

Some activities to explore the poem

1. In pairs read through all the cards you have been given. The text is all from a poem about two pairs of people.
2. Create a column with all the words that you think go with one pair and all the text that you think go with the other pair. You can either spread the cards out on your desks or your teacher might ask you to write the information down in a table or share it on the board with the rest of the class.
3. Now create a column of words/phrases that you think are to do with the setting of the poem
4. Create a column of cards that are all to do with the theme or message of the poem (ie what the poet is trying to 'say' to us about a particular topic).
5. Do you have any pieces of text left? What do you think these phrases might be to do with?
6. Looking at the words and phrases what do you think the occupations of the people are? Again, you might be asked to share this information with your partner, with another group or with the class. Think about the reasons for your choices.
7. What do you think happens in the poem?
8. Do you notice anything about the colours mentioned in the words and phrases? Do particular colours go with one set or the other?
9. What do you think are the feelings of the people?
10. Discuss your ideas with a partner and then try to summarise what you think the poem might be about. You might want to make notes so that you are ready to read out and explain your summary to the rest of the class.

Extension activity:

Use the words and phrases to write your own poem. Compare your ideas with a partner – have you written about similar topics or are your poems very different? When you read the original poem compare your ideas with the poet's.

light	young blond woman
younger of the two	nine a.m.
two garbagemen	as if anything at all were possible
and hunched back	hanging on
stoplight	gargoyle quasimodo
so casually coifed	bright yellow garbage truck
gazing down	standing

an elegant couple	a short skirt and colored stockings
between them	and both scavengers
downtown San Francisco	architect's office
as from a great distance	at the cool couple
red plastic blazers	one on each side
the older of the two	an elegant open Mercedes
holding all four close together	with grey iron hair
across that small gulf	the man

looking down	of this democracy
shoulder-length blond hair & sunglasses	about the same age as the mercedes driver
up since four a.m.	watching some odourless tv ad
also with sunglasses & long hair	grungy
a hip three-piece linen suit	red light
everything is possible	on their way home
in the high seas	