



# NATIONAL MATH + SCIENCE INITIATIVE

**NMSI ENGLISH**

AP Literature

## Poetry Analysis - 2014 Deconstruction Lesson

“For That He Looked Not upon Her”  
by George Gascoigne

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# Poetry Analysis

## 2014 Deconstruction Lesson

The poem “For That He Looked Not upon Her” by George Gascoigne (1573) was the focal text of Question 1 on the 2014 AP English Literature and Composition Exam. The prompt directed exam takers to analyze how the author developed the speaker’s complex attitude through poetic devices. Test takers must read closely to sort out poetic devices used by the author to convey the speaker’s complex attitude. These ideas must be coherently organized and supported with evidence from the passage. The following activities are intended to help shape stylistically mature and effective essays based on this challenging passage.

### Activity One: Interacting with the Prompt

The first step to a successful literary analysis is the deconstruction of the prompt to discover the writing task. In the prompt below, highlight, circle, or underline the elements of the prompt that direct your essay.

The following poem is by the sixteenth-century English poet George Gascoigne. Read the poem carefully. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the complex attitude of the speaker is developed through such devices as form, diction, and imagery.

1. What is the title of the poem? Underline or quotation marks? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the historical context in which the poem was written? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who is the author? How will you refer to the author in your essay? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Paraphrase the **task** of the prompt. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Activity Two: Interacting with the Poem

1. As a review of the text, read the poem silently without making any annotations.

### For That He Looked Not upon Her

You must not wonder, though you think it strange,  
 To see me hold my louring<sup>1</sup> head so low;  
 And that mine eyes take no delight to range  
 About the gleams which on your face do grow.  
 5   The mouse which once hath broken out of trap  
 Is seldom 'ticèd<sup>2</sup> with the trustless bait,  
 But lies aloof for fear of more mishap,  
 And feedeth still in doubt of deep deceit.  
 The scorched fly which once hath 'scaped the flame  
 10   Will hardly come to play again with fire,  
 Whereby I learn that grievous is the game  
 Which follows fancy dazzled by desire:  
       So that I wink or else hold down my head,  
       Because your blazing eyes my bale<sup>3</sup> have bred.

1 gloomy

2 enticed

3 misery

2. Write a one- to two-sentence summary of the poem. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Now, reread the poem, marking and annotating the poem according to the following instructions.
  - a. Explain the title. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Highlight the archaic language.
  - c. Highlight words with strong connotative meanings. What tone is created by the author's use of these words? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Draw a line where you see any shift in the poem. Justify your selection(s) by annotating the poem with a brief explanation.
  - e. Underline (or circle) the beginning letters of words used in alliteration.
  - f. Mark the rhyme scheme of the poem. How does the form (structure) of the poem connect to the author's overall message? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- g. Place an X on any lines of unusual syntax. What is the effect of the author's use of unusual sentence structure on the attitude of the speaker? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- h. Paraphrase the poem.

Lines from the Poem	Your Paraphrase
You must not wonder, though you think it strange, To see me hold my louring <sup>1</sup> head so low;	
And that mine eyes take no delight to range About the gleams which on your face do grow.	<i>I can tell by the look on your face that you enjoy seeing me in this state of torture.</i>
The mouse which once hath broken out of trap Is seldom 'ticèd <sup>2</sup> with the trustless bait, But lies aloof for fear of more mishap, And feedeth still in doubt of deep deceit.	
The scorched fly which once hath 'scaped the flame Will hardly come to play again with fire,	
Whereby I learn that grievous is the game Which follows fancy dazzled by desire:	
So that I wink or else hold down my head, Because your blazing eyes my bale <sup>3</sup> have bred.	

- i. Based on your markings and annotations, what overall observations can you make about the poem? Which of these contributes to the speaker's complex attitude? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Activity Three: Close Reading Questions

In a small group answer the following questions about the content of the passage.

- 1. Why is the speaker’s “louring” head so low (lines 1-2)?
- 2. To whom is he speaking? How do you know?
- 3. a. Create a table of words with negative versus positive connotations.

Positive	Negative

- b. What tone is created by the combination of these words?
- 4. Why does the speaker use the images of a mouse and a fly to illustrate his situation (lines 5-10)?
- 5. What observation about love does the speaker make in lines 11-12?
- 6. How does the speaker plan to prevent similar experiences in the future (lines 13-14)?

Activity Four: Analyzing the Speaker’s Attitude

1. **What** are the speaker’s attitudes, as revealed in the poem? (If the attitude is complex, it is marked by more than one emotional response.)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
2. **How** does the speaker’s language convey these attitudes through “poetic devices”? Provide examples of the devices that will help you identify the attitude of the speaker. (The use of devices creates a tone, which underscores these attitudes.)

Poetic Device with Textual Evidence	Effect on Speaker’s Attitude
<i>Animal imagery</i> “The mouse . . . feedeth still in doubt of deep deceit.” (lines 5-9)	<i>The speaker uses this imagery to show why he is distrustful of anyone who would put him in such a harmful situation again.</i>
<i>Alliteration</i>	
<i>Connotative Diction</i>	

**Activity Five: Composing the Thesis Statement**

An effective thesis statement states the writer’s assertions and opinion, which will be supported in the essay. It focuses on the text, answers the question of the prompt, and provides a roadmap or outline as to what will be in the essay. The thesis contains assertions, and the body of the essay explains/defends/proves the assertions with evidence from the text.

Write your thesis statement from your mock exam essay here:

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What is your assertion about the speaker’s complex attitude? \_\_\_\_\_

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What devices did you claim will support your assertion? \_\_\_\_\_

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The following is a frame statement to assist in forming the thesis statement. The thesis statement becomes the key element of the intro-thesis paragraph and may consist of more than one sentence. Everything in it should be inextricably tied to, should apply to, and should lead to the thesis for the prompt. It is also an excellent opportunity to create a first impression of writing maturity and style.

In the sonnet “For That He Looked Not upon Her” by George Gascoigne, the author creates/  
(form) (title) (author)

develops/reveals the speaker’s \_\_\_\_\_ attitude through the  
(marker verbs) (description of his attitude—don’t use “complex”)

use of \_\_\_\_\_  
(literary/poetic device)

to emphasize \_\_\_\_\_  
(effect)

as well as employing/utilizing \_\_\_\_\_  
(marker verbs) literary/poetic device)

to illustrate \_\_\_\_\_  
(effect)

Overall, these poetic/literary devices create a speaker who is \_\_\_\_\_  
(description of his attitude—don’t use “complex”)

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Rewrite your thesis statement using the frame statement as a guide.

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### Activity Six: Composing the Thematic Statement for the Conclusion

A solid conclusion that connects to a universal theme can add to the development of the essay. It is the writer's last chance to make an insightful comment and leave the reader of the essay with a positive impression.

- Refer to the main aspect of how complex the speaker's attitude is toward the abstract concept of desire. Mention the devices and what they reveal, and do not simply parrot the prompt.
- Mention again the author. Remember that the author has created this speaker who is struggling with his own flaws. Think about the author's overall message.
- End with an insightful thematic statement that can be applied universally, beyond the boundaries of the text.

In order to write a **thematic** statement you must have

1. a SUBJECT (an abstract thematic idea) and
2. your understanding of the *author's opinion* on that subject

Take the SUBJECT (an abstract idea) explored in a piece of literature and make an assertion about what the author tries to convey to the reader about this subject through the text. The purpose of the thematic statement is to clearly and concisely state the meaning of the work as a whole.

Example:

1. SUBJECT: Marriage (modern love)
2. The writer's understanding of the author's opinion: George Meredith believes **that marriage is an outdated and miserable condition that can be ended only by death.**

*Turn the bolded part of the sentence into a thematic statement.*

**Thematic statement:**

**Modern love creates misery for those involved in it and is only escapable by death.**

Write a thematic statement about Gascoigne's poem

1. SUBJECT (use an abstract thematic idea): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Your understanding of the author's opinion: The speaker believes \_\_\_\_\_

**Thematic Statement:**

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To create a sense of closure to your essay, the introduction's thesis statement, which is focused on the text, should connect to the conclusion's thematic statement, which reaches beyond the text.

**Thesis statement:**

1. SUBJECT: Othello—Desdemona's murder scene  
(novel/play which will be the subject of your essay)
2. Writer's opinion about that subject: Shakespeare includes the violent scene of Desdemona's murder in order to highlight the extreme to which Othello is driven by his unreasoning passion.

Highlight the evidence of the writer's opinion in the thesis statement.

**Thematic statement:**

1. SUBJECT: Unreasoning passion
2. The writer's understanding of the author's opinion: Shakespeare believes that men who let themselves be controlled by passion are unable to think or understand the truth clearly and sometimes do things, such as commit acts of violence, that they wouldn't do otherwise.

Highlight the evidence of the writer's understanding of the author's opinion in the thematic statement.

What is the effect of tying the thesis statement in the introduction to the thematic statement in the conclusion?

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**Activity Seven – Scoring Student Samples**

Score the following two student essays using the 2014 Scoring Guidelines for Question 1 of the AP English and Composition Exam.

***H***

In George Gacoigne’s Shakespearean sonnet “For That He Looked Not Upon Her,” the speaker avoids looking at the object of his affections. He is aware that to succumb again to his desire for her would be folly that would bring him only pain. Deliberately avoiding his desire, the speaker’s resolve is illustrated through metaphor and irony.

In the first quatrain, the speaker demonstrates his self-awareness by addressing the object of his affections with apostrophe. He directly addresses his lady in explanation of his “strange” behavior, the paradox of avoiding the gaze of one whom he acknowledges has “gleams” upon her face. Ironically, these attractive “gleams” of light or beauty are what he avoids, so that his “eyes take no delight” in them. His restraint, avoiding entrapment by her beauty, reveals his determination. The only way for the speaker to free himself from her is by not looking at her; he can evidently speak to her without worry of entrapment, for he apostrophizes her and speaks directly to her. Thus, his attraction to her is physical, based on her beauty alone: it is only his eyes that would “take...delight,” physical attraction he cannot reason with. Thus his desire for her is superficial and is thus blinding; to overcome it and protect himself all he can do is avoid its gaze.

Yet the speaker is aware that his desire is superficial and knows that he must overcome it or he will be entrapped in meaningless “bale” caused by her “blazing eyes.” He metaphorically compares himself to a “scorched fly which once hath escaped the flame.” Flies are attracted to flames because of the flames’ look; they self-destruct, scorching themselves because they cannot resist that attraction though the flame will only burn them. In relating himself to a silly fly, the speaker is aware of his folly in attraction to the lady. In the metaphor, the lady is related to the flame which will burn him and is not a substantial thing: flames can be put out. Thus, the speaker shows wisdom in adhering to the lesson he has learned; “that grievous is the game which follows fancy dazzled by desire.” Alliteration ties together “grievous game” and “dazzled by desire,” the dazzling being the cause of the grief. It is his eyes that are dazzled and allow desire to consume him and cause grief, and so he avoids looking at her protecting himself by looking away.

Justification from the Scoring Guide:

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

**G**

In the poem For That He Looked Not upon Her, the speaker has an intense feeling towards the person he is addressing. The speaker uses negative, dark word choice to portray his dislike for that certain individual. The speaker also appeals to the reader's sense of imagery by relating to a common rodent and insect, that is usually negated.

The speakers use of dark diction laced with a flowing rhythm emphasizes the speaker's complex attitude developed throughout the poem. Words such as "louring", "trap", "trustless", "deceit", all contain a negative connotation that is emitted and transforms into the speaker's attitude. The speaker of the poem has been deceived by an individual who he now contains an enraged and deep hatred for, and the speaker has no implication of ever falling for their trick again. The speaker has learned his lesson and is moving on; nevertheless his acknowledgment of his dislike towards an individual is portrayed through his "bale."

The speaker uses an array of imagery to further develop his complex attitude. The speaker states, "The mouse which once hath broken out of trap is seldom 'ticèd with the trustless bait," an image that a reader can easily relate to. What the speaker conveys through this imagery is that he is the mouse who broke free and will no longer trust the enticements of the bait, or the individual who he addresses. "The scorched fly which once hath 'scaped the flame will hardly come to play again with fire", again the speaker uses the image of an insect to explain his situation. The speaker is the fly that was burned by a flame and will not repeat that action. Like the well known quote, "Play with fire and you will get burned" the speaker realizes his mistake and will not make it again.

In this poem, the speaker makes it well known that he has been deceived by a person. With the use of dark diction, and emphasized imagery, the reader understands that he may have made the mistake once, but he will not make it again through the development of his strong attitude.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Justification from the Scoring Guide:

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

2. Select either the introduction or the conclusion for revision.

What are the weaknesses that need to be revised? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Write your revised introduction or conclusion. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# AP<sup>®</sup> ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

## 2014 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1

(George Gascoigne's "For That He Looked Not upon Her")

The score should reflect the quality of the essay as a whole—its content, style, and mechanics. **Reward the students for what they do well.** The score for an exceptionally well-written essay may be raised by one point above the otherwise appropriate score. In no case may a poorly written essay be scored higher than a 3.

- 9–8** These essays offer a persuasive analysis of Gascoigne's use of devices to convey the speaker's complex attitude. These essays offer a range of interpretations; they provide convincing readings of both the complex attitude and Gascoigne's use of devices such as form, diction, and imagery. They demonstrate consistent and effective control over the elements of composition in language appropriate to the analysis of poetry. Their textual references are apt and specific. Though they may not be error-free, these essays are perceptive in their analysis and demonstrate writing that is clear and sophisticated, and in the case of an essay scored a 9, especially persuasive.
- 7–6** These essays offer a reasonable analysis of Gascoigne's use of devices such as form, diction, and imagery to convey the speaker's complex attitude. They are less thorough or less precise in their discussion of the attitude and Gascoigne's use of devices, and their analysis of the relationship between the two is less thorough or convincing. These essays demonstrate an ability to express ideas clearly, making references to the text, although they do not exhibit the same level of effective writing as the 9–8 essays. Essays scored a 7 present better-developed analysis and more consistent command of the elements of effective composition than do essays scored a 6.
- 5** These essays respond to the assigned task with a plausible reading of Gascoigne's use of devices such as form, diction, and imagery to convey the speaker's complex attitude, but they tend to be superficial in their analysis of the attitude and of the devices. They often rely on paraphrase, which may contain some analysis, implicit or explicit. Their analysis of the speaker's attitude or of Gascoigne's use of devices may be vague, formulaic, or minimally supported by references to the text. There may be minor misinterpretations of the poem. These essays demonstrate some control of language, but they may be marred by surface errors. These essays are not as well conceived, organized, or developed as 7–6 essays.
- 4–3** These lower-half essays fail to offer an adequate analysis of the poem. The analysis may be partial, unconvincing, or irrelevant, or it may ignore the complexity of the speaker's attitude or Gascoigne's use of devices. Evidence from the poem may be slight or misconstrued, or the essays may rely on paraphrase only. The writing often demonstrates a lack of control over the conventions of composition: inadequate development of ideas, accumulation of errors, or a focus that is unclear, inconsistent, or repetitive. Essays scored a 3 may contain significant misreading, demonstrate inept writing, or both.
- 2–1** These essays compound the weaknesses of the papers in the 4–3 range. Although some attempt has been made to respond to the prompt, the assertions are presented with little clarity, organization, or support from the poem. These essays may contain serious errors in grammar and mechanics. They may offer a complete misreading or be unacceptably brief. Essays scored 1 contain little coherent discussion of the poem.

**Extension Activity**

Students often need more practice with sonnets as well as comparing and contrasting two poems. This extension activity pairs George Gascoigne’s poem from the 2014 AP Literature exam with William Shakespeare’s Sonnet 129 as a means to provide additional practice with sonnets and poetry analysis.

Th’ expense of spirit in a waste of shame  
 Is lust in action; and till action, lust  
 Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,  
 Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;  
 5 Enjoy’d no sooner but despised straight;  
 Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,  
 Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,  
 On purpose laid to make the taker mad:  
 Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;  
 10 Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;  
 A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;  
 Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.  
 All this the world well knows; yet none knows well  
 To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

**Annotation Practice: Interact with the poem.**

- Highlight the archaic language.
- Highlight words with strong connotative meanings.
- Draw a line where you see a narrative shift in the poem. Justify your selection by annotating the poem with a brief explanation.
- Circle any words that are repeated.
- Underline the beginning letters of words used in alliteration.
- Mark the rhyme scheme of the poem.
- What syntactical anomalies do you notice about this poem? How does the syntax affect the poem’s overall meaning?
- Based on the highlighting, circling, and underlining, can you make any overall observations about the poem?

**Analysis Practice: Answer the following questions in the space provided.**

1. What topic is the focus of this poem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the structure of the poem? How does it affect the overall meaning? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How are Shakespeare's and Gascoigne's poems similar? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How are Shakespeare's and Gascoigne's poems different? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the tone of Shakespeare's poem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How does the speaker's point of view in each poem affect the tone? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How are the themes of the two poems similar? Different? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What general observations can you make about a sonnet? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

