"BUT IF YOU DON'T LEARN TO READ AND WRITE, HOW ARE YOU EVER GOING TO TEXT?"

A sonnet is…

- "fundamentally a dialectical construct which allows the poet to examine the nature and ramifications of two usually contrastive ideas, emotions, states of mind, beliefs, actions, events, images, etc, by juxtaposing the two against each other, and possibly resolving or just revealing the tensions created and operative between the two."

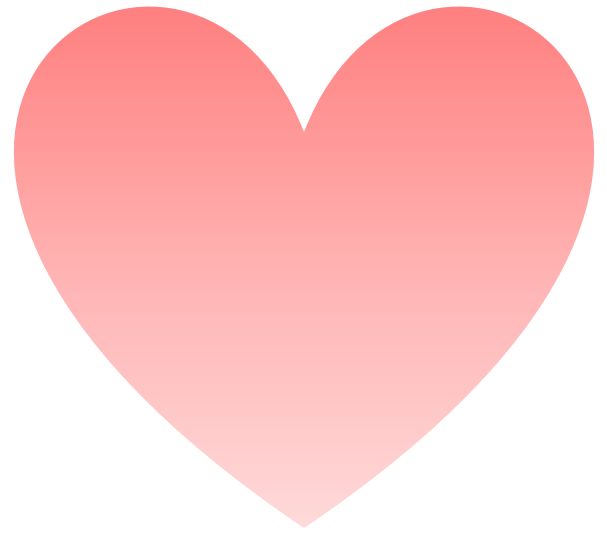http://www.sonnets.org/basicforms.htm

A sonnet is...

- Basically, you show two related but differing ideas/perspectives in order to communicate something about them

- An idea in two-parts, in which the contrast reveals some deeper truth

http://www.sonnets.org/basicforms.htm

A sonnet is…

- Traditionally about human love, loss, faith
  - but not always…

Organization A sonnet is...

- Coarse organization
  - 14 lines
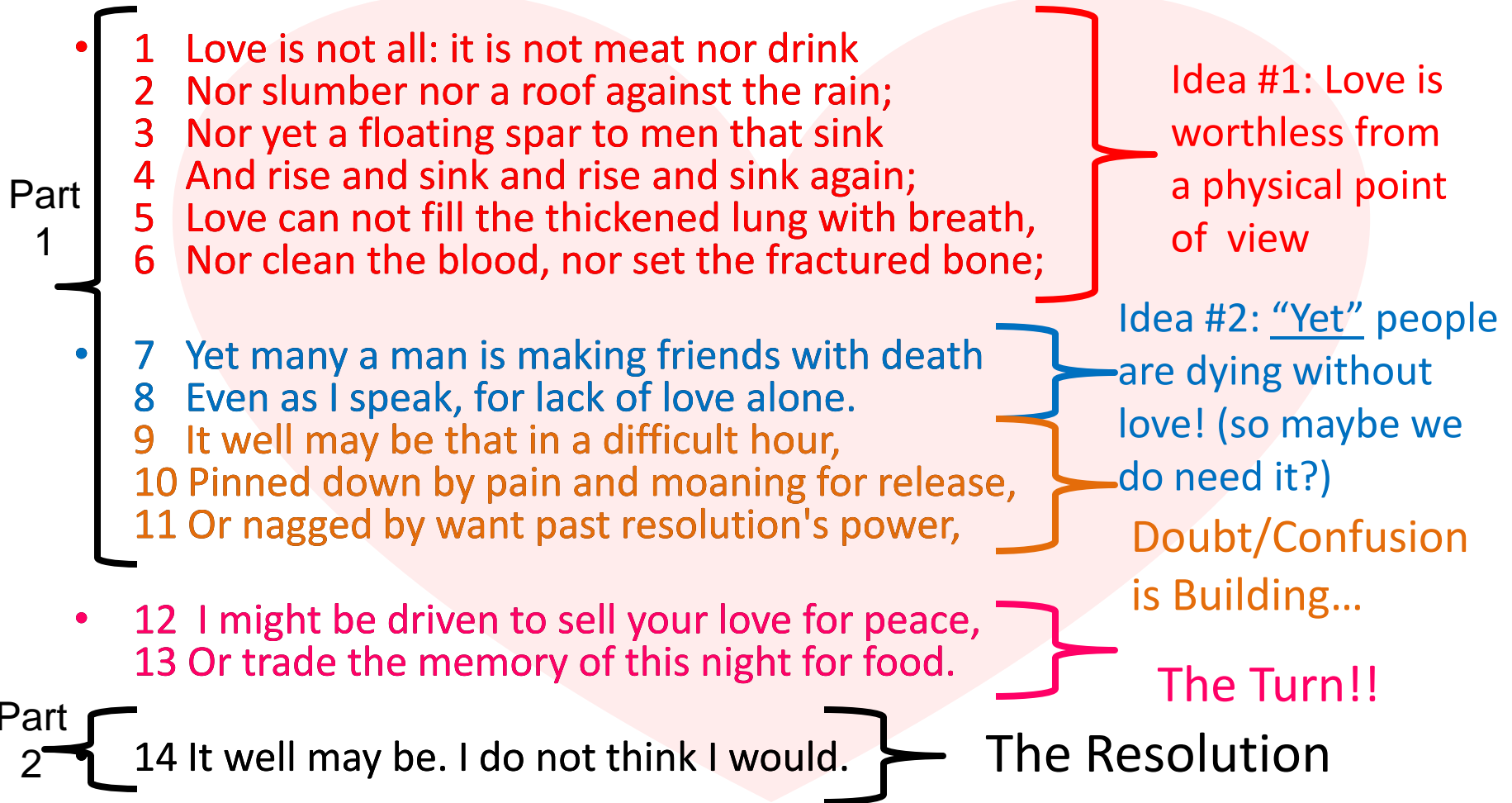 - English/Shakespearean
    - **TURN!** → The first presents **the theme**, raises issues or doubt,
    - The second part **answers the question**, resolves the problem, or drives home the poem's point.
  - The transition b/w the parts is called **the turn at/near line 13**

Coarse Organization
"Love is not all" by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Part 1

- 1 Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink
- 2 Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;
- 3 Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink
- 4 And rise and sink and rise and sink again;
- 5 Love can not fill the thickened lung with breath,
- 6 Nor clean the blood, nor set the fractured bone;

Idea #1: Love is worthless from a physical point of view

- 7 Yet many a man is making friends with death
- 8 Even as I speak, for lack of love alone.
- 9 It well may be that in a difficult hour,
- 10 Pinned down by pain and moaning for release,
- 11 Or nagged by want past resolution's power,

Idea #2: "Yet" people are dying without love! (so maybe we do need it?)

Doubt/Confusion is Building...

- 12 I might be driven to sell your love for peace,
- 13 Or trade the memory of this night for food.

The Turn!!

Part 2

14 It well may be. I do not think I would.

The Resolution

Organization # A sonnet is...

- <u>Finer</u> organization
  - Begins with 3 sets of 4 lines (quatrains)
  - Ends with a couplet (two lines)
- <u>Really fine</u> organization
  - Within each quatrain: "abab" rhyme scheme
  - The lines of the couplet rhyme

abab   cdcd   efef   gg

Glenn Everett, University of Tennessee at Martin
Vince Gotera, University of Northern Iowa

Finer (and Finest!) Organization
"[Love is not all](#)" by Edna St. Vincent Millay

- 1 Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink
  2 Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;
  3 Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink
  4 And rise and sink and rise and sink again;

  1st Quatrain abab

- 5 Love can not fill the thickened lung with breath,
  6 Nor clean the blood, nor set the fractured bone;
  7 Yet many a man is making friends with death
  8 Even as I speak, for lack of love alone.

  2nd Quatrain cdcd

- 9 It well may be that in a difficult hour,
  10 Pinned down by pain and moaning for release,
  11 Or nagged by want past resolution's power,
  12 I might be driven to sell your love for peace,

  3rd Quatrain efef

- 13 Or trade the memory of this night for food.
  14 It well may be. I do not think I would.

  Couplet gg

A sonnet is…

- Iambic pentameter
  - 5 iamb feet $\rightarrow$ 10 syllables per line
  - Iamb
    - "da DUM"
      - u   /
    - unstressed syllable followed by a stressed
  - Multisyllabic words <u>keep natural stresses</u>
    - <u>con</u>tent = /u   cont<u>ent</u> u/
  - Single syllable words can be stressed or unstressed as needed

u /   u /   u /   u /   u /

"Love is not all" by Edna St. Vincent Millay

-     u / u / u / u   /   u   /
- 1 Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink

-     u   / u   / u / u   /   u   /
- 2 Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;

-     u   / u / u   / u   /   u   /
- 3 Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink

-     u   /   u   /   u   /   u   / u /
- 4 And rise and sink and rise and sink again;

-     u   /   u   / u   /   u   /   u   /
- 5 Love can not fill the thickened lung with breath,

-     u   / u   /   u   / u   / u   /
- 6 Nor clean the blood, nor set the fractured bone;

"Love is not all" by Edna St. Vincent Millay

- 7   Yet many a man is making friends with death
  8   Even as I speak, for lack of love alone.
  9   It well may be that in a difficult hour,
  10 Pinned down by pain and moaning for release,
  11 Or nagged by want past resolution's power,
  12 I might be driven to sell your love for peace,
  13 Or trade the memory of this night for food.
  14 It well may be. I do not think I would.

- (deliberate) Exceptions abound in 2nd half.

- You are not allowed exceptions!

The Sonnet

- Write an original sonnet focused on technology, following the Shakespearean style, due before Friday 9 a.m. electronically (Classes/Dropbox/*name*_sonnet.doc)
  - [A love letter to a camera](#)
  - [Technology is Killing Romance](#)

- A sonnet can be helpful when writing about emotions that are difficult to articulate. ...the turn forces the poet to express what may not be normally expressible.

- Hopefully, you'll find yourself saying things you didn't know you were going to say, didn't know you could say, but that give you a better understanding of the emotions that drive the writing of the poem.

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Vince Gotera, University of Northern Iowa

Review

- The **English** or **Shakespearean** sonnet:
  - Fourteen lines
  - Iambic pentameter
  - Consists of **three Sicilian quatrains** (four lines)
  - And a **heroic couplet** (two lines)
  - Rhymes: *abab cdcd efef gg*
  - The turn comes at or near line 13

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"Sonnet 138" or "When My Love Swears that She is Made of Truth"

When my love swears that she is made of truth *a*
I do believe her, though I know she lies, *b*
That she might think me some untutor'd youth, *a*
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties. *b*

Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young, *c*
Although she knows my days are past the best, *d*
Simply I credit her false speaking tongue: *c*
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd. *d*

But wherefore says she not she is unjust? *e*
And wherefore say not I that I am old? *f*
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust, *e*
And age in love loves not to have years told: *f*

Therefore I lie with her and she with me, *g*
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be. *g*
                          - William Shakespeare

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{*First quatrain*; note the puns and the intellectual games: [I know she lies, so I believe her so that she will believe me to be young and untutored]}

{*Second quatrain*: [Well of course I know that she doesn't really think I'm young, but I have to pretend to believe her so that she will pretend that I'm young]}

{*Third quatrain*: [so why don't we both fess up? because love depends upon trust and upon youth]}

{*Final couplet*, and resolution: [we lie to ourselves and to each other, so that we may flatter ourselves that we are young, honest, and in love]. Note especially the puns.