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# Role of parents in literature education among secondary school students: Poetic appreciation as focus

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## Abstract

This study set out to investigate what makes poetic appreciation an unpopular task among students of secondary school, with particular reference to the role of parents and the home. A questionnaire was administered and data collected from two secondary schools in Ibadan. The result was analysed using mean, frequency count, and rank scale. It was found that linguistic difficulties and book scarcity are the major factors the students identified as hindrances to their positive development of poetic appreciation skills. The source of these two problems was traced to the home background of the students. It was therefore suggested that students could be helped to improve on their literary appreciation skills through the right linguistic exposure at home by giving students good grounding in their L1. This would facilitate rather than hinder their proper development of poetic appreciation skills, if properly handled. Moreover, improving the economic condition of Nigerian homes would enable students afford the needed books to be better literary scholars. All which should eventually lead to the production of better citizens, who would positively impact the attainment of the national agenda.

**Keywords:** Poetry appreciation, Linguistic problems, Parents' role, Book scarcity, L1, ESL, Literature education

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## **1. Introduction**

Nigeria is a very diverse nation. Considering the multi-culturality and multi-ethnicity of Nigeria, it is not surprising that she is multilingual. The number of ethnic groups making up Nigeria is yet to be definitely ascertained. The recent concession of some Eastern parts of the nation to Cameroun, following the International Court of Justice ruling, can only compound the situation concerning the number of languages that exist in Nigeria. It is thus not surprising that the number of Nigerian languages remains controversial. Scholars have proposed numbers which they consider appropriate. Olagoke (1979, p. 19) gives a brief summary of these scholars' attempts. He observes that: "Greenberg puts it at 248, Tiffen at over 150, and Ayo Bamgbose at about 400." On his part, Onoja (2009) avows that Nigerian languages are as many as 450. Obviously, the confused nature of these scholars' projections is not hidden. This same case applies even internationally as Crystal (2000) notes. Nonetheless, that the number of existing Nigerian languages is above a hundred is not in doubt. It is therefore not surprising that Nigeria is a politically volatile society due to the complexity of its linguistic structure.

As a consequence, diversity of expression in the Nigerian nation has made it difficult for the people to communicate effectively. Moreover, this problem has made it necessary to search for a common means of national expression. The English language naturally slipped into the role of a national language after the Nigerian independence in 1960. The desire to indigenise the language of national communication resulted in the adoption of the so called three national languages, viz: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Naturally, the agitation for recognition at the national level by the supposedly minority languages have not ceased (cf. Onoja, 2009). The national language question remains a relevant focus for the Nigerian policy makers.

The imposition of the English language as the de facto national language and official language of communication has naturally created its own problem. A major problem is that it has successfully cut off the majority of Nigerians non-literate in the English language from the mainstream of information and communication network within Nigeria. These disadvantaged Nigerians are believed to be as many as 80% of the population. This calls to question the effectiveness of English as the language of national communication. But more serious is the problem it poses as language of instruction in the educational system. The problem of interference of L1 or mother tongue arises. Expectedly, the L1 of Nigerian children should be a Nigerian indigenous language. This interference creates a sort of barrier to the learning and use of the English language in the course of instruction. This logically detracts from the educational process. Nevertheless, this has not reduced the status accorded the English language socially. Rather, the practice is that some parents are even moving to the point of turning the English language to their children's L1 (Ogunsanya, 2007) in the name of easy integration into the national society. One however wonders what identity such a child will have when it is neither English nor Nigerian as it does not belong fully to its indigenous language. A confused personality is more likely to be the end product of such a practice as Sulaiman (1995) argues.

Some of the factors said to be responsible for the prominent role attained by English in the course of time in Nigeria include: the multi-lingual nature of Nigeria, the pride of place given to English by the colonialists, the economic reward that white-collar jobs provide for educated Nigerians, as well as the supposed

psychological displacement that results from not introducing children to English early. According to Olagoke (1979), “the tendency is to go *straight for English*” [(p. 16) original emphasis] because parents believe that it is this that will quickly integrate their children into the social setting and the acceptable social language. Unfortunately, teachers encourage this state of affairs through their ubiquitous rule of “Don’t speak in vernacular”, which further reduces the prestige of the indigenous languages in the eyes of many. One does not consider this practice helpful to the attainment of Nigeria’s developmental goals. It should, however, be pointed out that science has proven that children can conveniently learn many languages at the same time in the course of childhood; those with a strong L1 base are believed to have the advantage (cf. Fafunwa, (1989) in Sulaiman, 1995).

Considering the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual nature of Nigeria, English as the language of instruction is seen as a bit of handicap to many Nigerian students. This is because, for most of them, English is an L2. This poses some challenge and has continued to pose a lot of challenge to educators in Nigeria. For most subjects that students take in the Nigerian secondary schools, English language is the medium of instruction. As a means of communication, it is usually a problematic enterprise for many Nigerian students as most have English as their L2. Scholars have variously propounded theories and suggested means of making the English language more accessible to Nigerian students (cf. Akolo, 2008; Alo, 2005; Yusuf and Olateju, 2005). The fact is that language is not only a means of communication but also a means of effective communication. If language is such an important means of studying other subjects, it appears even more crucial for students of literature. The importance of the English language to Literature-in-English can thus not be overemphasised. Willmott (1979) states some significance that English has for Literature-in-English as that it:

- (1) confronts the learner with language and the need to elucidate its meaning;
- (2) ...is an organization of language to which linguistic awareness must be applied if it is to be understood and appreciated;

moreover,

- (3) can generate language as well as exemplify it (p. 57).

These three reasons why literature is important in the curriculum of education in Nigeria tell us why language is important to literature. It thus seems logical to surmise that literature is a way of teaching language and spurring linguistic ‘self-consciousness’ among students. What this means is that literature can make students conscious of their language usage. In essence, literature education helps the learner to search for the real meaning of language as literature usually presents the two levels of semantics – the denotative and the connotative levels. Such awareness improves the learners’ linguistic and academic ability, but more importantly, the communicative effectiveness of such a learner as language is eventually about communication. To be able to communicate effectively in English, whether as a receiver or sender of the message, it is necessary to be competent in the language.

For teachers of English Language and Literature-in-English, the challenge is even more daunting. It will thus be interesting to see the effects that the different choices parents make, in terms of the home language of their wards, have on these young ones ability in literature education. Considering that poetry is just one of

the genres of literature, teaching students to learn to appreciate poetry may be quite tasking. This is because of what Chude (1989) describes as the difficult and flowery language of poetry. This language of poetry, he notes, could be seen as a problem to the learning of poetry. It is a known fact that poetry condenses ideas. Compared to the other genres of literature, it is regarded as the most difficult. But the view of this writer is that such a posture may be rooted in attitudes rather than reality. Dramatic literature that Ezewu (1979) describes as "...text which is acted out..." (p. 351) may not necessarily fare better. Even prose that is believed to be popular among students (see Table 5) cannot be given a much higher regard. However, the quest here is to find out what problems students of literature face in appreciating poetry considering how useful it can be to the learners' educational pursuits if given its due place in the curriculum.

Lado (1964) asserts that a person knows how to use a language well only when they can use its structures accurately for communication at will, with units and patterns as needed and holding normal memory span at conversational speed, and identifying errors when they occur. This, of course, foreshadows the Chomskyan grammar; but the reality we need to note is that linguistic competence has a lot to do with what Lado observes above. Nonetheless, as Alo (2005) rightly points out, competence that is contextual is also important to any linguistic analysis. However, there is need to observe that most of our secondary school students' 'mistakes' go beyond 'slips of tongue' and contextual idiosyncracies. It is obvious then that the socio-economic and family backgrounds could be important factors in the linguistic ability of Nigerian secondary school students, especially as is reflected in their literary appreciation tasks.

### 1.1. Objective of the study

To ascertain if the family and socio-economic backgrounds of secondary school students exert any significant influence on Nigerian secondary school students linguistic skill in their Literature-in-English class, with particular reference to their ability to appreciate poetry.

### 1.2. Research design

The study is a survey of the impact of family background on literary appreciation skills of secondary school students. It focuses on the socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds of the students and the possible impact of these on their poetic appreciation ability.

### 1.3. Research questions

Do students' socio-economic backgrounds exert any influence on their poetic appreciation in English? Is there a difference in terms of home environment on students' poetic appreciation ability? To what extent do the teacher, home and the society at large influence their attitudes to poetry? What is the effect of the linguistic ability of students on their effectiveness in poetic appreciation? What difficulties do they have in language as a key to unravelling and studying poetry? These questions form the core of the inquiry in this study.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Population and sample

The population sample was taken from two schools in Ibadan. It is made up of a mixture of boys and girls in the Senior Secondary School, that is, SS1, SS2, and SS3 classes. The two schools are the International School, Ibadan (ISI), located within the University of Ibadan campus, and Orogun Grammar School (OGS), Orogun, Ibadan. The total population from these schools is 105. This makes up the literature students who were available at the time of administering the questionnaire. Specifically, 40 students made up of 30 females and 10 males were given the questionnaires in ISI and 65 made up of 44 females and 21 males turned up for the class during which the questionnaires were administered in OGS. The impression given by the summary in Table 1 is that there were more females in the literature class. In all, 74 females took part in the study while a mere 31 males participated. These figures show a 2:1 ratio in terms of gender participation. It suggests a high bias for language related subject by the female students in secondary school literature education as scholars have previously observed.

Table 1. Population sample

Schools	Sex		Total
	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	
International School, Ibadan	30	10	40
Orogun Grammar School, Ibadan	44	21	65
Total	74	31	105

### 2.2. Instrument of data collection

A questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The instrument was tagged 'Questionnaire on the Problem of Poetic Appreciation among SSS Students'. It was constructed along three main parts. The first part has 14 questions, which were in the alternative choice form. These seeming questions were statements of expression of opinion on the students' attitude to poetry, poets, teachers, and possible psychological and sociological factors that might interfere with or affect their learning of poetry. These choices were expected to help narrow down their responses to a manageable proportion. The second part of the questionnaire sought to unravel the linguistic difficulties they encounter in the course of studying poetry. These likely linguistic difficulties are vocabulary problems, expressions, figures of speech, grammar and interpretation. They were expected to reorganise these items in their perceived order of difficulty. The last two questions

were expected to indicate their preferences among the three genres of literature in terms of their attitudinal postures to them as well as the order of frequency in reading each.

### 2.3. Procedure

Questionnaires were administered in the two schools on two different days. The literature teachers' help was solicited and obtained towards the successful administration of the questionnaires in the two schools. The questionnaires were given out to the students in both schools on each day with the express instruction that they should take their time in answering the questions posed. They were discouraged from doing group work but rather encouraged to take options that strictly reflected their individual opinions about the items on the questionnaires. Moreover, they were encouraged to seek clarification on any item that was not clear to them from the researcher. Even though some of them attempted to do group discussions on the questionnaire, this was discouraged; they were once again reminded that they should direct their questions to the researcher. The questionnaires were subsequently retrieved.

### 2.4. Data analysis

A corpus of data was collected from the responses given by the students in the questionnaires. The data was first studied in terms of the sex and schools of the population sample as shown in Table 1. Some of the statements in the questionnaires were scored with units of 4, 3, 2, 1 assigned to the alternative choices. The average means of these scores were then found. Frequency count was also done to analyse the data. For the last two sections of the questionnaire, the items were reordered in terms of their generic preferences among poetry, drama, and prose.

## 3. Result and discussion of findings

Table 2. Students' motivation for poetry reading

Item	No.	Mean Average
How many students like poetry	1	3.5
How easy do they consider it	3	3.1
How often do they read it	4	2.8
Why do they read it	5	3.5
When do they read it	11	3.4
How much do they admire poets	13	3.4
<b>Maximum</b>		4.0

From Table 2, it appears that the learners' motivation for reading poetry is very high. Item 1 that seeks to find out the number of students that like poetry does well in their responses. Item 1 ties with Item 5 which seeks to find out their reason for reading poetry. Items 11 and 13 that seek answer to when they read poems and their view of poets come next in mean average score. However, the seemingly poor showing of Item 4 on their frequency of reading poetry raises doubts on how well they understand Item 1. Nonetheless, their general performance on their desire to read poetry appears passably good, indicating a high motivation to read poetry.

Table 3. Some important factors affecting SSS students' poetry reading

Items	No.	Frequency
Those finding the teacher positive though not exceptional	12	81
Those that compare poetry to tales	9	78
Those that consider poetry easy rather than difficult	6	84
Those that can decipher the real nature of poetry	8	48
Those that read it to learn	10	42
Those that like rhythm in poetry	2	42
The most militating problem of book scarcity	14	40

A very large number of the students consider the biggest factor against poetry reading to be book scarcity as seen in Item 14. This sociological factor is seen as central to the problem facing their ability to develop a good poetic appreciation skill. It thus appears from Table 3 that students generally see poetry reading in a very positive light. For example, 84 of them consider poetry easy rather than difficult in Item 6. 78 of them see poetry as tales while only 42 of them enjoy its rhythmic nature as seen in Items 9 and 2. This shows that they have an understanding of the nature of poetry as having metrical form as well as substantive in nature in that it has definite content value. However, 81 of them look at the teacher as an important factor that is not adding a great deal of value to their interest in poetic appreciation (Item 12). They opine that the teacher only helps them to develop a basic skill in poetic appreciation, which apparently suggests that the teacher is not doing enough. One may however look at their seeing poetry as something easy to learn as attributable to the teachers' efforts. Nevertheless, one wonders if learning about poetry is the main reason why poems are written.

The second section of the questionnaire asks about the linguistic difficulties they encounter in poetic appreciation. In reordering these linguistic difficulties on a scale of 1-5 in terms of the magnitude of difficulty, it becomes obvious in Table 4 that grammar is considered the least difficulty and interpretation the greatest in poetic appreciation.

Table 4. Perceived linguistic difficulties confronting students in poetic appreciation in ranking order

Itemised Linguistic Difficulties			Scoring of Linguistic Difficulties		Ranking Order of Difficulties		
			<i>Difficulties</i>	<i>Scores</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Difficulties</i>	
A	Vocabulary Problems	1.....	A	Vocabulary Problems	2	1	Interpretation
B	Expression	2.....	B	Expression	4	2	Expression
C	Figures of Speech	3.....	C	Figures of Speech	3	3	Figures of Speech
D	Grammar	4.....	D	Grammar	1	4	Vocabulary Problems
E	Interpretation	5.....	E	Interpretation	5	5	Grammar

The first column gives the list of linguistic difficulties as presented in the questionnaire while the second column presents the average scores given to each difficulty by the students. The third column presents the ranking order of the linguistic difficulties. From Table 4, interpretation ranks highest in terms of difficulty magnitude. This is followed by expression and figures of speech which were used to beautify the poems. One could surmise that these linguistic adornments make the words lose their original meaning or just deepen such meaning. But the grammar of the language may prove least troublesome because the student has become familiar with the grammar of English. This is apparently due to their having been so frequently exposed to it since their primary education level.

Language may thus be where the problem lies. This is because the students may find it easy to read the surface meaning of the words in poetry and find it difficult to interpret the subtle message(s) embedded in the deep fabrics of its levels of meaning. This seems to support the theory that the students' main problem is with poetic diction as noted above (cf. Haynes, 1979; Chude, 1989). The students appear to essentially recognise the content and form of poetry on the surface level while reading between the lines is a problematic issue for them. The second level of interpretation apparently has so many barriers between it and the surface meaning after the subject matter and the language used must have been steeped in all sorts of deep symbols. Such barriers include atypical expressions, figures of speech and unfamiliar vocabulary, or rather, estranged vocabulary. The linguistic quandary may be accounted for by the fact that non-total competence in the familiar English is now made unfamiliar through specialised poetic diction. Obviously, English as a second language is not the most advantageous position from which to start in the appreciation of poems in English.

Clearly, as language is central to poetry, one cannot over-emphasise the importance of the issue raised here by the respondents. Even long before now, scholars have identified this particular problem. It has been established that the underlying problem of poetry learning is "that of poetic language" (Haynes, 1979, p. 207). Corroborating this ten years later, Chude (1989) also observes that the language of poetry itself could be regarded as a problem to the learning of poetry. This conclusion on the problematic nature of poetic language



may not be unconnected with what Preminger (1965) calls a deviation from grammatical rules which characterised poetic diction. The respondents' belief that language of poetry is a major hindrance to their ability to appreciate poetry could thus be viewed from a sympathetic perspective. Interpretation being their greatest problem and grammar being the least have other intervening difficulties like expression, figures of speech and unfamiliar vocabulary. All these together are enough challenge for a native speaker; how much more an L2 learner like those that make up the population of the study.

The issue here is that students have to analyse poetry that even native speakers find problematic. The unfortunate trend is that students in the ESL situation are introduced to foreign poems without proper development of this same ability in their L1. This puts Nigerian students at a great disadvantage. Olagoke (1979) notes that there is a great profit in students being masters in their L1 before being confronted with linguistic tasks in L2 (cf. Sulaiman, 1995). However, he sadly observes that most parents in Nigeria go for the straight English policy. The straight English policy introduces students from the outset to the English language in school as the language of instruction and communication immediately they leave the home for the school environment. This is without regard to the cultural shock these students may experience and the possible alienation from the indigenous culture of such students' parents. It is saddening that educators that should know the possible negative effect of such a practice on the educational system fully support the practice despite a standing Federal Government policy that the first three years of formal education should be conducted in the language of the immediate environment (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1998; Nwosu-Izuwah, 1998).

The Federal Government of Nigeria policy for secondary education specifically states that "secondary education shall...develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world cultural heritage" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1998, p. 17). If the indigenous languages are being snuffed out through a policy of child alienation, how do we hope to develop and promote these same Nigerian languages? Obviously, a child that cannot speak a simple correct sentence in its mother tongue is already doomed to an inability to function in a language that is not even its in the first place. Olagoke (1979) and Daniel (2008) assert that one of the easiest ways that teachers help discredit the indigenous languages is through the 'Don't speak in vernacular' policy that pervades Nigeria's pre-tertiary education levels. The problem is that such ideas are so internalised that most people tend to look down on anyone that chooses to study the indigenous languages as field of speciality. Even semi-literate parents speak their own dysfunctional kind of English to their children at home in the name of grooming them to be better speakers of English, which they consider the meal ticket that gives access to economic advancement in the modern world. This attitude is a dangerous one surely. There is no way it can help children of such parents to have a good grip of their L1 that should have given them a good grasp of a new language they would be introduced to as L2 in the course of their education. This fact has been demonstrated by the Ife experiment where students that did their studies in their L1, Yoruba, performed better in all their subjects, English inclusive, than the control group (Fafunwa, 1989 in Sulaiman, 1995). Sulaiman (1995) further avers that introducing students to the L2 immediately on entering the school system could lead to a psychological awkwardness and development of a negative self-concept. One does not believe that such confused children are the end products the National Policy on

Education is designed for. The loss of national identity through compromised personalities would not achieve Nigeria's intended national agenda.

Another important factor presented by the respondents is the number of books they have read among the three genres of literature. Moreover, the preferences they have among these three are also of interest. On the preferential scale, the students seem to prefer reading prosaic writings most and poetry least and their choices of the genre has drama first and poetry least. In the two cases, it could be seen that poetry takes the last position. On the scales of 0-2 and 1-3 for genre preferences and book reading preferences among the genres, poetry is the least preferred. One is tempted to account for this as connected again with the linguistic competence problem. However, as some of them pointed out, the teacher factor is a very important hindering reason for their low interest in poetic appreciation. As this paper is more concerned about the home and linguistic factors students' poetic appreciation skills development, the teacher factor is left for another study. It needs be mentioned, nonetheless, that the teacher is a crucial factor to the development of the students' skill in literary appreciation (cf. Akolo, 2008).

Table 5. Preference scale for the genres

Scores	Choices among Genres	Rank	Reading Habits	Scores
2	Drama	1	Novels	3
1	Prose	2	Drama books	2
0	Poetry	3	Poetry books	1

Looking at Table 5, one can surmise that poetry reading does not fare well in comparison with the other genres of literature. This should not be surprising. The fact that poetry books are usually in a collection with many poems making up a book could well account for their not having many poetry books to read, unlike in the case of novels and drama texts where there are usually many books to be read. However, it is also obvious that linguistic incompetence will easily put off many secondary school students who find poetry a bit heavy when they could easily read many novels without as much mental exertion which poetry may require. Moreover, acting out drama texts may also make them more interesting than poems. However, probably if teachers encourage recitations of poems individually or in class competitions, the students may develop the necessary interest. But more importantly, if parents encourage the students' interest through reading to them and reciting poetry with them in the home language as exemplified in panegyrics that exist in many indigenous Nigerian languages, the students' interest in poetry may be greatly kindled and developed through continuous practice and encouragement. This could well help towards the attainment of the national agenda of using education to promote Nigerian languages, art and culture "in the context of world cultural heritage" (FRN, 1998: 17). The end product is citizens with positive self-esteem, equipped to function effectively, even in the globalized world.

#### 4. Conclusion and recommendations

In conclusion, two major findings of the study in relation to the research questions are that

- (1) linguistic difficulties, especially the ability of students to interpret poems, and
- (2) scarcity of books are the major hindrances to secondary school students' capability to appreciate poems.

Even though teachers are usually blamed for students' underperformance in language related subjects like Literature-in-English (cf. Akolo, 2008; Vincent, 1979), the fact that socio-cultural background, or lack of it, is a major factor in students' linguistic incompetence is usually overlooked. Straight English policy usually adopted by many parents is considered suspect by this researcher in that it generally discourages students from being well grounded in their L1 as the indigenous languages are frequently disparaged and downgraded through parents' tendency to want to turn English to the home language for their children in the hope of helping them to become better academically, which is often equated with improved spoken English (Oguniyi, 2007). As Sulaiman (1995) perceptibly observes, such practice is more often than not actually a disservice to the young learner in that they are frequently left floundering and embarrassed by their mulatto status. As noted above, this is not in the national interest.

The home factor is also important in the area of book scarcity. A sound economic power would, in all probability, enable students to get the required books on poetry (cf. Longe, 1979), no matter the cost. Reverse would be the case in poor home backgrounds as poetry books may be considered one of the optional materials required, especially when one considers the preferential scale table (Table 5) where poetry trails the other genres of literature on all fronts.

The need to revolutionise education in Nigeria through attitudinal change from the home background of the students thus becomes essential. As can be seen from Table 2, the students have a high motivation to learn and appreciate poetry but certain interfering factors are not helpful to their ability to develop such interests. The fact that many Nigerian parents do not much help their children in that their straight English policy does not add value to the students' linguistic competence can be seen in that many of the students are still not much improved in their English language usages, despite the early introduction to the English language. To us, such an unhelpful practice of throwing children into the unfamiliar world of straight English from a home that had been in the familiar L1 is debilitating to the educational progress of the Nigerian child. A much sensible approach would be to allow the children have a good mastery of their L1 through the help of their parents, who are expected to assist the students attain good proficiency in the home language, the indigenous L1. It is said that children can learn many languages at the same time; as such they could conveniently learn English along with the indigenous languages, if properly guided. The educational concept of the simple to complex, from known to the unknown will be better served if children are allowed to gradually integrate to the ESL condition as stated in the National Policy on Education. A student that already has a good grasp of the local poetic diction and tradition should expectedly find it easier to flow into the strange imagery constructed by the foreign poetry or that are rendered in the L2. Strangulating the indigenous languages and culture in the name of modernisation is a wind that blows no one any good, least of

all the creative and independent human beings our secondary education is expected to produce. Our submission is therefore that literature education can become a useful tool in achieving Nigeria's national goals only when Nigerian students are given the right linguistic exposure at home as the basis for their future incursion into poetic appreciation in the English language.

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## Appendix

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PROBLEMS OF POETIC APPRECIATION AMONG SSS STUDENTS

AGE: ..... SEX: ..... CLASS: .....

SCHOOL: .....

*All information will be treated with utmost CONFIDENCE.*

**INSTRUCTION:** Please, circle any answer you choose from questions 1-14.

1. I like poems.....
  - a. very much
  - b. fairly well
  - c. only a bit
  - d. not at all
2. I like poems because of its.....
  - a. stanzas
  - b. metric lines
  - c. rhythm
  - d. rhyme scheme
3. Poems are.....
  - a. very easy
  - b. fairly easy
  - c. fairly difficult
  - d. very difficult

4. I read poems.....
  - a. always
  - b. often
  - c. once in a while
  - d. not at all
5. I read poems.....
  - a. for enjoyment
  - b. just for class work
  - c. just to pass exams
  - d. only for assignments
6. I found poetry usually .....
  - a. very deep
  - b. very technical
  - c. very involved
  - d. very easily understandable
7. Poetry captures.....
  - a. the essence of the world
  - b. the ugliness of the world
  - c. nothing that I can see
  - d. the beauty and essence of the world
8. In poems.....
  - a. a little is being said in few words
  - b. a lots is being said in many words
  - c. a lot is being said in very few words
  - d. a little is being said in many words
9. To me, poetry is like .....
  - a. Story-telling
  - b. Music
  - c. Mathematics
  - d. Nothing
10. I read poems .....
  - a. for their worth
  - b. for their beauty
  - c. if I don't find anything else to read
  - d. to learn about them
11. I read poems .....
  - a. only when we have poetry lesson
  - b. only with the help of the teacher
  - c. on my own at school
  - d. on my own at home
12. My literature teacher makes poetry ..... for us
  - a. interesting
  - b. boring
  - c. uninteresting
  - d. very lively
13. I ..... poets.
  - a. admire

- b. am indifferent to
  - c. don't admire
  - d. don't really have any opinion about
14. I don't read poetry as often as I will like to because .....
- a. my parents are illiterates so never introduced me to it
  - b. my parents are educated but don't read such things like poems
  - c. there are not many published books on poetry
  - d. my teacher doesn't give us the idea of the poetry book to read
15. Here is a list of difficulties one can find in poetry. List items in order of importance to you. Start with the most important difficulty.
- |                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| A. Vocabulary Problems | 1. .... |
| B. Expressions         | 2. .... |
| C. Figures of Speech   | 3. .... |
| D. Grammar             | 4. .... |
| E. Interpretation      | 5. .... |
16. Among poetry, prose and drama  
 I like .....best.  
 I like ..... least.
17. I have ..... poetry books.            I have read ..... poetry books.  
 I have ..... drama books.            I have read ..... drama books.  
 I have ..... novels.            I have read ..... Novels.

As precise an answer to each question as you can manage will be much appreciated.

**Thanks for your co-operation.**