

On First Looking into Chapman's Homer Key Info

Writer: John Keats | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Key Facts

Author: John Keats (1795-1821)

Original Title: On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

Title of the Author:

- Leading Second Generation Romantic Poet
- Poet of Sensuousness
- Poet of Beauty and Mortality

Written Date

:

October 1816

Published Date: First published in "*The Examiner*" in 1816 and later in *Poems* (1817), Keats's first collection.

Form: Petrarchan Sonnet (Italian Sonnet)

Meter: Iambic Pentameter

Tone: Excited & Reflective

Genre: Romantic Poetry / Sonnet

Total Lines: 14

Stanzas: 1 (as it is a sonnet)

Point of View: First-person (uses "I")

Rhyme Scheme: ABBAABBA CDCDCD

Setting:

- **Time Setting:** In the early 19th century.
- **Place Setting:** London, England, while reading the works of the ancient Greek poet Homer, who was freely translated by the Elizabethan playwright George Chapman.

Key Notes

Chapman's Homer:

George Chapman translated Homer's famous Greek poems (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*) into English. Keats had heard of Homer before, but when he read Chapman's simple and strong translation, he felt like he discovered a new and exciting world.

Realms of Gold:

"Realms of gold" means the rich and beautiful world of great books and stories. Keats had read many books, but he truly understood Homer's greatness only after reading Chapman's version.

Homer:

Keats calls Homer a great king of the poetry world. He uses the words "deep-brow'd Homer" to show that Homer was very wise and powerful, and his poems were full of deep meaning.

Historical Error:

Keats writes that "Cortez" discovered the Pacific Ocean. But this is a mistake. In real history, Balboa was the first European to see the Pacific. Still, this mistake doesn't ruin the poem's beauty.

Apollo:

Apollo is the Greek god of light, beauty, and poetry. In the poem, Apollo stands for the power of art and poetry.

Darien:

Darien is a hilly area in Panama, Central America. It is the place from where the Pacific Ocean was first seen by Europeans.