

Statements for a paragraph about 'To His Coy Mistress'

Read these lines again:

Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song: then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

In the envelope you will find some ideas you could use to write a paragraph about what you think the poet is doing in these lines.

Working with your partner:

- Decide which ideas you will use, and which you will reject. You will need to discuss:
 - Some of the statements are making almost the same point – which one makes it in the best way?
 - Do you want to add any ideas of your own?
- Together, organise the ideas you have decided to use in the order you think will work best for your paragraph.
- Working together, start to write your paragraph. You will need to add and change the statements a little to make your paragraph read well.

The young man appears to be offering a joyful experience.

The jaunty rhythm is at odds with the dark imagery in these lines.

The young man is emphasising how time races on while he and his mistress are missing their opportunities for fun.

Some modern readers might sympathise with the young man and think that the mistress is being prudish.

Marvell wants to show that he is offering only a headlong rush into sin, and possible tragedy for the woman (a ruined reputation, a possible unwanted pregnancy).

This line is one long sentence.

The contrast is a clue to Marvell's underlying message, which a contemporary reader might have been more inclined to notice: that the youth's argument is false.

The beginning of the poem is romantic but here all the imagery is to do with death.

This long sentence, running over 8 lines, is fast to read, with a jaunty but relentlessly regular rhythm.