












# Songs of Innocence And Experience: (c)

## Social Commentary

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### Social Commentary

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

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To identify how far Blake comments on the society around him.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Collect a range of different newspapers and look at the cartoons
  - Discuss the variety
    - Gentle / harsh; political / social; caricature; etc.
  - Discuss the idea and purpose of satire
    - (  How Poetry works > Recognising poetic form > Stylistic aspects > Satire)
- ❖ **Textual examination:** Read the poem *London* aloud around the class
  - Change from one speaker to the next at each punctuation mark (not apostrophes!)
    - This helps to identify the units of meaning, and their balance
      - (  Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *London* > Language, tone and structure)
  - Make separate lists of the nouns and the adjectives used in this poem
    - What impression do these lists give?
    - Can the lists be sub-divided?
      - (  Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *London* > Synopsis and commentary)
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Discuss Blake's criticisms of his society in the light of your thoughts in the Opening Exercise
  - (  Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *London* > Imagery, symbolism and themes)
- If you have a talented cartoonist in the class, s/he might be able to illustrate the poem.
- ❖ **Recreative task:** In groups, produce the first two pages of 'The London Gazette', a newspaper which arises from the poem
  - Include a range of items such as:
    - Various news reports on ideas contained in the poem
    - Letters
    - Opinion columns
    - Interviews with characters referred to, etc.
      - (  The context of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* > Social / political context)
      - (  Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *London* > Imagery, symbolism and themes + Synopsis and commentary)
- ❖ **Critical task:** 'Blake's main concern is with personal freedom and social justice.' By exploring *London* and one other poem, say how far you agree with this statement
  - (  Themes and significant ideas > Themes and related poems in the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*)
  - (  Critical approaches to *Songs of Innocence and Experience* > An example of Marxist analysis – *London*)
- ❖ **Extension task:** Find other examples of satirical attacks on life around Blake's era
  - Include writing and other art forms
  - What impression do these works give of the time?
    - (  Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *London* > Imagery, symbolism and themes)
    - (  The context of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* > Social / political context > The spirit of rebellion – society + politics)