**The Sick Rose**

**(1794)**

BY [WILLIAM BLAKE](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-blake)

O Rose thou art sick.

The invisible worm,

That flies in the night

In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed

Of crimson joy:

And his dark secret love

Does thy life destroy.

Tone:

Structure:

Meaning:

Map

Description automatically generated **Poetry Analysis and Inquiry** Text

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Steps to analyzing poetry

1. Read for feeling (read aloud)
2. Reread and mark any questions you have with a “?”
   1. Vocabulary?
   2. Meaning?
3. Read for meaning (do the following in any order)
   1. Look for figurative devices and record on poem *(I have listed the devices under the poem. Can you find them?)*
   2. Look for connotation- important in understanding poetry
   3. Look for imagery (senses)
   4. “translate” into your own words at the natural breaks
4. Note title- how does it help with meaning or tone?
5. What is the structure of the poem? Is it relevant to the meaning?
6. Research the author’s biography *(I did this for you)*
7. Research the era in which it was written. Historical context is relevant to all writing. *(I did some for you already)*

**William Blake**

“Poet, painter, engraver, and visionary William Blake worked to bring about a change both in the social order and in the minds of men. Though in his lifetime his work was largely neglected or dismissed, he is now considered one of the leading lights of English poetry, and his work has only grown in popularity.” [Poetry Foundation](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-blake)

“Blake was a nonconformist who associated with some of the leading radical thinkers of his day… In defiance of 18th century neoclassical conventions, he privileged imagination over reason in the creation of both his poetry and his images” <https://poets.org/poet/william-blake>

“Blake loved the world of the spirit and abominated institutionalized religion, especially when it was allied with government” [https://www.britannica.com/](https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Blake/Blakes-religion)

**Background to the poem:**

* Taken from his book called *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794) which are books of poetry with his illustrations (see above). Innocence represents the “unfallen world” whereas “Experience” represents original sin, political and social corruption, fear and a loss of childhood vitality.