

✕ Refers to links on [www.crossref-it.info](http://www.crossref-it.info)

### Investigating *The Sick Rose*

- ❖ Do you think a poem like this can have an impact on you even if you aren't sure what it means?
- ❖ Compare it with *The Blossom* in the *Songs of Innocence*.
  - Do you find any contrasts or points of contact between these two?

### Investigating language and tone

- ❖ List all the connotations of the following words:
  - Sick
  - Worm
  - Howling storm
  - Thy bed of dark crimson joy
  - Dark secret love
- Decide which of them apply to this poem and what they suggest about it.

### Investigating structure and versification

- ❖ Try reading the poem aloud, on one breath per sentence, varying:
  - Volume
    - From loud to quiet
    - From quiet to loud
  - Pace
    - Increasing speed
    - Decreasing speed

- Emotion
  - Fear
  - Excitement
  - Other ideas
- What do these readings add to your understanding of the poem?
- Are any more 'successful' than others?

### Investigating imagery and symbolism

- ❖ What were your associations with roses and worms when you first read this poem?
  - What reaction did they evoke in you?
  - Having thought about some possible further associations with the images, how do you react to them now?

### Investigating themes

- ❖ What new ideas about the following themes do you gain from this poem
  - The effects of 'fallenness' on repression of sexuality and other emotions?
  - The effects of the Fall?
- ❖ Blake was an advocate of 'free love' The effects of 'fallenness' on repression of sexuality and other emotions
- ❖ The effects of the Fall. Does this alter how you understand *The Sick Rose*?