

LONDON BY WILLIAM BLAKE

What is the poem about?

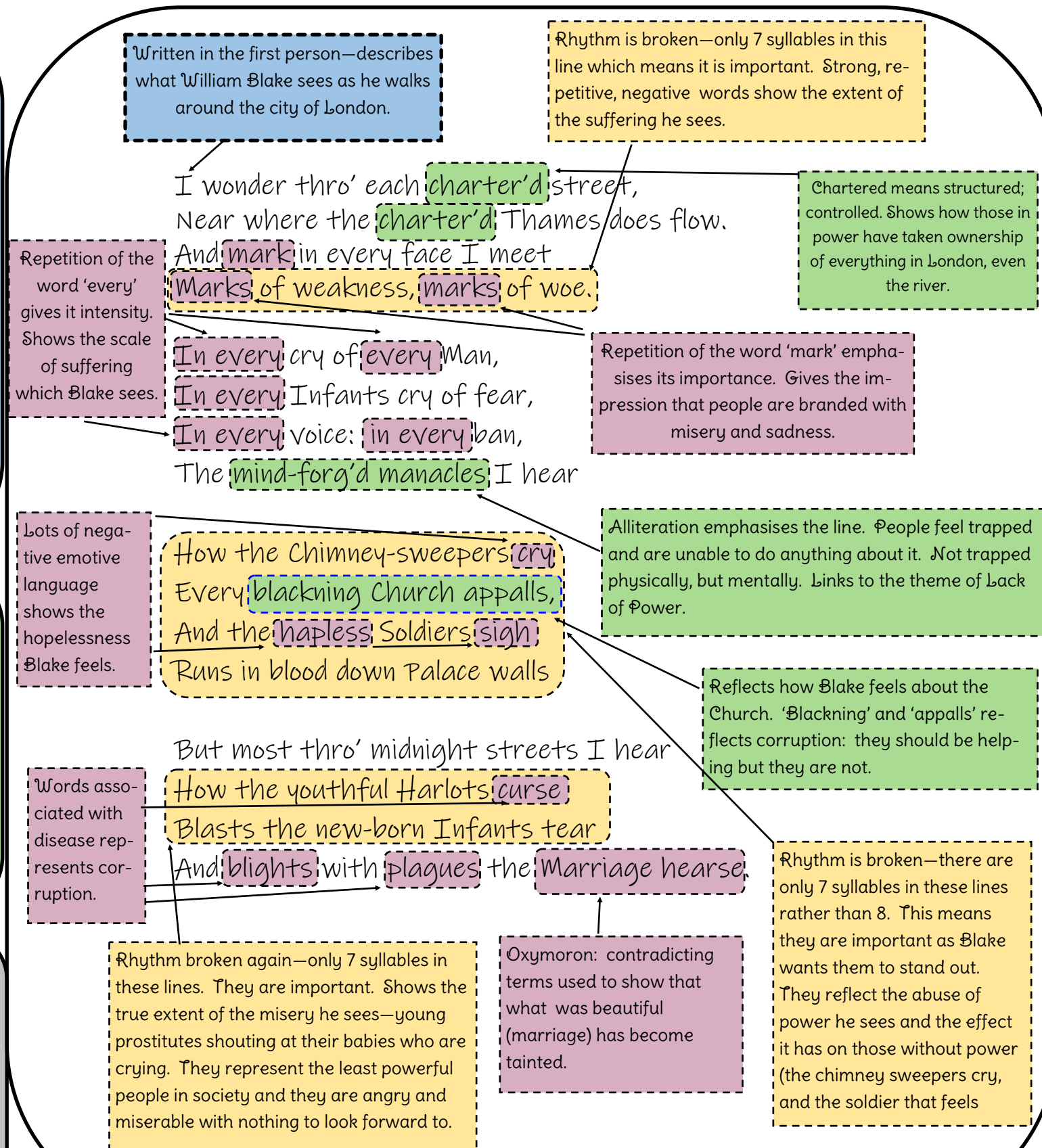
- Written during the Industrial Revolution.
- London was the most powerful city in the world at the time.
- Far from being a city of dreams, Blake portrays London as a dirty, corrupt place.
- It is written in the first person; describing what William Blake sees as he walks about the city he used to love so much.
- Everywhere he looks he sees how power is being abused; he sees a clear contrast between those with power and those without.

Themes

- **Abuse of power:** Shows how the city became dirty and corrupt with the abuse of power.
- **Individual experience:** written as a personal account to create immediate empathy.
- **Loss / Anger:** Those without power are miserable and trapped and feel unable to

What other poems does it compare well to?

ABUSE OF POWER	INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES	LOSS / ANGER
Ozymandias	The Prelude	Poppies
My Last Duchess	Remains	The Emigree
Tissue	War Photographer	Kamikaze
Checking out me History	Poppies	Exposure



Structure & Form

- The poem is written in four stanzas (verses); each with four lines (this makes it a quatrain).
- Each verse has an alternative rhyme scheme (first line rhymes with third line and second rhymes with fourth).
- Largely written in iambic tetrameter which echoes the walking pace of Blake walking around London.
- Iambic tetrameter is broken in lines 4, 9-12 and 14-15. This is to emphasise these lines.
- The last line in each stanza is a powerful one.

Language Choices:

- Written in the first person—from the perspective of Blake as he walks around London. This creates immediate empathy for the reader, who feels they are walking around with him.
- Repetition: Blake uses repetition regularly throughout the poem to emphasise particular issues.
- Emotive language: uses lots of negative emotive language which paints a picture for the reader about exactly how much suffering he sees and the impact it is having.