

Structure:

Narrative poem

# "The Green Beret" Ho Thien

Third person, the narrator distances himself from the event → objectivity?  
young age of the boy → innocence

He was twelve years old  
And I do not know his name  
The mercenaries took him and his father,  
Whose name I do not know,  
One morning upon the High Plateau.

The beginning: like a story, exposition

the setting

the soldier towers over the "frail" boy → the soldier has all the power

passive voice, impersonal

metaphor, a thick forest → nobody can help them?

direct speech - monosyllabic words, chopped speech → authority, power

metaphorical expression

**Green Beret** looked down on the **frail boy**  
With the **eyes** of a hurt animal and thought,  
A good fright will **make him talk**.  
He **commanded**, and the father **was taken away**

No article - the soldier represents all the soldiers

Beret - metonymy  
the soldier is represented by a part of his uniform, he lacks individuality

imagery, emotive language  
the weak and scared boy is juxtaposed to the powerful soldier

choice of verbs → the soldier's authority and power

ROARED - like an animal

minute - second - instant building tension

imagery

repetition

simile

Behind the forest's green wall.

'Right kid tell us where they are,

Tell us where or your father - dead.'

With **eyes** now bright and filled with horror

The slight boy said nothing.

'you've got **one minute** kid,' said Green Beret,

'tell us where or we kill father.'

And **thrust his wrist-watch** against a face all eyes, idiom, imagery?

The second-hand turning, jerking on its way.

'O.K. boy **ten seconds** to tell us where they are.'

In the last instant the silver hand shattered the Sky and the forest of trees.

'Kill the old guy,' roared Green Beret

And shots **hammered out**

Behind the forest's green wall

And sky and trees and soldiers stood

In silence, and the boy **cried out**.

Green Beret **stood**

In silence, as the boy **crouched down**

And shook with tears,

As children do when their father dies.

'Christ,' said one mercenary to Green Beret,

'he didn't know a damn thing,

We killed the old guy for nothing,'

So they all went away,

Green Beret and his mercenaries.

metonymy

enjambement

metaphor

personification

juxtaposition

imagery, juxtaposition

Animal images

as if it were a regular occurrence → it is, in war

inversion →

storytelling

A body part is likened to a cold metal, as if the soldier isn't even human

power vs. submission

GAP → to emphasize the climax of the poem

/// Green Beret /// the boy — time reference

previously: a damn thing, nothing

And the boy knew everything,  
He knew everything about them, the caves,  
The trails, the hidden places and names,  
And in the moment that he cried out,  
In that same instant,  
Protected by frail tears  
Far stronger than any wall of steel,  
They passed everywhere  
Like tigers  
Across the High Plateau.

repetition

repetition

simile  
hyperbole

simile  
↓

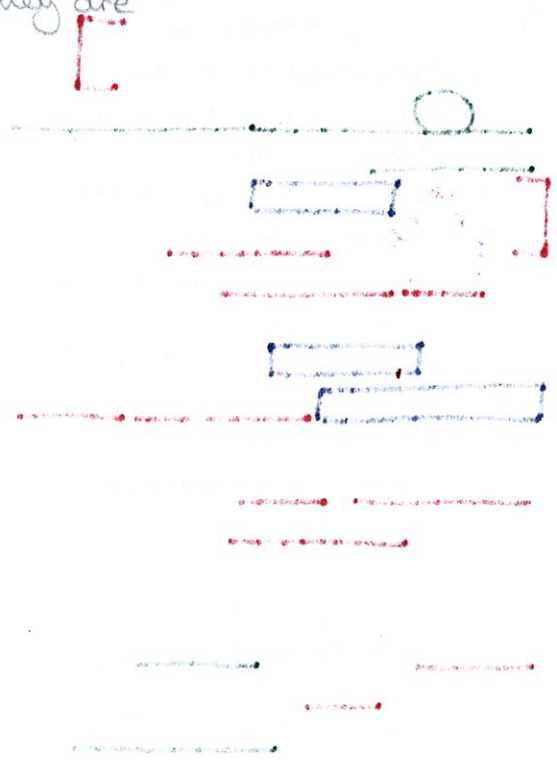
compared to animals, they are predators

listing: to emphasize the boy's sacrifice and bravery

The soldier seemed to have all the power, but the boy showed greater courage

paradox

Themes: bravery  
patriotism  
cruelty of war



Americans - ignorant of the culture → oppressors  
Exacerbating the situation  
Losing the moral legitimacy  
Choosing a child → the next generation  
Losing the support of the people  
Force vs. ideals  
Modern → watch, time ≠ moral decay  
Animal imagery through the poem

considerer amit ... not with ... kind words ...