



## Verses upon the Burning of our House, July 10th, 1666

BY ANNE BRADSTREET

*Here Follows Some Verses Upon the Burning  
of Our house, July 10th. 1666. Copied Out of  
a Loose Paper.*

In silent night when rest I took,  
For sorrow near I did not look,  
I wakened was with thund'ring noise  
And piteous shrieks of dreadful voice.  
That fearful sound of "fire" and "fire,"  
Let no man know is my Desire.  
I, starting up, the light did spy,  
And to my God my heart did cry  
To straighten me in my Distress  
And not to leave me succourless.  
Then, coming out, behold a space  
The flame consume my dwelling place.  
And when I could no longer look,  
I blest His name that gave and took,  
That laid my goods now in the dust.  
Yea, so it was, and so 'twas just.  
It was his own, it was not mine,  
Far be it that I should repine;  
He might of all justly bereft  
But yet sufficient for us left.  
When by the ruins oft I past  
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast  
And here and there the places spy  
Where oft I sate and long did lie.  
Here stood that trunk, and there that chest,  
There lay that store I counted best.  
My pleasant things in ashes lie  
And them behold no more shall I.  
Under thy roof no guest shall sit,  
Nor at thy Table eat a bit.  
No pleasant talk shall 'ere be told  
Nor things recounted done of old.  
No Candle e'er shall shine in Thee,  
Nor bridegroom's voice e'er heard shall be.  
In silence ever shalt thou lie,  
Adieu, Adieu, all's vanity.  
Then straight I 'gin my heart to chide,  
And did thy wealth on earth abide?  
Didst fix thy hope on mould'ring dust?

TPCASTT

Anne Bradstreet's "Here Follow Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House, July 10, 1666"

<p><b>Title</b> of poem means</p>	
<p><b>Paraphrase</b> parts of the poem</p>	<p>Lines 1-20</p>
<p><b>Connotation</b> Examine literary devices focusing on how they contribute to meaning and/or the effect.</p>	

## TPCASTT: Literary Analysis Made Easy

**T** **Title:** Ponder the title

**P** **Paraphrase:** Translate the poem into your own words – paraphrase line by line for short poems OR summarize stanza by stanza for long poems.  
Look for: Syntactical units (complete sentences rather than line by line) Enjambment vs. End-stopped lines

**C** **Connotation:** Contemplate the meaning beyond the literal. Examine any and all devices, focusing on how such devices contribute to the meaning, the effect, or both.

<i>Alliteration</i>	repetition of identical or similar consonant sounds, normally at the beginning of words
<i>Allusions</i>	a direct or indirect reference to something which is presumable commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art
<i>Ambiguity</i>	double meanings
<i>Antithesis</i>	direct contrast of structurally parallel word groupings – sink-swim, best-worst
* <i>Apostrophe</i>	speaker addresses remarks to a dead person, an absent person or a non-human object
<i>Assonance</i>	repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds - "A land laid waste with all its young men slain"
<i>Consonance</i>	repetition of the same or similar final consonant sounds on accented syllables or in important words – ticktock, singsong,
<i>Details</i>	facts included or omitted to create effects or evoke responses
<i>Diction</i>	choice of words – denotative and connotative meanings
<i>Hyperbole</i>	exaggerated statements -- Your eyes are as bright as the sun!
<i>Imagery/Images</i>	sensory details: visual, auditory, smell, touch, taste
<i>Internal rhyme</i>	repetition of sounds within the same line
<i>Irony</i>	opposite of the expected: verbal, situational, dramatic
<i>Metaphor</i>	direct comparison of principal term identified by secondary term - war is a razor
<i>Metonymy</i>	object is used to represent something to which it is closely related: scepter & crown = royalty
<i>Onomatopoeia</i>	use of a word whose sound imitates or suggests its meaning
<i>Oxymoron</i>	contradiction of terms – jumbo shrimp, honest thief, sweet sorrow
<i>Paradox</i>	appears contradictory or opposed to common sense, but contains a degree of truth or validity
<i>Personification</i>	author presents or describes concepts, animals, or inanimate objects by endowing them with human attributes or emotions
<i>Pun</i>	a play on words – Eve was nigh Adam; Adam was naive
<i>Rhyme</i>	repetition of vowel sounds in accented syllables and all succeeding syllables
<i>Simile</i>	comparison using like or as
<i>Symbols</i>	generally, anything that represents or stands for something else
<i>Syntax</i>	arrangement of words within sentences OR of sentences within paragraph
<i>Synecdoche</i>	a part represents the whole: hands = person, all hands on deck
<i>Understatement</i>	ironic minimalizing of fact: understatement presents something as less significant than it is

**A** **\*Attitude/Tone:** Examine both the speaker's and the poet's attitudes.  
Look for:
 

1. Speaker's attitude toward self, other characters, and the subject of the poem
2. Attitudes of characters other than the poem's speaker
3. Poet's attitude toward speaker, other characters, subject, and finally, toward the reader

**S** **\*Shift:** Rarely does a poet begin and end the poetic experience in the same place. As is true in most of us, the poet's understanding of an experience is a gradual realization, and the poem is a reflection of that epiphany. One way to help arrive at an understanding of a poem is to trace the changing feelings of the speaker from the beginning to the end. The discovery of shift can be facilitated by watching for the following:

- Key words: but, yet, however, although
- Punctuation: dashes, periods, colons, ellipsis
- Changes in line or stanza length
- Irony
- Changes in sound that may indicate changes in meaning
- Changes in diction: slang to formal
- Occasion of poem (time and place)
- Stanza divisions

**T** **Title:** Examine the title again on an interpretive level.

**T** **Theme:** Recognize the human experience, motivation, or condition suggested by the poem. First list what the poem is about (subjects); then determine what the poet is saying about each of those subjects (theme). *Remember*, the theme must be expressed as a complete sentence.

Always show *how* poetic devices operate in conveying the effect and meaning of the passage or poem. In other words, you must always support your ASSERTIONS with specific detail, evidence and explanation!