

A Birthday (1861)

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- **1. Read the poem through.**
- Underline the sentence that tells you whose birthday the poet is celebrating.
- **The poet is celebrating the birthday of her life (see line 15).**
- What makes it a birthday.
- **The fact that the poet has fallen in love.**
- **2. Focus on the first stanza.**
- What figures of speech are used?
- **The poet uses repeated similes.**
- Group the similes according to the senses they appeal to?
- **The simile in line 1 appeals to the sense of hearing; the simile in line 3 appeals to the senses of taste and sight; the final simile in line 5 appeals to the sense of sight.**
- What colours are evoked?
- **The colours evoked are green, red and all the colours of the rainbow.**
- What world are the images taken from?
- **The images are taken from the world of nature.**
- What feelings are they meant to convey?
- **They are meant to convey feelings of joy and happiness.**

- **3. Focus on the second stanza.**
- How does this stanza differ from the first?
- **While in the first stanza the poet describes her state of happiness through images; in the second one she addresses an imaginary reader.**
- What is the effect of the repeated use of imperatives?
- **The repeated use of imperatives makes the scene more vivid by involving the reader directly in the creation of images. In addition, it conveys a sense of excitement.**
- Which sense/s do the images described appeal to?
- **They appeal to the senses of touch, sight, smell and taste.**
- What world are they taken from?
- **Once again they are taken from the world of nature.**
- What link/s can you find between the imagery of the first and second stanzas?
- **Both the images of the first and second stanza are taken from the world of nature and appeal to the senses.**