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**“O Captain! My Captain!” by Walt Whitman**

**Guided Notes – Lesson 5**

**What does the rhyme scheme of “O Captain! My Captain!” reveal about its structure and meaning?**

**Objective:** In this lesson you will learn how to analyze the impact the structure of a text has on its meaning by looking at its rhyme scheme.

**Steps:**

1. Identify the rhyme scheme of a poem
2. Look for breaks in the rhyme scheme
3. Ask, “How does the rhyme scheme enhance the author’s message

**O Captain! My Captain!- Look at one stanza at a time:**

1. Identify the rhyme scheme of a poem

*(Assign each line a letter based on the end rhyme.)*

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,

 The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,

 The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,

 While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

 But O heart! heart! heart! 5

 O the bleeding drops of red,

 Where on the deck my Captain lies,

 Fallen cold and dead.

 O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;

 Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills, 10

 For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,

 For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;

 Here Captain! dear father!

 This arm beneath your head!

 It is some dream that on the deck, 15

 You've fallen cold and dead.

 My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,

 My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,

 The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,

 From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won; 20

 Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

 But I with mournful tread,

 Walk the deck my Captain lies,

 Fallen cold and dead. 25

1. Look for breaks in the rhyme scheme

*(Use the text above to identify breaks in the rhyme scheme. Use the box below to record notes on what you discover.)*

1. Ask, “How does the rhyme scheme enhance the author’s message?”

*(Record your thoughts in the box below.)*