

Poem Analysis Assessment
“An Ode for the Fourth of July 1788”

1. What form is this poem written in? How do you know?

This poem is an ode, which is a type of lyric poem. I know this is an ode because an ode deeply analyzes one object, person or idea. In this case, the poem is meditating on and analyzing the Fourth of July.

2. What is the tone of the poem? How do you know? Cite specific examples from the poem that reveal its tone.

The tone of the poem is very patriotic and proud. The author is celebrating the United States and the special virtues of the newly formed nation. One example of the proud and patriotic tone is Columbia sitting in her throne and looking into the future and seeing the amazing things that are in store for the new nation. Another example is how she refers to her sons as being valiant and wise, and not having fought for their independence in vain.

3. Give at least two examples of figurative language (similes, metaphors, alliteration, repetition, hyperbole, personification, etc.) from the poem.

1. “My sons for freedom fought, nor fought in vain
But found a naked Goddess was their gain.”

This would be an example of a metaphor- the metaphor compares the newly formed nation to a naked Goddess that can be shaped and formed by the new government.

2. “And let the people’s motto ever be
UNITED THUS, and THUS UNITED- FREE.”

This would be an example of repetition. Repeating the word “united” gives it a strong resonance in the reader’s mind and makes the author’s point that the new nation is united as one in freedom.

4. What do you think the meaning of the poem is? What is the author trying to express through his writing?

I think the meaning of this poem is to celebrate the United States and its recent independence from the British. The author is trying to express feelings of patriotism, pride, and unity among the colonists.

5. What sort of emotions do you think this poem inspires in its readers?

I think that the emotions this poem inspires are feelings of nationalism and pride in the United States and a rallying together over a common purpose and a common belief.