

There is no object that we see; no action that we do; no good that we enjoy; no evil that we feel, or fear, but we may make some spiritual advantage of all: and he that makes such improvement is wise, as well as pious.

1. What does Anne Bradstreet mean?
2. Do you agree with her? Explain your answer.

pi·ous

/ˈpiːəs/ 

adjective

devoutly religious.

synonyms: religious, devout, God-fearing, |



3. What is the tone of this picture?

Explain with details.

4. How does this picture typify

Puritans?

5.

Puritan Plain Style

The Puritans' beliefs in modesty, hard work, and religious devotion were reflected in all aspects of their lives, from the simple, dark clothes they wore, to the spare furnishings they used, to the literature they wrote. The **Puritan Plain Style** is characterized by short words, direct statements, and references to everyday objects and experiences. Consider the simple, direct statements in these lines from Bradstreet's poem:

*If ever two were one, then surely we,
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee.*

Bradstreet's style may seem less plain to modern readers because of the outdated language, like the use of *thee* for *you*, and the **syntax**, or **structure**, of her sentences. She sometimes omits words, such as the verb *are* after *we* in the first line above, that we would include today. Her syntax also uses **inversion**, or the placing of sentence elements out of normal position. For example, instead of "let's so persevere in love," she says, "in love let's so persevere."

6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqrrZjypPSk> Notes about Anne Bradstreet

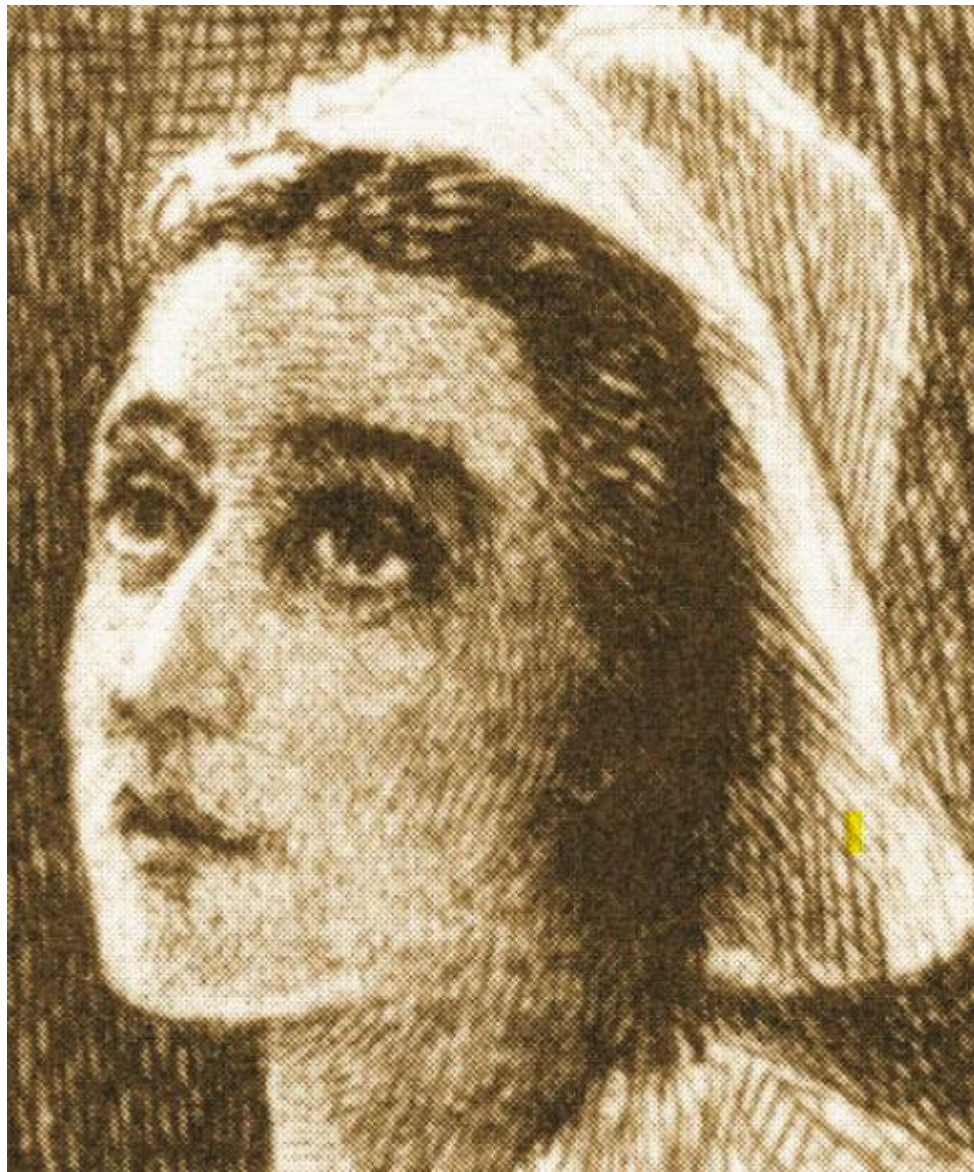
7. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_Wwio6E7Fw Notes about Puritan arrivals

8. What makes a perfect marriage?

9. Do soul mates exist?

Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672)

Author of **“To My Dear and Loving Husband”**



To
My Dear
and
Loving Husband
Anne Bradstreet

Paraphrasing

How would you paraphrase these first two lines?

Vocabulary

quench (kwench) *v.*
satisfy a thirst

recompense (rek' əm
pens') *n.* repayment;
something given or done
in return for something
else

manifold (man' ə fōld')
adv. in many ways

persevere (pə' sə vir')
v. persist; be steadfast
in purpose

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can.

5 I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold,
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that rivers cannot **quench**,
Nor ought¹ but love from thee, give **recompense**.
Thy love is such I can no way repay,

10 The heavens reward thee **manifold**, I pray.
Then while we live, in love let's so **persevere**,²
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

1. **ought** (ô't) *n.* anything whatever.

2. **persevere** pronounced (pə' sə vir') in the seventeenth century, and thus rhymed with the word *ever*.

Critical Reading

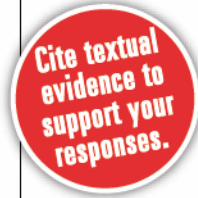


1. **Key Ideas and Details (a)** What does the speaker value more than “whole mines of gold”? **(b) Distinguish:** What other images suggest the richness and abundance of the love the speaker and her husband share?
2. **Key Ideas and Details (a) Analyze:** What is the apparent contradiction in the last two lines? **(b) Draw Conclusions:** What does the last stanza reveal about Puritan beliefs in the afterlife?
3. **Craft and Structure (a)** Note where Bradstreet uses repetition in the first stanza. **(b) Analyze:** How does her use of repetition suggest a growing emotional intensity?
4. **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas** Which aspect of the speaker is more important in this poem—the private or the public self? Use at least two of these Essential Question words in your response: *community, personal, unique, social*. [*Connecting to the Essential Question: What makes American literature American?*]

▲ Critical Viewing

How does this painting present Bradstreet as both poet and Puritan housewife?

ANALYZE



Explanatory Text Write a brief **essay** in which you interpret the speaker’s view of love and reward in this poem. First, review the poem for details relating to luxury and abundance. Then, explain how these images of wealth help the speaker express the depth of her love for her husband. Cite details from the text to support your ideas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think the speaker loves her husband as much as she says she does? Why or why not?
2. Do you think this poem is trying to make an argument or prove a point? Or is it merely describing the love between the speaker and her husband?
3. Is there anything ridiculous about the speaker's claims? No river can quench it – really? Do you take her love seriously, or does she seem a bit melodramatic to you?
4. How is it that the speaker and her husband will live forever, really? What do you think she means by the last two lines of the poem?
5. Does this poem seem like it was written in the 1600s?
6. Based on this poem alone, what do you think of Mrs. Bradstreet?

Examine Social Context The Puritans strongly disapproved of women writers. A Puritan minister even wrote a letter to his sister in England saying, “Your printing of a book, beyond the custom of your sex, doth rankly smell.” In spite of this disapproval, do you think the Puritan community would have considered any aspects of Anne Bradstreet’s poetry praiseworthy? Explain your answer.