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Does love make the world go round?

- The **theme** of love has resonated with humans across the globe for centuries and for as long as we have loved, we have used poetic **style** as a means of **self-expression**, as a way to make **connections** and to better understand our **relationships** with others.



CONSIDER THESE QUESTIONS:

Factual: What is love? What are the conventions of love poetry?

Conceptual: Where do we get our ideas about romantic love? How do literature and film shape our ideas about love? What do we experience when we fall in love?

Debatable: Can love transcend cultural boundaries? Is love really blind? Does literature give us unrealistic expectations about love? Is there such a thing as true love?

Now **share and compare** your thoughts and ideas with your partner, or with the whole class.

○ IN THIS CHAPTER, WE WILL ...

- **Find out** what the conventions of love poetry are.
- **Explore** how literature, art and culture shape our ideas about love and relationships.
- **Take action** to read more love poetry.

■ These Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills will be useful ...

- Communication skills
- Critical-thinking skills
- Information literacy skills

● We will reflect on this learner profile attribute ...

- **Caring** – We show empathy, compassion and respect for the needs and feelings of others.

◆ Assessment opportunities in this chapter:

- ◆ **Criterion A:** Analysing
- ◆ **Criterion B:** Organizing
- ◆ **Criterion C:** Producing text
- ◆ **Criterion D:** Using language

KEY WORDS

love
attraction
desire
unrequited
unconditional



ACTIVITY: Let's do it ...



■ Cole Porter in the 1920s.

■ ATL

- Communication skills: Make inferences and draw conclusions

Let's do it

Visit the link below to listen to Cole Porter's 1928 hit, *Let's do it, Let's fall in love*.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qf_QorYgDE

- 1 What are your impressions of the song? **Identify** the stylistic choices the writer has made to make the song so memorable.
- 2 **Identify** the sentence mood of 'Let's fall in love' and **comment** on the effect.
- 3 Why do you think the popularity of Porter's song has endured over time? **Discuss** with a partner.
- 4 How would you define a love song? What is the purpose of a love song? Do you listen to love songs? If so, why? **Discuss** these questions in groups or as a whole class.
- 5 **Use** the Internet to find out which songs are currently in the top ten of the music charts. How many of them would you consider to be love songs? What does this reveal about our attitudes towards love and relationships?

◆ Assessment opportunities

- ◆ In this activity you have practised skills that are assessed using Criterion A: Analysing.

What is love?



In Plato's fourth-century text *The Symposium*, the comic playwright Aristophanes delivers a speech on the origin of romantic love. According to Aristophanes, each human being originally consisted of a 'rounded whole', a kind of double monster. These beings went about the Earth causing havoc, and were consequently split into two by the angered Zeus, each individual part doomed to wander the Earth seeking the other to complete them. This quaint story is probably where we get our notion of having an 'other half' or a 'soul mate' and perhaps tries to somewhat account for the sometimes surprising choices we make when we fall in love.

But what does it actually mean to fall in love? The word 'love' (or at least an early version of it) entered the English language between the fifth and the eleventh century and was used to describe feelings of desire, affection or friendliness. But our conceptual understanding and experience of love goes back much further than this.

ACTIVITY: *Love Is...*

■ ATL

- Communication skills: Read critically and for comprehension

Originally created by Kim Casali as a way of expressing her feelings for her husband, the *Love Is...* series is one of the longest running comic strips in history. In 1975, when her husband was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Casali commissioned Bill Asprey, a British cartoonist, to continue making the comics under her pen name.

Read the article opposite and discuss the following:

- 1 What are your thoughts on how the comic strip came into being?
- 2 According to the article, why has the series divided audiences? What is your opinion on this?
- 3 Use the Internet to explore more examples of Casali's work. Type **Kim Casali love is** into the search bar.
- 4 What do you think love is? Create a mind map of your ideas about love and synthesize them into your very own Casali-inspired comic strip!

◆ Assessment opportunities

- ◆ In this activity you have practised skills that are assessed using Criterion A: Analysing, Criterion C: Producing text and Criterion D: Using language.

Most of us would agree that love is an incredibly powerful human emotion; we can experience love for our family, our friends and even our pets. But the type of love we are mainly, but not solely, concerned with in this chapter is romantic love – the love we experience when we find ourselves deeply connected to another person.

Love Is... back

The story goes something like this: it's 1967, and Kim Grove, a New Zealand-born waitress living in California, begins a relationship with a dashing Italian, Roberto Casali. According to one account, she was too shy to express her feelings directly and left him little love cartoons; in another, she sent him the cartoons in letters. Either way, those cartoons began to stack up – an image of a cartoony version of Kim or Roberto or the two together with the words 'Love is...' followed by another thought or idea or moment.

In 1971, Roberto got the message and married Kim; in 1974, he thought her cartoons might resonate with others. He brought them to the *Los Angeles Times Syndicate*, which snapped them up. Kim Casali continued to create her 'Love is...' cartoons, which were printed here at the paper, syndicated nationally and appeared in more than 60 countries.

The cartoons, of two usually naked figures (sometimes they wear overalls) were omnipresent in the '70s. 'Love is... when he only wants to dance with you,' 'Love is... wearing something that turns his head,' and 'Love is... when you call a truce' are some of those that have made it into the new anthology 'Love is... all around' from Abrams, all of which feature the cute cartoon couple. Depending on your point of view, they're adorable or sickly sweet, too much or entirely true. 'Love is... weatherproof,' 'Love is... finding a rainbow in every shower,' 'Love is... more precious when you're far away.'

Having differences of opinion on the 'Love is...' cartoons has an actual legacy. In 1974, *The Times* ran a story titled, 'Love is... Stirring up a Hornet's Nest.' Reader Edith Zaslow had written in, finding one of the cartoons sexist and offensive to women – including one which read, 'Love is... cleaning the coffee table after him several times a day.' We asked other readers to tell us what they thought, and most of the responses were along the lines of, 'It really does put down women,' and 'I've always thought the cartoon one of the most insipid I've ever read.' A few, however, stood up for Casali, writing, 'The cartoons have always seemed to me to be a wonderful representation of what true love and marriage is all about.'

Roberto Casali died of cancer in 1976; Kim Casali died in 1997. They had three sons; the eldest, Stefano, brought this book to publication. The youngest son, Milo, was born 17 months after his father's death – Roberto, knowing he was ill, had banked his sperm for artificial insemination. That might be hard to explain in a cartoon, but it seems like it surely is love.

Carolyn Kellogg

Is love really blind?

WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE WHEN WE FALL IN LOVE?

'I feel it in my fingers, I feel it in my toes' goes The Troggs' 1967 song, *Love Is All Around*; but what exactly happens to us when we fall in love? Is it a matter of the mind or the body? The heart or the brain? Do we all experience love in the same way?

Love, as we have seen through reading some of the poems in this chapter, is a complicated affair. Although we may have some shared ideas about what it means to be in love (we'll look at *where* we get these ideas from later on), our individual experiences will be different. This diversity of experience is reflected in the vast body of poetry written on the theme of love; whether it is the giddy delight of an early courtship, or the utter despair which marks the end of a relationship or the loss of a loved one, there's a poem out there for everyone.

In this section we will look at examples of poetry which explore the sadness that can come with love as well as some that challenge traditional beliefs and ideas about love.

▼ Links to: Science – Biology

What's dopamine got to do with it?

Have you ever heard people talk about attraction in terms of chemistry? You may have come across expressions such as 'having the right chemistry'. Well, it turns out there might be more to this **metaphor** than we think!

Visit the link below to find out what happens to our brains when we fall in love:

www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/video/2017/feb/14/what-happens-in-your-brain-when-you-fall-in-love-video



- In art and literature, Cupid, the god of love, is often depicted blindfolded.



Parallelism

Parallelism is a stylistic device used in poetry and prose where certain grammatical constructions, sounds, meanings or rhythms are repeated to create effect.

Take the following example from a poem by William Blake.

Can you spot any examples of parallelism in the text?

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

What parts of the line are repeated?
What changes? Why does Blake include parallelism here? What is the effect?

How do literature and film shape our ideas about love?

WHERE DO WE GET OUR IDEAS ABOUT ROMANTIC LOVE?

Romeo and Juliet, Cathy and Heathcliff, Edward and Bella – what do these famous pairs have in common? They're all characters from some of the most popular literary love stories known to us! The theme of love is one that has captured the imagination of readers and writers ever since we started putting pen to paper and it is impossible to deny the impact literature, and indeed film, has had on shaping our ideas about love and relationships.

For many of us, our initiation into the world of romantic love comes from the fairytales we are told as children; the ideas we form are then reinforced by what we see on television, in the media, through the stories that we read and the films that we watch.



■ Edward and Bella, from the *Twilight Saga*.



■ 'Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight,/For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night'; Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the best known love stories of all time. (Painting by Ford Madox Brown).

But is the depiction of love and romance in film and literature an honest representation of love in the real world? Does what we see on screen or read in books set unrealistic, and perhaps unhealthy, expectations of how we should behave in relationships?



Collocations

Unconditional, undying, unrequited, eternal, true, everlasting; what do all of these adjectives have in common? They've all been used to describe the concept of love! We can consider some of these pairings to be **collocations**.

The term collocation refers to two or more words which are frequently placed together, for example, the adjective 'unconditional' and the **abstract noun** 'love' are often placed together.

Can you think of any other words related to love or relationships which frequently appear together?

ACTIVITY: *Twilight*

■ ATL

- Communication skills: Make inferences and draw conclusions
- Critical-thinking skills: Evaluate evidence and arguments

Visit the link below to watch the clip from *Twilight* (2008), the film adaptation of Stephenie Meyer's bestselling novel of the same name.

Complete the tasks that follow.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY2kKLvUL2c

- 1 'Bella is confused throughout most of the scene.' Justify this statement by making one comment about Bella's use of:
 - paralinguistic features (body language or facial expression)
 - prosodics (stress, intonation and volume)
 - language (what she says).
- 2 Look at the following quote from the film: '*I don't have the strength to stay away from you any more.*' What can we, the audience, interpret this quotation suggests about love?
- 3 The novel on which the film is based is part of the *Twilight* series, a four-book collection which has sold over 100 million copies globally in over 50 countries and has been translated into 37 different languages. The film series has been as popular and has grossed over \$3.3 billion to date. In pairs, critique what you have seen of the film so far and comment on why you think the saga has been such a success.

◆ Assessment opportunities

- ◆ In this activity you have practised skills that are assessed using Criterion A: Analysing.

EXTENSION

It's in *his* kiss



- Seeing double? Snow White and Aurora (Sleeping Beauty) are both brought back to consciousness by their 'true love's kiss'.



- Films like *Maleficent* and *Frozen* challenge ideas about traditional gender roles.

In pairs, **discuss** what role kisses serve in any fairytales you are familiar with. Can you **identify** any patterns?

Use the Internet to find out about the origins of some of these stories and **interpret** what kisses in fairytales reveal about gender roles. How does this make you feel? **Discuss** with a partner.

If you can, watch either *Frozen* or *Maleficent* and comment on how these films challenge traditional ideas about gender in fairytales.

ACTIVITY: Does literature give us unrealistic expectations about love?

■ ATL

- Critical-thinking skills: Gather and organize relevant information to formulate an argument
- Communication skills: Write for different purposes; organize and depict information logically



Visit the link below to read the article.

www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/3776923/Romantic-comedies-make-us-unrealistic-about-relationships-claim-scientists.html

Summarize the content of the article and discuss it in groups. How far do you agree with the following statement?

Love stories in films and books breed unhealthy expectations about love and relationships.

Create a mind map of ideas you can use to support your argument. Can you think of ideas which support the other side of the argument? It's worth jotting these down too. You may want to use the information to carry out some research.

Choose one of the following options:

- Have a class debate.
- Write an essay or a speech persuading others to take on your point of view.
- Select a romantic film aimed at teenagers. Can you apply the arguments you have come up with to your chosen film? **Create** a presentation for your class outlining how.

◆ Assessment opportunities

- ◆ In this activity you have practised skills that are assessed using Criterion B: Organizing, Criterion C: Producing text and Criterion D: Using language.

ACTIVITY: Can money buy love?

■ ATL

- Communication skills: Read critically and for comprehension; make inferences and draw conclusions



- Dorothy Parker with her second husband, Alan Campbell. Campbell was an actor and screenwriter, and the pair worked on more than 15 films together.



- What would you rather receive as a love token, one perfect rose or a limousine?

Visit the link below and listen to the 1964 hit *Can't Buy Me Love* by The Beatles.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxha1IUuSPI

Identify the message of the song. How far do you agree with it? Discuss in groups and share with the class.

Now read the following poem by Dorothy Parker (you may remember her from Chapter 2 of *Language & Literature for the MYP 2: by concept*). Copy and annotate it in detail.

Identify and analyse language and stylistic choices used by the writer to convey ideas about the theme of love.

Based on your reading of the poem, what can you infer about the author's attitude towards love? How does it differ from the attitudes conveyed in the song you listened to earlier? **Use** a comparative PEA paragraph to organize your response.

One Perfect Rose

A single flow'r he sent me, since we met.
All tenderly his messenger he chose;
Deep-hearted, pure, with scented dew still wet -
One perfect rose.

I knew the language of the floweret;
'My fragile leaves,' it said, 'his heart enclose.'
Love long has taken for his amulet
One perfect rose.

Why is it no one ever sent me yet
One perfect limousine, do you suppose?
Ah no, it's always just my luck to get
One perfect rose.

Dorothy Parker

◆ Assessment opportunities

- ◆ In this activity you have practised skills that are assessed using Criterion A: Analysing and Criterion B: Organizing.