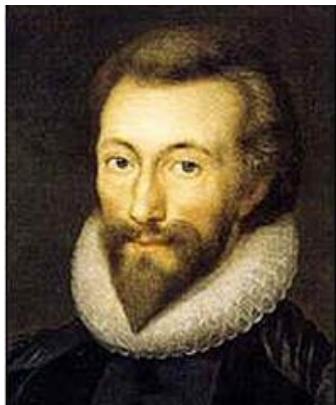


Poem #5

“Death be not Proud” by John Donne

DEATH be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so,
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then;
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.

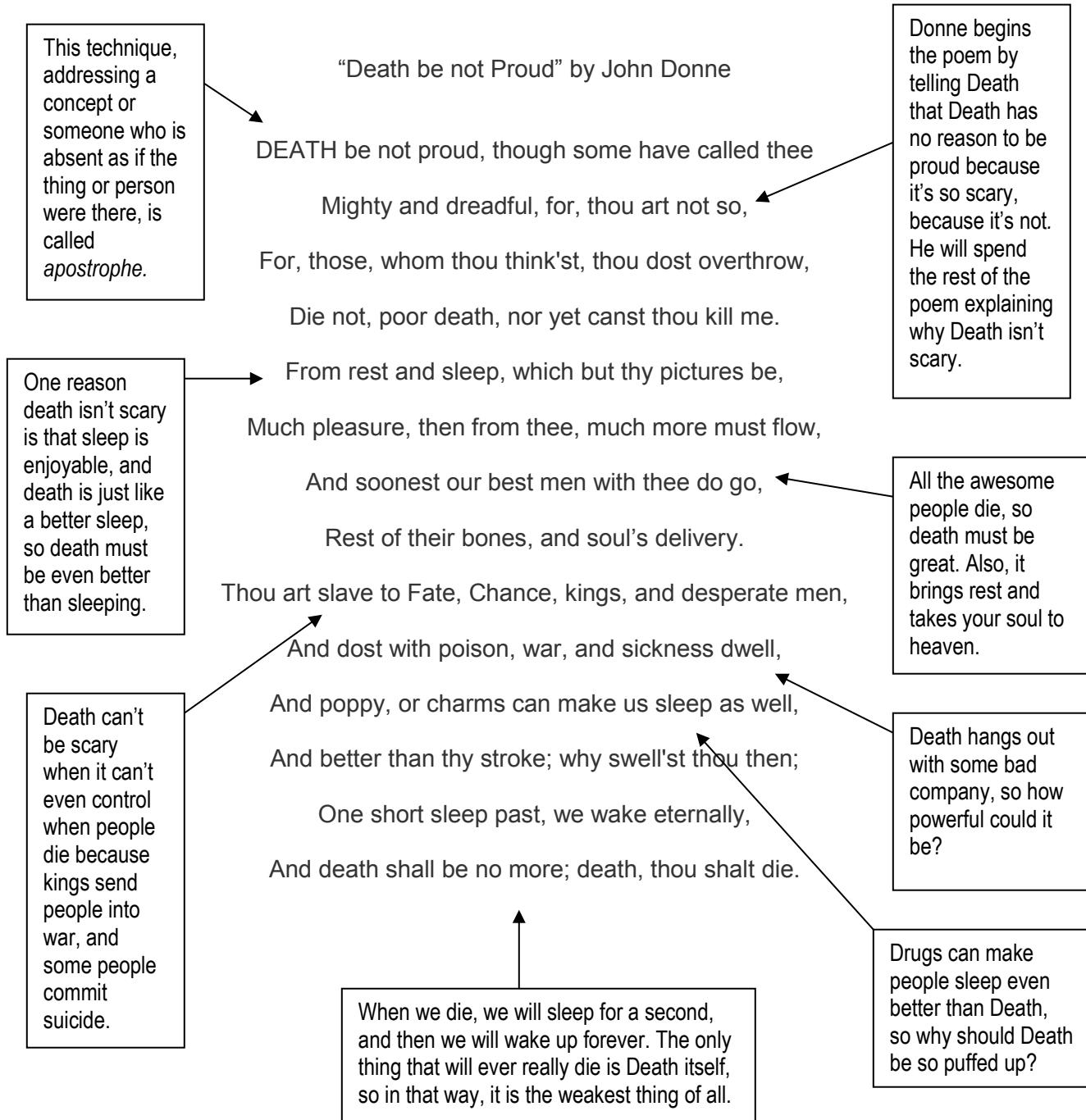


The official name of this poem is “Divine Sonnet X,” although it is most frequently called by its first line. If you were going to name this poem, what would you call it? John Donne (“Donne” is pronounced like “done”) was a poet who became an Anglican priest.

This poem is a challenge to Death that tries to convince Death that he is not powerful or to be feared. Since most people are afraid of death, this poem challenges a common idea.

MENSA for kids

Taking it apart





Memorizing it

This poem has a strong rhyme scheme. The poem is a sonnet, so it has three quatrains and a couplet. Follow the directions below to figure out the rhyme scheme.

“Death be not Proud” by John Donne

DEATH be not proud, though some have called thee	_____	Step 1: Underline the last word of each line.
Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not so,	_____	
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost overthrow,	_____	
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.	_____	
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,	_____	
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,	_____	
And soonest our best men with thee do go,	_____	Step 3: Put an “A” on the line next to the last word of the first line, “thee.”
Rest of their bones, and soul’s delivery.	_____	
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,	_____	
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,	_____	Step 4: Put a “B” on the line next to the last word of the second line because it doesn’t rhyme with “thee.”
And poppy, or charms can make us sleep as well,	_____	
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then;	_____	
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,	_____	Step 5: Put an “A” next to any word that rhymes with the last word of the first line, “thee.”
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.	_____	

Step 6: Put a “B” next to any word that rhymes with the last word of the second line.

Step 7: Put a “C” next to the first word that doesn’t rhyme with either “A” or “B.”

Step 8: Put a “D” next to the first word that doesn’t rhyme with either “A” or “B” or “C” and so on until you go through the whole poem.





Memorizing it

Some of the words of this poem have been replaced with words that rhyme with the original word.
Find the replacement words and write the correct words above them.

“Death be not Proud” by John Donne

DEATH be not loud, though none have called thee

Flighty and dreadful, door, thou cart not so,

For, those, doom thou think'st, chow dost overthrow,

Cry not, poor death, nor bet canst thou bill me.

From best and sleep, hitch but sky pictures be,

Much treasure, then from bee, much more must stow,

And soonest our best men with thee do go,

Test of their stones, and soul's delivery.

Thou art crave to Fate, Dance, kings, and desperate hen,

And dosta with poison, chore, and sickness knell,

And poppy, or charms man make us creep as well,

And cheddar than thy stroke; fly swell'st thou then;

Done short sleep last, we flake eternally,

And death shall be glow more; death, thou shalt shy.



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