

John Donne  
The Sun Rising  
Stanza 2

Worksheet by:  
Keith Tankard  
Knowledge4Africa.com

This is a rather complicated but saucy love poem in which the poet addresses the Sun and speaks to him about love and about his loved one. The poet centres on the heat of passion and on the solitary focus of the two lovers: they are the centre of the universe, while all wealth and happiness is but an imitation of their wealth and happiness.

1. "Thy beams, so reverend, and strong  
Why shouldst thou think?  
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,  
But that I would not lose her sight so long."

- "Thy beams, so reverend, and strong | Why shouldst thou think?" would appear at first reading to have little meaning. Can you rewrite the lines so that the meaning becomes clear? (2)
- What reason does the poet give for questioning the sun's power? (4)
- Why, however, does the poet not want to take that route of winking or blinking? (2)

2. "If her eyes have not blinded thine,  
Look, and to-morrow late, tell me,  
Whether both the Indias of spice and mine  
Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me."

- Comment on the extreme exaggeration in the words, "If her eyes have not blinded thine". (2)
- What is the poet referring to when he says, "both the Indias of spice and mine"? (4)
- What is the logic of the poet's statement: "Look, and to-morrow late, tell me, | Whether both the Indias of spice and mine | Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me"? (4)

3. "Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,  
And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay."

- What is the logic or meaning of this statement? (4)

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