

Week 3

Discussion Questions for Chs. 6 and 7 of *Poetic Form*.

Consider the following topics regarding the European forms of sestina and villanelle.

1. David Caplan tells us that the sestina was considered a form of “low” poetry prior to the twentieth century (125). Do you see it as somehow lesser than, say, a sonnet or not? Explain.
2. Compare two sestinas that you believe have different tones/moods, and explain how these differences are achieved, because of elements like subject, diction (word choice), syntax (word/line order).
3. Compare two villanelles that you believe have different tones/moods, and explain how these differences are achieved, because of elements like subject, diction, syntax.
4. Do you see either the sestina or villanelle as a superior form? If so, why; if not, why not?

Remember that when you quote poetry, if you quote more than one line, you should use a backward slash (/) to indicate line breaks; and since these lines are numbered by the editor, then include them in parenthetical citations. E.g.,

Frost writes, “She withdrew shrinking from beneath his arm / That rested on the banister, and slid downstairs [. . .]” (33-34).

Note: I’ve used bracketed ellipses because the quote does not stop at a complete “sentence”; also the 33-34 refers to the line numbers, not page numbers.

Choose one of the above questions, and write a one- to two-page mini-essay in response to it. Use textual evidence, and follow MLA style. Include a Work(s) Cited page.

For the Work Cited or Works Cited, use the following format:

Frost, Robert. “Home Burial.” *Poetic Form: An Introduction*. David Caplan. New York: Pearson-Longman, 2007. 30-34.