

# D. H. Lawrence



## Key Points:

- ★ In life, Lawrence followed his instincts and impulses in pursuit of different ways of being. He never saw himself as part of any movement and always went his own way.
- ★ What Lawrence believed, he believed with his whole being. He was perhaps, a prophet for human beings about how they lived. He saw what he felt was wrong, and wrote in order to make it better. He said 'If there weren't so many lies in the world... I wouldn't write at all'
- ★ An isolated figure - his isolation had its roots in his childhood. Although he was a passionate believer in the potential of human beings, he was disappointed over and over again in the actuality of most of them.
- ★ Instinctive sympathy with the natural world.
- ★ Recognition of man's relationship with the natural world - could be considered a pioneer of ecological thinking.
- ★ Lawrence wanted poems to open out, to respond to the moment-to-moment flow of thoughts and feelings, records of engagement with something outside of himself.
- ★ Repeated words and phrases give shape to his poems. Free verse is not formless, while there may be no definable metre, there is always rhythm - dictated by the varying line lengths and breaks.
- ★ Lawrence's work has a fierce and passionate attention to the world, both inner and outer. He said; 'All things are relative, and have their sacredness in their true relation to all other things.'
- ★ Certain events, like the death of his mother or his love affair with Frieda affected him deeply. Other poems explore encounters or about the world around him.

## Quotes about Lawrence:

- 'In free verse we look for the insurgent naked throb of the instant moment... It is the instant; the quick; the very jetting source of all will-be and has-been. The utterance is like a spasm, naked contact with all influences at once. It does not want to get anywhere, it just takes place' – Lawrence
- 'The accuracy of Lawrence's observations haunts the mind permanently' – Kenneth Roxroth
- 'Lawrence was in a direct line of descent from such earlier poets as Blake, Coleridge and Whitman, for whom imagination was everything' – Keith Sagar
- 'These are my tender administrations to the mental and emotional wounds we suffer from' – Lawrence
- Lawrence 'can seldom have conceived a poem as a whole before he sat down to write it. It grew under his pen' – James Reeves
- Lawrence is one of those poets who 'always renew my alertness to the world around me' – Elaine Feinstein

### D.H. Lawrence - Keywords

|             |                   |                |               |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Topical     | Expressive        | Unconventional | Thoughtful    |
| Relevant    | Vibrant           | Unique         | Personal      |
| Concise     | Didactic          | Penetrating    | Lucid         |
| Eloquent    | Clear             | Profound       | Original      |
| Engaging    | Innovative        | Poignant       | Compressed    |
| Honest      | Vivid             | Reflective     | Contemplative |
| Insightful  | Political         | Perceptive     | Symbolic      |
| Polemical   | Thought-Provoking | Succinct       | Philosophical |
| Surreal     | Critique          | Modernisation  | Duality       |
| Melancholic | Condescending     | Reinterprets   | Fragmentary   |
| Solitude    | Unambiguous       | Unorthodox     | Provocative   |
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|             |                   |                |               |

### Key Quotes

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