










Songs of Innocence And Experience: (e)

Innocence or Experience?

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Innocence or Experience?

 refers to links on www.crossref-it.info

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To consider Blake's view of the two terms, as suggested by his poems.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Read out the names of a range of well-known personalities (with pictures, if possible)
 - For each, students vote:
 - Approve
 - Disapprove
 - Indifferent
 - Ask some to justify their choice
 - This can be a more competitive game if two people have to decide (in secret) what the 'audience' is going to vote for, in advance
 - The point is that there is usually more than one side to be considered.
- ❖ **Textual examination:** Examine the four poems which were moved from *Songs of Innocence* to *Songs of Experience*
 - ( Synopses and commentary > Textual history)
 - Consider the following oppositional ideas:
 - Innocent v. experienced
 - Joyous v. less spontaneous
 - Desires v. responsibilities
 - Imagination v. rational thought
 - Freedom v. constraint
 - Using these as a basis, draw up lists for and against each of the four poems being moved back into *Songs of Innocence*
 - Include quotations whenever possible
 - ( Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *The Schoolboy* + the other three poems)
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Allocate student groups one of the four poems each, to support either its move, or that it should stay where it is
 - If the four poems are divided around the class, there will be eight possible arguments
 - Think about diction, themes, imagery and any other factors
 - Give the students time to prepare, and then listen to each argument in turn
 - The class could vote on their final decisions
 - ( Themes and significant ideas > Themes and related poems in the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*)
 - ( Themes and significant ideas > What did Blake mean by 'Innocence' and 'Experience'?)
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Ask students to write a poem in response to *The School Boy* which expresses their thoughts and feelings about their own educational experience
 - Does it have the same mixed feelings as Blake's?
 - They could use the same form as Blake, or devise their own
 - ( Synopses and commentary > *Songs of Experience* > *The Schoolboy* > Language, tone and structure)
- ❖ **Critical task:** 'Do innocence and experience enter into such a complex dialogue with each other that the distinction between the terms becomes hard to make?' asks Professor David Punter. What is your response to his question?
 - Refer to three or four particular poems in your answer
 - ( Themes and significant ideas > What did Blake mean by 'Innocence' and 'Experience'?)
 - ( Critical approaches to *Songs of Innocence and Experience* > Varied critical responses)
- ❖ **Extension task:** Choose some other poems from either *Songs of Innocence* or *Songs of Experience*
 - Try to find reasons why they might be moved into the other part of the collection
 - ( Synopses and commentary > various poems)