

LESSON 1

DRAMATIC POETRY: BRINGING WORDS TO LIFE ON STAGE





Path to Understanding

Dramatic poetry is like a play in the form of a poem. It's written to be performed in front of an audience. It includes speeches, dialogues, or monologues that express emotions and tell stories. In dramatic poetry, words come alive through acting, gestures, and voice. Imagine reading a story aloud where every word feels full of energy and meaning—that's dramatic poetry!

Dramatic poetry is exciting because it:

- Explores emotions. It helps us understand how people feel in different situations.
- Combines art and action. It's a way to tell stories using both words and performance.
- Boosts self-expression. Performing dramatic poetry builds confidence and teaches us how to express ourselves better.

A great example from Philippine literature is in *Florante at Laura* by Francisco Balagtas. "Florante at Laura" is a classic Filipino literary piece by Francisco Balagtas. It is an awit (Filipino poetry) consisting of 399 stanzas, each with four lines. Below are some of the most important stanzas of the poem, along with their English translations:

<p>Stanza 1 (Opening Stanza): Filipino:</p> <p>"Sa isang madilim, gubat na mapanglaw, Dawag na matinik ay walang pagitan, Halos naghihirap ang kay Febong silang, Dumalaw sa loob ang lubhang masukal."</p>	<p>English:</p> <p>"In a dark, gloomy forest, filled with thorns, Where no clear path could be seen, The light of Phoebus (the sun) could barely penetrate, As the thick undergrowth made it even more desolate."</p>
<p>Stanza 29 (Florante's Lament): Filipino:</p> <p>"O palad ko! sa iyo'y nagtatampo, Bakit ang laki ng hirap ay di mo inaalo? Ang mabangis na tadhana'y di mo matutulo, Sa puso ko't dibdib ay lagi kang nakasulo."</p>	<p>English:</p> <p>"O fate! I lament to you, Why do you not ease my immense suffering? You cannot quench the cruelty of destiny, For in my heart and chest, you always burn."</p>
<p>Stanza 231 (Laura's Beauty): Filipino:</p> <p>"Ang anyaya'y lalong sa bituin nakikita, Sa pisngi ni Laura'y nagmamalabis pa, Ang ningning ng araw sa mukha niya'y natatakpan, At ang kulay ng rosas sa pisngi ay namumutla."</p>	<p>English:</p> <p>"Her radiance outshines even the stars, On Laura's cheeks, it is even more evident, The brightness of the sun pales in comparison to her face, And the color of roses fades beside her cheeks."</p>

<p>Stanza 341 (Florante's Love for Laura): Filipino:</p> <p>"Laura, ang ngalan mo'y laging nasa dibdib, Sa bawat sandali'y ikaw ang laman ng isip, Kahit sa hirap at ligaya'y ikaw ang alaalang titig, Sa puso ko'y walang ibang naghahari kundi ikaw."</p>	<p>English:</p> <p>"Laura, your name is always in my heart, In every moment, you are in my thoughts, Whether in hardship or joy, you are my constant memory, In my heart, no one reigns but you."</p>
<p>Stanza 399 (Closing Stanza): Filipino:</p> <p>"At sa wakas, ang lahat ay nagwakas din, Ang hirap at ligaya'y naglahong parang hangin, Ngunit ang pag-ibig namin ay hindi magmamaliw, Sa puso't alaala'y habang buhay na sasariwa."</p>	<p>English:</p> <p>"And in the end, everything came to an end, The suffering and joy vanished like the wind, But our love will never fade, In our hearts and memories, it will forever remain fresh."</p>

These stanzas highlight love, suffering, and fate, central to the narrative of "Florante at Laura." The poem is a masterpiece of Filipino literature, blending romance, heroism, and moral lessons.



Trivia Time– About The Author

Francisco Balagtas (1788–1862) was a celebrated Filipino poet and playwright, regarded as the "Prince of Tagalog Poets." Born in Bigaa, Bulacan, Philippines, he is best known for his epic masterpiece *Florante at Laura*, written in Tagalog during the Spanish colonial period. The work is a literary classic that explores themes of love, betrayal, oppression, and patriotism, blending allegory and social critique. Balagtas' contributions to Philippine literature shaped the development of Tagalog as a medium for artistic expression. His legacy endures as a symbol of Filipino cultural identity, with his influence extending to contemporary literature and the Balagtasan debate tradition.



Did you know that Balagtas inspired the Balagtasan, a Filipino poetic debate? This art form is still celebrated today!

If you'd like to learn more about Francisco Balagtas, feel free to check out this link!
https://www.bulakenyo.ph/francisco-balagtas-the-ultimate-filipino-poet/?utm_source



Extend Your Learning!

From Words to Feelings: A Dramatic Journey Through Poetry

Instructions Read & Analyze the Poem. Then Express the Emotions through Performance. Form small groups of 3-4 students. Each student picks one emotion to focus on. Rehearse and perform the stanza, emphasizing:

- ✓ Voice modulation (adjusting tone, pitch, and volume)
 - ✓ Facial expressions (showing the character's emotions)
 - ✓ Gestures and movement (using body language to enhance meaning)
- One student should record the performance for documentation.

Reflect and Share

- After the performance, each group answers the following questions:
 - How did your interpretation change when you used different emotions?
 - What challenges did you face in expressing emotions through poetry?
 - How does dramatic poetry help us understand human emotions better?
- Share responses through a Google Form, Padlet post, or Flipgrid video response.

Now that we've explored the storytelling magic of narrative poetry, it's time to shift gears and step onto the stage. In our next lesson, we'll dive into dramatic poetry, where characters come alive through dialogue and monologue, creating a theatrical experience on the page.