

London

1 I wander through each chartered street,
2 Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
3 And mark in every face I meet,
4 Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

5 In every cry of every man,
6 In every infant's cry of fear,
7 In every voice, in every ban,
8 The mind-forged manacles I hear:

9 How the chimney-sweeper's cry
10 Every blackening church appals,
11 And the hapless soldier's sigh
12 Runs in blood down palace-walls.

13 But most, through midnight streets I hear
14 How the youthful harlot's curse
15 Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
16 And blights with plagues the marriage-hearse.



In the 18th and 19th centuries, the port of London was the busiest port in the world.

Two thirds of coastal vessels using the Pool were colliers meeting an increase in the demand for coal as the population of London rose.

Coastal trade virtually doubled between 1750 and 1796 reaching 11,964 vessels in 1795. In overseas trade, in 1751 the pool handled 1,682 ships and 234,639 tons of goods. By 1794 this had risen to 3,663 ships and 620,845 tons.^[2]

The river was lined with nearly continuous walls of wharves running for miles along both banks, and hundreds of ships moored in the river or alongside the quays.

Form

- **Lyric poetry** is of a personal nature, it portrays the poet's own feelings, states of mind, and perceptions
- **Ballad form** - a song or poem, especially a traditional one or one in a traditional style, telling a story in a number of short regular stanzas, often with a refrain
- **Romantic poetry** – expressing sincere feelings or sentiments, expressing profound human experiences, being inspired by the imagination as well as the landscape
- Rejected 'poetic diction' for a freer form, adopted ordinary language
- Anti-establishment, 'revolutionary literature'.
- Blake abandoned the regularity of end stopped lines - unconventional
- Traditional meter of hymns
- Couplets used to stress the main conceit of the poem
- Dramatic monologue
- Blank verse - unrhymed, iambic pentameter
- Free verse – without strict meter or rhyme, also know as organic verse
- Rhyme – internal, regular, end-stopped, assonance, irregular, couplet, alternate lines, ...
- Line length
- Stanzas – irregular or regular
- Syntax – order of words

Structure

- Questions and answers? Or just questions?
- Dialogue: voices of innocence and experience
- Repetition of ideas at the beginning and ending with one word altered
- Structure gives way to imagery
- Flow of associations
- How does the poem end? A universal thought? A change of tone?

Language

- Allusion – a subtle reference to somebody or something, usually classical
- Irony or sarcasm
- Uses religious symbols in a new and radical way
- Poetic diction – word choice
- Esoteric – difficult to understand
- Archaic – a word or phrase no longer in general use but is still encountered in literature and is used for special effect. Uses Old English spellings
- Impassioned language – frequent use of exclamation and repetition

Romantic movement

- Romantic period (1798-1832) age of literacy revolution, alongside the economic and social revolutions of the time.
- Partly a revolt against aristocratic social and political customs of the Age of Enlightenment and a reaction against the scientific rationalisation of nature
- The Romantics looked at themselves, their own experiences, deepest emotions, and “*to the life of imagination.*”
- They were also inspired by their faith, religion and the Bible.
- Unlike Classicism, they celebrated the fundamental qualities of man, which they believed could only truly be seen in a child. They saw the child as something pure and unspoilt, and therefore closer to God.
- Wordsworth said; “*the Child is the father of Man.*” See also Blake’s ‘*Songs of Innocence*’.