

Poet Percy Bysshe Shelley

Task 1. Read the text, write down and translate the adjective in bold.

Percy Bysshe Shelley is one of the most **prominent** Romantic poets, alongside with Lord Byron, whose radical intellect and fierce sense of justice made him one of the great Romantic intellects.

He is best remembered for his poetry and his **controversial** ideas that were ahead of his time. He promoted free thought and human rights. Shelley died tragically young but his work continues to resonate today.

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born into a political family in Sussex. His father planned a career in Parliament (politics) for his son. However, Shelley had other ideas – he was by all accounts a bright, **mischiefous** and imaginative child, and showed an early inclination to write. After a **rebellious**, unhappy childhood, Shelley got expelled from Oxford for writing and distributing a pamphlet called ‘The Necessity for Atheism’, quarreled with his father and left England for Italy.

One of his most famous poetic works “The Mask of Anarchy” is a British political poem written by Percy Bysshe Shelley following the Peterloo Massacre of that year (the name given to an incident that took place in Manchester, England). A group of people gathered in St Peter's Fields in central Manchester to demand political change. The crowd was large, but **peaceful and not armed**. It was attacked by the army, who killed eleven people and injured about 500. In his call for freedom, it is perhaps the first modern statement of the principle of **nonviolent** resistance.

Shelley drowned at age 29 while sailing in a storm off the Italian coast, leaving unfinished his last and possibly greatest **visionary** poem, *The Triumph of Life*.

*Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number–
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you–
Ye are many – they are few.*

From “The Mask of Anarchy” by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Task 2. Answer the questions

1. What kind of poets was Percy Bysshe Shelley?
2. What is he best remembered for?
3. What kind of a child was Shelley in his young years?
4. How can “The Mask of Anarchy” be characterized?

Task 3. Watch the video and learn the lines from “The Mask of Anarchy”