

Brief Investigations Metaphysical poetry:

Donne: Doubt and death: *This is my playes last scene*, *What if this present*, *Show me Deare Christ*, *At the Round Earth's Imagin'd Corners*

Brief Investigations

Metaphysical poetry: Donne: Doubt and death
This is my playes last scene, *What if this present*, *Show me Deare Christ*, *At the Round Earth's Imagin'd Corners*

This is my playes last scene

- Do you think that Donne does clinch it at the end of *This is my playes last scene*?
 - Or does the sonnet still feel unresolved?
- What words suggest urgency and fear?
- What words suggest calm and faith?
- Can you see the way in which the octave has a transition into the final part of the sonnet?

What if this present

- Read through Donne's *What if this present*
 - What does he actually picture in thinking of the 'last night'?
 - Is it what you would expect?
 - In what sense is it a beautiful picture?
- How is the tone of calm conveyed in the words and the rhythm of the sonnet?
- Compare this to *Batter my heart*
 - What are the most significant differences?

Show me Deare Christ

- In *Show me Deare Christ*
 - Explain the line 'Sleepes she a thousand, then peepes up a year?'
- What does this poem suggest is Donne's attitude to the Church of England, of which he was a member and later a priest?
 - Many people today have given up the attempt not only to find religious truth, but any sort of truth. What would Donne say to them?

At the Round Earth's Imagin'd Corners

- In *At the round earth's imagined corners*
 - What is the effect of the long lists in ll.7,8?
 - Where does it climax?
 - Compare the way Donne uses this list with those in other sonnets
 - What do you understand by the image of 'seal'd our pardon'?
- How could you bring out the contrasts in tone and viewpoint if reading the poem out loud?
- Do you think the poem finishes on an open, unfinished note? Or is there a sense of confidence on Donne's part?