

Can you imagine how this process is connected to the content of Sonnet 15? Make hypotheses and exchange them with your classmates.



When I consider everything that grows
SENCE
Holds in perfection but¹ a little moment,
GAUNT PALP
That this huge stage presenteth nought but² shows
SENCE
Whereon³ the stars in secret influence comment;

5 When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered⁴ and check'd⁵ even by the selfsame sky,
GIANNI
Vaunt⁶ in their youthful sap⁷, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory⁸;

1 > What/Who does "their" refer to?

It refers to men.

Then the conceit⁹ of this inconstant stay
10 Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
DAVID
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay
To change your day of youth to sullied¹⁰ night;

And all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new¹¹.

1. but: solo

2. nought but: nulla eccetto

3. Whereon: su cui

4. Cheered: incoraggiati

5. check'd: ostacolati

6. Vaunt: si vantano

7. sap: linfa

8. And wear ... memory: e vedono
il proprio valore esaurirsi fino a
dimenticarlo; wear: consumano

9. conceit: pensiero

10. sullied: insudiciata

11. I engraft you new: ti dono nuova
giovinezza; engraft: (terzo) innesto

1. but: solo
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6. Vaunt: si vantano
7. sap: linfa
8. And wear ... memory: e vedono il proprio valore esaurirsi fino a dimenticarlo; wear: consumano

9. conceit: pensiero
10. sullied: insudiciata
11. I engraft you new: ti dono nuova giovinezza; engraft: (termine botanico) innesto

» Understanding the text

1. **FIRST** Read the poem and decide if the following statements are true or false. Correct the false ones.

- a. The poet observes that the highest point of excellence in all living things lasts for a very short time. (T) (F)
- b. The poet thinks that the stars have no effect on the world. (T) (F)

- c. The poet realises that the sky can influence only the plants' growth. (T) (F)
- d. Men and plants go through the same stages: youth, decline, death. (T) (F)
- e. Time and Decay are at war over the poet's beloved because they have different aims. (T) (F)
- f. The poet, counteracting the action of time, gives new life to his beloved through poetry. (T) (F)

» Closer reading

2. Consider the first two stanzas and complete the following activities.

a. Fill in the grid with the information required.

	Stanza 1	Stanza 2
Initial word	WHEN	WHEN
What the poet ("I") does	TO CONSIDER	TO PERCEIVE
The object of his consideration	EVERYTHING THAT GROWS	THE MEN INCREASE

b. What function do the stars (1st stanza) and the sky (2nd stanza) have in relation to men and plants?

c. In stanza 1 the world and life are mentioned through a metaphor. Underline it and explain what ideas it conveys.

3. Focus on stanza 3, which represents the turning point, and answer the questions.

...the linker that introduces it. What

4. Now consider the final couplet and complete the following sentence.

youth • fights • time • life • poem • love • beloved

In the name of [1] LOVE the poet [2] FIGHTS against [3] TIME; while passing time takes [4] YOUTH away from his [5] BELOVED, the poet gives him new [6] LIFE through his [7] POEM.

5. Re-read the sonnet and answer the questions.

a. In the poem there are two examples of personification. What is personified and through which devices?

b. IELTS The poem is based on the parallel between vegetal and human life (plants/men). Find and underline two words typical of the vegetal world that, in this poem, are used to refer to men. Compare the condition of plants and human beings and the poet's idea about life stages (in no more than 2 minutes).



Exercise Num. 1, page 736 / IT'S LITERATURE

I imagine that it's linked to the content of the sonnet because a child can be defined as "the seed of the father that is grown in the belly of the mother" and - then it creates a parallelism with what we see in the photo.