CAPITOLO

9

The English Sonnet

"Foole, said my Muse to me, looke in thy heart, and write." — Sir Philip Sidney, Astrophil and Stella 1

OBIETTIVI

1. I can explain how the sonnet came from Petrarch's Italy to the Tudor court, and the role of manuscript, miscellanies and patrons.
2. I can recognise the Petrarchan, English and Spenserian sonnets and the Spenserian stanza, and name their parts.
3. I can read and analyse sonnets by Petrarch, Wyatt, Sidney and Spenser, and compare a source with its adaptation.
4. I can use the future perfect, the future in the past and expressions such as *be about to, be bound to, be due to*.
5. I can read a poem aloud with natural rhythm and write a commentary on a poem.

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In the summer of 1557 a London printer, Richard Tottel, put on sale a small book called *Songes and Sonettes*. Many of its poems had been written twenty or thirty years earlier, at the court of Henry VIII, by two aristocrats who were both dead: Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. Their poems had travelled from hand to hand in manuscript; now anyone with a few pence could read them. Many were sonnets, a form that Wyatt had brought home from Italy. Fifty years later, when Shakespeare's *Sonnets* were printed in 1609, the sonnet had become the most fashionable poem in the English language.

This chapter follows that journey, from Petrarch's Italy to the court of Elizabeth I. You will read a sonnet by Petrarch beside Wyatt's English version of it, the first sonnet of Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* and a sonnet by Edmund Spenser, and you will learn to tell the three sonnet forms apart. In the Language section you will look at the future from new angles: from a point in the future, and from a point in the past.

9.1 History and Society: Poets at Court

9.1.1 The court as a stage

In Tudor England the **royal court** was not only a building but a moving community: the king or queen, their ministers and servants, ambassadors, and hundreds of nobles and gentlemen who hoped for a post, a pension or a piece of land. Power came from the monarch, so being near the monarch mattered. The court moved between palaces such as Greenwich, Whitehall and Hampton Court, and wherever it went there was music, dancing, hunting, tournaments, plays and conversation.

A successful **courtier** had to be more than a soldier. You met the ideal in chapter 8: Castiglione's *Cortegiano* (1528), translated into English by Thomas Hoby in 1561, described a gentleman who could fight, ride and dance, but who could also speak well, play an instrument and write graceful verse — and do it all with apparent ease, the famous *sprezzatura*. At the courts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, writing a clever love poem was one way to be noticed. Poetry was a social skill, like dancing: it showed wit, education and good manners.

Many of these poems were about love, and courtly love poetry often had a second meaning. A poet who complained about a cold, distant lady might also be talking about a monarch who did not reward him. Under Elizabeth I, a queen who never married, the language of love and the language of politics came very close: courtiers addressed her as a goddess, a moon, a lady to be adored from below.

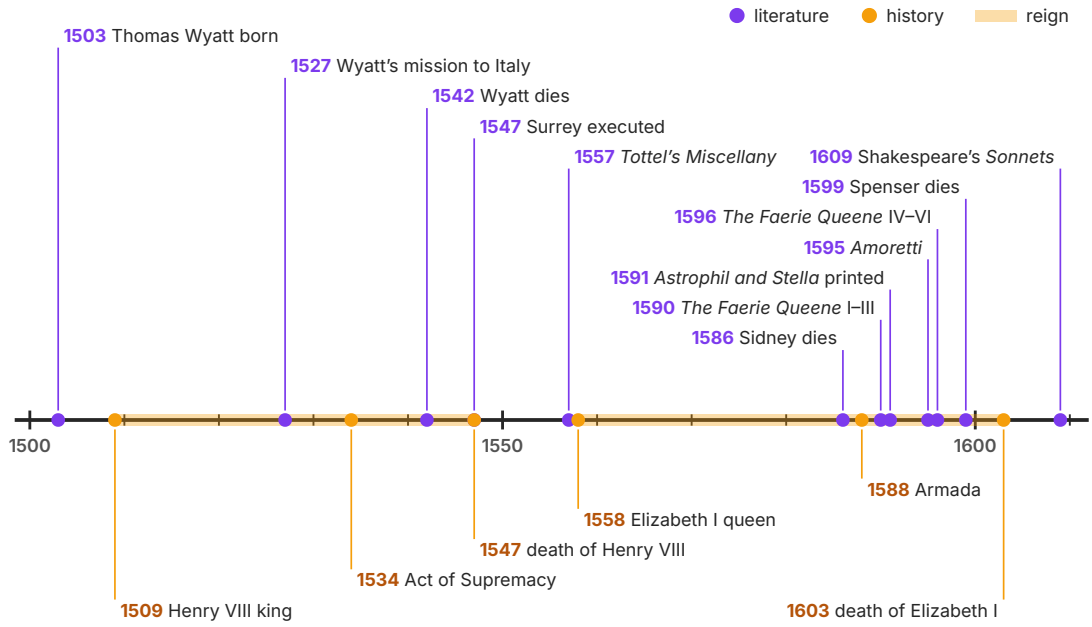


Figura 9.1 The English sonnet in the Tudor century: a proportional timeline, 1500–1610 (ticks every 10 years). Violet: literature; amber: history; the amber bands show the reigns of Henry VIII (1509–1547) and Elizabeth I (1558–1603). Petrarch, the model of all these poets, had died in 1374.

9.1.2 Poems in manuscript

Today a poet who wants readers looks for a publisher. In the 16th century a gentleman usually did the opposite. Poems were copied by hand and passed around among friends, at court, at the universities and at the Inns of Court, the law schools of London. A reader copied a poem he liked into his own notebook, sometimes changing a word or two, and added a reply; a group of friends filled a shared book with their favourite verses. One such book, the Devonshire Manuscript, contains poems by Wyatt and by others in his circle, copied by several hands in the 1530s. Another, the Egerton Manuscript in the British Library, contains Wyatt's poems with corrections that scholars believe are in his own hand.

Why not print? Many gentlemen felt that selling your poems in a shop was not a gentleman's business: print was for preachers and professional writers who needed money. Manuscript was also safer. A love poem could carry hidden allusions to real people, and at the court of Henry VIII, where two queens were executed and great ministers fell, a careless line could be dangerous. Many poems were published only after their authors had died.

9.1.3 Tottel's Miscellany

That is exactly what happened in 1557, in the reign of Mary I. Tottel's book, today called **Tottel's Miscellany**, collected poems by Surrey, by Wyatt and by other, often anonymous, authors. A **miscellany** is a printed collection of poems by different writers. Tottel was a businessman as well as a printer: he gave many poems new titles, such as "The lover compareth his state to a ship in perilous storm tossed on the sea", and his editors smoothed Wyatt's rough lines so that they would sound more regular. The book was reprinted many times before the end of the century, and generations of readers learnt from it what an English love poem should sound like.

9.1.4 Patrons and poets

A poet who was not rich needed a **patron**: a powerful person who protected and supported a writer, with money, a job or a place in a great household. In return the poet dedicated his books to the patron and praised him or her in verse. This system, called **patronage**, explains the long, flattering dedications at the beginning of many Elizabethan books. Edmund Spenser dedicated *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579) to Philip Sidney and *The Faerie Queene* to Elizabeth I herself; in 1591 the queen gave him a pension of fifty pounds a year. Sidney's sister, Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, was a poet herself and one of the greatest patrons of the age.

By the 1590s things were changing. London had more readers, more printers and more booksellers, and a professional writer could hope to live, badly, from his pen and from the theatres (chapter 10). In the years after 1591, when Sidney's sonnets were printed, many poets published whole books of sonnets. The courtly game of Wyatt's time had become a fashion, and a market.

DA RICORDARE

Courtier-poets. Wyatt, Surrey and Sidney were aristocrats and men of action — ambassadors, soldiers, courtiers — who wrote poetry for a small circle of readers, in manuscript. Spenser was different: a man of modest family who needed patrons and published his work. The sonnet arrived in England as a court fashion and became, by the 1590s, a printed bestseller.

9.2 Literature: the Sonnet from Petrarch to Spenser

9.2.1 Petrarch and Petrarchism

You met the sonnet in English 2 (Unit 10): a poem of fourteen lines. It was born in Italy, at the Sicilian court of the emperor Frederick II, in the first half of the 13th century; Giacomo da Lentini is usually named as its inventor. Dante wrote sonnets, but the poet who made it the great European love poem was Francesco Petrarca, in English **Petrarch** (1304–1374). His collection of

Italian poems, which he called *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* ("fragments in the vernacular") and which we call the *Canzoniere*, contains 366 poems, 317 of them sonnets. Most are about Laura, whom he first saw, he tells us, in Avignon on 6 April 1327, and went on loving after her death in 1348.

The Italian sonnet has two parts. The first eight lines form the **octave** (*fronte*, the two *quartine*), which rhymes *abba abba*; the last six form the **sestet** (*sirma*, the two *terzine*), which usually brings in new rhymes — *cde cde*, *cdc dcd* and other patterns: the sestet is not fixed. Between the two parts there is often a change of direction, a new thought, an answer to a question or a move from description to feeling. This turn is called the **volta**, the Italian word for "turn".

Petrarch's style had features that every Renaissance poet imitated:

- the idealised lady, beautiful, virtuous and distant, described from head to foot: golden hair, eyes like stars, a neck like snow;
- the suffering lover, who burns and freezes, hopes and despairs, and cannot stop loving;
- the **conceit** (*concetto*): an elaborate, surprising comparison developed for several lines — love as a ship in a storm, the lady as a deer that cannot be caught;
- the **oxymoron** (*ossimoro*): two opposite words joined together, like "sweet enemy" or "icy fire", perfect for a love that is both pleasure and pain.

In the 16th century the Venetian Pietro Bembo made Petrarch the model of Italian poetry (*Prose della volgar lingua*, 1525), and poets from Spain to France wrote sonnets "in the manner of Petrarch". This international fashion is called **Petrarchism** (*petrarchismo*). Its images became clichés, and English poets would end up laughing at them, as Shakespeare does in Sonnet 130 (chapter 11).

9.2.2 Wyatt and Surrey

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–1542) was a courtier and diplomat of Henry VIII. In 1527 he travelled to Italy on a diplomatic mission, and he came back with a taste for Italian poetry. He translated and adapted many of Petrarch's poems and wrote the first sonnets in English. His life was dangerous: he was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1536, at the time of Anne Boleyn's fall, and again in 1541, and both times he was released. He died of a fever in 1542, while on the king's business.

Wyatt kept Petrarch's octave, *abba abba*, but he usually ended his sonnets with a rhyming pair of lines, a **couplet** (*distico*), something the Italian sonnet never does. His lines are often irregular, with eleven syllables or unexpected stresses: today many readers hear in this roughness a speaking voice.

Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (c. 1517–1547), was younger, a proud aristocrat and a soldier. He was executed for treason in January 1547, a few days before the death of Henry VIII. Surrey gave the sonnet the shape it would keep in England: three **quatrains** (groups of four lines, *quartine*) with alternate rhymes and a final couplet, *abab cdcd efef gg*. This form, the **English sonnet**,

needs only two words for each rhyme sound instead of four, which suits English, a language with fewer rhymes than Italian. It is often called the **Shakespearean sonnet**, because Shakespeare used it for almost all his sonnets. Surrey also translated Books II and IV of Virgil's *Aeneid* into unrhymed iambic pentameter (chapter 6): the first English example of the verse that chapter 10 calls blank verse.

9.2.3 Sidney

Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586) was, for his contemporaries, the perfect courtier: soldier, diplomat, scholar and poet. He died at thirty-one of a wound received in battle at Zutphen, in the Netherlands. None of his works was printed in his lifetime. *Astrophil and Stella*, written in the early 1580s, is a **sonnet sequence**, a series of sonnets that tells a love story: 108 sonnets and 11 songs in which Astrophil ("star-lover", from Greek) loves Stella ("star", in Latin), who is married to someone else. Stella is usually identified with Penelope Devereux, Lady Rich. The sequence was printed in 1591, without the permission of Sidney's family; the 1591 edition calls the lover "Astrophel", and you will find both spellings.

Sidney uses the Petrarchan octave and the English couplet, and he experiments with the line: his first sonnet, T2 in this chapter, is written in lines of twelve syllables. He also wrote *The Defence of Poesy* (written around 1580, printed in 1595), the first great work of literary criticism in English, which argues that poetry teaches better than philosophy and history because it delights while it teaches.

9.2.4 Spenser

Edmund Spenser (c. 1552–1599) was born in London to a family of modest means and studied at Cambridge. He spent most of his adult life in Ireland as an official of the English government. His *Amoretti* ("little loves", 1595) are 89 sonnets printed together with the *Epithalamion*, a wedding song: unlike most sonnet sequences, they tell a love story that ends happily, with his marriage to Elizabeth Boyle in 1594. The **Spenserian sonnet** links its quatrains with shared rhymes, *abab bcbc cdcd ee*, so that each quatrain grows out of the one before (Figura 9.2).

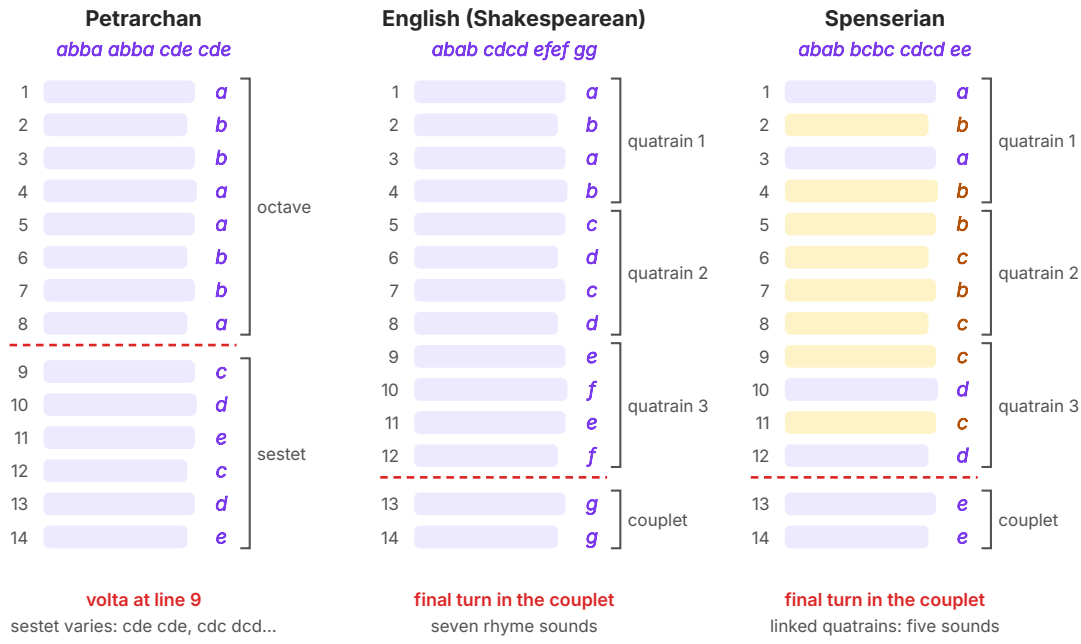


Figura 9.2 The three sonnet forms. Each bar is a line; the letters show the rhyme scheme. The Petrarchan sonnet divides 8 + 6; the English and the Spenserian sonnets divide 4 + 4 + 4 + 2.

Spenser's masterpiece is *The Faerie Queene* (Books I–III 1590, IV–VI 1596), a long unfinished poem dedicated to Elizabeth I, the "Faerie Queene" Gloriana. Each book follows a knight who represents a virtue — the Redcrosse Knight is Holiness — through adventures that are an allegory (chapter 7) of the moral life and of English history. Spenser invented a stanza for it: eight iambic pentameters and a ninth, longer line, rhyming *ababbcbcc* (Figura 9.3). This is the **Spenserian stanza**. Its last line is an **alexandrine**, a line of six iambic feet (twelve syllables); the name comes from a medieval French poem about Alexander the Great. Spenser chose an old-fashioned spelling and vocabulary, in homage to Chaucer, near whom he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

1	*A Gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,*	*a*	10 syllables	eight iambic pentameters
2	*Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,*	*b*	10 syllables	
3	*Wherein old dints of deepe wounds did remaine,*	*a*	10 syllables	
4	*The cruel markes of many'a bloudy fielde;*	*b*	10 syllables	
5	*Yet armes till that time did he never wield:*	*b*	10 syllables	
6	*His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,*	*c*	10 syllables	
7	*As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:*	*b*	10 syllables	
8	*Full jolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,*	*c*	10 syllables	
9	*As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.*	*c*	12 syllables	alexandrine (six stresses)

Rhyme scheme *a b a b b c b c c* — three rhyme sounds; the last line is longer and slows the stanza down.

Figura 9.3 The Spenserian stanza: *The Faerie Queene*, Book I, canto 1, stanza 1, in Spenser's spelling (text of the edition by G. A. Wauchope, 1903). Three rhyme sounds (*a* violet, *b* amber, *c* blue); the ninth line is an alexandrine.

IN SINTESI

Three sonnet forms. Petrarchan: octave *abba abba* + sestet (*cde cde*, *cdc dcd*..., it varies); volta at line 9. **English (Surrey, Shakespeare)**: three quatrains + couplet, *abab cdcd efef gg*; a turn at line 9 and/or in the couplet. **Spenserian**: linked quatrains + couplet, *abab bcbc cdcd ee*. **Wyatt**: Petrarchan octave + English ending (*abba abba cddc ee* in T1).

A stanza form. Spenserian stanza: nine lines, *ababbcbcc*, eight pentameters + one alexandrine (twelve syllables, six stresses).

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ «Il sonetto petrarchesco ha sempre la sirma *cde cde*.» → ✓ L'ottava è fissa (*abba abba*), la sirma varia: *cde cde* (*Rvf* 190), *cdc dcd* e altri schemi.

✗ «Wyatt ha tradotto Petrarca parola per parola.» → ✓ Wyatt **adatta**: cambia immagini, tono e finale (vedi la sezione Connections).

✗ «Il sonetto inglese è diviso in ottava e sestina.» → ✓ Il sonetto inglese è diviso in tre quartine e un distico (4 + 4 + 4 + 2).

9.3 Texts: Three Sonnets

The three texts show the sonnet at three moments: arriving from Italy (T1), turning into a sequence about writing itself (T2) and promising eternal life to the lady (T3). Read each one aloud

at least twice before you read the notes.

9.3.1 T1 · Petrarca, *Rvf* 190, and Thomas Wyatt, "Whoso list to hunt"

Context. In Petrarch's sonnet the poet has a vision: a white deer appears to him at sunrise in spring; he follows it all morning, until at midday he falls into the water and the deer disappears. Wyatt, almost two centuries later, turns the vision into a hunt. His sonnet was not printed in Tottel's Miscellany; it survives in manuscript and was first printed in the 19th century. Wyatt's spelling has been modernised by his editors.

Tabella 9.1 T1 — Petrarca, *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* 190 (text from it.wikisource) and Thomas Wyatt, "Whoso list to hunt" (text of *The Poetical Works of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, with a memoir by Sir Harris Nicolas, 1864). The two poems are set side by side; the lines do not correspond one to one.

Petrarca (Italian original)	Wyatt (English adaptation)	
Una candida cerva sopra l'erba	*Whoso list to hunt? I know where is an hind!*	
verde m'apparve, con duo corna d'oro,	*But as for me, alas! I may no more.*	
fra due riviere, all'ombra d'un alloro,	*The vain travail hath wearied me so sore;*	
levando 'l sole a la stagione acerba.	*I am of them that furthest come behind.*	
Era sua vista sí dolce superba,	*Yet may I by no means my wearied mind*	5
ch'i' lasciai per seguirla ogni lavoro:	*Draw from the deer; but as she fleeth afore*	
come l'avaro che 'n cercar tesoro	*Fainting I follow; I leave off therefore,*	
con diletto l'affanno disacerba.	*Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.*	
«Nessun mi tocchi – al bel collo d'intorno	*Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt*	
scritto avea di diamanti et di topazi –:	*As well as I, may spend his time in vain!*	10
libera farmi al mio Cesare parve».	*And graven with diamonds in letters plain,*	
Et era 'l sol già vòlto al mezzo giorno,	*There is written her fair neck round about;*	
gli occhi miei stanchi di mirar, non sazi,	*'Noli me tangere; for Cæsar's I am,*	
quand'io caddi ne l'acqua, et ella sparve.	*And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.'*	

Glosses (Wyatt). *Whoso list*: whoever wishes; *hind*: a female deer; *I may no more*: I can go on no longer; *vain travail*: useless effort; *sore*: badly; *furthest come behind*: are the last; *afore*: ahead; *Fainting*: growing weak; *I put him out of doubt*: I assure him; *graven*: engraved; *Noli me tangere*: Latin, "do not touch me"; *wild for to hold*: too wild to be held. **Petrarca.** *libera farmi al mio Cesare parve*: my Caesar wanted me to be free (no one may take me).

Analysis

Form. Petrarch's sonnet rhymes *abba abba cde cde*. Wyatt keeps the octave (*hind / behind / mind / wind* and *more / sore / afore / therefore*) but changes the end: *doubt / vain / plain / about*, then a couplet, *am / tame* — *abba abba cddc ee*. The couplet gives the poem a sharp, almost epigrammatic ending: the last word is *tame*, and the hind is anything but.

Language and images. The whole sonnet is one extended conceit: love is a hunt, the lady is a deer, the lover is a tired hunter. The paradox in line 8, "in a net I seek to hold the wind", says that his effort is impossible. Wyatt's voice is direct and conversational: it opens with a question to other men ("Whoso list to hunt?"), mixes long and short phrases, and breaks the rhythm with pauses in the middle of lines ("Fainting I follow; I leave off therefore").

Themes. Petrarch's deer is a mysterious, almost holy vision: no one may touch her because she belongs to "Caesar", perhaps God. In Wyatt the inscription becomes a warning to rivals: the hind belongs to a powerful master, and anyone who follows her is wasting his time. The famous Latin words come from the Gospel of John (20:17), where the risen Christ says them to Mary Magdalene; in Wyatt they sound almost political.

1. What does the speaker tell the other "hunters" in line 1 and in lines 9–10?
2. Find three words or phrases that show that the speaker is tired.
3. Explain the image of the net and the wind (line 8).
4. Compare the endings: what happens to Petrarch's speaker, and how does Wyatt's poem end?

9.3.2 T2 · Philip Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 1

Context. The first sonnet of the sequence is a poem about how to write a poem. Astrophil wants Stella to read his verse; he looks for ideas in other poets' books, finds nothing, and is finally told by his Muse what to do. The text is the one of the 1598 edition, in A. W. Pollard's edition (1888), in its original spelling.

Tabella 9.2 T2 — Sir Philip Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella*, sonnet 1 (text of A. W. Pollard's edition, 1888, from the folio of 1598; original spelling).

Loving in truth, and faine in verse my love to show,	
That she, deare She, might take some pleasure of my paine,—	
Pleasure might cause her reade, reading might make her know,	
Knowledge might pitie winne, and pitie grace obtaine,—	
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;	5
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertaine,	
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow	
Some fresh and fruitfull showers upon my sunne-burn'd braine.	
But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;	
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Studie's blowes;	10
And others' feete still seem'd but strangers in my way.	
Thus, great with childe to speak, and helplesse in my throwes,	
Biting my trewand pen, beating myselfe for spite;	
Foole, said my Muse to me, looke in thy heart, and write.	

Glosses. *faine*: eager; *deare She*: dear lady (Stella); *pitie*: pity; *grace*: favour, love in return; *inventions*: ideas, things to say (in rhetoric, "invention" is finding your arguments); *others' leaves*: the pages of other poets' books; *sunne-burn'd*: dried up, like a field in summer; *halting*: limping; *wanting Invention's stay*: without the support of Invention; *step-dame*: stepmother; *others' feete*: other poets' metrical feet (a pun); *great with childe*: pregnant; *throwes*: the pains of giving birth; *trewand*: truant, lazy.

Analysis

Form. The rhyme scheme is *abab abab cdcd ee*, with only two rhyme sounds in the first eight lines, like an Italian octave. The lines are alexandrines, twelve syllables with six stresses, which makes them slow and heavy, like the poet's struggle. The volta comes at line 9 with "But": after eight lines of searching, the words do not come.

Language. Lines 2–4 build a chain in which the last word of each step becomes the first of the next: *pleasure* → *pleasure, reading* → *reading, know* → *knowledge, pitie* → *pitie*. This figure (in Greek rhetoric, *climax*, "ladder") shows the plan that Astrophil hopes will lead, step by step, from his poem to Stella's love. Lines 9–13 turn writing into a birth: Invention is "Nature's child",

the poet is “great with childe” and in pain. The last line breaks the pattern with direct speech, and its advice is simple: do not copy, look inside yourself.

Themes. The irony is that Sidney says this in a very Petrarchan sonnet, full of the rhetoric he claims to reject. Sincerity, here, is itself a literary pose: the sonnet is both a love poem and a manifesto about originality.

1. What does Astrophil hope will happen, step by step, in lines 1–4?
2. Where does he look for “inventions”, and why does it not work?
3. Find the images of birth and childhood in lines 9–14.
4. Is the poem sincere or artificial? Give one reason for each answer.

9.3.3 T3 · Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti* 75

Context. The poet writes the name of the woman he loves in the sand, and the sea washes it away. The sonnet is a small drama with two voices: hers in the second quatrain, his in the third and in the couplet. The text is that of F. J. Child’s edition of Spenser’s poems, in Spenser’s spelling.

Tabella 9.3 T3 — Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti* 75 (1595) (text of *The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser*, ed. F. J. Child, vol. 5; original spelling).

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,	
But came the waves and washed it away:	
Agayne I wrote it with a second hand;	
But came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.	
“Vayne man,” sayd she, “that doest in vaine assay	5
A mortall thing so to immortalize;	
For I my selve shall lyke to this decay,	
And eke my name bee wyped out lykewize.”	
“Not so,” quod I; “let baser things devize	
To dy in dust, but you shall live by fame:	10
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,	
And in the hevens wryte your glorious name.	
Where, when as death shall all the world subdew,	
Our love shall live, and later life renew.”	

Glosses. *strand*: beach, shore; *with a second hand*: a second time; *pray*: prey; *assay*: try; *immortalize*: make immortal; *my selve*: myself; *eke*: also; *quod*: said; *baser*: lower, less noble; *devize*: plan, arrange; *eternize*: make eternal; *when as*: when; *subdew*: conquer; *later life*: the life after death.

Analysis

Form. The sonnet rhymes *abab bcbc cdcd ee*: each quatrain takes one rhyme from the quatrain before (*pray / assay / decay*, *immortalize / lykewize / devize / eternize*), and the argument moves forward in the same linked way. The first quatrain tells a story, the second gives the lady's objection, the third the poet's answer, and the couplet a final promise.

Language. Look at the repetitions: "I wrote… I wrote", "But came… But came", "in vaine" after "Vayne man". The lady plays on the words *vain* (proud) and *in vain* (uselessly). Her argument is realistic: she is mortal, so her name will be "wyped out" like the letters in the sand. His answer is the oldest promise of love poetry, which goes back to Horace and Ovid: poems last longer than bodies.

Themes. Time and death against love and art. The couplet goes further than fame on earth: when death has conquered "all the world", their love will live and "renew" in a "later life", a Christian idea.

1. What happens in the first quatrain? Why does the poet try twice?
2. What does the lady think of his attempt, and why?
3. How will the poet "eternize" her, according to line 11?
4. What is new in the couplet compared with lines 9–12?

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Scanning two opening lines. In this book stresses are shown in CAPITALS (appendix, section D).

1. Spenser, T3 line 1. Count the syllables: *One / day / I / wrote / her / name / up / on / the / strand* = 10. Read it naturally and mark the strong syllables: *one DAY i WROTE her NAME up-ON the STRAND*. The pattern is unstressed + stressed five times: a regular iambic pentameter.

2. Spenser, T3 line 2. *But came the waves and washed it away* has only nine syllables in modern English. In Spenser's time the *-ed* could still be sounded: *wash-ed*. Then: *but CAME the WAVES and WASH-ed IT a-WAY* — ten syllables, five stresses (one of them, *it*, is weak: poets often allow this).

3. Sidney, T2 line 1. *Lov / ing / in / truth / and / faine / in / verse / my / love / to / show* = 12. Stresses: *LOV-ing in TRUTH, and FAINE in VERSE my LOVE to SHOW* — six stresses, so an alexandrine. The first foot is reversed (*LOV-ing*, stressed + unstressed): an **inversion**, very common at the start of a line, which puts weight on the first word.

4. Method. Count the syllables, read aloud and listen for the stresses, then look for the variations: they are often where the meaning is.

9.4 Language: Future Forms (B2)

You already know *will*, *going to*, the present tenses for the future and the future continuous (*This time next year I'll be studying…*, English 2, Unit 5). At B2 you also need to look at the future from a **point in the future** (the future perfect), to talk about the future **as it was seen from the past** (the future in the past), and to say how certain or how near a future event is.

9.4.1 The future perfect: simple and continuous

Imagine you are a reader in 1557, holding Tottel's new book. You might say: *By the end of the century, the sonnet **will have become** the most fashionable poem in England.* The future perfect looks back from a moment in the future at something that will be finished by then (Figura 9.4).

Tabella 9.4 The future perfect: form

	Simple	Continuous
Affirmative	*will have* + past participle *By June we **will have read** four sonnets.*	*will have been* + *-ing* *By June she **will have been recording** for eight months.*
Negative	*won't have* + past participle *He **won't have finished** by Friday.*	*won't have been* + *-ing* *They **won't have been waiting** long.*
Question	*Will* + subject + *have* + past participle? ***Will** you **have learnt** it by Monday?*	*How long will* + subject + *have been* + *-ing*? *How long **will** you **have been studying** English?*

Use the **future perfect simple** for an action that will be **completed before** a future moment; that moment is often introduced by *by* (= not later than), *by the time* + present simple, *before*, or *in* + a period: *By the time you read this post, I'll have sent my commentary. In two weeks we'll have finished Part III.* Use the **future perfect continuous** for the **duration** of an activity up to a future moment, usually with *for*: *Next month Prof.ssa Rossi will have been teaching at our school for twenty years.* As with all continuous forms, state verbs stay simple: ✓ *By June I'll have known her for a year.*

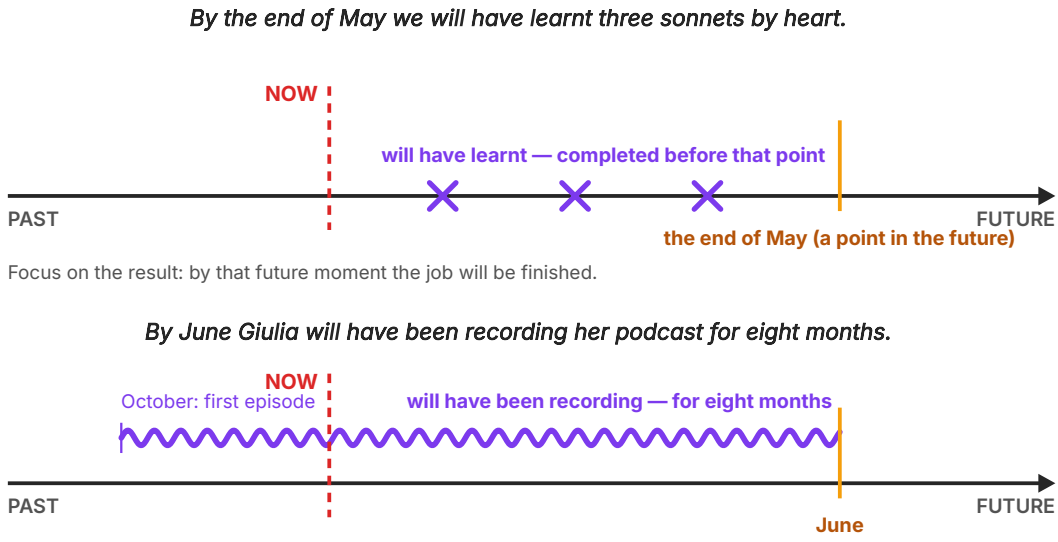


Figura 9.4 The future perfect simple (above) and continuous (below). The amber line marks a point in the future; the future perfect looks back from it. Crosses: completed actions; wave: an activity in progress.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Future perfect = futuro anteriore. *By June we will have read four sonnets* = «Entro giugno avremo letto quattro sonetti». Il *future perfect continuous* non ha un tempo corrispondente in italiano: *By June she will have been recording for eight months* = «A giugno saranno otto mesi che registra» oppure «A giugno registrerà da otto mesi».

Confronto con l'italiano. L'italiano usa il futuro anteriore anche nelle frasi temporali (*quando avrai finito, chiamami*); l'inglese no: dopo *when, as soon as, after, until, by the time* si usa il *present perfect* o il *present simple*: *Call me* ***when you've finished***. L'italiano usa il futuro anteriore anche per una supposizione sul passato (*sarà già partito*): in inglese si dice *He* ***must have left*** (capitolo 3).

9.4.2 The future in the past

When we tell a story in the past, we often need to say what was still in the future **at that time**. English uses the past forms of the future structures:

Tabella 9.5 The future in the past

Future seen from now	Future seen from the past	Example
will	*would*	*In 1527 Wyatt did not know that his poems* ***would be printed*** *thirty years later.*
be going to	*was / were going to*	*Spenser* ***was going to write*** *twelve books, but he finished only six.*
be about to	*was / were about to*	*When Surrey was executed, Henry VIII* ***was about to die****: he died nine days later.*
present continuous (plan)	past continuous	*Giulia* ***was leaving*** *for Bristol the next morning, so she packed that night.*
will be doing	*would be doing*	*She knew that this time the next day she* ***would be flying*** *to Bristol.*

Was / were going to is often used for a plan that did **not** happen: *I was going to start with Shakespeare, but I changed my mind.* The same *would* appears in reported speech (English 2, Unit 7).

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Future in the past = condizionale passato. Dove l'inglese usa *would* + forma base, l'italiano usa il condizionale passato: *He said he* ***would come*** = «Disse che **sarebbe venuto**». *I knew she* ***would like*** *the poem* = «Sapevo che la poesia le **sarebbe piaciuta**».

Confronto con l'italiano. L'italiano parlato usa spesso l'imperfetto: «Disse che veniva», «Stavo per uscire» (= *I was about to go out*), «Dovevo partire, ma…» (= *I was going to leave, but…*). Il condizionale passato italiano (*sarebbe venuto*) si rende con *would* + forma base, non con *would have* + participio: *would have come* indica un'ipotesi non realizzata (*sarebbe venuto, se…*).

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *He said he would have come.* (per dire «che sarebbe venuto») → ✓ *He said he* ***would come****.*

✗ *By June I will learn the whole sonnet.* → ✓ *By June I* ***will have learnt*** *the whole sonnet.* · ✗ *I'll have finished until Friday.* → ✓ *…****by*** *Friday.* (*until* = fino a, per un'azione che continua)

✗ *When I will have finished, I'll call you.* → ✓ *When I* ***have finished****, I'll call you.*

9.4.3 How near, how likely: *be about to*, *be bound to* and others

A group of expressions with *be* tells us more about a future event: how soon it will happen, how sure we are, whether it is on a timetable.

Tabella 9.6 Other ways to talk about the future

Expression	Meaning	Example
be about to + base form	very soon	*Quick, the podcast* ***is about to start****.*
be on the point of + *-ing*	very soon (more formal)	*In 1585 Sidney* ***was on the point of sailing*** *with Drake when the queen called him back.*
be bound to + base form	certain (the speaker's opinion)	*Read it aloud three times and you'****re bound to*** *remember it.*
be (un)likely to + base form	probable / improbable	*Shakespeare's sonnets* ***are likely to be*** *in the test. It's* ***unlikely to*** *rain.*
be due to + base form	expected, on a timetable	*The next episode* ***is due to*** *come out on Friday.*

All of them work in the past too: *was about to, was bound to, was due to*. Note the patterns: *about to* and *bound to* take the base form; *on the point of* takes *-ing*. *Be likely to* can also be *It is likely that…*: *It's likely that the test will be on Friday.* Be careful with *due to*: + base form it means "expected", but + noun it means "because of": *The match was cancelled* ***due to*** *rain.*

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

be about to **= stare per**: *I'm about to leave* = «Sto per partire». ***be bound to*** **= essere destinato a, di sicuro**: *It's bound to rain* = «Pioverà di sicuro». ***be likely to*** **= è probabile che**: attenzione alla costruzione, in inglese il soggetto è la persona o la cosa: *She's likely to win* = «È probabile che vinca». ***be due to*** **= è previsto che**: *The train is due to arrive at six* = «Il treno dovrebbe arrivare alle sei».

Confronto con l'italiano. *Stare per* si traduce sempre con *be about to* + forma base: ✗ *I'm about to leaving*; ✗ *I'm on the point to leave* → ✓ *on the point of leaving*.

9.5 Skills: Talking and Writing about Poems

9.5.1 Vocabulary: love and poetry

To talk about a love poem you need two sets of words: words for the poem itself, and words for the feelings it describes.

Tabella 9.7 Love and poetry: key words

Word	Meaning	Example
verse (n., uncountable)	poetry; also a single line	*Sidney wrote both verse and prose.*
stanza	a group of lines that forms a unit in a poem	*The Spenserian stanza has nine lines.*
rhyme (n. and v.)	the same sound at the end of two words	*"Hind" rhymes with "mind".*
metaphor	a comparison without *like* or *as*	*Love is a hunt.*
image	a picture created by words	*the image of the name in the sand*
praise (v. and n.)	to say that someone is wonderful	*Petrarch praises Laura's eyes.*
longing	a strong wish for someone or something you cannot have	*a poem full of longing*
devotion	great love and loyalty	*his devotion to Stella*
unrequited	(of love) not returned by the other person	*Astrophil's love is unrequited.*

Useful collocations: *write / recite / learn a poem by heart*; *a love poem*, *a poem about time*; *fall in love with*; *declare your love*; *a rhyming couplet*; *the opening / closing lines*.

Word formation: negative prefixes and *-less*

In English 2 you used *un-*, *dis-*, *ir-* (Unit 4) and the suffix *-less* (*careless, useless*, Unit 2). Poets love these words, because they say "not", "never" and "without" in one word: *immortal* (Spenser's lady is not), *endless* love, *timeless* verse. The prefix *in-* changes before some letters:

Tabella 9.8 Negative prefixes and the suffix *-less*

Form	Rule	Examples
im-	before *m* and *p*	*immortal, immeasurable, impossible, imperfect, impatient*
il-	before *l*	*illegible, illogical, illegal*
ir-	before *r*	*irresistible, irregular, irrational*
in-	most other letters	*invisible, incomplete, inconstant, insincere*
noun + *-less*	without	*timeless, endless, restless, heartless, helpless, speechless, nameless*

The spelling doubles the consonant: *im* + *mortal* = *immortal*, *ir* + *regular* = *irregular*. Many *-less* adjectives make nouns with *-ness* and adverbs with *-ly*: *helpless* → *helplessness, helplessly*. Sidney's

"helplesse in my throwes" (T2, line 12) is our *helpless*.

9.5.2 Reading: Fourteen Lines

Before you read. Do you ever listen to podcasts? What makes you stop listening to one after a few minutes?

For the Literature Trail, Giulia has started a podcast about poetry called *Fourteen Lines*. In each episode she reads a sonnet and talks about it with a guest. This is the script of the third episode, which she published on the Literature Trail blog.

Tabella 9.9 Reading — *Fourteen Lines*, episode 3: "The Deer and the Hunter" (podcast script)

Giulia	Hi everyone, and welcome back to *Fourteen Lines*, the poetry podcast of the Literature Trail. I'm Giulia, and today my guest is Sam, from Bristol, who is studying English Literature at A level. Hi, Sam!
Sam	Hi, Giulia. Thanks for having me. I was going to prepare some notes, but then I thought it would be more fun to improvise.
Giulia	Brave! So, today we are about to do something a bit unusual: two poems, two languages. First, Petrarch's «Una candida cerva». I'm going to read it in Italian, and our listeners in Bristol are bound to understand at least one word: *cerva*.
Sam	Er… "cervical"?
Giulia	No! It means a female deer. A *hind*, in older English. In Petrarch the deer is a vision: white, with golden horns, a collar of diamonds. She appears at dawn and disappears at midday.
Sam	And when Wyatt rewrote it, he turned the vision into a hunt. That's what I love. Petrarch's speaker falls into the water like a dreamer. Wyatt's speaker sounds like a tired man in a pub: "Whoso list to hunt? I know where is an hind!" — basically, "Anyone want to go hunting? I know where there's a deer. Not me, though. I give up."
Giulia	But he doesn't give up, does he? He says "I leave off", and then he keeps following her.
Sam	Exactly. That's the joke, and the pain. And then the ending: "Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am." Mrs Hill says that for many readers Caesar is Henry VIII and the hind is Anne Boleyn. But she also says we're not allowed to write that as a fact in an exam, because nobody can prove it.
Giulia	Our teacher, Prof.ssa Rossi, says the same. It's a hypothesis. What we can say is that Wyatt makes the poem more dangerous: the deer belongs to someone powerful.
Sam	And the form changes too. Petrarch has two tercets at the end; Wyatt ends with a couplet. Two lines, one rhyme, *am* and *tame*. It closes like a door.
Giulia	Our listeners are probably wondering why a Turin student is doing a podcast about English sonnets. The truth is that I was going to do a podcast about Italian poetry. Then I realised that every English sonnet I opened had an Italian ancestor.
Sam	And in English the sonnet kept changing. By the time Shakespeare's were printed, in 1609, the English had moved the main turn of the poem to the end: the couplet.

Giulia	Which brings us to next week. The next episode is due to come out on Friday, and it will be about Spenser's sonnet on the name in the sand. By the end of the year we'll have recorded ten episodes, and I'll have been doing this podcast for eight months. If I survive.
Sam	You're bound to survive. You have the best guests.
Giulia	Modest as always. Thanks, Sam! And thank you all for listening. Remember: fourteen lines can last four hundred years.

Language in context. Find in the script: two examples of *was going to* for a plan that changed; one *be about to*; one *be bound to*; one *be due to*; one future perfect simple and one future perfect continuous. Then answer the questions in the exercises.

9.5.3 Speaking: reading poetry aloud

A poem is written to be heard. Reading it well is not acting: it is making the sense and the music clear at the same time.

- **Stress the content words** — nouns, main verbs, adjectives, adverbs — and let the small words (*the, a, of, to, and*) be light: *one DAY i WROTE her NAME up-ON the STRAND*. Do not hammer the rhythm.
- **Pause at the punctuation, not at the end of every line.** When a sentence continues into the next line without punctuation, this is called **enjambment** (*enjambement, inarcatura*): keep your voice going, with at most a tiny break. In T1, "Yet may I by no means my wearied mind / Draw from the deer" is one movement.
- **Slow down a little in the couplet**: it is the end of the argument.
- **Change your voice for direct speech**: the lady and the poet in T3, the Muse in T2.
- **Pronounce old spellings as modern words** (*agayne* = again), but sound the *-ed* when the metre needs it (*wash-ed*).

Tabella 9.10 Useful language — reading aloud and giving feedback

Function	Phrases
Preparing	*Where are the stresses in this line? · Should I pause here or carry on? · How do you pronounce…?*
Praising	*Your rhythm was really natural. · I liked the way you slowed down in the couplet.*
Suggesting	*You could try pausing after… · Maybe stress "name" a bit more. · It might sound better if you didn't stop at the end of line 5.*
Checking	*Did I sound too mechanical? · Was I too fast? · Could you hear the change of voice?*

1. **Pair work.** Mark the stresses and the pauses on T3 (CAPITALS for stresses, a slash / for pauses). Read it aloud to your partner, who gives you feedback with the phrases in Tabella 9.10.

Swap roles.

2. **Group work: a choral reading.** In groups of three, read T1 in English: one student reads the octave, one the third quatrain, and all three the couplet together. Then one student reads Petrarch's original in Italian. Discuss: which language sounds slower? Where does each poem change direction?

LEARNING TO LEARN

Memorising a poem. Learning fourteen lines by heart is easier than it looks if you use the poem's own structure. (1) **Chunk it**: learn one quatrain at a time, and say the previous chunks every time you add a new one. (2) **Use the rhyme as a cue**: before each line, think of the word it must rhyme with (*strand… hand*; *away… pray*). (3) **Say it aloud and write it** from memory, then check. (4) **Space the practice**: five minutes today, tomorrow and in three days work better than one hour once.

Transfer it. The same method works for a sonnet by Petrarch or Foscolo, a *terzina* of Dante or a passage of Virgil in Latin: in Italian the rhymes help you exactly as they do in English, and in Latin the metre does the same job.

9.5.4 Writing: a commentary on a poem

A **poem commentary** (*commento*, *analisi del testo*) explains what a poem says and how it says it: its context, form, language and images, and theme. In this book you have already written a literary paragraph (PEE, chapter 6); a commentary puts several of those paragraphs together in a fixed order. This is Sam's commentary on T3, written for his A-level English class.

Tabella 9.11 Model text — a commentary on a poem

Spenser, *Amoretti* 75: winning against the tide
Amoretti 75 belongs to the sonnet sequence that Edmund Spenser published in 1595 to celebrate his courtship of Elizabeth Boyle. In fourteen lines it stages a small argument between the poet and his lady about whether poetry can defeat death.
The sonnet follows Spenser's own form, *abab bcbc cdcd ee*, and its linked rhymes mirror the argument, which moves forward step by step. The first quatrain tells a story, the second gives the lady's reply, the third the poet's answer, and the couplet a final promise.
The central image is the name written "upon the strand". The repetition of "I wrote" and "But came" shows the poet's stubborn effort, and the personified tide "made my paynes his pray", as if time were a hunter. The lady answers with a pun: he is a "Vayne man" who works "in vaine", since she will "decay" like the letters in the sand.
The volta comes with "Not so" at line 9. The poet claims that his "verse" will "eternize" her virtues, and the couplet goes even further: when death has conquered "all the world", their love will "renew" in a "later life".
The poem therefore moves from defeat to triumph: art, and in the end faith, win where the sea seemed to win. (207 words)

Structure. Title → **introduction**: author, work, date, what the poem is about in one sentence → **form**: type of poem, rhyme scheme, structure and how it fits the meaning → **language and imagery**: the key images and devices, each with a short quotation → **volta and theme**: how the argument turns and what it says → **conclusion**: one sentence that sums up the effect.

Language. Use the **present simple** to describe what the poem does (*the lady answers, the couplet goes further*). Embed short quotations in your own sentences, with quotation marks: *the tide "made my paynes his pray"*. Use verbs such as *shows, suggests, mirrors, emphasises*.

Checklist.

- Does the introduction give author, title, date and the subject in one sentence?
- Have you named the form and explained why it matters, not just listed rhymes?
- Does every point have a short quotation, embedded in your sentence?
- Have you explained the volta and the theme?
- Is the commentary between 180 and 250 words, in the present simple, without "I think" in every sentence?

Task. Write a commentary (180–250 words) on Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* 1 (T2) or on Wyatt's "Whoso list to hunt" (T1), for the Literature Trail blog.

9.6 Connections: Petrarch Goes to England

Few Italian books have travelled as far as the *Canzoniere*: printed again and again in Venice, it taught poets in Spain, France, England and beyond how to write about love. The English sonnet is one branch of that European family.

9.6.1 What Wyatt changed

Comparing T1 with its source shows that a Renaissance "translation" was a new poem. Tabella 9.12 lists the main differences.

Tabella 9.12 Petrarch's deer and Wyatt's hind

	Petrarca, *Rvf* 190	Wyatt, "Whoso list to hunt"
Situation	a vision, at sunrise in spring	a hunt that has lasted too long
The speaker	alone, fascinated, «come l'avaro» seeking treasure	speaks to other men; tired, ironic
The inscription	«Nessun mi tocchi»: she has been made free by her "Caesar"	"*Noli me tangere*, for Cæsar's I am": she belongs to a master
The ending	the poet falls into the water; the deer vanishes	a couplet: the hind is "wild for to hold, though I seem tame"
Rhyme scheme	*abba abba cde cde*	*abba abba cddc ee*

Petrarch's sonnet ends in mystery; Wyatt's ends in a warning. The deer of the *Canzoniere* is untouchable because she is pure; Wyatt's hind is untouchable because she is owned. That is why readers have looked for real people behind the poem.

APPROFONDIMENTO

Was the hind Anne Boleyn? Since the 19th century many readers have identified Wyatt's "Caesar" with Henry VIII and the hind with Anne Boleyn, whom the king began to court in the late 1520s and married in 1533. Wyatt knew Anne, and a later family account, written by his grandson, says that Wyatt had been attracted to her. In 1536, when Anne was arrested and executed, Wyatt too was sent to the Tower, and then released.

All this makes the reading attractive, but it remains a **hypothesis**: the poem names no one, the image of the collar comes from Petrarch, and we do not know when Wyatt wrote it. In an essay, write "the hind has often been identified with Anne Boleyn", never "the hind is Anne Boleyn".

9.6.2 Two poets, one paradox

Petrarch's most famous catalogue of contradictions, *Rvf* 134, became one of Wyatt's best-known poems. Compare the openings (Tabella 9.13):

Tabella 9.13 Petrarca, *Rvf* 134, ll. 1–2 (text from it.wikisource) and Wyatt's version (text of the 1864 edition).

Petrarca	Wyatt
Pace non trovo, et non ò da far guerra; *e temo, et spero; et ardo, et son un ghiaccio;*	*I find no peace, and all my war is done;* *I fear and hope, I burn, and freeze like ice;*

("I find no peace, and I have no means to make war; and I fear and hope, and I burn, and I am ice" — translation by the editors.) Here Wyatt follows Petrarch closely, line by line, and keeps the contradictions, set side by side as antitheses (chapter 8): *fear and hope*, *burn and freeze*. But even here there is a small change: Petrarch's speaker *is* ice; Wyatt's freezes *like* ice — a metaphor has become a simile. The love that is peace and war at once, fire and ice, will reach Shakespeare's Romeo, who packs it into true oxymora: love is "cold fire" and "bright smoke" (chapter 12).

COLLEGAMENTI

Maths: counting a sonnet. A sonnet is a small problem in arithmetic. 14 lines can be divided as **8 + 6** (Petrarchan) or **4 + 4 + 4 + 2** (English and Spenserian). Count how many lines share each rhyme sound: in the Petrarchan sonnet $a = 4$, $b = 4$, $c = d = e = 2$, so $4 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 14$ lines with only 5 sounds; in the English sonnet 7 sounds × 2 lines = 14; in the Spenserian, a 2 + b 4 + c 4 + d 2 + e 2 = 14 with 5 sounds. Fewer sounds means more rhyming words: a Petrarchan octave needs four words on each rhyme, easy in Italian, where most words end in a vowel, much harder in English.

Counting syllables. The Italian *endecasillabo* has 11 syllables, with its last stress on the 10th (*U-na-can-di-da-cer-va-so-pra-l'ER-ba*); the English iambic pentameter has 10, with the last stress on the 10th (*one DAY i WROTE her NAME up-ON the STRAND*). Most Italian lines end with an unstressed syllable, most English lines with a stressed one: that is why the two metres correspond.

1. Find another Italian poem written as a sonnet (for example by Dante, Foscolo or a 20th-century poet). Which rhyme scheme does it use?
2. Choose an image from Petrarch (the deer, the ship, fire and ice) and look for it in a song or a film today. Has it become a cliché?

SINTESI

- At the Tudor court poetry was a social skill of the courtier; poems circulated in manuscript among friends, and many were printed only after their authors' deaths.
- *Tottel's Miscellany* (*Songes and Sonettes*, 1557) printed the poems of Wyatt and Surrey; poets who were not rich depended on patrons.
- The sonnet was born in 13th-century Sicily; Petrarch (1304–1374) made it the great love poem of Europe in the *Canzoniere* (366 poems, 317 sonnets).
- The Petrarchan sonnet: octave *abba abba* + sestet (it varies), with a volta at line 9; Petrarchism means the idealised lady, the suffering lover, conceits and oxymora.
- Wyatt (1503–1542) wrote the first English sonnets, adapting Petrarch and ending with a couplet; Surrey (c. 1517–1547) created the English sonnet, *abab cdcd efef gg*, and wrote the first unrhymed pentameters.
- Sidney (1554–1586) wrote the sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella* (printed 1591) and *The Defence of Poesy*; Spenser (c. 1552–1599) wrote the *Amoretti* (1595, *abab bcbc cdcd ee*) and *The Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596) in Spenserian stanzas.
- T1: Wyatt turns Petrarch's vision of a white deer into a tired hunter's warning: the hind belongs to "Caesar" (the Anne Boleyn reading is a hypothesis).
- T2: Sidney's first sonnet, in alexandrines, is about writing: after searching in other poets' books, the Muse says "looke in thy heart, and write".
- T3: in Spenser's sonnet the sea washes the lady's name away, but the poet promises that his verse will make her immortal.
- The future perfect simple (*will have done*) and continuous (*will have been doing*) look back from a point in the future; the future in the past uses *would, was going to, was about to*.
- *be about to / be on the point of* + *-ing* (very soon), *be bound to* (certain), *be (un)likely to* (probable), *be due to* (on a timetable).
- To read a poem aloud, stress content words and pause at punctuation, not at line ends (enjambment); a poem commentary moves from context to form, language, volta and theme.

ESERCIZI

History and Literature

1. ● When was *Tottel's Miscellany* published?

   A. 1527

   B. 1557

   C. 1591

   D. 1609

2. ● Who wrote the first sonnets in English?
   - **A.** Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey
   - **B.** Philip Sidney
   - **C.** Edmund Spenser
   - **D.** Thomas Wyatt

3. ● Which is the rhyme scheme of the Spenserian sonnet?
   - **A.** *abab cdcd efef gg*
   - **B.** *abba abba cdc dcd*
   - **C.** *abab bcbc cdcd ee*
   - **D.** *ababbcbcc*

4. ● True or false? Correct the false statements. a Wyatt translated Petrarch word for word. b Surrey used the rhyme scheme *abab cdcd efef gg*. c *Astrophil and Stella* was printed during Sidney's lifetime. d Spenser's *Amoretti* were printed together with a poem celebrating his wedding. e *The Faerie Queene* is dedicated to Elizabeth I. f Petrarch wrote the *Canzoniere* in Latin.

5. ● Match the authors (1–6), the works (a–f) and the dates (i–vi). 1 Petrarch · 2 Richard Tottel · 3 Sidney · 4 Spenser · 5 Shakespeare · 6 Surrey — a *Amoretti* · b *Sonnets* · c *Songes and Sonettes* · d *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* · e *Astrophil and Stella* · f *Aeneid* II and IV in unrhymed pentameters — i printed 1557 · ii printed 1591 · iii 1595 · iv 1609 · v 14th century · vi written before 1547

6. ●● Explain these terms in your own words, with an example from the chapter: a octave · b volta · c conceit · d oxymoron · e sonnet sequence · f alexandrine.

7. ●● Answer in 40–60 words: why did many courtier-poets of Henry VIII's time not print their poems?

Text Analysis

8. ● In T1, what does "Whoso list to hunt" mean?
   - **A.** Whoever wants to go hunting
   - **B.** Whoever has lost the hunt
   - **C.** Who has a list of the hunters
   - **D.** Everyone must go hunting

9. ●● T1 (Wyatt). Answer the questions. a Why does the speaker say "I may no more" (line 2)? b How does he describe his position among the hunters in line 4? c Which line shows that his effort is impossible? d Where is the inscription, what language is it in, and what does it warn?

10. ●● Write the rhyme schemes of T2 and T3. Where is the volta in each sonnet, and which word announces it?

11. ●●● T2. Scan line 13, "Biting my trewand pen, beating myselfe for spite": count the syllables, mark the stresses in CAPITALS and say what kind of line it is. Where is the rhythm inverted?

12. ●● T3. Paraphrase lines 5–8 in modern English.

13. ●● Find an example of each device in T1–T3 and give the line: a a conceit · b a pun · c an enjambment · d a paradox · e a personification · f direct speech.

14. ●●● Write a PEE paragraph (80–100 words) comparing the endings of Petrarch's *Rvf* 190 and Wyatt's "Whoso list to hunt".

Language

15. ● By the time you arrive, the podcast _____ .
    - **A.** will finish
    - **B.** will have finished
    - **C.** finishes
    - **D.** would finish

16. ● Last month Giulia told us that the episode _____ out the following Friday.
    - **A.** will come
    - **B.** would have come
    - **C.** would come
    - **D.** has come

17. ● Complete with the future perfect simple or continuous of the verbs in brackets. a By the end of term we _____ (read) all three sonnets. b Next June my parents _____ (be) married for twenty years. c By nine o'clock Giulia _____ (record) for three hours, so she'll be tired. d _____ you _____ (finish) your commentary by Friday? e I'm afraid I _____ (not / learn) the poem by tomorrow: it's too long. f In September Sam _____ (study) English Literature for a whole year.

18. ●● Rewrite the sentences with the future in the past, starting with the words given. a "I'll publish the episode on Friday," said Giulia. → Giulia said… b In 1557 nobody knew it: the sonnet will become a fashion. → In 1557 nobody knew that… c We planned to visit Stratford, but it rained. (going) → We… d The concert was going to start in a minute when the lights went out. (about) → The concert… e "This time next week I'll be travelling to London," Sam thought. → Sam thought that… f Spenser planned to write twelve books. (going) → Spenser…

19. ●● Complete with *about to, on the point of, bound to, (un)likely to, due to* in the correct form. a Hurry up! The train _____ leave. b Don't worry: with all that practice you _____ do well. c The new episode _____ come out on Friday at six. d I was _____ giving up when I finally understood the poem. e It's cloudy, but it _____ rain before the evening. f Everyone at court wanted to read Sidney's sonnets: they were _____ be printed one day.

20. ●● Error correction. Find and correct the mistake in each sentence. a By next year I will finish my A levels. b She said she will come to the reading the next day, but she didn't. c I'm about to leaving. d When you will have read the poem, write a commentary. e He is bound to passing the test. f By June I'll have been knowing her for a year.

21. ●● Imagine you are a reader in 1557, holding Tottel's book. Use the prompts to make predictions with the future perfect. a by 1560 / Elizabeth / become queen · b by 1585 / Sidney / write *Astrophil and Stella* · c by 1591 / Spenser / publish the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* · d by 1590 / the English / defeat the Armada · e by 1610 / Shakespeare's sonnets / be printed.

22. ●● Translate into English. a Entro la fine dell'anno avremo letto tre sonetti di Spenser. b Sapevo che la poesia ti sarebbe piaciuta. c Stavo per spegnere il computer quando Sam mi ha chiamato.

23. ● Choose the correct option. a The bus is *due to / about to* leave at 7.15 tomorrow. b Look at those clouds: it's *bound to / due to* rain. c I *was going to / would* call you, but my phone died. d By Friday they *will have / will be* finished the project. e It's *likely that / likely to* she will win. f We were on the point *of leaving / to leave*.

Vocabulary

24. ● Complete with the words in the box: *devotion · image · longing · praise · rhyme · stanza · unrequited · verse*. a Stella does not love Astrophil: his love is _____ . b The first _____ of *The Faerie Queene* describes a knight riding across a plain. c Petrarch's poems _____ Laura's eyes and hair. d Shakespeare wrote both prose and _____ . e "Mind" and "wind" _____ in Wyatt's poem. f The name in the sand is a powerful _____ of time. g Spenser's sonnets show his _____ to Elizabeth Boyle. h Wyatt's poem expresses a _____ for something he can never have.

25. ● Word formation. Make negative adjectives with *in- / im- / il- / ir-*: a mortal · b legible · c resistible · d constant · e perfect. Then make adjectives with *-less*: f time · g heart · h name.

26. ● Complete the collocations with *break · declare · fall · learn · recite · write*. a _____ a poem by heart · b _____ a poem in front of the class · c _____ in love with someone · d _____ your love · e _____ a sonnet · f _____ a promise

Writing and Speaking

27. ●● Write a commentary (180–250 words) on *Astrophil and Stella* 1 (T2) or on "Whoso list to hunt" (T1). Follow the structure and the checklist in the Writing section.

28. ●● Speaking. Prepare a reading of the first quatrain of T2: mark the stresses (CAPITALS) and the pauses (/). Read it to your partner and explain two choices you made.

Towards B2

29. ●● Multiple-choice cloze. Choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for each gap.
When Thomas Wyatt (1) _____ to Italy in 1527, he could not know that his poems (2) _____ read by thousands of people. He (3) _____ Petrarch's sonnets into English, but he did not translate them word for word. Thirty years later Tottel's book made his poems (4) _____ . By the end of the century almost every educated young man (5) _____ tried to write a sonnet, and readers began to (6) _____ the sonnet as the typical English love poem.
1 A travelled B has travelled C had travelled D would travel · 2 A will be B would be C would have D are · 3 A adopted B advised C adapted D admitted · 4 A fame B famous C famously D notoriety · 5 A has B would C had D was · 6 A see B look C watch D notice

30. ●●● Key-word transformation. Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word in capitals (2–5 words). a I'll finish the commentary before Friday at the latest. HAVE — I _____ the commentary by Friday. b The episode will start in a moment. ABOUT — The episode _____ start. c I'm certain that Giulia will win the poetry prize. BOUND — Giulia _____ the poetry prize. d The plane should land at 10.30, according to the timetable. DUE — The plane _____ at 10.30. e I intended to call you, but I forgot. GOING — I _____ you, but I forgot. f Probably nobody will notice the mistake. UNLIKELY — The mistake _____ noticed.

31. ●● Word formation cloze. Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits the gap. Spenser promised his lady that his verse would make her (1) _____ (MORTAL). The (2) _____ (END) movement of the sea wipes her name away: the tide seems (3) _____ (RESIST). After the second wave the letters in the sand are (4) _____ (LEGIBLE). But the poet believes that poetry is (5) _____ (TIME), and he does not feel (6) _____ (HELP).

PER APPROFONDIRE

- [NOR] S. Greenblatt (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. B: the pages on Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney and Spenser, with their sonnets.
- [SAN] A. Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*: the chapter on Renaissance and Reformation literature, on the courtier-poets.
- [ABR] M. H. Abrams, G. G. Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: the entries "sonnet", "conceit", "Petrarchan conceit" and "stanza".
- [SWA] M. Swan, *Practical English Usage*: the entries on the future perfect and on the future in the past.

Glossario del capitolo

Alexandrine
alessandrino — a line of twelve syllables and six stresses (iambic hexameter).

Conceit
concetto — an elaborate, surprising comparison developed through several lines (love as a hunt).

Couplet
distico — two consecutive lines that rhyme, as at the end of an English sonnet.

Courtier
cortigiano — a noble or gentleman who attends the monarch at court; the ideal courtier was also a poet.

Enjambment
enjambement, inarcatura — a sentence that continues from one line into the next without a pause.

Future in the past
futuro nel passato (condizionale passato) — would, was going to, was about to: the future seen from a past moment.

Future perfect
futuro anteriore — will have done (completed before a future moment); continuous *will have been doing* (duration up to it).

Miscellany
antologia, miscellanea — a printed collection of poems by different authors (*Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557).

Octave
ottava, fronte — the first eight lines of a Petrarchan sonnet, rhyming *abba abba*.

Oxymoron
ossimoro — two opposite words joined together: *icy fire, sweet enemy*.

Patronage
mecenatismo, protezione — the support (money, a post, a home) that a powerful patron gives to a writer or artist.

Petrarchism
petrarchismo — the imitation of Petrarch's style and images in European poetry of the 15th and 16th centuries.

Poem commentary
analisi del testo poetico — a short essay on a poem: context, form, language and imagery, volta and theme.

Quatrain
quartina — a group of four lines; the English sonnet has three.

Royal court
corte — the monarch and the people who live and work around him or her, and the place where they meet.

Sestet
sestina, sirma — the last six lines of a Petrarchan sonnet; its rhyme scheme varies.

Sonnet sequence
canzoniere, ciclo di sonetti — a series of sonnets that tells a story (*Astrophil and Stella*, *Amoretti*).

Spenserian stanza
stanza spenseriana — nine lines rhyming *ababbcbcc*: eight iambic pentameters and an alexandrine.

Unrequited
non corrisposto — (of love) not returned by the person you love.

Volta
volta — the turn in thought or feeling in a sonnet, usually at line 9 or in the final couplet.

Soluzioni

1. B 1557.

2. D Thomas Wyatt.

3. C *abab bcbc cdcd ee*. A is the English sonnet, B a Petrarchan sonnet, D the Spenserian stanza.

4. a F — he adapted Petrarch, changing images, tone and ending (T1). b T. c F — it was printed in 1591, five years after his death. d T (the *Epithalamion*). e T. f F — the poems are in Italian, the vernacular; only the title Petrarch gave the collection, *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, is Latin.

5. 1 d v · 2 c i · 3 e ii · 4 a iii · 5 b iv · 6 f vi.

6. Model answers: a the first eight lines of a Petrarchan sonnet, rhyming *abba abba* (T1, both poems). b the turn in thought in a sonnet, usually at line 9 ("But" in T2, "Not so" in T3). c an elaborate, surprising comparison developed for several lines (love as a hunt in T1). d two opposite words joined together ("icy fire", "sweet enemy"; Romeo's "cold fire", chapter 12). e a series of sonnets that tells a story (*Astrophil and Stella*, *Amoretti*). f a line of twelve syllables and six stresses (T2; the last line of the Spenserian stanza).

7. Model answer: For a gentleman, selling poems in a shop seemed unsuitable: print was for professional writers. Poems were a social game, copied by hand and shared among friends at court. Manuscript was also safer, because love poems could hide allusions to real people, and at Henry VIII's court a careless line could be dangerous. (53 words)

8. A Whoever wants to go hunting.

9. a He is exhausted by his useless effort ("the vain travail hath wearied me so sore"). b He is one of the last, those who "furthest come behind". c Line 8: "Since in a net I seek to hold the wind". d Around the hind's neck, engraved with diamonds; it begins in Latin (*Noli me tangere*, "do not touch me") and goes on in English; it warns that she belongs to Caesar and is wild, even if she seems tame.

10. T2: *abab abab cdcd ee*; volta at line 9, "But" (the words do not come). T3: *abab bcbc cdcd ee*; volta at line 9, "Not so" (the poet answers the lady).

11. 12 syllables: *BI-ting my TRE-wand PEN, BEA-ting my-SELFE for SPITE* — six stresses, an alexandrine. The first foot (*BI-ting*) and the fourth (*BEA-ting*, after the pause) are inverted (stressed + unstressed); the two parallel *-ing* verbs stand out.

12. Model answer: "Proud man," she said, "you are trying in vain to make a mortal thing immortal: I myself will decay like this name in the sand, and my name will be wiped out too."

13. a T1: the whole poem, love as a hunt. b T3 line 5: "Vayne man… in vaine" (proud / uselessly). c T1 lines 5–6 ("my wearied mind / Draw from the deer"), or T2 lines 7–8. d T1 line 8: holding the wind in a net. e T3 line 4: the tide "made my paynes his pray"; or T2 line 10, Invention as "Nature's child". f T2 line 14 (the Muse); T3 lines 5–8 and 9–14.

14. Model answer: **Point**: the two poems end in very different moods. **Evidence**: Petrarch's speaker, «stanchi di mirar, non sazi», falls into the water «et ella sparve», while Wyatt closes with a couplet in which the hind says she is "wild for to hold, though I seem tame". **Explanation**: Petrarch ends in mystery, as if a dream were over, and the loss belongs to the speaker alone. Wyatt ends with a warning to all hunters: the closed couplet and the final word, "tame", sound ironic and almost bitter, because the hind belongs to someone more powerful. (90 words)

15. B will have finished.

16. C would come (future in the past).

17. a will have read · b will have been (state verb: simple) · c will have been recording · d Will … have

finished · e won't have learnt (learned) · f will have been studying.

18. a Giulia said (that) she would publish the episode on Friday. b ...the sonnet would become a fashion. c We were going to visit Stratford, but it rained. d The concert was about to start when the lights went out. e Sam thought that he would be travelling to London at that time the following week. f Spenser was going to write twelve books.

19. a is about to (also: is due to) · b are bound to (also: are likely to) · c is due to · d on the point of · e isn't likely to / is unlikely to · f bound to.

20. a will have finished · b would come (she said she would come) · c about to leave · d When you have read · e bound to pass · f I'll have known (state verb).

21. a By 1560 Elizabeth will have become queen. b By 1585 Sidney will have written *Astrophil and Stella*. c By 1591 Spenser will have published the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*. d By 1590 the English will have defeated the Armada. e By 1610 Shakespeare's sonnets will have been printed. (All these predictions came true: 1558, early 1580s, 1590, 1588, 1609.)

22. a By the end of the year we will have read three sonnets by Spenser (three of Spenser's sonnets). b I knew (that) you would like the poem. c I was about to switch off (turn off) the computer when Sam called me.

23. a due to · b bound to · c was going to · d will have · e likely that · f of leaving.

24. a unrequited · b stanza · c praise · d verse · e rhyme · f image · g devotion · h longing.

25. a immortal · b illegible · c irresistible · d inconstant · e imperfect · f timeless · g heartless · h nameless.

26. a learn · b recite · c fall · d declare · e write · f break.

27. Traccia (T2): introduction — the first sonnet of Sidney's sequence (written in the early 1580s, printed 1591), a poem about how to write a love poem; form — alexandrines, *abab abab cdcd ee*, octave of searching, volta at "But" (line 9); language — the chain of lines 2–4 (pleasure → reading → knowledge → pity → grace), the images of drought ("sunneburn'd braine") and birth ("great with childe", "throwes"), the pun on "feete"; theme — originality against imitation; conclusion — the irony of a very artful poem that preaches sincerity. Assess: structure, embedded quotations, present simple, 180–250 words.

28. Model answer: *LOV-ing in TRUTH, / and FAINE in VERSE my LOVE to SHOW, / that SHE, / deare SHE, / might TAKE some PLEA-sure OF my PAINE, — / PLEA-sure might CAUSE her READE, / READ-ing might MAKE her KNOW, / KNOW-ledge might PI-tie WINNE, / and PI-tie GRACE ob-TAINE*. "I stress the repeated words (*pleasure, reading, knowledge, pity*) because they build the chain of the argument. I pause only at the punctuation, which here falls at the line ends and at the comma after *truth*, and I make a longer pause at the dash after *paine*."

29. 1 A · 2 B · 3 C · 4 B · 5 C · 6 A.

30. a will have finished · b is about to · c is bound to win · d is due to land · e was going to call · f is unlikely to be.

31. 1 immortal · 2 endless · 3 irresistible · 4 illegible · 5 timeless · 6 helpless.