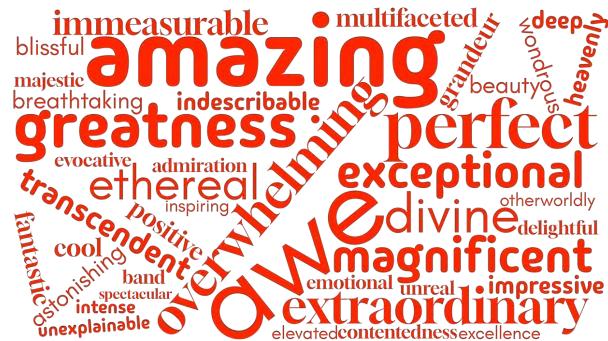
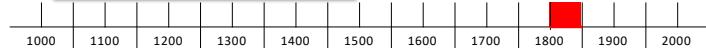


### Attendance Question

What does the word *sublime* mean to you?



### John Keats (1795-1821)



### John Keats (1795-1821)

In Poetry I have a few Axioms, and you will see how far I am from their Centre. 1st I think Poetry should surprise by a fine excess and not by Singularity—it should strike the Reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a Remembrance—2nd Its touches of Beauty should never be half way ther[e]by making the reader breathless instead of content: the rise, the progress, the setting of imagery should like the Sun come natural natural too him—shine over him and set soberly although in magnificence leaving him in the Luxury of twilight—but it is easier to think what Poetry should be than to write it—and this leads me on to another axiom. That if Poetry comes not as naturally as the Leaves to a tree it had better not come at all. (NAEL D1010-11)

John Keats. Letter to John Taylor, 27 February 1818.

### ode

#### Classical ode types

Pindaric	Horatian
5thC BCE	ca. 23-13 BCE
Greek	Latin
public	private
heterostrophic (irregular)	homostrophic (regular)
dancing chorus delivers strophe, antistrophe, and epode	literary odes composed in various regular stanzaic forms

- an elaborately formal lyric poem
- often takes the form of a lengthy ceremonious address to a person or an abstract entity
- always serious and elevated in tone
- most odes in English, including Keats' famous odes, follow the homostrophic (regular) Horatian model (Baldick 257)

📖 Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale” (1819)



Carlos Delgado (CC BY-SA 4.0)

**common nightingale**

- *Luscinia megarhynchos*
- small European bird best known for its beautiful, powerful song
- name derived from “night” and the Old English *galan*, “to sing”
- slightly larger than robin, brown in colour except for reddish tail
- song of the male has been described as one of the most beautiful sounds in nature, but females do not sing (*Wikipedia*)

📖 Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale” (1819)

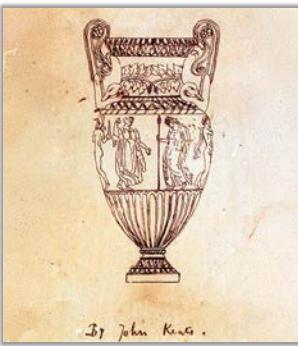
In the spring of 1819, a nightingale had built her nest in my house. Keats found a tranquil and continual joy in her song; and one morning he took a chair from the breakfast-table to the grass-plot under a plum-tree, where he sat for two or three hours. When he came into the house, I perceived he had some scraps of paper in his hand, and these he was quietly thrusting behind the books. On inquiry, I found those scraps, four or five in number, containing the poetic feeling on the song of our nightingale. The writing was not well legible; and it was difficult to arrange the stanzas on so many scraps. With his assistance I succeeded, and this was his “Ode to a Nightingale,” a poem which has been the delight of every one. (53-54)

Charles Brown. *Life of John Keats*. Oxford UP, 1937.

📖 Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1820)



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**ekphrasis**

Two cities radiant on the shield appear,  
The image one of peace, and one of war.  
Here sacred pomp and genial feast delight,  
And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;  
Along the street the new-made brides are led,  
With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed:  
The youthful dancers in a circle bound  
To the soft flute, and cithern's silver sound:  
Through the fair streets the matrons in a row  
Stand in their porches, and enjoy the show.

Homer. *The Iliad*. Book 18. Transl. by Alexander Pope, 1715-20.

- Greek for “description”
- a verbal description of or meditation on a non-verbal work of art, real or imagined, usually a painting or a sculpture
- the most famous Classical example is the detailed description of Achilles’ shield in Homer’s *Iliad* (800-700 BCE)
- the most famous example in English is Keats’ “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1820) (Baldick 257)

## Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1820)

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty,”—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. (49-50)

**Who speaks these lines, and to whom?**

1. Both lines are spoken by the urn to humankind
2. Both lines are spoken by the poet to the urn
3. Both lines are spoken by the poet to the figures on the urn
4. “Beauty is truth, truth beauty” is spoken by the urn, and the remainder is spoken by the poet to the reader
5. “Beauty is truth, truth beauty” is spoken by the urn, and the remainder is spoken by the poet to the urn

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