

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## What is metaphysical poetry?

## Slot Notes

The term \_\_\_\_\_ was applied to a style of 17th Century poetry first by \_\_\_\_\_ and later by \_\_\_\_\_ because of the highly \_\_\_\_\_ and often \_\_\_\_\_ imagery involved. Chief among the metaphysical poets are \_\_\_\_\_, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, \_\_\_\_\_, and Henry Vaughan. While their poetry is widely varied (the metaphysicals are not a thematic or even a structural school), there are some common characteristics:

1. *Argumentative structure.* The poem often engages in a \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ presentation; the poem is an \_\_\_\_\_ exercise as well as or instead of an emotional effusion.

2. *Dramatic and colloquial mode of utterance.* The poem often describes a \_\_\_\_\_ event rather than being a reverie, a thought, or contemplation. \_\_\_\_\_ is simple and usually direct, inversion is limited. The \_\_\_\_\_ is occasionally rough, like speech, rather than written in perfect meter, resulting in a dominance of thought over form.

3. *Acute realism.* The poem often reveals a \_\_\_\_\_ analysis; images advance the \_\_\_\_\_ rather than being ornamental. There is a learned style of thinking and writing; the poetry is often highly \_\_\_\_\_.

4. *Metaphysical wit.* The poem contains \_\_\_\_\_, even striking or shocking analogies, offering elaborate parallels between apparently dissimilar things. The \_\_\_\_\_ are drawn from widely varied fields of knowledge, not limited to traditional sources in nature or art. \_\_\_\_\_ from science, mechanics, housekeeping, business, philosophy, astronomy, etc. are common. These \_\_\_\_\_ reveal a play of intellect, often resulting in puns, paradoxes, and humorous comparisons. Unlike other poetry where the \_\_\_\_\_ usually remain in the background, here the \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes take over the poem and control it.

Metaphysical poetry represents a revolt against the conventions of \_\_\_\_\_ love poetry and especially the typical Petrarchan \_\_\_\_\_ (like rosy cheeks, eyes like stars, etc.).

The common characteristics include:

1. A desire to build a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ comparison between two seemingly unrelated things or circumstances;
2. A witty or clever \_\_\_\_\_ ;
3. Use of \_\_\_\_\_ and/or contradiction;
4. Informal or casual \_\_\_\_\_ ;
5. A tendency to \_\_\_\_\_ a particular dramatic situation;
6. Rejection of overly \_\_\_\_\_ or idyllic theories;
7. A love of \_\_\_\_\_ topics.

To do this, the poets relied upon several literary devices such as

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (contradictory statement that's true),
2. \_\_\_\_\_ (a fancy comparison),
3. \_\_\_\_\_ (exaggeration).

They wrote to a mixed audience; their techniques were much \_\_\_\_\_ and emulated by some, but others criticized them for "stretching" or coming up with \_\_\_\_\_ similarities in order to build their conceits. The poetry also explored philosophical topics including man's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in nature.

\_\_\_\_\_ -- An act of bidding farewell; a leave-taking; A speech or statement made as a farewell; A word or phrase of farewell used to end a letter or message.

\_\_\_\_\_ – A figure of speech in which exaggeration is used for emphasis or effect, as in *I could sleep for a year* or *This book weighs a ton*.

\_\_\_\_\_ – to underplay the importance of something for rhetorical effect.

\_\_\_\_\_ – especially complex and ingenious figures of speech that make surprising connections between two seemingly dissimilar things.

\_\_\_\_\_ -- A seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true