“Ode to Aphrodite” Sappho
Deathless Aphrodite, throned in flowers,
Daughter of Zeus, O terrible enchantress,
With this sorrow, with this anguish, break my spirit
Lady, not longer!

Hear anew the voice! O hear and listen!
Come, as in that island dawn thou camest,
Billowing in thy yoked car to Sappho
Forth from thy father's

Golden house in pity! ... I remember:
Fleet and fair thy sparrows drew thee, beating
Fast their wings above the dusky harvests,
Down the pale heavens,

Lightning anon! And thou, O blest and brightest,
Smiling with immortal eyelids, asked me:
'Maiden, what betideth thee? Or wherefore
Callest upon me?

'What is here the longing more than other,
Here in this mad heart? And who the lovely
One beloved that wouldst lure to loving?
Sappho, who wrongs thee?

'See, if now she flies, she soon must follow;
Yes, if spurning gifts, she soon must offer;
Yes, if loving not, she soon must love thee,
Howso unwilling...'

Come again to me! O now! Release me!
End the great pang! And all my heart desireth
Now of fulfillment, fulfill! O Aphrodite,
Fight by my shoulder!
In the poem “Ode to Aphrodite” by Sappho, the speaker (it is Sappho in this case because she is referred to in the poem) is trying to show us that love is very troublesome and difficult to get. The poet does this by using allusion, structure, tone, and dialogue to convey a sense of helplessness and frustration when trying to find love. This also reveals that these intense feelings makes us want to call out for help in order to overcome these desperate emotions once and for all.

Aphrodite is alluded to throughout the poem and this helps show that the speaker is very desperate to find love and she does this by calling on Aphrodite repeatedly. Aphrodite is the Greek goddess of love, so Sappho is calling onto Her to help her ease her burden and make her love interest fall in love with her. This is shown throughout the poem by phrases like “Deathless Aphrodite”, “Daughter of Zeus”, “Smiling with immortal eyelids”, and “O Aphrodite”. This gives us a sense that the speaker is struggling with finding love and is in distress about it.

The structure of the poem helps convey the long, difficult and desperate journey that Sappho undertakes in finding love. The structure of the poem is an Ode. An Ode is a long poem that is directed to someone or something, in this case it is Aphrodite. The length of the poem is a total 28 lines and in 7 stanzas of 4 lines. This kind of long structure is used to show the amount of desperation Sappho feels when trying to find love. It gives us a sense of pity that she is going through this long and troublesome journey.

Another technique that is used is tone and it is used in the poem to make us feel a sense of helplessness, desperation, and pity for Sappho as she supplicates and calls on Aphrodite. This is made clear by the use of anastrophe such as in “O terrible enchantress”, “O hear and listen”, and “O blest and brightest”. The use of anastrophe shows us Sappho's helplessness because she is calling onto a superior being and begging for Her help by the repetitive use of “O”. Also, the use of short sentences in the last stanza gives us a sense of urgency “Coma again to me! O now! Release me!”. This gives the poem a desperate tone and it is just like a very abrupt and final call for help.

Additionally, the poet uses a very special technique which is dialogue to show the connection between Aphrodite and Sappho. This dialogue also reveals that their relationship is strong and has been there for a long time and that Aphrodite is willing to assist Sappho on this long and difficult journey. Aphrodite asked Sappho “Maiden, what betideth thee? Or wherefore callest upon me?” This shows their close relationship because Aphrodite referred to her as “Maiden”. Also, the dialogue in the sixth stanza is very didactic because Aphrodite gives Sappho advice on how to find love and her tone shows great concern for her. This shows that Sappho needs Aphrodite in order to find success in love and that without her she will be in great sorrow.

These techniques and devices such as allusion, structure, tone and dialogue that are used by Sappho in “Ode to Aphrodite” help show the long and tedious journey of finding love and it shows the feeling of helplessness that Sappho experiences when undergoing that journey. We can deduce that Aphrodite is her final hope and she calls out to her desperately to finally become united with her lover. It makes us understand Sappho's intense emotions and makes us pity her at the same time. It shows us that love is not always an easy thing to get, in fact it requires time, patience and dedication.