

Study Guide for Philip Larkin: The Poems of Philip Larkin



Study Guide for Philip Larkin's The Poems of Philip

Larkin by Course Hero

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Philip Larkin (1922-1985) was one of the most celebrated poets of the 20th century. His work is known for its honesty, wit, and pessimism. Larkin's poems often explore themes of love, loss, and the meaning of life.

This study guide provides a comprehensive overview of Larkin's poetry. It includes:

* A biography of Larkin * A discussion of Larkin's major themes * An analysis of some of his most famous poems * A list of resources for further study

Biography

Philip Larkin was born in Coventry, England, in 1922. He was the son of a city treasurer. Larkin attended St. John's College, Oxford, where he studied

English. After graduating, he worked as a librarian in Belfast and then Hull.

In 1955, Larkin published his first collection of poems, *The Less Deceived*. The collection was a critical and commercial success. Larkin went on to publish six more collections of poetry, including *The Whitsun Weddings* (1964), *High Windows* (1974), and *Required Writing* (1982).

Larkin died of cancer in 1985. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Major Themes

Larkin's poetry often explores the following themes:

* **Love**: Larkin's poems about love are often bittersweet. He writes about the joys and sorrows of love, as well as the difficulty of sustaining relationships. * **Loss**: Larkin's poems about loss are often moving and elegiac. He writes about the death of loved ones, as well as the loss of innocence and hope. * **The meaning of life**: Larkin's poems about the meaning of life are often pessimistic. He writes about the futility of human existence and the inevitability of death.

Analysis of Some Famous Poems

Here is a brief analysis of some of Larkin's most famous poems:

* **"Here" (1955)**: This poem is a meditation on the nature of home. Larkin writes about the comfort and security of home, as well as the loneliness and isolation that can come with it. * **"The Whitsun Weddings" (1964)**: This poem is a celebration of ordinary life. Larkin writes about a train journey he takes on Whitsunday, and he describes the people and places he sees along the way. * **"High Windows" (1974)**: This poem is a

reflection on aging and mortality. Larkin writes about the changes that come with old age, and he expresses his fears and regrets about death. *

"Aubade" (1981): This poem is a meditation on death. Larkin writes about the inevitability of death, and he expresses his hope for a peaceful end.

Resources for Further Study

Here is a list of resources for further study of Philip Larkin's poetry:

* Philip Larkin Society: <https://www.philiplarkin.com/> * The Poetry Archive: <https://poetryarchive.org/> * The British Library: <https://www.bl.uk/> * The Philip Larkin Centre at the University of Hull: <https://www.hull.ac.uk/larkin/>

Philip Larkin was one of the most important poets of the 20th century. His work is honest, insightful, and moving. This study guide provides a comprehensive overview of Larkin's poetry, and it is an essential resource for anyone who wants to learn more about his work.



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