***Poems for Essay***

**Question:** How do the poetry techniques used in *Ozymandias*, *Dulce Et Decorum Est* and *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night* help develop the theme of death in each poem?

**Ozymandias**

By Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,

Who said—“Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal, these words appear:

My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;

Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

**Theme Summary:** Power of death over human ambition and achievement

**Use of structure:** to emphasise distance in space and time. Point made by using structure: king long dead and gone – death has robbed him of his great power he was so proud of – showing the power of death over human ambition and achievement

**Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night**

By [Dylan Thomas](https://www.poets.org/node/44729), 1914 - 1953

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.  
  
Though wise men at their end know dark is right,  
Because their words had forked no lightning they  
Do not go gentle into that good night.  
  
Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright  
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.  
  
Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,  
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,  
Do not go gentle into that good night.  
  
Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight  
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.  
  
And you, my father, there on the sad height,  
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.  
Do not go gentle into that good night.  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

**Theme Summary:** life is precious and should be fought for at every turn.

**Use of structure:** The villanelle is an uncommonly seen form of poetry because of the rules and requirements associated with it. The rigid repetition is used to reflect obsessive, repeating thought processes.

**Dulce Et Decorum Est**

By Wilfred Owen

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,   
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,   
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs   
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.   
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots   
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;   
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,   
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;   
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,   
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime . . .   
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,   
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,   
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace   
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,   
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,   
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;   
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood   
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,   
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud    
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,   
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,   
The old Lie: *Dulce et Decorum est   
Pro patria mori.*

**Theme Summary:** bitterness at the horror and pointlessness of war. The false glory of patriotism contrasted with the traumatic impact on soldiers.

**Use of structure:** the poem seems to follow a conventional structure at first, using a consistent rhyme pattern and meter, but gradually falls apart and becomes less structured, reflecting the gradual decline of the speaker’s mental state.