Native – As the speaker realises in this extract from The Prelude, humanity is only one part of nature. The natural world can make man feel extremely small and insignificant. The speaker feels power after taking the boat and directing it as he pleases, but is soon levied by the power of nature (in the form of a large mountain).

Loneliness – Throughout large sections of The Prelude, Wordsworth is often on his own, and he makes it clear that this is important to him. He is able to think more clearly when he is alone, and is more affected by experiences and places. In this sense, a more spiritual and mystical atmosphere is created through the idea of loneliness.

Romanticism – Romanticism was an artistic, literary, musical, cultural and intellectual movement that originated in Europe in the late 18th century. In Britain, the movement took root in the late 18th and early 19th century. Romanticism is characterised by its emphasis on emotion, as well as glorifying nature and past events – memories and settings are often colourfully described. It was partially in response to the scientific rationalisation of nature of the era.

Imagery – Wordsworth uses vivid imagery to create the night-time atmosphere throughout the opening of the extract, using vocabulary associated with peace to describe the tranquil night. For example words such as 'stealthily', 'grimmer' and 'painting' create a quiet, peaceful scene in the mind of the reader. This is at odds with the similer, almost gothic atmosphere created in the second half of the poem through vocabulary such as 'grave', 'black', 'and grim'.

Personification – In order to demonstrate the sheer power of nature throughout the poem, Wordsworth chooses to personify several aspects of nature at different points in the extract. For example, in line six (led by the speaker himself) guided him to take the boat that evening. Later on in the poem, the mountain peak that soothes the speaker is described as having been heavily personified in the second half of the poem through vocabulary such as 'grave', 'black', 'grim'.

Structure – There are no stanzas throughout the extract, yet Wordsworth opts to use lots of punctuation to clarify meaning and enable the reader to separate ideas. The extract is a complete story in itself, in that it starts with 'one summer evening' and ends with the effect of the action 'troubled pleasure'. The repeated use of 'and' throughout the poem gives it a spoken feel, like someone telling a story.

Oxymoron – An oxymoron is used in line six as the speaker states 'it was an act of stealth, and troubled pleasure.' Pleasure is usually associated with happiness, while someone that is 'troubled' is tormented to the degree that they cannot take pleasure from something. Whilst the boy does take pleasure from taking the boat, it is implied that he cannot enjoy it fully, for some kind of underlying fear.

Quote: “Living men, moved slowly through the mind And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice”