

## Sonnet writing

You will need to apply criticism to your reading of a text. Using the sonnet from the practice benchmark, try your hand here:

“Sonnet 87” by William Shakespeare

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing, 1  
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:  
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;  
My bonds in thee are all determinate.  
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting? 5  
And for that riches where is my deserving?  
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,  
And so my patent back again is swerving.  
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,  
Or me, to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking; 10  
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,  
Comes home again, on better judgment making.  
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,  
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

**Literary professor Richard Dries critically analyzes Shakespeare’s *Sonnet 87*. In his analysis, he argued that the sonnet is a break up letter/speech. He theorized that the couple is doomed for reasons related to social status.**

*“In his plays and poems, [Shakespeare] fails not to explore all aspects of love – including rejection. Sonnet 87 is a testimony of breaking up, not because of relationship issues, not due to external forces (such as an affair), but because on some social scale in the poet’s eye, the woman is higher up. Yet ... [as] is characteristic of Shakespeare’s writing, a close reading reveals that we can’t tell if he is talking about a [high maintenance love interest] or the love of his life. Perhaps on some level ... it is both. In either case, in the rich language of Shakespeare’s poetry, financial and [relationship] images mingle once again while a host of other literary tools reinforce the theme of letting go of a lover that is out of your league” (Dries).*

After reading, defend or challenge the assertions Dries makes about Shakespeare’s writing. Be sure to review both excerpts. Use the provided sonnet as textual support for your argument.

## Writing format

Claim: Need to take a position in support of, against, or qualifying the critic’s position.

Example: Richard Dries over-interprets when he says Shakespeare fully conveys the experience of rejection in “Sonnet 87”.

Introduction: Here, you need to provide context for what you are going to be citing and analyzing; who is talking, and what are they talking about?

Cite: Cite *strong* evidence using a blended sentence.

Explanation:

- For the text: You need to demonstrate how this confirms, refutes, or qualifies whatever it is the critic has argued. This will also require *your* insight, so make sure you clearly explain
- For the critic: You need to present their position on the text; make sure you pick a strong, clear example, that then ties into the evidence you will be citing from the text.
- Remember to transition clearly between both pieces of evidence.

Support and analysis rubric definition for “Exceeds Expectations”:

*Writer effectively defends or challenges a literary critic’s claim regarding Shakespearean sonnets.*

*Writer uses textual evidence from the critic and the sonnet(s) that clearly supports thesis.*

*Writer effectively analyzes how the textual evidence supports the writer’s claim.*