of 8 lines and describes some men who are marching away from the front, as we can understand by reading in line 4: "towards our distant rest", and in line 8: "that dropped behind" which are iambic verses conveying tiredness.

There is also represented a frontal attack on the enemy's trenches. We can say that it isn't an heroic scene because the soldiers are given grotesque traits such as: "like old beggars"(1) and "coughing like haugs"(2).

Moreover by reading line 3 "we turned our backs", we can notice that they are withdraw before meeting the enemy.

The scene is described from the point of view of a soldier who is the poet himself, in fact he says: "we", "our", and he gives us a description of the exhausted soldiers. He uses a lot of adjectives suggestive of weakness and exhaustion as we can infer by reading: "asleep", "lame", "blind", "drunk", "deaf".

The idea of exhaustion is also suggested by the use of compound words as we can infer by reading "bent double", "knock-kneeds" and "blood-shod", and by the use of metaphors as in line 6 and 7: "blood-shod" and "drunk with fatigue".

It is important that through metaphors we can also realize that this is not an heroic combat because the soldiers have been badly wounded and mutilated. In fact, many have lost their boots as we can read in line 6 "blood-shod" and in lines 7-8 "the hoots of gas shells".

The second stanza is different from the first, in fact it is made up of 6 lines and there is a change in tone and rhythm.

This change of atmosphere is provoked by the sudden gas attack, and the urgency of the warning is rendered through the word "gas" which is repeated twice, the use of exclamation marks and the printing of the word "gas" first in small and then in capital letters.

This second part begins with the two words "gas, GAS!" but the first "gas" is linked to the preceding section where the soldiers are deaf because of the noise of gas shells. The second word in capital letters wakes them up from their sleepiness in time to put the masks on.

In line 9 the word "ecstasy" may mean frenzy because the soldiers seem crazy after the gas attack and it suggests animal instincts, awkwardness, confusion, blind panic, frantic movements.

Moreover, the image of frantic movements and confusion is emphasized by the use of some "-ing" verbs as: "flumming", "fitting", "yelling out", "stumbling" and "floundering". On the second stanza the poet focuses on the description of the one soldier who was too late in putting his "helmet" and who is introduced by the indefinite pronoun "someone", and on the presence of the gas.

By analyzing the word "green" we can realize that the gas used in World War I was chlorine. By reading from line 13 to line 14 we can understand that the poet is seeing the horrible scene through the green glass of his gas-mask.

Moreover the presence of the gas is described indirectly through the use of adjectives as "dim"(13), "misty"(13), "thick"(13), "green"(10) and the use of a simile as "as under a green sea"(14). The simile of the gas vapours looking like a sea is emphasized by another image of the man drowning.

Wilfred Owen