

GCSE AQA  
English

AQA Anthology of Poetry

# Power and Conflict

**BOLDLY** *they* **RODE**  
**AND WELL** *INTO* **THE**  
**JAWS OF** *Death*  
**INTO THE MOUTH OF HELL**

## The Poetry Guide

For the Grade 9-1 Course

## 'Power and Conflict' Poems — Table of Themes

In the exam, you'll be given one poem from the cluster and asked to write about how one of its main themes is presented in comparison to another poem of your choice from the cluster.

You need to choose a second poem that has similar themes to the first. This table shows the major themes for each poem in the cluster — make sure they're as clear as possible in your head, so when you get into the exam you don't waste time trying to work out which poems might be suitable.

	Power of Humans	Power of Nature	Effects of Conflict	Reality of Conflict	Loss and Absence	Memory	Negative emotions — Anger	Negative emotions — Guilt	Negative emotions — Fear	Negative emotions — Pride	Identity	Individual Experiences
Ozymandias	✓	✓								✓		
London	✓				✓		✓					✓
The Prelude: Stealing the Boat		✓				✓			✓	✓		✓
My Last Duchess	✓					✓				✓	✓	
The Charge of the Light Brigade			✓	✓							✓	
Exposure		✓	✓	✓	✓							
Storm on the Island	✓	✓							✓			
Bayonet Charge			✓	✓					✓			✓
Remains			✓	✓		✓		✓				✓
Poppies			✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
War Photographer			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓
Tissue	✓	✓									✓	
The Emigrée					✓	✓					✓	✓
Kamikaze		✓	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓
Checking Out Me History	✓						✓				✓	

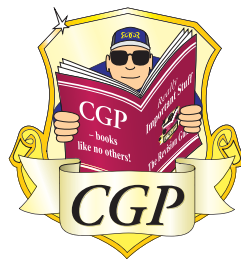
AQA Anthology of Poetry

# Power and Conflict

AQA's *Power and Conflict* poetry cluster has its fair share of poems about war — and writing essays about them can be a real battle.

Not to worry. This brilliant book guides you through the entire cluster — form, structure, language, themes, context... the lot. And because it's from CGP, we get straight to the point, with no needless rambling.

We've also included plenty of practice questions to test you on what you've learned, plus a whole section of advice to help you write top-grade answers. Everything you need to power through the exams!



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# How To Use This Book

This book is for anyone studying the 'Power and Conflict' cluster of the AQA GCSE English Literature Poetry Anthology. You'll have to answer an exam question on the poems — this book tells you what you need to know.

## You need to know the poems really well

You need to know all fifteen poems [in depth](#). Read each one carefully [over and over again](#), and jot down your [own ideas](#) about it. This book will help you [understand](#) the poems and develop your ideas:

You can't take the poems or any notes into the exam, so you need to learn plenty of short quotes to use.

- [Section One](#) guides you through each poem in the cluster — read the [notes](#) on what each poem [means](#), its main [features](#), and the [attitudes](#) and [feelings](#) it conveys.
- Answer the [questions](#) about each poem — these will help you develop a [personal response](#) to it.
- When you feel that you know the poems [well](#), have a go at the [questions](#) at the end of the section. They'll help you identify any [gaps](#) in your knowledge of the poems.

## In the exam, you'll have to compare poems with a similar theme

- 1) The Poetry Anthology question will give you [one](#) poem from the 'Power and Conflict' cluster, and ask you to [choose another](#) with a [similar theme](#) to compare it to.
- 2) In [Section Two](#) the poems are grouped by [theme](#), to give you some ideas of which poems you could [compare](#) in the exam and what you might say about them.
- 3) Have a go at the [practice questions](#) at the end of the section to check you're up to speed with the themes of each poem.

Have a look inside the front cover for a handy summary of which themes relate to which poems.

## Get to grips with the main features of each poem

- 1) [Section Three](#) is all about [form](#), [structure](#) and [language](#).
- 2) It looks at how different poets use techniques like [rhyme](#), [rhythm](#) and [imagery](#) to create [effects](#) — the examiners are [really keen](#) for you to write about this.
- 3) There are some more [practice questions](#) at the end of the section to help you test your knowledge.



First day on the job, and Tim had already got to grips with the 'self-destruct' feature of his car.

## Learn how to write a cracking exam answer

- 1) You need to know [how](#) to write a great essay [comparing](#) two poems:

- [Section Four](#) gives you loads of [advice](#) on how to [plan](#) and [write](#) a fantastic exam answer.
- There are plenty of extracts from [sample answers](#) to show you the right way to approach the question.

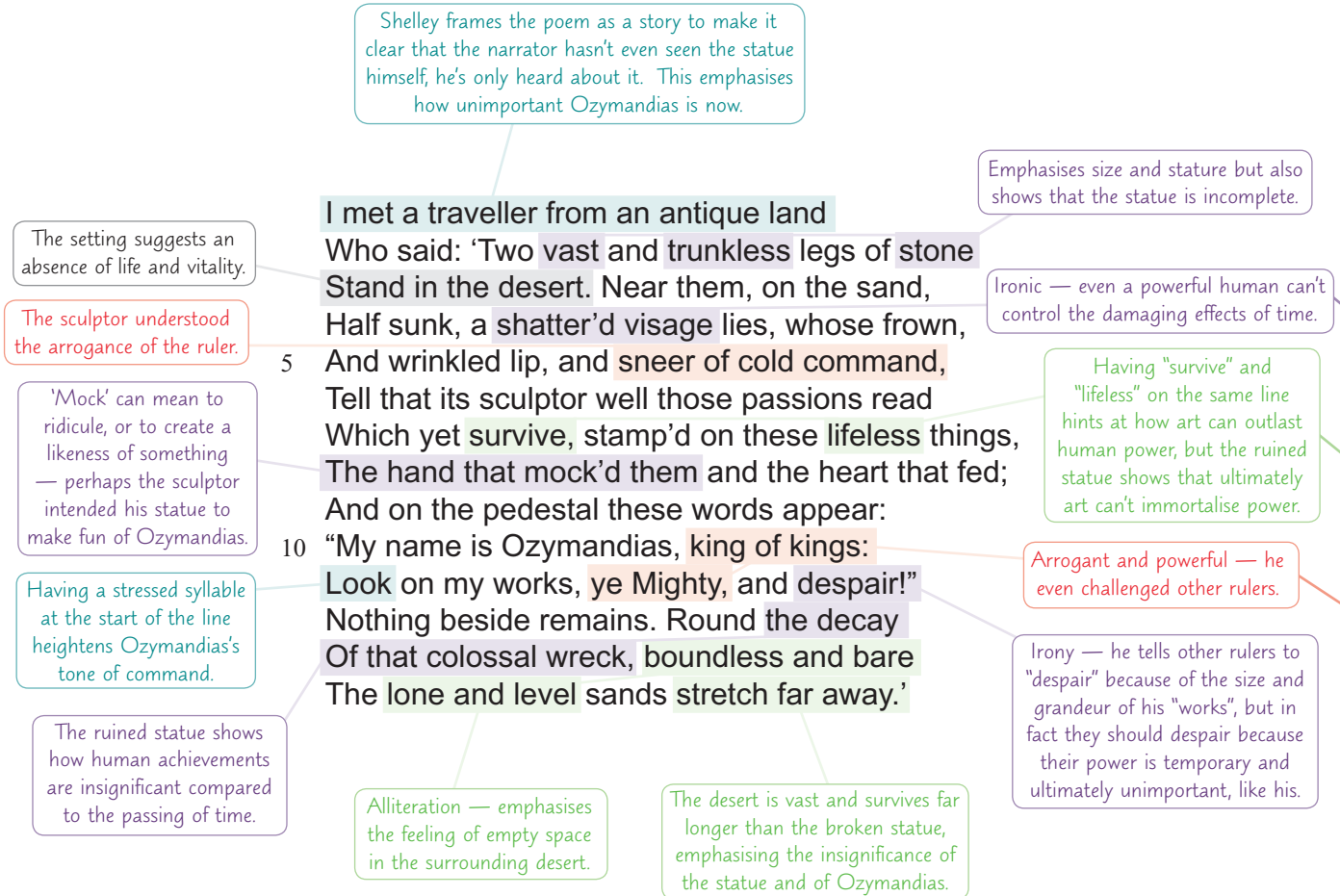
- 2) Once you know the [theory](#), put it into [practice](#):

- [Section Five](#) lets you test your skills by [adding quotes](#) or [extending points](#) to improve essay extracts. This will help you understand how to really [use the poems](#) to write a [top-notch](#) answer.
- It also gives you some sample answers to [grade](#), to help you work out how to improve your [own answers](#).

- 3) There's no substitute for getting some practice at [writing essays](#):

- Use everything you've learnt to answer the [exam-style questions](#) at the end of Sections One, Two and Three.
- You don't have to write a [full essay](#) for every question — making a [detailed plan](#) is still good practice.

# Ozymandias



## Context — Shelley

Shelley was a 'Romantic' poet — 'Romanticism' was a movement that had a big influence on art and literature in the late 1700s and early 1800s. 'Romantic' poets believed in emotion rather than reason, tried to capture intense experiences in their work and particularly focused on the power of nature. Shelley also disliked monarchies, absolute power and the oppression of ordinary people. His radical political views were inspired by the events of the French Revolution, where the monarchy was overthrown.

## POEM DICTIONARY

Ozymandias — another name for Ramesses II, a ruler of Ancient Egypt  
 antique — ancient  
 trunkless — without a torso  
 visage — face  
 pedestal — base of a statue  
 colossal — very large



# Percy Bysshe Shelley

Percy Bysshe Shelley was a 'Romantic' poet, who only really became famous after his death. He wrote 'Ozymandias' in 1817, after hearing about how an Italian explorer had retrieved the statue from the desert.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The narrator meets a **traveller** who tells him about a **statue** standing in the middle of the desert.
- 2) It's a statue of a **king** who ruled over a past civilisation. His face is **proud** and he arrogantly **boasts** about how **powerful** he is in an **inscription** on the statue's base.
- 3) However, the statue has fallen down and **crumbled away** so that only the ruins remain.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem is a **sonnet**, with a **turning-point** (volta) at line 9 like a **Petrarchan** sonnet. However, it doesn't follow a regular sonnet rhyme scheme, perhaps reflecting the way that **human power** and structures can be **destroyed**. It uses **iambic pentameter**, but this is also often **disrupted**. The story is a **second-hand account**, which **distances** the reader even further from the dead king.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The narrator builds up an image of the statue by focusing on **different parts** of it in turn. The poem ends by describing the **enormous desert**, which helps to sum up the **insignificance** of the statue.
- 3) **IRONY** — There's **nothing** left to show for the ruler's arrogant boasting or his great civilisation. The ruined statue can be seen as a **symbol** for the temporary nature of **political power** or human **achievement**. Shelley's use of irony reflects his **hatred** of **oppression** and his belief that it is possible to **overturn** social and political **order**.
- 4) **LANGUAGE OF POWER** — The poem focuses on the power of **Ozymandias**, representing **human** power. However his power has been **lost** and is only visible due to the power of **art**. Ultimately, **nature** has **ruined** the statue, showing that **nature** and **time** have more **power** than anything else.
- 5) **ANGRY LANGUAGE** — The **tyranny** of the ruler is suggested through **aggressive** language.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **PRIDE** — The ruler was **proud** of what he'd achieved. He called on other rulers to **admire** what he did.
- 2) **ARROGANCE** — The inscription shows that the ruler **believed** that he was the most powerful ruler in the land — nobody else could **compete** with him. He also thought he was **better** than those he ruled.
- 3) **POWER** — Human civilisations and achievements are **insignificant** compared to the passing of **time**. **Art** has the power to **preserve** elements of human existence, but it is also only **temporary**.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

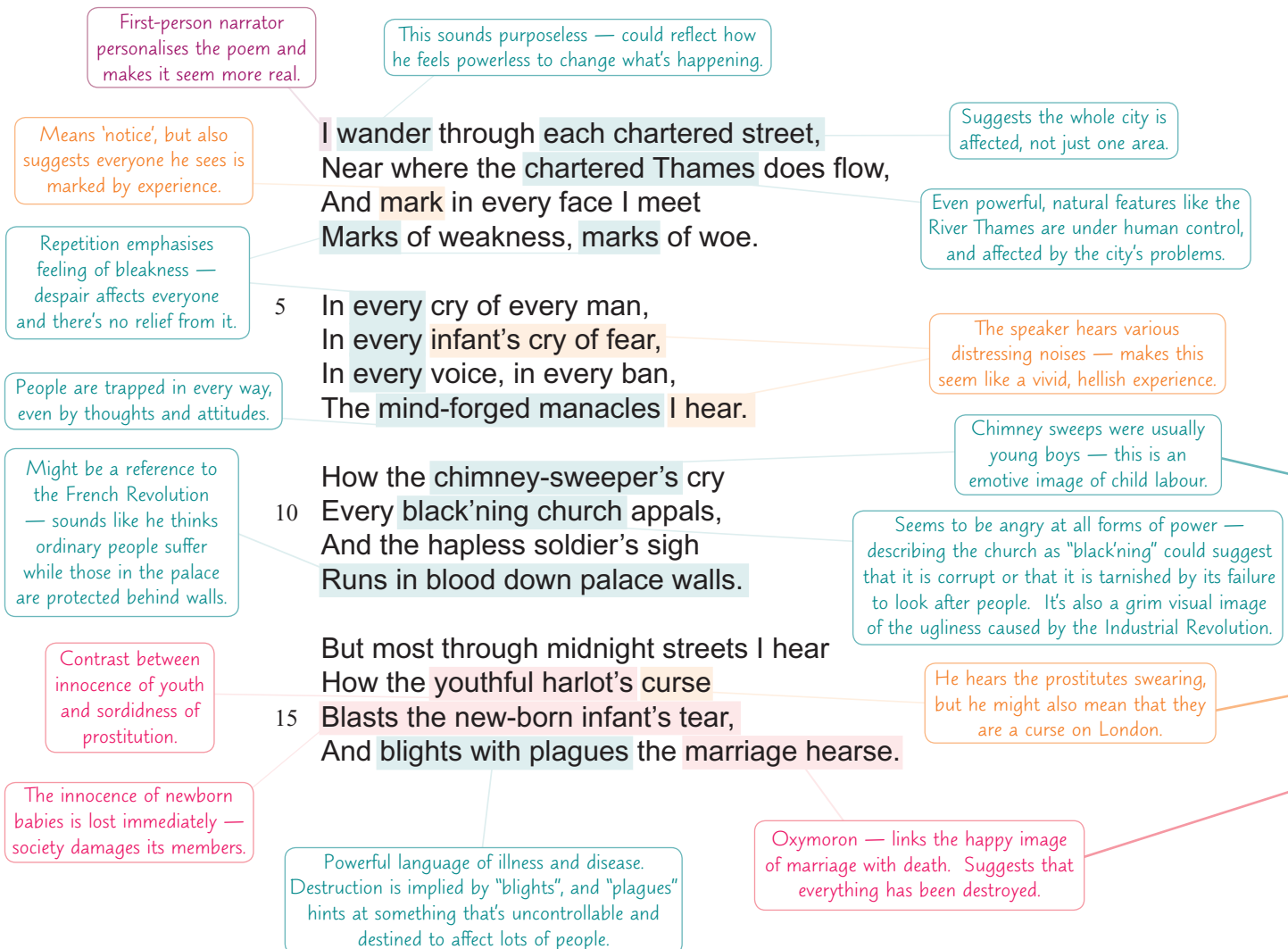
- Q1. Why do you think the poem is set in a vague "antique" land?
- Q2. Why do you think "Nothing beside remains" comes directly after the ruler's proud inscription?
- Q3. What does the poem suggest about the way Ozymandias ruled?
- Q4. How might Shelley's status as a 'Romantic' poet have affected the tone of the poem?



### ***Power of humans, power of nature, pride...***

Compare Shelley's presentation of human power, pride, and life represented in art with Browning's in 'My Last Duchess'. The power of nature is also important in 'The Prelude', 'Exposure' and 'Storm on the Island'.

# London



Context — 'Songs of Innocence and of Experience'  
Blake wrote and illustrated two volumes of poetry which explored the state of the human soul. The 'Songs of Innocence' are positive poems which focus on childhood, nature and love, whereas the 'Songs of Experience' (including 'London') look at how that innocence is lost, and how society has been corrupted.

**POEM DICTIONARY**  
chartered — mapped out or legally defined  
woe — sadness  
ban — can mean either 'a curse' or 'to prohibit'  
manacles — handcuffs  
hapless — unfortunate  
harlot — a prostitute

# William Blake

'London' was published in 1794. William Blake was an English poet and artist who held quite radical social and political views for the time — he believed in social and racial equality and questioned Church teachings.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The narrator is describing a **walk** round the city of London.
- 2) He says that **everywhere** he goes, the people he meets are affected by **misery** and **despair**.
- 3) This misery seems **relentless**. **No one** can escape it — not even the **young** and innocent.
- 4) People in **power** (like the Church, the monarchy and wealthy landowners) seem to be **behind** the problems, and do **nothing** to **help** the people in need.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — This is a **dramatic monologue** — the first-person narrator speaks passionately and personally about the suffering he sees. The **ABAB** rhyme scheme is **unbroken** and seems to echo the **relentless** misery of the city. The regular **rhythm** could reflect the sound of his **feet** as he **trudges** around.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The narrator presents **relentless** images of **downtrodden**, **deprived** people. The first two stanzas focus on **people** he sees and hears, before the focus **shifts** in stanza three to the **institutions** he holds responsible. The final stanza returns to looking at **people**, showing how even **newborn babies** are affected.
- 3) **RHETORIC** — The narrator uses rhetorical language to **persuade** you of his point of view — he uses powerful, **emotive** words and images to **reinforce** the horror of the situation. **Repetition** is used to emphasise the **number** of people affected, and to show how society needs to **change**.
- 4) **USE OF THE SENSES** — The poem includes the depressing **sights** and **sounds** of the city — the first stanza is about what he **sees**, the second what he **hears**, and the last two stanzas combine the **visual** and **aural**.
- 5) **CONTRASTS** — These are used to **show** how **everything** is affected and **nothing** pure or innocent remains.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **ANGER** — **Emotive language** and **repetition** show the narrator's **anger** at the situation. He mentions "every black'ning church" and "palace walls", suggesting he's especially angry at the people in **power**, who could do something to **change** things but **don't**.
- 2) **HOPELESSNESS** — The "mind-forged manacles" suggest that the **people themselves** are also to blame — they're **trapped** by their own attitudes. They appear hopeless because they're not able (or not even trying) to help **themselves**.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Why do you think the poem is written in the first person?
- Q2. What is the effect of repetition in the poem?
- Q3. What does the phrase "mind-forged manacles" (line 8) suggest about the people of London?
- Q4. What is the effect of setting the final stanza on "midnight streets"?



### **Individual experiences, anger, loss and absence...**

'The Prelude' and 'The Emigrée' present contrasting individual experiences of a place — one is a negative experience of a rural environment and the other a positive experience of a remembered city.

# The Prelude: Stealing the Boat

Unclear here who 'her' is. An earlier part of the poem suggests it's nature, personified.

Happy, rural image.

Narrator appears confident.

Oxymoron hints at the narrator's guilt.

Seems familiar to him.

The narrator knows he's doing something wrong — this is the first clue that something isn't quite right.

The succession of 'I' sounds helps the poem flow, like the boat moving gently across the lake.

Again, narrator seems confident, maybe a bit arrogant. This contrasts with the mood later in the poem.

This emptiness contrasts with line 22, when he looks at the horizon again. This makes the appearance of the mountain more shocking.

The metaphor of 'a fairy boat' makes the scene seem magical and otherworldly, but still not threatening.

The natural simile shows that he's confident and in control — enhances the contrast with the next line.

Turning-point (volta) introduces a complete change in tone. The simple word is emphasised by being at the start of the line and by the caesura.

A mountain appears on the horizon. Very different language now — darker and more threatening.

The mountain is personified. Ugly image — contrast to earlier beautiful images of the boat ('elfin', 'swan').

As the narrator rows away from the mountain, more and more of it comes into view. This means it seems like the mountain is getting bigger, and makes this sound like a nightmare.

The mountain is calm, powerful and in control — contrasts with the narrator's fear.

The repetition of sibilant sounds creates a sinister mood.

He's afraid and guilty, and wants to hide away — he feels like an intruder.

The impact was long lasting.

The vague language shows that the narrator doesn't understand what he's seen — he's struggling to describe it.

The event has had a big impact on him — 'grave' means serious, but may also be a reminder of his own mortality.

The narrator is left feeling alone and unsettled.

Nature is described as a powerful, conscious being that can influence our lives.

The narrator no longer thinks of nature in terms of pretty images — he's learnt there's more to it than that.

Unsettling image — helps us to empathise with him. Huge contrast to the tone and mood at start.

## Context — 'The Prelude'

This is an extract from the first of fourteen books that make up Wordsworth's poem, 'The Prelude'. The book is entitled 'Introduction — Childhood and School-Time'. Wordsworth was a 'Romantic' poet (see p.2). Like other 'Romantic' poetry, this extract explores the connection between nature and human emotion, and the way human identity and character is shaped by experience.

## POEM DICTIONARY

stealth — secrecy  
pinnacle — a small boat  
lustily — enthusiastically  
covert — shelter  
bark — an old type of sailing boat

One summer evening (led by her) I found  
A little boat tied to a willow tree  
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.  
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in  
5 Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth  
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice  
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;  
Leaving behind her still, on either side,  
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,  
10 Until they melted all into one track  
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,  
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point  
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view  
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,  
15 The horizon's utmost boundary; far above  
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.  
She was an elfin pinnacle; lustily  
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,  
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat  
20 Went heaving through the water like a swan;  
When, from behind that craggy steep till then  
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,  
As if with voluntary power instinct,  
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,  
25 And growing still in stature the grim shape  
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,  
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own  
And measured motion like a living thing,  
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,  
30 And through the silent water stole my way  
Back to the covert of the willow tree;  
There in her mooring-place I left my bark, —  
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave  
And serious mood; but after I had seen  
35 That spectacle, for many days, my brain  
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense  
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts  
There hung a darkness, call it solitude  
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes  
40 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,  
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;  
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live  
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind  
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

# William Wordsworth

William Wordsworth was a poet from the Lake District. 'The Prelude' is an autobiographical poem — it explores key moments and experiences in Wordsworth's life. It was published shortly after his death in 1850.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The extract begins on a summer evening when the narrator finds a **boat** tied to a tree. He **unties** the boat and takes it out on the **lake**.
- 2) Initially the narrator seems **happy** and **confident**, and he describes a beautiful scene. A **mountain** appears on the horizon and the narrator is **afraid** of its **size** and **power**.
- 3) He turns the boat around and goes home, but his view of nature has **changed**.



The mountain scared Bill, but he wasn't sure why.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — This extract is a **first-person narrative**. It sounds personal and describes a turning point in the poet's life. The use of **blank verse** (unrhymed verse in **iambic pentameter**) makes it sound serious and important, and the **regular rhythm** makes it sound like **natural speech**.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — There are three main sections in the extract. In the first, the **tone** is fairly **light** and **carefree**. There's a **distinct change** when the mountain appears — the tone becomes **darker** and more **fearful**. In the final section, the narrator **reflects** on how the experience has **changed** him.
- 3) **BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE** — The poem begins with a series of **pretty, pastoral images** of nature.
- 4) **CONFIDENT LANGUAGE** — The narrator appears **sure** of himself at first — almost **arrogant** in his view of himself and his place in the world. He gives the impression of feeling **powerful**.
- 5) **DRAMATIC LANGUAGE** — The initial glimpses of **threatening** language become more **intense** after the **mountain** appears. The narrator comes to understand how **powerful** nature is.
- 6) **FEARFUL LANGUAGE** — The narrator is far **less confident** at the end of the extract. He's troubled by the **"huge and mighty forms"** of nature he's glimpsed. The experience has a lasting, **haunting** effect on him.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **CONFIDENCE** — The narrator feels **comfortable** and **in control** to start with, but his confidence **in himself** and the **world around him** is **shaken** by this one event.
- 2) **FEAR** — Nature is shown to be more **powerful** than a human being. The narrator is left with a feeling of **awe** and **respect** for nature, but he's also **scared** by it.
- 3) **REFLECTION** — The poem **ends** with the narrator reflecting on how he's been **changed** by the event. His **thoughts** and **dreams** are still **troubled** by what he's experienced.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. What does the phrase "troubled pleasure" (line 6) suggest about the narrator's actions and feelings?
- Q2. What is the effect of the repetition of "and" in lines 24-29?
- Q3. Can you empathise with the narrator? Is his reaction understandable?
- Q4. What impression of nature do you have by the end of the poem?



### ***The power of nature, fear, individual experiences...***

Nature is presented as being very powerful and frightening in several other poems, including 'Exposure' and 'Storm on the Island'. The narrator of 'Remains' has also been changed by a personal experience.

# My Last Duchess

Context — Duke Alfonso II of Ferrara

Ferrara is a region of Italy. In 1561, the Duke of Ferrara's wife, Lucrezia, died in suspicious circumstances — there were rumours she was poisoned. Hearing about this event probably inspired Browning to write this poem.

**Ferrara**

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
Looking as if she were alive. I call  
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands  
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.  
5 Will't please you sit and look at her? I said  
'Frà Pandolf' by design, for never read  
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,  
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,  
But to myself they turned (since none puts by  
10 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst  
How such a glance came there; so, not the first  
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
15 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
Frà Pandolf chanced to say 'Her mantle laps  
Over my lady's wrist too much,' or 'Paint  
Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
Half-flush that dies along her throat': such stuff  
20 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough  
For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made glad,  
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er  
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.  
25 Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,  
The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
The bough of cherries some officious fool  
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule  
She rode with round the terrace — all and each  
30 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,  
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, — good! but thanked  
Somehow — I know not how — as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame  
35 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
In speech — (which I have not) — to make your will  
Quite clear to such an one, and say, 'Just this  
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,  
Or there exceed the mark' — and if she let  
40 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,  
— E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose  
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,  
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without  
45 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;  
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands  
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet  
The company below, then. I repeat,  
The Count your master's known munificence  
50 Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed  
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,  
55 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Sounds as if he owns the Duchess herself, not just the picture of her.

Sets a sinister tone.

The name of the artist.

The punctuation doesn't end the line, with the Duke speaking again immediately — he doesn't give his visitor a chance to speak.

Sounds polite, but he's really being quite forceful here.

He controls who looks at the painting, but he couldn't control who looked at his wife when she was alive.

Suggests people were scared of his temper.

Creates the impression of a question from the visitor, but we hear it through the Duke — he's in complete control.

Reference to death is out of place and suspicious — it hints at the Duchess's fate.

Repeating this shows that his wife's blushes bother him.

The Duke struggles to express his irritation.

She flirted a lot — the Duke thinks so anyway.

She was cheery and friendly — but the Duke means this as a criticism.

Enjambment makes it sound as if he's getting carried away by his anger.

He sounds as if he's justifying himself — he's defensive.

The punctuation and repetition here creates a stuttering effect, which underlines his exasperation with her behaviour.

Repetition of "stoop" in lines 34, 42 and 43 hints at how the Duke felt his wife was beneath him.

He's proud of his history, his important family and the titles of "Duke" and "Duchess".

False modesty — he clearly does like speaking.

This word suggests he was more bothered about the Duchess's behaviour than he's letting on.

The Duke is so proud that even criticising his wife would have been beneath him — he believes she shouldn't need to be reminded how to behave.

This seems to be a euphemism for his wife's murder. "I gave commands" is cold and cynical.

He sounds suspicious of her — maybe he thought she was being unfaithful.

He's arranging his next marriage — his Next Duchess.

He returns to the subject of his art collection, which emphasises his power and wealth. The story of his last Duchess is a subtle warning to his visitor about how he expects his next wife to behave.

## POEM DICTIONARY

countenance — face  
durst — dare  
mantle — cloak  
bough — branch  
officious — interfering  
forsooth — indeed  
munificence — generosity  
dowry — money paid to a man by his bride's family when they marry  
avowed — said  
Neptune — Roman god of the sea

# Robert Browning

Browning was born in England but lived in Italy for many years. He was fascinated by the Italian Renaissance (14th-16th centuries) — a period in which the arts flourished. 'My Last Duchess' was published in 1842.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The Duke proudly points out the **portrait** of the Duchess (his former wife) to a visitor.
- 2) The Duke was angered by the Duchess's **behaviour** — she was **friendly** towards everyone and he was annoyed that she treated him just like **anyone else**.
- 3) He acted to **stop** the Duchess's **flirtatious behaviour**, but he doesn't say how he did this. There are strong hints that he had her **murdered**.
- 4) The Duke and his guest **walk away** from the painting and the reader discovers that the Duke's visitor has come to arrange the Duke's **next marriage**.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem is a **dramatic monologue** written in iambic pentameter. This reinforces the impression that the Duke is in **conversation** with his visitor. The **rhyming couplets** show the Duke's desire for **control**, but the **enjambment** suggests that he gets **carried away** with his **anger** and passions. This creates a picture of a somewhat **unstable** character, whose obsession with **power** is **unsettling**.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem is **framed** by the visit to the Duke's **gallery**, but the Duke gets caught up in talking about the Duchess instead of just describing the art. The poem **builds** towards a kind of **confession**, before the identity of the visitor is **revealed**, and the Duke moves on to talking about another artwork.
- 3) **POWER AND OBJECTIFICATION** — The Duke felt the need to have **power** and **control** over the Duchess. He saw her as another of his **possessions**, to be collected and admired, just like his expensive artworks.
- 4) **DRAMATIC IRONY** — The things the Duke says about the Duchess seem quite **innocent**, but they often have more **sinister** meanings for the reader. There's a **gap** between what the Duke tells his listener, and what the poet allows us to read **between the lines**.
- 5) **STATUS** — Status is really **important** to the Duke. He **cares** about how others see him.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **PRIDE** — The Duke is very proud of his **possessions** and his **status**.
- 2) **JEALOUSY** — He **couldn't stand** the way the Duchess treated him **the same** as everyone else (lines 31-34).
- 3) **POWER** — The Duke enjoys the **control** he has over the painting (lines 9-10). He didn't have this power over the Duchess when she was alive.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Do you think the Duke ever had any affection for the Duchess? Why / Why not?
- Q2. How is the Duke's view of himself different from the way the reader sees him?
- Q3. Is the title of the poem effective? Why? Can you think of a suitable alternative title?
- Q4. Why do you think the Duke is the only one who speaks in the poem?



### ***Pride, power of humans...***

Compare the Duke's pride and craving for power with the dead king's attitude and desires in 'Ozymandias'. You could also look at how the abuse of power is presented in this poem and 'Checking Out Me History'.

# The Charge of the Light Brigade

I

Half a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

5 'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns!' he said:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

II

10 'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Was there a man dismay'd?  
Not tho' the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder'd:  
Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do and die:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

III

20 Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley'd and thunder'd;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred.

IV

30 Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
Flash'd as they turn'd in air  
Sabring the gunners there,  
Charging an army, while  
All the world wonder'd:  
Plunged in the battery-smoke  
Right thro' the line they broke;  
Cossack and Russian  
35 Reel'd from the sabre stroke  
Shatter'd and sunder'd.  
Then they rode back, but not  
Not the six hundred.

V

40 Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon behind them  
Volley'd and thunder'd;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While horse and hero fell,  
45 They that had fought so well  
Came thro' the jaws of Death  
Back from the mouth of Hell,  
All that was left of them,  
Left of six hundred.

VI

50 When can their glory fade?  
O the wild charge they made!  
All the world wonder'd.  
Honour the charge they made!  
Honour the Light Brigade,  
55 Noble six hundred!

The rhythm sounds like galloping horses' hooves — it gives the impression that the horses are unstoppable.

Sounds sinister — the reader is warned right from the start that something bad is going to happen.

They're presented as one group with one purpose.

The commanding officer is speaking here.

Soldiers realise the order was a mistake but do what they're told because it's their duty to obey orders. The poet respects them for this.

Rhyme and repetition emphasise the soldiers' obedience and sense of duty, even though they know they will almost certainly be killed.

There's a line in the Bible that says "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil" (Psalm 23). Using Biblical references makes the poem seem solemn and significant.

Repetition at the start and end of the lines reflects the way the soldiers are surrounded by the enemy's guns. It also replicates the sound of gunfire.

Sibilance emphasises the idea of ammunition flying towards them.

The first three stanzas end with the same line. It adds to the sense of foreboding and reminds us of the number of soldiers.

These images personify death and hell and make them seem like monsters that the soldiers can't escape from.

The repetition of "Flash'd" and the rhyme create a powerful image of the cavalry using their swords.

This reminds us that the cavalry only had swords against the Russian guns.

Double meaning — could mean that people marvelled at their bravery or that they wondered why they had been sent on the charge. This poem was written in 1854 in response to a newspaper article about the battle. Many newspapers at the time were critical of the Crimean War, but this poem focuses on the bravery of the soldiers rather than the mistakes of the military leaders.

Several lines begin with verbs, emphasising the action and increasing the pace of the poem.

The sibilance here sounds vicious.

The repetition of "not" emphasises the fact that some of the brigade have been killed. It also creates a broken, stuttering effect, making it sound almost as if the speaker is upset.

Powerful, onomatopoeic verbs suggest the noise from the cannons.

Similar to the opening lines of stanza 3, but now the soldiers are retreating.

The sense of admiration is touched with sadness.

The repetition of "left of" reminds us that lives have been lost, and makes the poem sound sad.

Sounds dramatic and daring.

This is a rhetorical question that challenges the reader.

This command is repeated to leave the reader with the idea that they should honour the cavalry.

POEM DICTIONARY  
sabres — long curved swords  
sabring — to cut or wound with a sabre  
battery — a group of cannons  
Cossack — a warrior from southern Russia and Ukraine



# Alfred Tennyson

Alfred Tennyson was one of the greatest poets of the Victorian era, and was Poet Laureate from 1850 until his death in 1892. He wrote this poem in 1854 as a tribute to the men who died in the battle it describes.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The poem describes a disastrous **battle** between **British cavalry** (soldiers on horseback) and **Russian forces** during the **Crimean War** (1853-1856).
- 2) A **misunderstanding** meant that the Light Brigade were ordered to **advance** into a valley surrounded by **enemy soldiers**.
- 3) The cavalry were only armed with **swords**, whereas the Russian soldiers had **guns**. The Light Brigade were virtually **defenceless** against their enemies, and many of them were **killed**.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem's narrated in the **third person**, making it seem like a **story**. The regular, relentless **rhythm** creates a fast pace, imitating the cavalry's advance and the **energy** of the battle. Rhyming **couplets** and **triplets** drive the poem forwards, but the momentum is **broken** by unrhymed lines, which could mirror the **horses stumbling** and **soldiers falling**. The overall lack of rhyme scheme hints at the **chaos** of war.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem tells the story of the battle in **chronological order**, from the **charge** of the men in the first three stanzas, to the **battle** in the fourth and the **retreat** in the fifth. The final stanza is shorter and **summarises** the **heroism** of the brigade.
- 3) **REPETITION** — Repetition creates a sense of **impending doom** and **inevitability**. Repetition of "**six hundred**" at the end of each stanza reinforces the idea of the **large numbers** of men involved, with the references to them **summarising** the story of the **battle**.
- 4) **HEROIC LANGUAGE** — Adverbs like "**Boldly**" and verbs like "**Charging**" emphasise the men's **bravery**. **Respectful** language shows how the narrator feels the soldiers should be **remembered**.
- 5) **VIOLENT LANGUAGE** — The narrator chooses **powerful** verbs and adjectives to give a strong sense of the **violence** of the battle, and uses **sounds** to create a vivid, noisy, **hellish** setting.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **ADMIRATION** — The narrator admires the **bravery** and **sacrifice** of the men because they **obeyed orders** even though they knew death was likely. He thinks that the world should **recognise** their bravery and **appreciate** their sacrifice.
- 2) **PATRIOTISM** — The men followed the orders because of their **duty** to their **country**, and the speaker portrays them as **heroes** for doing this.
- 3) **HORROR** — There's a suggestion that the narrator is horrified by the **violence** of the battle.



Derek was relieved his horse hadn't learnt how to charge yet.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. How does the phrase "jaws of Death" (line 46) make you feel? Explain your answer.
- Q2. How does the narrator convey the terror and violence of the battle?
- Q3. Why do you think the stanzas in the poem are numbered?



### Effects of conflict, reality of war...

'Poppies', 'Remains' and 'War Photographer' are all good poems to look at alongside this one if you're thinking about the effects of conflict. 'Bayonet Charge' and 'Exposure' work well for the reality of war.

# Exposure

This is a shared, painful experience.

Lots of different emotions — another reason why their brains hurt.

The "brambles" of the barbed wire remind us of the pain caused by nature.

This is a Biblical reference to Matthew 24:6, where Jesus foretells the end of the world. He says "You will hear of wars and rumours of wars".

Dawn is personified using the language of battle. Normally dawn brings hope, but not here.

Sibilance mimics the whistling sound of bullets flying.

Alliteration emphasises the relentlessness of the snow.

Another question, possibly answering the first question — they're here to die.

Assonance of long 'oh' sounds makes the imagined journey sound painful and slow.

Fires offer them no warmth — they look like jewels, which are precious but cold.

Suggests that they believe they're sacrificing themselves in order for life at home to be preserved.

Vivid image of what exposure to the cold does to their bodies.

Final stanza ends in same way as first stanza, suggesting that even death doesn't change anything.

Nature is personified and seems to be attacking them.

Ellipses hint that they're waiting for something to happen — it never does.

The short, simple half line emphasises their boredom and tension.

Assonance and onomatopoeia create a vivid aural description.

Rhetorical question asks what the point of it all is.

No colour — the battlefield is cold and lifeless. Grey was also the colour of German uniforms, so this aligns nature with the enemy.

The description of dawn approaching mirrors the soldiers in the trenches.

Snow is normally white (symbolising purity), but here it's black (symbolising evil or death).

The snowflakes are personified — they're maliciously seeking the men's faces.

Half-rhyme creates a link between their current situation and their dreams of the past.

The caesurae in this stanza create a division on each line, which reflects how the men are shut out of their homes. This also reflects the soldiers' concern that people back home were losing interest in their fate as the war dragged on.

Could mean that their love of God is disappearing, or that they feel God's love for them is dying.

Metaphor refers to the eyes of the living and the dead men — it's a vivid description of how they've been overpowered by nature. It hints that the living men are no longer able to feel any emotion.

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knive us...  
Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent...  
Low, drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient...  
Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,  
5 But nothing happens.

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire,  
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.  
Northward, incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,  
Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.  
10 What are we doing here?

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow...  
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.  
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army  
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey,  
15 But nothing happens.

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.  
Less deathly than the air that shudders black with snow,  
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause, and renew;  
We watch them wandering up and down the wind's nonchalance,  
20 But nothing happens.

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces —  
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare, snow-dazed,  
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,  
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses,  
25 — Is it that we are dying?

Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires, glozed  
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;  
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;  
Shutters and doors, all closed: on us the doors are closed, —  
30 We turn back to our dying.

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;  
Nor ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.  
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;  
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,  
35 For love of God seems dying.

Tonight, this frost will fasten on this mud and us,  
Shrivelling many hands, puckering foreheads crisp.  
The burying-party, picks and shovels in shaking grasp,  
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,  
40 But nothing happens.

## POEM DICTIONARY

salient — a section of trenches that reached into enemy territory  
sentries — soldiers watching for danger  
glozed — a combination of 'glowing' and 'glazed'  
poignant — painfully sad  
loath — unwilling  
puckering — contracting into wrinkles or folds

# Wilfred Owen

Wilfred Owen wrote 'Exposure' in 1917-18 from the trenches of World War One, not long before he was killed in battle. Much of Owen's poetry reveals his anger at the war's waste of life and its horrific conditions.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) **Soldiers** in the **trenches** of World War One are **awake** at night, **afraid** of an enemy attack.
- 2) However, **nature** seems to be their **main enemy** — it's freezing cold, windy and snowing.
- 3) The men **imagine** returning **home**, but the doors there are **closed** to them. They believe that **sacrificing** themselves in the war is the only way of keeping their loved ones at home **safe**.
- 4) They return to **thinking** about their **deaths** in the icy, bleak trenches.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem's written in the **present tense** using the **first person plural** (e.g. "Our", "We", "us"). This **collective voice** shows how the experience was **shared** by soldiers across the war. Each stanza has a **regular rhyme scheme** (ABBAC), reflecting the **monotonous** nature of the men's experience, but the rhymes are often **half-rhymes** (e.g. "snow" & "renew"). The rhyme scheme offers no **comfort** or **satisfaction** — the rhymes are **jagged** like the reality of the men's experience and reflect their **confusion** and **fading energy**. Each stanza **ends** with a **half line**, leaving a gap which mirrors the lack of activity or **hope** for the men.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem has **eight** stanzas, but there's **no real progression** — the last stanza **ends** with the **same words** as the first one, reflecting the **monotony** of life in the trenches and the **absence** of change.
- 3) **QUESTIONS** — The poem uses rhetorical questions to ask **why** the men are **exposed** to such dreadful conditions, and whether there's any **point** to their **suffering**.
- 4) **BLEAK LANGUAGE** — The poem includes lots of **bleak imagery** to remind the reader of the **men's pain**, the **awful weather** and the lack of **hope** for the soldiers. **Assonance**, **onomatopoeia** and carefully chosen **verbs** add to the bleak mood and make the descriptions **vivid** and **distressing**.
- 5) **PERSONIFICATION** — **Nature** is repeatedly **personified**, making it seem the **real enemy** in the war.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **SUFFERING** — There are reminders of the real, physical **pain** that the soldiers experience, as well as their **exhaustion** and **fatigue**. Even thinking about **home** is painful for the men as they're **not welcome** there.
- 2) **BOREDOM** — There's a sense of **frustration** at their situation — they are "Worried", "Watching" and waiting, but "**nothing happens**" and the men are left to **contemplate** their own **deaths**.
- 3) **HOPELESSNESS** — The soldiers are **helpless** against the power of **nature** and there is nothing they can do to **change** their situation. The poem offers **little hope** of a **future** for the men.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

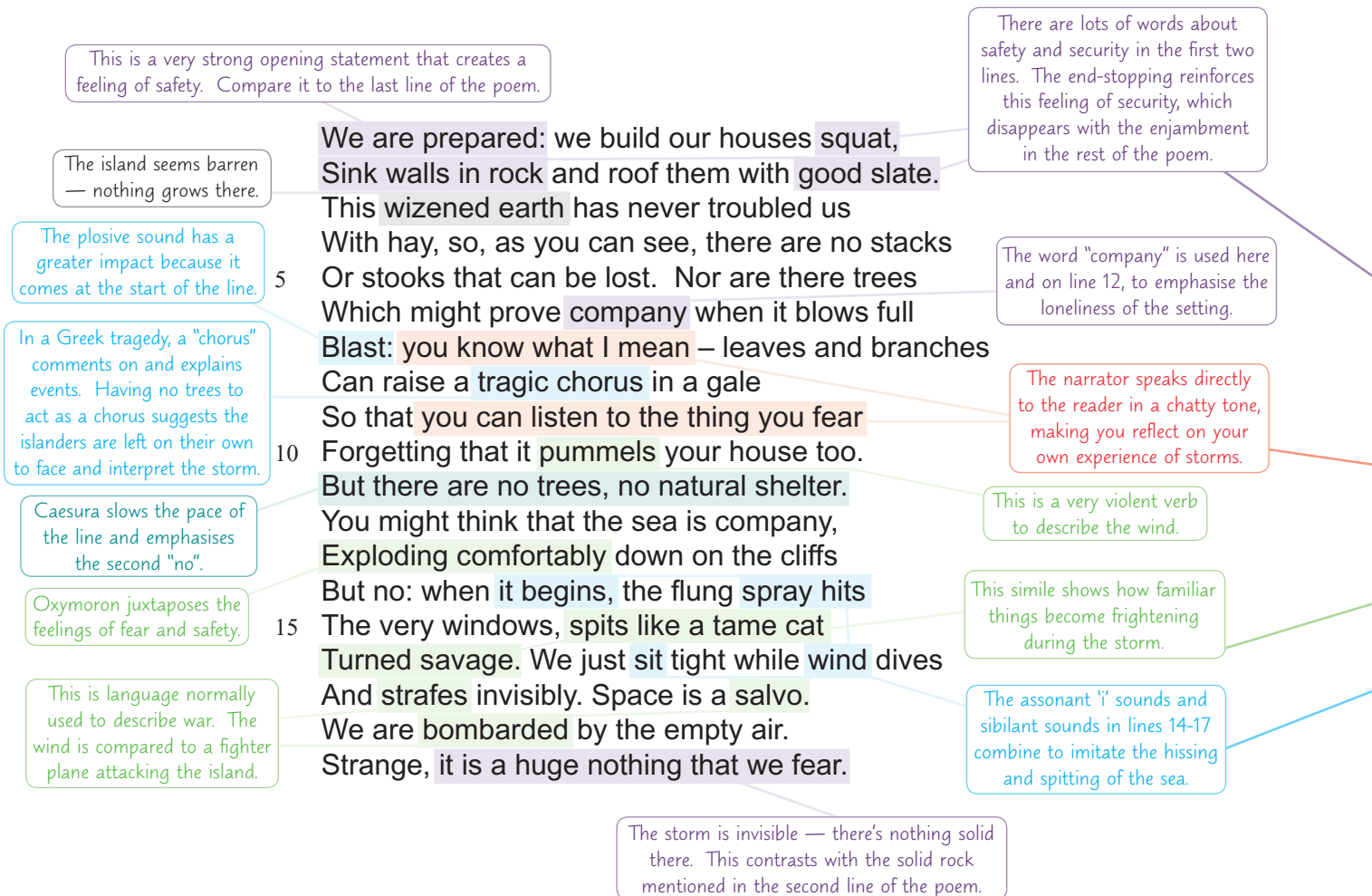
- Q1. What do you think the title is referring to? Could it have more than one meaning?
- Q2. Do you think the men are relieved about a new day dawning? How can you tell?
- Q3. Why do you think the word "ghosts" is used to describe the men thinking about going home?



### **Reality of war, power of nature, loss and absence...**

The reality of war is also a key theme in 'Charge of the Light Brigade' and 'Bayonet Charge', while 'Storm on the Island' focuses on the power of nature. 'London' is another poem with a total absence of hope.

# Storm on the Island



## Context — Northern Ireland

The first eight letters of the poem's title spell 'Stormont'. 'Stormont' is the name given to Northern Ireland's parliament buildings. This hints that the 'storm' could be about some of the violent political disturbances that Ireland has experienced, e.g. between Catholics and Protestants, or Irish republicans wanting independence from Britain.

## POEM DICTIONARY

wizened — dried up  
stooks — bundles of a crop stacked together and left in a field to dry  
strafe — to rake with gunfire at close range, often from the air  
salvo — lots of guns firing at once

# Seamus Heaney

Seamus Heaney was a Northern Irish poet who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995 and died in 2013. He often wrote about themes such as childhood, nature and his homeland. This poem was published in 1966.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The narrator describes how a community thinks it's **well-prepared** for a coming storm.
- 2) As the poem goes on, their **confidence** starts to disappear as the storm develops. The **power** and the **sounds** of the storm are described.
- 3) The ending of the poem describes the **fear** as the storm hits the island.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem is written in **blank verse**, which mirrors the patterns of **everyday speech** and makes the poem sound like part of a **conversation**. The first person plural ("We") is used, showing how this is a collective, communal experience. The poem is all in **one stanza** — it's **compact** and **sturdy**, like the **houses**.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem **shifts** from security to fear. "**But no:**" seems to be a **turning point** (volta), with the slow pace of the **monosyllabic phrase** and the **caesura** reflecting the last moments of **calm** before the storm.
- 3) **CONTRASTING DESCRIPTIONS OF SAFETY AND FEAR** — The narrator uses a lot of words to do with **safety** and **security** at the beginning of the poem. The tone changes though, and the sense of **danger** increases as **familiar** things become **frightening** during the storm.
- 4) **DIRECT ADDRESS** — The narrator involves the **reader** in his fear by speaking **directly** to "you".
- 5) **VIOLENT IMAGERY** — The storm is described in violent, often **warlike** terms, with **similes**, **metaphors** and **personification** combining to emphasise the **danger** and effects of the storm.
- 6) **USE OF SOUNDS** — **Forceful** sounds (e.g. "**Blast**") are used to demonstrate the **strength** of nature, and the poem also uses **assonant** and **sibilant** sounds to reflect the **noise** of the wind and waves.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **SAFETY** — The first part of the poem shows that the community feels **safe**, and **prepared** for the storm.
- 2) **FEAR** — This sense of security soon changes to **fear**, as familiar things **change** and become **frightening**.
- 3) **HELPLESSNESS** — The people can't do **anything** about their fear except wait for the storm to **finish**. Nature is presented as a **powerful**, relentless force.



Steve saw the storm as the perfect opportunity to try out his new kite.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

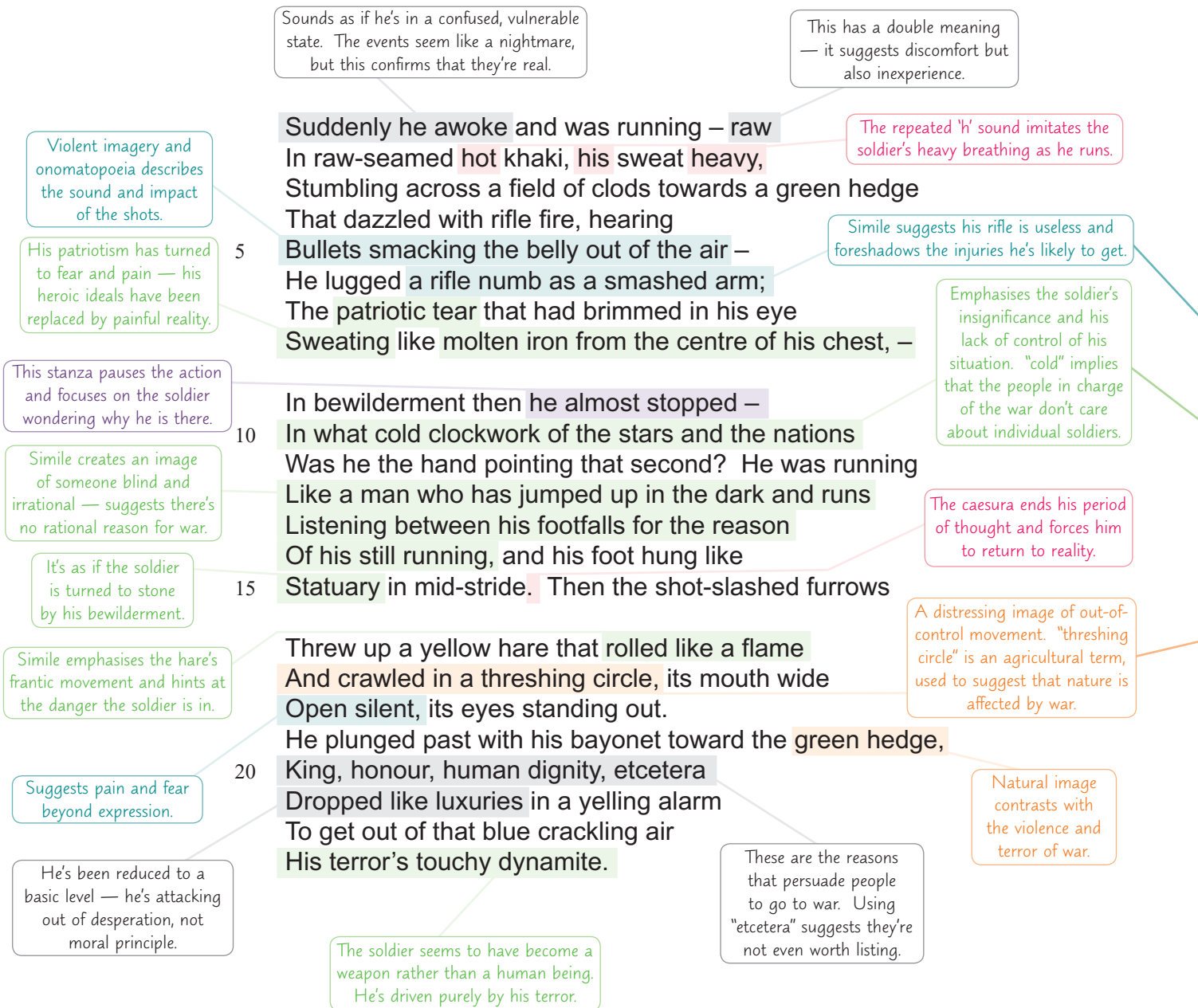
- Q1. Do you think the speaker likes living on the island? Why / why not?
- Q2. What's the effect of describing the "leaves and branches" as a "tragic chorus"?
- Q3. Why do you think the poem addresses the reader directly? What effect does it have on you?
- Q4. What is the effect of comparing the sea to a "tame cat / Turned savage"?



### **Power of nature, fear, individual experiences of place...**

If you're writing about fear or the power of nature, look at 'Bayonet Charge' or 'The Prelude'. You could consider how feelings for a place are presented in this poem compared with 'The Emigrée' or 'London'.

# Bayonet Charge



## Context — World War One

Although it was written much later, the poem is set during World War One. It describes a soldier going 'over the top' — this was when soldiers climbed out of their trenches and charged towards enemy lines, carrying their bayonets. These charges usually resulted in heavy casualties.

## POEM DICTIONARY

bayonet — a blade / knife that's attached to the end of a rifle  
clods — lumps of earth  
statuary — a group of statues  
threshing — thrashing, or the beating of crops (e.g. corn) to separate the crop from the straw

# Ted Hughes

Ted Hughes was a 20th-century English poet. His father served in and survived World War One, and Ted spent two years as a mechanic in the RAF before going to university. 'Bayonet Charge' was published in 1957.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The poem focuses on a single soldier's experience of a **charge** towards **enemy lines**. It describes his **thoughts** and **actions** as he tries to stay **alive**.
- 2) The soldier's overriding emotion and motivation is **fear**, which has replaced the more **patriotic ideals** that he held before the violence began.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem uses **enjambment** and **caesura**, and has lines of **uneven length**. This creates an **irregular rhythm**, which mirrors the soldier **struggling** to run through the mud. The narrator uses the pronoun "**he**" rather than naming the soldier to keep him **anonymous**. It suggests that he is a **universal** figure who could represent **any** young soldier.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem starts *in medias res* (in the middle of the action) and covers the soldier's movements and thoughts over a short space of time. The first stanza sees the soldier acting on **instinct**, but **time** seems to **stand still** in the second stanza, when the soldier begins to **think** about his situation. In the final stanza, he **gives up** his thoughts and ideals and seems to have lost his **humanity**.
- 3) **VIOLENT IMAGERY** — There is some shocking imagery which brings home the sights and sounds of war. This helps to strongly convey the sense of **confusion** and **fear**.
- 4) **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE** — The poem includes powerful **figurative language** to emphasise the **horror** and **physical pain** of the charge, and also to question the point of war.
- 5) **NATURAL IMAGERY** — The repeated references to the "**green hedge**" and the mention of a "**field**" and "**threshing circle**" show the **natural, agricultural setting** of the war. The painful image of the "**yellow hare**" reminds the reader of how the natural world is also **damaged** by war.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **TERROR** — The poem **challenges patriotism** and shows how desperate **terror** becomes the overriding emotion in battle. The soldier is driven forward by **fear** rather than any more noble motive.
- 2) **CONFUSION** — The soldier is **physically disorientated** by the gunfire, but he's also **questioning** what he's doing there at all.



Dress sense, self-respect, human dignity etcetera dropped like luxuries.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. How does the middle stanza differ from the other two stanzas?
- Q2. How does the speaker show the soldier changing between the start and the end of the poem?
- Q3. How is natural imagery used in the poem to emphasise the horror of the soldier's situation?
- Q4. What does the poem suggest about the poet's attitude to war?



### Effects of conflict, reality of war, fear...

This poem examines the deadly effects and realities of war — 'Exposure' and 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' do similar things. You could also compare the soldier's fear with that of the narrator in 'The Prelude'.

# Remains

This sounds like one in a series of stories, and the reader is listening in.

On another occasion, we get sent out to tackle looters raiding a bank. And one of them legs it up the road, probably armed, possibly not.

Colloquial expression — makes it sound like an ordinary anecdote.

There's doubt here, which contrasts strongly with the definite action that follows.

5 Well myself and somebody else and somebody else are all of the same mind, so all three of us open fire. Three of a kind all letting fly, and I swear

Repetition sounds like he's keen for the reader to know it wasn't just him — hints that he feels guilty.

This comes as a surprise — the sudden violence doesn't fit with the casual tone.

Poetic voice switches to "I" — this is now more personal.

10 I see every round as it rips through his life — I see broad daylight on the other side. So we've hit this looter a dozen times and he's there on the ground, sort of inside out,

This violent metaphor contrasts shockingly with the colloquial style of the first two stanzas.

Repetition of "I see" emphasises the visual horror of the scene.

This is quite a grotesque, exaggerated image — he says he can see straight through the bullet holes in the man's body.

20 pain itself, the image of agony. One of my mates goes by and tosses his guts back into his body. Then he's carted off in the back of a lorry.

This is an almost childish description of the man's body — the speaker seems unable to process it in an adult way.

Turning point (volta) in the poem. The speaker's mood changes.

Two very casual, cold actions — no respect for the dead man. "tosses" and "carted off" make it sound as if the body is a piece of rubbish.

15 End of story, except not really. His blood-shadow stays on the street, and out on patrol I walk right over it week after week. Then I'm home on leave. But I blink

A visual reminder of the death — it foreshadows the memories that are going to haunt him.

Short, simple sentence suggests he thinks that once he's at home he'll forget the terrible things he's seen. The suddenness of the line also hints at the speaker being confused.

20 and he bursts again through the doors of the bank. Sleep, and he's probably armed, possibly not. Dream, and he's torn apart by a dozen rounds. And the drink and the drugs won't flush him out —

The stanza ending reflects the blinking — the enjambment carries you forwards, and the horror is still there when the next stanza starts.

Short words, separated from the rest of the line by caesurae, sound like gun shots.

25 he's here in my head when I close my eyes, dug in behind enemy lines, not left for dead in some distant, sun-stunned, sand-smothered land or six-feet-under in desert sand,

Repetition of line 4 shows that he's replaying the event in his mind, and hints at his inner turmoil.

The metaphor compares the memory stuck in his mind to a soldier in a trench.

30 but near to the knuckle, here and now, his bloody life in my bloody hands.

The violent parts of the compound adjectives, "stunned" and "smothered", show how the place is affected by war. The long line and the sibilance slow the pace and reflect the speaker's lack of clear thought.

There could be a double meaning to "bloody" — he's talking about the man's blood, but also swearing in anger.

There's no collective responsibility now — he feels completely responsible.

Possible reference to *Macbeth* — after persuading her husband to kill King Duncan, Lady Macbeth sleepwalks and tries to wash imaginary blood from her hands. This allusion hints that the speaker has been unbalanced by his guilt, as Lady Macbeth was.



# Simon Armitage

Armitage is an English poet, playwright and novelist. 'Remains' is from his 2008 collection, *The Not Dead*, which looks at the effect of war on ex-soldiers. It's based on the account of a British soldier who served in Iraq.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) A group of soldiers **shoot** a man who's running away from a **bank raid** he's been involved in. His **death** is described in **graphic detail**.
- 2) The soldier telling the story **isn't sure** whether the man was **armed** or not — this plays on his mind.
- 3) He can't get the man's death **out of his head** — he's **haunted** by it.



Josh was appointed lookout to make sure there'd be no raids on this bank.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — There's no regular **line length** or **rhyme scheme**, making it sound like someone telling a **story**. The speaker starts with the **first person plural** ("we"), but changes to first person **singular** ("I") and the poem becomes more **personal**, sounding like a **confession**. In the final **couplet**, both lines have the **same metre** — this gives a feeling of **finality** and hints that the guilt will **stay** with the soldier.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem begins as if it's going to be an **amusing anecdote**, but it quickly turns into a **graphic description** of a man's **death**. There is a clear **volta** (turning point) at the beginning of the **fifth stanza**, where the soldier's tone, thoughts and emotions are **changed** by his guilt.
- 3) **GRAPHIC IMAGERY** — The man's death is described in **gory detail**, with the implication that his "**guts**" have **spilt** out onto the ground. The **imagery** reminds the reader of the **horrors** of war, but also shows how **desensitised** to violence and death the speaker was at the time — they had become part of his **everyday life**.
- 4) **COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE** — The first four stanzas have lots of **chatty, familiar language**, which helps make the poem sound like someone telling a **story**. However, this language also **trivialises** the man's death.
- 5) **REPETITION** — Words are **repeated** to **reflect** the way that the **killing** is repeated in the speaker's **mind**.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **NONCHALANCE** — Initially, there's a very **casual** attitude towards the death of the man — the tone at the start of the poem is **anecdotal**. He's shot **without warning** and his body is just **thrown** into a lorry and "**carted off**".
- 2) **GUILT** — The speaker can't get the **memory** of the killing out of his **mind**. He is tormented by thoughts of the man, and wondering whether he was **armed** or not. The poem ends with the speaker **acknowledging** that he has **blood** on his hands — he knows he's **guilty**.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Why do you think Armitage chose the title he did? Do you think it's an effective title?
- Q2. In anecdotes you usually use people's names. Why does the speaker just say "somebody else"?
- Q3. Why do you think the word "flush" is used in line 24?
- Q4. What does the phrase "near to the knuckle" suggest about how the death is affecting the speaker?



### Memory, effects of conflict, individual experiences...

You could compare the importance of memory in this poem and 'Kamikaze'. 'Poppies', 'Bayonet Charge' and 'War Photographer' all explore individual experiences of war and the effects of conflict.

# Poppies

Three days before Armistice Sunday and poppies had already been placed on individual war graves. Before you left, I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals, spasms of paper red, disrupting a blockade of yellow bias binding around your blazer.

Sellotape bandaged around my hand, I rounded up as many white cat hairs as I could, smoothed down your shirt's upturned collar, steeled the softening of my face. I wanted to graze my nose across the tip of your nose, play at being Eskimos like we did when you were little. I resisted the impulse to run my fingers through the gelled blackthorns of your hair. All my words flattened, rolled, turned into felt, slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked with you, to the front door, threw it open, the world overflowing like a treasure chest. A split second and you were away, intoxicated. After you'd gone I went into your bedroom, released a song bird from its cage. Later a single dove flew from the pear tree, and this is where it has led me, skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

On reaching the top of the hill I traced the inscriptions on the war memorial, leaned against it like a wishbone. The dove pulled freely against the sky, an ornamental stitch. I listened, hoping to hear your playground voice catching on the wind.

5

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An ominous reminder that war kills individuals, so loss is personal.

Makes the reader think of an injured body.

Another image of being wounded. She is emotionally wounded and he might be wounded in war.

Caesurae reflect the mother's attempt to stay in control — she doesn't want to get carried away with her emotions.

"felt" suggests she speaks softly and aligns her with domesticity.

The mother's composure briefly disappears, as shown by the "melting" of her words.

Simile shows the world from the son's perspective — makes it sound exciting and full of precious experiences.

Doves are a symbol of peace but also of mourning.

Battle imagery makes her sound vulnerable.

A reminder of the risks her son faces.

Strong visual image of something small and beautiful in a vast space — represents her son.

Repetition emphasises the parallel between national and personal mourning and remembrance.

Suggests that she feels shut out from her son's life.

Domestic, motherly image — this may be the last time she can do this for her son.

Alliteration emphasises she's trying to be brave and not show emotion.

This reference to the sense of touch shows how the mother longs for the closeness she had with her son when he was small, and emphasises the distance between them now.

The "blackthorns" allude to Jesus, who wore a crown of thorns when he was crucified. This hints at the sacrifice the son may make.

The mother asserting her bravery here subverts the idea that it's only those who go off to war who are brave.

Sudden movement suggests breaking a boundary.

The son's excitement contrasts with his mother's sadness. However, "intoxicated" also hints at a lack of control — the son's giving up control of his life by joining the army.

Symbolises her son leaving.

Sewing imagery conveys her nervousness and physical feelings of anxiety.

Touch is important to the mother — the memorial is a solid object, unlike her wishes and memories.

Strong visual image hints at her wish for his safety.

Alliteration echoes the way she's straining to hear him.

Links leaving to join the army with leaving to go to school.

## POEM DICTIONARY

Armistice — an agreement to end fighting. The armistice signed at the end of World War One, along with the people who died in the conflict, are remembered in November each year.

bias binding — a strip of fabric sewn on to conceal rough edges or add decoration. It could indicate the son's rank or regiment here.

# Jane Weir

Jane Weir is a writer and textile designer who grew up in Manchester and Italy, and has also lived in Belfast. 'Poppies' was one of a collection of 21st-century war poems commissioned in 2009 by Carol Ann Duffy.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) A **mother** describes her son leaving home, seemingly to join the **army**.
- 2) The poem is about the mother's **emotional reaction** to her son leaving — she feels **sad**, **lonely** and **scared** for his safety.
- 3) She describes helping him smarten his **uniform** ready to leave. After he leaves, she goes to places that **remind** her of him, desperately trying to find any trace of him.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The **first-person narrative** means that the reader gets a strong impression of the mother's emotions. There is no regular **rhyme** or **rhythm**, which makes it sound like the narrator's thoughts and memories. **Long sentences** and **enjambment** give the impression that the narrator is absorbed in her own thoughts and memories, whilst **caesurae** show how she tries to hold her **emotions** together.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem is chronological, describing preparations for the son leaving, his departure and then what the mother does **afterwards**. However, the time frame is **ambiguous** — memories of the son's **childhood** are **intermingled** with memories of him **leaving**, and they're often not clearly distinguished.
- 3) **USE OF THE SENSES** — The mother's **separation** from her son is emphasised by the way she can't **touch** or **hear** him. She touches **other things** and listens for his **voice** "on the wind", but this can't **replace** her son.
- 4) **WAR IMAGERY** — Images of **war** and **violence** symbolise the son's new **identity** and the **danger** that he's in. References to "Armistice Sunday" and the "war memorial" make the reader **question** whether he is still **alive**.
- 5) **DOMESTIC IMAGERY** — The images of war are **mixed** with poignant images of **home** and **family life**.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **LOSS** — The mother acts as if she's **lost** her son — she is **struggling** to move on and **accept** the changes. There are hints that the son may even be **dead**. References to the son **starting school** allude to a **different kind** of loss that the mother has previously experienced.
- 2) **FEAR** — The mother is **anxious** and **fearful** for her son's safety. Her anxiety has a **physical effect** on her. The poem focuses on the **bravery** and restraint of the people **left behind** when their **loved ones** go to war.
- 3) **FREEDOM** — The poem shows the contrasting perspectives between the **loss** the mother feels and the **freedom** and excitement her son experiences.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Is this a poem about war or a poem about family? Explain your answer.
- Q2. What impression do you get of the mother through the things that she does?
- Q3. Do you think the son is still alive? What clues does the poem give you?
- Q4. How do you think the title relates to the poem?



### **Effects of conflict, loss and absence, identity...**

Effects of conflict are covered in several poems, including 'War Photographer'. You could compare family identity here with national identity in 'Kamikaze', or look at loss in this poem and 'The Emigrée'.

# War Photographer

The phrase tells us where he is, but "dark" also hints at the subject matter of his photographs.

The succession of plosive sounds breaks the soft mood like gunfire.

Short, simple sentence using monosyllabic words — he has to put his emotions aside, like a soldier does.

May be a reference to a Vietnam War photo (see below). The link hints at the importance of the photographer's work, as the photo is sometimes credited with helping to end the war.

He's "half-formed" because the photograph is still developing, but also suggests his body's been mutilated.

Emotive metaphor to describe his photos. Having the pictures printed seems to confirm and solidify the suffering they show.

The sibilant and plosive sounds make the reader almost spit the words out. This may hint at frustration that the photos aren't considered important enough to feature in the main newspaper.

Suggestion that he's returning to the war zone — like a soldier, he's been home on leave, but now must return to do his job.

The reels of film are described like soldiers, or like rows of war graves. Paradox — chaos and suffering are reduced to something ordered.

In his darkroom he is finally alone  
with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.  
The only light is red and softly glows,  
as though this were a church and he  
a priest preparing to intone a Mass.  
Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.

This simile shows the seriousness of his work. This is a solemn act, almost like a funeral mass.

This is a quote from the Bible (Isaiah 40:6) which means that human life is temporary.

Irony — he was calm in the face of horrors, but now they affect him.

Soft sounds contrast strongly with the place names in stanza one.

Turning point (volta) in the poem. The focus switches to the personal cost of war — he's remembering a specific death and its impact.

He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays  
beneath his hands, which did not tremble then  
though seem to now. Rural England. Home again  
to ordinary pain which simple weather can dispel,  
to fields which don't explode beneath the feet  
of running children in a nightmare heat.

Focusing on one photo and family makes this personal and emphasises the real suffering of war.

Emphasises that he has an important role in informing the public of the reality of war.

Reminder that this is all happening somewhere else. "stained" hints at the lasting impact of war.

Something is happening. A stranger's features  
faintly start to twist before his eyes,  
a half-formed ghost. He remembers the cries  
of this man's wife, how he sought approval  
without words to do what someone must  
and how the blood stained into foreign dust.

"prick" suggests pain, but only a small amount of pain for a short time. This suggests the readers will quickly forget the photos.

A hundred agonies in black and white  
from which his editor will pick out five or six  
for Sunday's supplement. The reader's eyeballs prick  
with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers.  
From the aeroplane he stares impassively at where  
he earns his living and they do not care.

The internal rhyme of "tears" and "beers" emphasises the short duration of the readers' pain — the tears will quickly be replaced with beers.

This is ambiguous — it could refer to the readers of the newspapers who don't care about the victims of war, or it could refer to the wider world, which is apathetic about others' suffering.

## Context — Nick Ut's 'Napalm Girl' photo

The imagery in line 12 seems to reference a famous photo by another war photographer, Nick Ut. He took a photo of a nine-year-old Vietnamese girl, Kim Phúc, during the Vietnam War. The photo shows Kim Phúc running naked towards the camera in extreme pain — she'd torn her clothes off after being severely burned when her village was hit by a napalm bomb (a bomb designed to start fires). The photo was published on the front page of the New York Times and won a Pulitzer Prize.

## POEM DICTIONARY

intone — recite or sing a prayer or chant

Beirut — the capital of Lebanon in the Middle East

Phnom Penh — the capital of Cambodia in South-East Asia

dispel — get rid of

Sunday's supplement — the magazine which comes with the Sunday newspaper

## Carol Ann Duffy

Carol Ann Duffy is a Scottish poet who, in 2009, became the first woman to hold the post of Poet Laureate. 'War Photographer' was published in 1985 as part of Duffy's collection, *Standing Female Nude*.

### You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) A war photographer is in his **darkroom**, developing **pictures** that he's taken in war zones across the world. Being back in **England** is a big **contrast** — it's **safe** and **calm** compared to where he's been.
- 2) A photo begins to **develop**, and the photographer **remembers** the **death** of the man, and the **cries** of his wife.
- 3) The final stanza focuses on the people in **England** who will see his photographs in their **Sunday papers**. The speaker thinks that they don't really **care** about the **people** and **places** in the photographs.

### Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem has **four** stanzas of **equal** length and a **regular rhyme scheme** — it is "set out in ordered rows" like the photographer's spools, echoing the **care** that the photographer takes over his work. The use of **enjambment** reflects the **gradual revealing** of the photo as it **develops**.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem follows the **actions** and **thoughts** of the photographer in his darkroom. There's a distinct **change** at the start of the third stanza, when the photographer remembers a **specific death**. In the final stanza, the focus shifts to the way the photographer's **work** is **received**.
- 3) **RELIGIOUS IMAGERY** — The references to religion make it sound almost as if the photographer is a **priest** conducting a **funeral** when he's developing the photos — there's a sense of **ceremony** to his actions.
- 4) **CONTRASTS** — The poem presents "**Rural England**" as a contrast to the **war zones** the photographer visits. The **grieving widow** is compared with people in England whose eyes only "prick / with tears" at the pain. Ironically, the photographer is **detached** in the war zones but deeply **affected** at home.
- 5) **EMOTIVE LANGUAGE** — The poem is full of **powerful**, emotive **imagery** which reflects the **horrors** of war seen by the photographer and captured in his photos. Like the photographer, Duffy tries to **represent** the **true horror** of conflict in her work in order to make the reader **think** about the subject.

### Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **PAIN** — The photographs **depict** real pain ("A hundred agonies") and there's also the **emotional** pain of the woman who's lost her husband. The horrific pain of war is **contrasted** with the "ordinary" pain back **home**.
- 2) **DETACHMENT** — The photographer is **detached** from his **emotions** in the war zones so he can do his job. The words "finally **alone**" and "**impassively**" suggest that he's also **detached** from "ordinary" life in England.
- 3) **ANGER** — The poem **ends** with a sense of anger at the people who **don't care** about the **suffering** of others.

### Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Why do you think the photographer's hands tremble when he's developing the photos?
- Q2. Do you think the photographer enjoys being back in England? Explain your answer.
- Q3. Describe the mood in the final stanza of the poem.
- Q4. Do you think Duffy admires the photographer? Why / why not?



### Memory, individual experiences, effects of conflict...

The effect of the photographer's memories in this poem could be compared with those of the soldier in 'Remains'. 'Bayonet Charge' and 'Kamikaze' offer contrasting experiences of conflict and its effects.

# Tissue

"Paper" begins the first two sentences in the poem, drawing the reader's attention. This suggests that it's important and can perhaps drive the change that the third line alludes to.

Paper that lets the light shine through, this is what could alter things.

Light allows things to be seen, rather than hidden. This may hint at what needs to change.

Paper thinned by age or touching,

Mentioning the Koran broadens the importance of paper — it can be used to record beliefs.

5 the kind you find in well-used books, the back of the Koran, where a hand has written in the names and histories, who was born to whom,

Paper is used to record family history — whole lives can be summed up by marks on paper.

Gentle verbs and repetition of "and" shows that the pages are treated with respect and affection — the description makes them sound almost as if they're a child or a pet.

10 the height and weight, who died where and how, on which sepia date, pages smoothed and stroked and turned transparent with attention.

Having "attention" as the last word before the first full stop emphasises the importance of what's come before.

There's a shift in tone here. The speaker suggests that if buildings were made out of paper, people would notice that they are only temporary.

15 If buildings were paper, I might feel their drift, see how easily they fall away on a sigh, a shift in the direction of the wind.

Rhyming "shift" and "drift" plays on the idea of movement — they appear in different places on the line as if they've been blown by the wind.

A short, blunt sentence, which may reflect the fixed nature of maps and borders — they create division rather than freedom.

20 Maps too. The sun shines through their borderlines, the marks that rivers make, roads, railtracks, mountainfolds,

The sun is a powerful, permanent force, whereas borders are just temporary marks on paper.

The alliteration creates a flowing effect and a sense of freedom.

Receipts record our day-to-day lives. They can tell a story about our whole existence.

Fine slips from grocery shops that say how much was sold and what was paid by credit card might fly our lives like paper kites.

The simile hints at how our lives can be controlled by money.

25 An architect could use all this, place layer over layer, luminous script over numbers over line, and never wish to build again with brick

The work of the poet mirrors the work of the architect — the poet builds layers of words and meanings, where an architect designs physical structures. The repetition of "over" reinforces the idea of layers.

The consonance of "brick" and "block" emphasises the solidity of the objects, and the enjambment gives the words more impact.

30 or block, but let the daylight break through capitals and monoliths, through the shapes that pride can make, find a way to trace a grand design

These lines repeat the image in lines 17 and 18. Light is enduring and powerful — it will continue to shine even when man-made structures break.

There's a shift from talking about paper to talking about humans — a construction more complex and more "grand" than any building.

35 with living tissue, raise a structure never meant to last,

This sounds like a criticism of human pride — we create big, imposing buildings that are ultimately unimportant.

The references to creation in the previous two stanzas suggest that this could be addressed to a child. It could also be addressed to the reader, reminding us that we're all influenced by our heritage.

of paper smoothed and stroked and thinned to be transparent,

Human life is only temporary, but the repetition of line 11 reminds us that we're all part of a complex, lasting family history.

turned into your skin.

## POEM DICTIONARY

Koran (or Qur'an) — the holy book of Islam  
sepia — a brownish-grey colour  
monoliths — large stone statues or columns

## Imtiaz Dharker

Imtiaz Dharker was born in Pakistan, raised in Glasgow and now lives in Britain and India. 'Tissue' is from her 2006 collection, *The Terrorist at My Table* — the collection questions how well we know the people around us.

### You've got to know what the poem's about

The poem **resists** a straightforward **interpretation**, but there are some key **themes** and **ideas**:

- 1) The first three stanzas talk about the importance of paper as a means of **recording** our **history**.
- 2) Stanzas four to six focus on the **paradox** that paper is **fragile**, yet it still **controls** our lives.
- 3) The final thirteen lines look at **creating things**, particularly **human life**. Life is more **complex** and **precious** than other things we create. It's also **temporary**, but forms part of a bigger and ongoing story.

### Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poetic voice is elusive, with the focus on **humanity** in general rather than a specific person or speaker. The lack of regular rhythm or rhyme and the **enjambment** across lines and stanzas gives the poem a **freedom** and **openness**, reflecting the narrator's desire for freedom and clarity. The short stanzas mean that the poem is **built up** in **layers**, just as it suggests human life is.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — There are **three** main parts to the poem, moving through ideas about **history**, **human experience** and the **creation** of human life. The final, single line **stands out** and focuses the reader on their own **identity** and how it's **created**.
- 3) **LANGUAGE ABOUT LIGHT** — Light is presented as a **positive force** — it **enables** people to see and understand, it can move **through** and **beyond boundaries** and it can **break through** objects.
- 4) **LANGUAGE ABOUT CREATION** — There are lots of references to things being created. **Man-made** constructions like **buildings** and **borderlines** are compared with the creation of **humans**.
- 5) **DIFFERENT TYPES OF TISSUE** — The **homonyms** of 'tissue' create a **link** between **paper** and **humans** — both tissue paper and human tissue are **fragile**, but **powerful**. The word 'tissue' **originally** meant something that had been **woven**, which reinforces the idea that human lives are built up in **layers**.

### Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **CONTROL** — The poem mentions **different** things that control **human life** — there are references to money, religion, nature, pride and governments ("capitals").
- 2) **FREEDOM** — The speaker imagines a world that **breaks free** of some of these **restrictions**, where human constructions are **less permanent** and important.

### Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Why do you think the poet lists details of what families might write in the back of the Koran?
- Q2. The word "transparent" is repeated on lines 12 and 36. Why do you think this is?
- Q3. Why do you think the architect would "never wish to build again with brick"?
- Q4. Why does Dharker describe the human body as a "structure"?



### ***Power of nature, power of humans, identity...***

'Ozymandias' is another poem that looks at how nature is ultimately more powerful than human power or achievements. The importance of family identity is a common feature of this poem and 'Poppies'.

# The Emigrée

There once was a country... I left it as a child but my memory of it is sunlight-clear for it seems I never saw it in that November which, I am told, comes to the mildest city. The worst news I receive of it cannot break my original view, the bright, filled paperweight. It may be at war, it may be sick with tyrants, but I am branded by an impression of sunlight.

The white streets of that city, the graceful slopes glow even clearer as time rolls its tanks and the frontiers rise between us, close like waves. That child's vocabulary I carried here like a hollow doll, opens and spills a grammar. Soon I shall have every coloured molecule of it. It may by now be a lie, banned by the state but I can't get it off my tongue. It tastes of sunlight.

I have no passport, there's no way back at all but my city comes to me in its own white plane. It lies down in front of me, docile as paper; I comb its hair and love its shining eyes. My city takes me dancing through the city of walls. They accuse me of absence, they circle me. They accuse me of being dark in their free city. My city hides behind me. They mutter death, and my shadow falls as evidence of sunlight.

The opening makes it sound like a story, but it also suggests loss.

This hints at another voice telling her about her past.

The negative "branded" is juxtaposed with the positive "impression of sunlight". "branded" also suggests a permanence to her view — it can't change.

The description makes the "city" sound pure, almost heavenly.

This seems to refer to the language of her childhood — the metaphor makes the language seem bright and precious.

The first line of the stanza sounds hopeless, but the next line changes the mood again.

There's a childlike joy in this description — it sounds like a child playing with a pet.

It's unclear who "They" are, but they are menacing, and the repetition reinforces their threat to the speaker.

This suggests that the memory is clear and happy.

"November" represents difficult times, when things are cold, dark and gloomy.

Metaphor suggests that the narrator's memories are bright and positive, but also solid and fixed.

Suggestion that the country has been invaded and that the speaker's positive view of it isn't accurate.

Time is personified as an enemy, but it can't affect the speaker's memories.

Using another sense (taste) increases the vividness of the experience.

The city is personified — the "white plane" could represent the speaker's memories.

Contrasting perceptions of the city the speaker is now in — she sees it as restrictive, but "they" see it as "free".

The speaker is accused of being "dark" in her current city — this contrasts with the brightness she associates with her old city.

The poem ends on a positive note — despite the threats of death, the city is still associated with "sunlight", just as it is at the end of the first two stanzas.



"Who are you calling 'hollow'?"

## POEM DICTIONARY

emigrée — a woman forced to leave her native country, often for political reasons



## Carol Rumens

Carol Rumens is an English poet, lecturer and translator. She has published over fifteen collections of poetry, as well as several novels and plays. 'The Emigrée' appeared in her 1993 collection, *Thinking of Skins*.

### You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The speaker talks about a **city** in a **country** she **left** as a child — she has a purely **positive** view of it.
- 2) The city seems to be **under attack** and unreachable, but in the third stanza it **appears** to the speaker. An unknown "They" **accuse** and **threaten** the speaker, but she still sees the old city in a **positive** way.
- 3) The city may not be a **real place** — it could represent a **time**, **person** or **emotion** that the speaker has been forced to leave.

### Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem is written in the **first person**, with three eight-line stanzas but **no regular rhythm** or rhyme scheme. The first two stanzas contain lots of **enjambment**, but there's more **end-stopping** in the final stanza. This reflects the speaker's feeling of **confinement** in her new "**city of walls**".
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The speaker's **memory** of the city grows and solidifies as the poem moves on — the city becomes a physical presence for the speaker in the final stanza. Each stanza **ends** with "**sunlight**", reinforcing the fact that the speaker sees the city in a **positive light**.
- 3) **LANGUAGE OF CONFLICT** — Vocabulary associated with **war**, **invasion** and **tyranny** shows that the city may not be as **perfect** as the speaker **remembers** it. In the second stanza, there's the sense that the speaker is **defying** the authorities by accessing her "child's vocabulary" that's been "**banned**".
- 4) **LANGUAGE ABOUT LIGHT** — The city is described in **bright**, **colourful terms**, emphasising the speaker's feeling that it's a **beautiful**, **positive** place. The repeated link with "**sunlight**" suggests a **vitality** to the city.
- 5) **PERSONIFICATION** — The city is initially personified as being "**sick with tyrants**". In the final stanza, it **appears** to the speaker, **lies down** and then later takes her **dancing**. Describing the city in **human terms** emphasises the **strength** of the speaker's **love** for it.

### Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **NOSTALGIA** — The speaker's **positive memories** of the city are **unwavering** — nothing she hears will change her view of it. There's a sense of **yearning** for the city and the past, which is **partly fulfilled** by the city **appearing** to the speaker in the final stanza.
- 2) **THREAT** — There are suggestions that the city has been **invaded** or taken over by a **tyrant**, but the speaker chooses to **ignore** these things. She is **threatened** in her new city, and seems to have to **protect** her old city. The poem ends with "**sunlight**", but this doesn't entirely remove the sense of threat.

### Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. What does the title of the poem suggest about how the speaker feels about leaving the city?
- Q2. Why does Rumens use the word "break" in line 5? Does this tell us anything about the city?
- Q3. Why do you think the speaker uses the simile "docile as paper" to describe the city?
- Q4. If it's not a real place, what do you think the city might represent? Explain your answer.



### Memory, loss, individual experiences...

Have a go at comparing the power of memory in this poem and 'Kamikaze'. You could also compare the experience of loss with that in 'Poppies', or the experience of a place with that in 'London'.

# Kamikaze

This creates the sense of a journey, but the title suggests that it will be a journey to his death.

Her father embarked at sunrise with a flask of water, a samurai sword in the cockpit, a shaven head full of powerful incantations and enough fuel for a one-way journey into history

Japan is known as the 'land of the rising sun', so this may be a reference to the location.

This suggests that the pilot was under a kind of spell, which hints at the influence of patriotic propaganda that kamikazes were exposed to. They were told that it was a great honour to die for their country.

Second stanza changes direction — the plane is still flying, but it's going to turn around.

but half way there, she thought, recounting it later to her children, he must have looked far down at the little fishing boats strung out like bunting on a green-blue translucent sea

These are the daughter's thoughts and explanations — the pilot has no voice and his real reasons are never heard.

The simile is homely and pretty — a far cry from war. Bunting is associated with celebration, which makes the image ironic — there's no victorious return for the pilot.

Irony — the pilot should have been aiming for big enemy ships, but it's "little fishing boats" that catch his eye.

Beautiful image of nature.

Flags are a symbol of national identity, but here the simile hints at the way that flags can be used to stop or direct something.

and beneath them, arcing in swathes like a huge flag waved first one way then the other in a figure of eight, the dark shoals of fishes flashing silver as their bellies swivelled towards the sun

This hints at the movement of the samurai sword from line 2. It's an ironic reference, because the pilot is turning away from combat.

The repeated sibilant sounds reflect the smooth movement of the fish in the water.

Focus switches to the pilot's childhood memories.

and remembered how he and his brothers waiting on the shore built cairns of pearl-grey pebbles to see whose withstood longest the turbulent inrush of breakers bringing their father's boat safe

These are innocent childhood activities, which contrast with the pilot's job in the war.

Enjambment and lack of punctuation in this stanza may hint that the pilot got caught up in his childhood memories.

Interjection of direct speech — it sounds like the pilot's daughter is answering a question from her children.

– yes, grandfather's boat – safe to the shore, salt-sodden, awash with cloud-marked mackerel, black crabs, feathery prawns, the loose silver of whitebait and once a tuna, the dark prince, muscular, dangerous.

Repetition of "safe" hints at the pilot's mind-set — he doesn't want his children to go through the pain of losing him.

All the sea creatures are given extra description. The cumulative effect of the list highlights their beauty and significance to the pilot.

The colours used — "silver" in this line and "pearl-grey" in line 21 — make nature sound precious.

Describing the tuna in this way reminds the reader of the dangers of nature.

The poem's first full stop signals the end of the flight — it should have ended in death, but instead the pilot returns to his family.

Irony — he survived, but he is still treated as if he's dead.

And though he came back my mother never spoke again in his presence, nor did she meet his eyes and the neighbours too, they treated him as though he no longer existed, only we children still chattered and laughed

We hear the daughter's voice in direct speech again. She speaks in a more factual, less descriptive way about her father's subsequent life, which hints at her pain and her empathy with him.

till gradually we too learned to be silent, to live as though he had never returned, that this was no longer the father we loved. And sometimes, she said, he must have wondered which had been the better way to die.

Hints that the pilot was changed by his experience.

The final, short sentence could be a comment on the destructiveness of patriotism — the pilot's family are so ashamed that they treat him as if he's dead. He may have wished that he'd fulfilled his mission — either way his story ends in a kind of death.

**POEM DICTIONARY**  
 kamikaze — one of a group of Japanese WW2 pilots who flew on suicide missions  
 samurai sword — a traditional Japanese sword  
 cairns — piles of stones, usually to mark something  
 breakers — waves that hit the shoreline

# Beatrice Garland

Beatrice Garland lives in London and works as a clinician and researcher for the NHS alongside writing poetry. 'Kamikaze' was published in 2013 as part of her first poetry collection, *The Invention of Fireworks*.

## You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The poem opens with a kamikaze pilot setting off on his **mission**. Kamikaze pilots were specially trained **Japanese pilots**, who were used towards the **end** of World War Two. They flew their planes on **suicide missions** into enemy ships — it was seen as a **great honour** to serve your country in this way.
- 2) It becomes clear that the pilot **turned around** and didn't complete his mission — his daughter **imagines** that this was because on the way he saw the beauty of **nature** and **remembered** his innocent **childhood**.
- 3) The pilot was **shunned** when he got **home** — even his **family** acted as if he wasn't there.

## Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The poem is mostly narrated in the **third person** using reported speech of the **pilot's daughter**, but her voice is heard directly in the later stanzas. The **absence** of the **pilot's voice** shows that he's been **cut off** from society, and the use of the third person emphasises the **distance** between pilot and daughter.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The first five stanzas form **one sentence** which covers an **account** of the pilot's **flight** as the pilot's **daughter** imagines it. The **end** of the sentence represents the plane **landing**, and the final two stanzas deal with the **fallout** of the pilot's **actions**.
- 3) **IRONY** — There are **ironic reminders** of how the pilot has **abandoned** his mission. The way he's **treated** when he returns to his family is ironic because they act as if he's **dead**, even though he **chose** not to die.
- 4) **NATURAL IMAGERY** — **Similes**, **metaphors** and **detailed descriptions** are used to emphasise the **beauty** and **power** of **nature**. The pilot's daughter hints that this beauty was one of the main **triggers** for his **actions**.
- 5) **DIRECT SPEECH** — The addition of direct speech makes the poem seem more **personal**. Hearing the daughter's voice emphasises the **impact** of war on a **specific family**.

## Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **PATRIOTISM** — The opening stanza is full of suggestions of **patriotic pride** and **duty** — the pilot has the chance to fly "into **history**". The patriotism of his **family** and **neighbours** is shown in their reaction to his return — they treat him as if he's dead because he has **failed** in his duty to his **nation**.
- 2) **SHAME** — The reaction of the **pilot's wife** is one of **deep shame** — she never speaks to him again.
- 3) **REGRET** — The pilot's daughter's words in the final stanzas are tinged with a sense of **regret** and **loss**. The repetition in lines 9 and 41 of "**he must have**" also hints at her **empathy** with the pilot.

## Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Do you think the main speaker approves of what kamikaze pilots had to do? Why / why not?
- Q2. Why do you think we don't hear the pilot's voice in the poem?
- Q3. What is the significance of the fish in the poem?
- Q4. Do you think the pilot was glad he turned around? Why / why not?



### **Identity, memory, power of nature...**

National identity also features in 'Checking Out Me History'. Try comparing 'Kamikaze' with 'Poppies' if you're writing about memory, and with 'The Prelude' if you're writing about the power of nature.

# Checking Out Me History

Emphasises separateness of the British education system from himself. Repetition of "Dem" and "me" creates a sense of 'them and us'.

Phonetic spelling of Caribbean accent — narrator's voice links to his identity.

5 Dem tell me  
Dem tell me  
Wha dem want to tell me

Deliberate attempt to hide history. Image of bandage is ironic — bandages should aid healing, but here they've caused blindness.

Repeated phrasing shows that heritage and personal identity are connected.

5 Bandage up me eye with me own history  
Blind me to me own identity

Metaphor for not allowing him to see his own history.

Dismisses British history — assumes the reader knows it.

Dem tell me bout 1066 and all dat  
dem tell me bout Dick Whittington and he cat  
But Toussaint L'Ouverture  
no dem never tell me bout dat

Uses pantomime as example — makes British history seem trivial compared to Toussaint.

10 Toussaint  
a slave  
with vision  
lick back

Succession of short lines slows the pace — suggests he's breaking off from his main point to recall this memory.

Double negative sounds assertive and angry.

15 Napoleon  
battalion  
and first Black  
Republic born

Strong rhymes and broken syntax show importance of oral communication.

20 Toussaint de thorn  
to de French  
Toussaint de beacon  
of de Haitian Revolution

Repetition makes it sound like a chant, creating a confident and forceful mood.

Images of light and vision contrast with the blindness of his formal education.

25 Dem tell me bout de man who discover de balloon  
and de cow who jump over de moon  
Dem tell me bout de dish ran away with de spoon  
but dem never tell me bout Nanny de maroon

Uses nursery rhymes as an example of British history — makes it seem trivial but also links it to the tradition of reciting poems out loud.

Linked to vision — she can see into the future.

The simple rhyme scheme emphasises the silliness of the white history he's been taught. Rhymes build up to last line — highlights what he wasn't taught.

30 Nanny  
see-far woman  
of mountain dream  
fire-woman struggle  
hopeful stream  
to freedom river

Connects Nanny to nature and water — she seems like a spiritual person. She's also associated with hope and liberty.

Suggests that she's passionate. Linked to warmth and light.

European coloniser compared to native American cultures that resisted slavery — restriction contrasted with freedom. Also a reminder that there's always more than one version of history, but he's only been taught one — that of the colonists.

35 Dem tell me bout Lord Nelson and Waterloo  
but dem never tell me bout Shaka de great Zulu  
Dem tell me bout Columbus and 1492  
but what happen to de Caribs and de Arawaks too

Makes Florence Nightingale's work sound unimportant and basic. Linked to folklore and nursery rhyme characters in stanza — undermines her.

Figures from British folklore and nursery rhymes contrast with Mary Seacole, an important real-life figure.

40 Dem tell me bout Florence Nightingale and she lamp  
and how Robin Hood used to camp  
Dem tell me bout ole King Cole was a merry ole soul  
but dem never tell me bout Mary Seacole

Seems more real and relevant than the scenes from white history.

Suggests she's defiant and brave.

45 From Jamaica  
she travel far  
to the Crimean War  
she volunteer to go  
and even when de British said no  
she still brave the Russian snow  
a healing star  
among the wounded  
a yellow sunrise  
to the dying

Metaphor links her to the wider universe. Images suggest light, hope and warmth.

Repeats phonetic lines from first stanza — reminds us of the narrator's anger.

50 Dem tell me  
Dem tell me wha dem want to tell me  
But now I checking out me own history  
I carving out me identity

Emphatic final word — sums up the main theme. He's going to use his own history to create his identity.

**POEM DICTIONARY**  
 Toussaint L'Ouverture — a ruler who led the slaves to victory in the Haitian revolution  
 Nanny de Maroon — leader of the Maroons (runaway slaves), who led Jamaican resistance against the British  
 Lord Nelson — officer in the Royal Navy who died during the Battle of Trafalgar  
 Shaka — influential Zulu leader and warrior  
 Caribs and Arawaks — Caribbean people whose islands were invaded by Europeans  
 Mary Seacole — Jamaican nurse who helped the sick in the Crimean War

## John Agard

John Agard was born in Guyana, a Caribbean country in South America, but he moved to Britain in 1977. His poetry often examines cultures and identities. 'Checking Out Me History' was published in 2007.

### You've got to know what the poem's about

- 1) The narrator is talking about his **identity** and how it links to his knowledge of **history**.
- 2) He was taught about **British history** but wasn't taught about his **Caribbean roots**. He lists famous figures from history and questions why he doesn't know about people from **other cultures** who did great things.
- 3) He mentions men and women from **diverse backgrounds** who should be celebrated.
- 4) At the end, he says he's going to **create** his own **identity** based on his **heritage**.

### Learn about the form, structure and language

- 1) **FORM** — The narrator uses a **mixture** of stanza forms, suggesting he's **breaking** the **confining** language rules he's been taught. The Caribbean history stanzas have **shorter lines** and more **broken syntax** than the British history stanzas — this emphasises them and makes them seem more serious. The rhyme schemes are also different — the British stanzas have lots of simple **rhymes**, making them sound **childish**.
- 2) **STRUCTURE** — The poem **alternates** between historical and fictional figures from Caribbean and British culture, emphasising the **differences** between them. The British figures are skipped over quickly, with little respect, whereas the Caribbean figures are covered in more detail.
- 3) **METAPHORS OF VISION AND BLINDNESS** — The narrator says that his education kept his true heritage **hidden** from him. Images of **light** are positive because they suggest an **awareness** of your own **identity**.
- 4) **ORAL POETRY FEATURES** — The narrator uses techniques from **oral poetry**, such as **repetition**, **strong rhythms**, **chanting** and **phonetic spellings**. This links the poem to the **oral tradition** of reciting poetry aloud and telling stories, which are used as ways of **communicating history**. The use of Caribbean phonetic spellings creates a sense of **pride** in his **background**, and the use of **standard English** in lines 46-49 emphasises that the figures from his Caribbean heritage should feature in the teaching of **history**.

### Remember the feelings and attitudes in the poem

- 1) **ANGER** — The narrator's **angry** because the education system didn't teach him about his culture. He was unaware of his heritage even though it's an important part of **who he is**.
- 2) **ADMIRATION** — He respects the Caribbean figures he describes in the poem. He **admires** their achievements and wants to tell their **stories** to show the important role they played in history.
- 3) **CELEBRATION** — At the end he says he will **embrace** his own identity in a **positive** way.

### Go a step further and give a personal response

Have a go at **answering** these **questions** to help you come up with **your own ideas** about the poem:

- Q1. Why do you think the poet uses both male and female figures from history in the poem?
- Q2. What is the effect of the verbs "checking" and "carving" in the final lines of the poem?
- Q3. What is the effect of the lack of punctuation in the poem?
- Q4. What natural images does the poet use and why are they important?



### *Identity, anger, power of humans...*

You could compare the narrator's anger with that of the narrator in 'London'. The formation of identity is a key theme in 'Tissue', where ideas about heritage and challenging authority are also explored.

## Practice Questions

*Right then, that's the end of the dead bodies, darkrooms and dubious dukes, but now you need to make sure that you've actually learnt something. These questions will check whether the main points of the poems are clear in your head — there are three questions on each poem to get you started.*

### Ozymandias

- 1) Who was Ozymandias? Briefly describe his character.
- 2) What is the effect of having different voices speaking in the poem?
- 3) How is the power of nature presented in the poem?

### London

- 1) What is the speaker's overall message in the poem?
- 2) How does the poem convey a sense of hopelessness?
- 3) What do you think might have been Blake's motivation for writing the poem? Think about the context of the poem.

### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat

- 1) What do you think Wordsworth is saying about man's relationship with nature?
- 2) How do the narrator's feelings change over the course of the poem?
- 3) Give an example of personification of the mountain. What is the effect of this?

### My Last Duchess

- 1) What do you think happened to the Duke's last Duchess? Give evidence to support your answer.
- 2) Describe what we learn about the character of the Duchess. Is this likely to be a fair view of her?
- 3) What is the effect of the poem being written in rhyming couplets?

### The Charge of the Light Brigade

- 1) Write a brief summary of what happens in each stanza of the poem.
- 2) How does the narrator feel about the actions of the Light Brigade? How can you tell?
- 3) Find some examples of repetition in the poem. What is its effect?

## Practice Questions

### Exposure

- 1) What do you think the poem's overall message is?
- 2) Does the tone of the poem change at all? Why do you think this is?
- 3) What is the effect of the poem's rhyme scheme?

### Storm on the Island

- 1) Briefly explain what the poem is about.
- 2) What do you think the speaker's overall impression of nature is? Explain your answer.
- 3) Other than a physical storm, what else might the storm represent? Explain your answer.

### Bayonet Charge

- 1) What is the poem about? What do you think the speaker's message is?
- 2) What would you say is the overriding emotion in the poem? Explain your answer.
- 3) Find a metaphor in the poem and explain why it has been used.

### Remains

- 1) What do you think this poem is saying about the effects of conflict on individuals?
- 2) What is the narrator's tone at the start of the poem? What effect does this have?
- 3) How is repetition used to show the soldier's guilt?

### Poppies

- 1) What do you think the overall message of the poem is?
- 2) Describe the speaker's mood in the poem.
- 3) Why do you think there are so many references to the mother touching things?

## Practice Questions

### War Photographer

- 1) What do you think the overall message of the poem is?
- 2) What do you think the photographer's attitude towards his work is? Explain your answer.
- 3) What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? What effect does this have?

### Tissue

- 1) Briefly explain what you think the poem is about.
- 2) How do you think the speaker feels about man-made structures? Explain your answer.
- 3) Who do you think the "architect" in line 25 might refer to? Explain your answer.

### The Emigrée

- 1) Write a brief summary of each stanza of the poem.
- 2) What are the main feelings of the speaker in the poem? Do these feelings change at any point?
- 3) Give an example of personification of the city. What is the effect of this?

### Kamikaze

- 1) Briefly summarise what happens in the poem.
- 2) How do you think the pilot's daughter feels about her father? Explain your answer.
- 3) Why do you think the voice switches back to the third person for the final two lines?

### Checking Out Me History

- 1) Give a summary of the speaker's argument in the poem.
- 2) How does the speaker make the British history he's been taught sound foolish?
- 3) How is language used to reinforce the speaker's message?



## Practice Questions

*It's no big secret — the best way to prepare for writing an essay in the exam is... by writing a practice essay. Here are five questions for you to have a crack at — don't forget to plan your answer before you start writing.*

### Exam-style Questions

- 1) Compare the way in which the theme of pride is presented in 'My Last Duchess' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
  
- 2) Explore the ways in which the effects of conflict are portrayed in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
  
- 3) Compare the poets' feelings towards a place in 'The Emigrée' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
  
- 4) Explore the ways that ideas about power are presented in 'Tissue' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
  
- 5) 'Those who don't have power are inevitably angry with those who do.'

Using this quotation as a starting point, write about the theme of anger in 'Checking Out Me History' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

Remember to comment on how the poems are written.

## Power of Humans

In the exam you'll probably have to compare poems on a given theme — this section covers the likely themes.

- 1) Humans often use power to **benefit themselves** rather than other people, and the **misuse** of power can lead to people being **hurt** or **killed**.
- 2) Human power is ultimately **insignificant** compared to **nature**, which is **vast** and **timeless**.

### Humans can abuse their power...

#### My Last Duchess (Pages 8-9)

- 1) The Duke seems **obsessed** with power — he even **controls** who sees the **portrait** of his last duchess.
- 2) There are **hints** the Duke had his wife **killed** — “I gave **commands**; / Then **all smiles stopped**” has a **sinister** tone. Its **lack** of **explanation** suggests he doesn't feel he has to **account** for his actions.
- 3) The poem's **form** also reflects his **absolute power** — although there is a visitor present, we only hear the **Duke's voice**, and the use of **rhyming couplets** reflects his rigid **control**.

#### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) The speaker in the poem is **angry** that the people in charge of his **education** have given him a **one-sided** view of history — he learnt lots about **British** history, but nothing about **Caribbean** heroes.
- 2) **Metaphors of blindness**, e.g. “**Blind** me to me own identity”, show how the speaker feels he's been **badly treated** by those in power.
- 3) The poem is written with **historical** misuses of power in mind — it mentions real figures from Caribbean history who **revolted** against **slavery** and **European colonisation**.

### ...but human power is ultimately temporary

#### Ozymandias (Pages 2-3)

- 1) Ozymandias is presented as a ruler who **abused** his power — he's described as having a “**sneer of cold command**” and as **arrogantly** telling other rulers to look at his works and “**despair**”.
- 2) However, the poem focuses on the **temporary** nature of the ruler's power. Ozymandias has no power now — there is **nothing** left of his “**works**” and even his **statue** has collapsed.
- 3) Shelley uses **irony** to highlight the **contrast** between Ozymandias's **belief** in his own power and the reality that all his achievements are **insignificant** compared to the “**boundless**” desert.

#### Tissue (Pages 24-25)

- 1) **Paper** is used to symbolise human power — receipts can “fly our lives like paper kites”, but they're **fragile** and **easily destroyed**, hinting at its **impermanence**. Paper **maps** show “**borderlines**” and other man-made features, but the **sun** “**shines through**” them, alluding to nature's enduring **power**.
- 2) In the eighth stanza, the speaker talks about letting “**daylight** break / through **capitals and monoliths**”. This is an image of **natural power** being greater than **human power** — “capitals and monoliths” represent human **governments** and **buildings**, but they are **temporary** compared to nature.



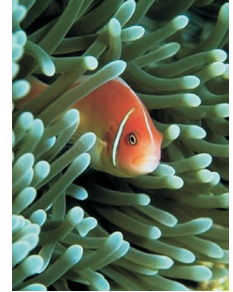
### Think about the role of human power in other poems...

The speaker in 'London' is frustrated about the misuse of human power — he feels that it's used to control rather than to help people. In 'Storm on the Island', human power is insignificant compared to nature.

## Power of Nature

Ahh, nature — I'm thinking of a sunny spring morning filled with daffodils and ducklings. Sadly not...

- 1) Nature is a **powerful force** that can cause **suffering** and **destruction**. It's often **personified** in poetry to describe its **effect** in **human** terms.
- 2) Nature has the power to **change** humans and **affect** their decisions.



Sam decided to present nature as an anemone instead.

### Nature is presented as an enemy

#### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) Nature is **personified** as the **deadly enemy** of the soldiers in the trenches — it has "**merciless** iced east winds that **knife**" them, and snowflakes that "come **feeling**" for their faces with "**fingering stealth**". The men expect to **die** not from German gunfire, but from **exposure** to the **elements**.
- 2) There's no **progression** in the poem, which mirrors the **relentlessness** of nature. The repeated **stanza ending**, "But nothing happens", echoes the **monotonous** snow and rain that **falls** on the men.

#### Storm on the Island (Pages 14-15)

- 1) There are two aspects of nature described in the poem, and both have a **negative effect** on the islanders.
- 2) The island is **inhospitable** because nothing can grow there — the earth is "**wizened**" and there are **no** trees or "stacks / Or stooks".
- 3) However, it's the **extremes** of nature that the islanders fear — **war imagery** is used to suggest that nature is **attacking** the island — it's "**bombarded** by the empty air" and the wind "**strafes**" it.

### Nature can have a powerful effect on humans

#### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat (Pages 6-7)

- 1) The almost **magical beauty** of nature is present in the poem, with the "**circles glittering**" on the lake and the "**sparkling light**". The narrator initially seems to be **inspired** and **relaxed** by nature.
- 2) However, when a **mountain** appears, it is **personified** as a **terrifying, monstrous** being — it "**Upreared** its head" and the narrator thinks that it "**Strode** after" him. It seems to be this that makes him **return** the boat he stole, suggesting that nature is able to **influence our behaviour**.
- 3) The poem ends with the phrase "a **trouble** to my **dreams**." This acts as a reminder of how nature is not just beautiful and gentle — the narrator has been **unsettled** and **changed** by the experience, and the "**pleasant images**" of nature in his mind have been **replaced** with troubling ones.

#### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) Nature is presented as one of the **reasons** why the pilot **turned back** — his daughter thought that seeing the **beauty** of the scene below him compelled him to abandon his mission.
- 2) The danger of nature is also alluded to, with the "**turbulent inrush**" of waves and the "**muscular, dangerous**" **tuna**. This suggests that humans are at the **mercy of nature** — the "turbulent" waves could **crush** a boat, or a fisherman could be **dragged** overboard by a tuna.



### Some poems compare natural power with human power...

'Ozymandias' and 'Tissue' both present nature as being stronger than humans. In 'Tissue', sunlight breaks through man-made structures, and in 'Ozymandias', Shelley shows nature outlasting the ruler's power.

## Effects of Conflict

Death, death and more death — that’s the gist of it, but thankfully the poets are a bit more creative than that.

- 1) Conflict causes **injury** (both physical and psychological) and **death**.
- 2) Even people **not** directly involved in the **fighting** can be **affected** by conflict.

### Conflict affects the people who fight...

#### The Charge of the Light Brigade (Pages 10-11)

- 1) **Death** or serious injury is the ultimate result of the battle for many of the soldiers. The **repetition** of phrases like “**valley of Death**” and “**mouth of Hell**” creates an **ominous** mood and confirms there is no escaping their **fate**.
- 2) The speaker focuses on the **extensive** loss of life in the charge — each stanza **ends** with a reference to the “**six hundred**” to remind the reader of the **huge human cost** involved.
- 3) The poem also shows how war can inspire great **bravery** and **sacrifice**. The soldiers do their **duty** even though they believe they are probably going to **die** in the process.

#### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) The soldier **dehumanises** the looter and presents the killing as a **normal** part of his **job**, as shown by the poem’s **anecdotal** tone and opening phrase, “**On another occasion**”. **Colloquial verbs** like “tosses” and “carted off” describe how the soldiers **casually dispose** of the body. This suggests that conflict can **devalue** human life and make **violence** seem **normal**.
- 2) However, memories of conflict have a deep **psychological impact** on the soldier (see p.41).
- 3) The **final stanza** of the poem is made up of only **two lines** rather than the normal four — the **disruption** of the poem’s **form** mirrors the soldier’s **breakdown**.

### ...and those who don’t

#### Poppies (Pages 20-21)

- 1) ‘Poppies’ focuses on the **pain** and **distress** experienced by a **mother** whose son has joined the army.
- 2) Even **before** he goes, the mother feels **detached** from her son — the “gelled / **blackthorns**” of his hair stop her running her fingers through it. This emotional distance **foreshadows** their physical **separation**.
- 3) After the son leaves, the mother is **anxious** and **restless**. Her **fear** for his safety is revealed in **physical symptoms** — she describes her **stomach** as “**busy** / making tucks, darts, pleats”.

#### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) In the **war zone**, the photographer is able to keep a **steady hand**, but as he **develops** the photos, his hands “**tremble**”, suggesting that he is deeply **affected** by the “**hundred agonies**” he has seen.
- 2) His view of **home** is also affected by his experience of war — the “**ordinary pain**” of England contrasts starkly with that of “running children in a **nightmare heat**” in the war zone.
- 3) The final stanza considers the reactions to conflict of people **not involved** in it. The emphatic “**they do not care**” implies that people have become so **desensitised** to suffering that it **no longer affects** them.



### ***These poems also consider the effects of conflict...***

‘Kamikaze’ shows the effects of conflict on the pilot and his family. ‘The Emigrée’ contains hints that conflict forced the speaker to leave the city. ‘Exposure’ and ‘Bayonet Charge’ both show ideals being lost in war.

## Reality of Conflict

The reality of conflict can be pretty painful — I should know, I grew up with two brothers...

- 1) Poems set in the heat of the battle create [vivid pictures](#) of the sights, sounds and emotions.
- 2) Poems set after the battle are more [detached](#) from the [reality](#).

### The horror of war can be described as it happens...

#### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) [Bleak imagery](#) is used to convey the men's [pain](#) — for example, the description of the frost as "[puckering foreheads crisp](#)" compels the reader to imagine their [flesh freezing](#). Comparing the noise of the wind to the "[twitching agonies](#) of men" creates a [vivid](#) picture of wounded soldiers.
- 2) The reality of war leaves no room for [patriotism](#) or [heroism](#) — the men "[cringe](#) in holes" like [frightened animals](#). [Rhetorical questions](#) ("What are we doing here?") emphasise the [pointlessness](#) of their suffering.
- 3) The [hopeless tone](#) of the poem suggests that the men believe they have [little chance](#) of [surviving](#). They seem to have accepted that they will never see their [families](#) or [homes](#) again.

#### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) The soldier is presented as a [confused](#) and [helpless victim](#) — he is "[running](#)" in a state of bewilderment, and verbs like "[Stumbling](#)" suggest he has [no control](#) of his situation or actions.
- 2) His [discomfort](#) is clear from his "[raw-seamed hot khaki](#)" and the way he "[lugged](#)" his rifle. [Violent imagery](#), such as the "[Bullets smacking the belly](#) out of the air", hint that he may be in [pain](#).
- 3) Physical descriptions of the battle create a sense of [noise](#) and [confusion](#). The "[blue crackling air](#)" gives the impression that the soldier is completely [surrounded](#) by [danger](#).
- 4) His [patriotism](#) and [principles](#) are "[Dropped like luxuries](#)" — they are no use to him in the [heat of battle](#).

### ...or after the event

#### The Charge of the Light Brigade (Pages 10-11)

- 1) The poem creates a [noisy](#) and [frightening](#) picture of the battle using onomatopoeia ("[thunder'd](#)"), violent verbs ("[Flash'd](#)") and a [relentless, galloping rhythm](#). This emphasises the men's [bravery](#) and [heroism](#).
- 2) However, there's a [distance](#) between the speaker and the battlefield — the battle is recounted like a [story](#), and the [chronological structure](#) helps impose [order](#) on the events.

#### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) War forces people to make [morally complicated decisions](#) on the [spur of the moment](#). The soldier is left with a [disturbing](#) feeling of [responsibility](#), as shown by the phrase "his bloody life in [my bloody hands](#)."
- 2) [Graphic images](#) present the reader with a [vivid picture](#) of the [horror](#) of war — the speaker describes seeing "broad daylight" through the bullet holes in the looter, which is a [grotesque, disturbing](#) image.
- 3) The soldier is [unable](#) to remain [detached](#) from the reality of what he's done — his sleep is [interrupted](#) by repeated images of the man being "[torn apart](#)" and he is [haunted](#) by his memories.



### You could also write about 'War Photographer'...

The photographer is not actively involved in conflict, but he sees the reality of it on a daily basis. Emotive imagery like the "running children in a nightmare heat" is used to create a picture of the horrors of war.

## Loss and Absence

Two more cheery, uplifting themes here, but hey, it could be worse — at least this isn't chemistry...

- 1) People experience **loss** when they're **separated** from someone or something they **love**.
- 2) An absence of **hope** can lead to **negativity** and **despair**.

### Conflict can cause loss of people or places

#### Poppies (Pages 20-21)

- 1) The mother feels like she's **lost** her son when he leaves to join the **army**. She acts almost as if he has **died** — she leans against the "**war memorial**" and mentions "**Armistice Sunday**".
- 2) The loss she experiences is emphasised by references to **textures** and the **senses**. She traces "the **inscriptions**" on the war memorial and **listens** for her son's voice "on the **wind**" — this hints at her desperate desire to find some kind of **connection** with him, to **compensate** for their **separation**.

#### The Emigrée (Pages 26-27)

- 1) The speaker is **nostalgic** for a place that she left as a child — the opening phrase "There **once was** a country..." **frames** the poem with the sense of **loss** she feels for the place. This loss is **heightened** by the fact that the speaker retains an "**impression of sunlight**" — a positive, **idealised** view of the city.
- 2) There are suggestions that **conflict** is **responsible** for the speaker's loss — the city "may be at **war**", and the speaker describes herself as an "**Emigrée**" in the title, hinting that she was **forced** to leave.

#### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) Although the pilot chose to **avoid dying** in the war, his family still **lose** him — their **shame** causes them to treat him "as though he **no longer existed**".
- 2) The daughter's statement that he "was **no longer** the father we **loved**" hints at the **pain** that this **emotional loss** caused both the pilot and his family.

### People without power often feel hopeless

#### London (Pages 4-5)

- 1) There's an absence of **anything positive** in the poem — the speaker refers to the absence of **freedom** ("the chartered Thames"), **innocence** ("Blasts the new-born infant's tear") and **morality** ("harlot's curse").
- 2) There's also an absence of **hope**, with no sense that anyone can do anything to **improve** the situation. The final image of the plagued "**marriage hearse**" implies the **cycle of suffering** will continue.

#### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) The men in the trenches have **no hope** of things improving. The dejected line, "We **only know** war lasts, rain soaks and clouds sag stormy" emphasises that their lives are **miserable** and filled with **suffering**.
- 2) Even thinking about **home** doesn't provide any **hope** for the men — they understand that they are "dying" and know that at home "the **doors are closed**" to them.



#### **Loss of life is a common theme in this cluster...**

The speaker in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' is keen to emphasise the loss of life, repeating "the six hundred". Conversely, the Duke in 'My Last Duchess' doesn't seem to feel loss, despite his wife's death.

# Memory

They say an elephant never forgets, but it turns out soldiers, photographers, mothers and pilots don't either...

- 1) Memories can be **powerful**, particularly memories of **negative** or **difficult experiences**.
- 2) Memories often contain **specific**, **personal** details which give them a **unique power**.

## Memories can have a haunting effect

### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) The speaker is **haunted** by the memory of **killing** the looter. Going home doesn't help him, his sleep is **disturbed** and he can't "**flush**" out the memory with "drink" or "drugs".
- 2) The **monosyllabic**, **punchy** line openings of "Sleep" and "Dream" imitate the loud, violent sounds of **bullet shots**, and reflect the way that he is **jolted** awake at night by **memories** of the killing.
- 3) The **metaphor** of a soldier "**dug in behind enemy lines**" emphasises how the memory is **stuck** in his mind, and hints at the **danger** of the memory — it has the **potential** to destroy him.



Ted (top) had happier memories of winning the squadron's human pyramid tournament.

### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) The photographer's memories are **triggered** by the **development** of a **photo** in his darkroom.
- 2) **Senses** are used to describe his memories — he remembers hearing "the **cries** / of this man's wife" and **seeing** the "**blood stained**" in the dust. This makes them seem **personal** and **vivid** in his mind.
- 3) The way that his hands "**tremble**" suggests that remembering the scenes is **difficult** — the **memories** of **conflicts** seem to affect him **more deeply** than the original events did.

## Memories can be described vividly

### The Emigrée (Pages 26-27)

- 1) The speaker vividly remembers the **city** she left as a child. She describes her view of it as a "**bright, filled paperweight**", showing how her memories are **positive**, **colourful** and **solid**. Different **senses** increase the vividness — her "child's vocabulary" "**tastes** of sunlight" and she **combs** the personified city's "hair".
- 2) However, there's a suggestion that the speaker's memories are **unreliable** — the perfect place she remembers might be "at **war**" or "**sick with tyrants**".

### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) The pilot's daughter **imagines** that the pilot's **idyllic childhood memories** contributed to him turning round.
- 2) The **vivid, beautiful descriptions** of **sea creatures** hint at the **power** of the pilot's childhood memories. Metaphors like the "loose silver of whitebait" create a **powerful**, **sensual** picture.
- 3) In contrast, the **daughter's memories** of life after her father's return are presented in a **matter-of-fact** way — her straightforward language ("my mother never spoke again") shows how **painful** the situation was.



### Other poems also feature powerful memories...

The speaker in 'The Prelude' is deeply troubled by his memories of the mountain. The mother in 'Poppies' clings to her memories of her son, both as a small boy and when he leaves to join the army.

## Negative Emotions

These poems have so much negativity that we need two pages. Good job every other theme is so positive...

The poems in the cluster express a **range** of **negative emotions**, for example:

- 1) **Anger** is a **strong emotion** that often stems from a **hurtful experience** or a sense of **mistreatment**.
- 2) **Guilt** is often associated with **conflict**, either because of actions **committed** in war, or because of being able to **escape** a war that other people cannot.
- 3) **Fear** is often experienced in response to **uncontrollable** forces, such as **nature** or **war**.
- 4) **Pride** is linked to **power**, and it often leads to a **misuse** of that power.

### Anger can be directed at society

#### London (Pages 4-5)

- 1) The narrator is angry about the **society** he sees as he **wanders** the streets of London.
- 2) He uses **rhetorical devices** to get the reader to share his anger. For example, he **repeats** “marks” and “every” and uses **emotive imagery**, such as “every **infant’s cry** of fear”.
- 3) The images of the “**black’ning** church” and “**blood** down palace walls” show his anger at institutions like the **Church** and the **government** / **monarchy** for not **improving** things.

#### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) The speaker is angry at **British society** for giving him an **education** that ignored his **Caribbean heritage**.
- 2) He repeats the phrase “**Dem tell me**” to set himself (“me”) in clear **opposition** to society (“Dem”). He **avoids** using standard **British grammar** to **distance** himself from the society he’s **criticising**.
- 3) His anger leads him to **juxtapose** British **pantomime** and **nursery rhyme** characters, e.g. “**Dick Whittington** and he cat”, with Caribbean **heroes**, e.g. “**Toussaint L’Ouverture**”. These comparisons are deliberately **ridiculous**, emphasising his **frustration** with “Dem” in a **humorous** way.

### War can leave people feeling guilty

#### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) The soldier’s **guilt** seems to stem from his **doubt** as to whether or not the looter was **armed**. The **repetition** of “**probably armed, possibly not**” shows that he’s **replaying** the action in his **mind** and trying to work out if his actions were **justified**.
- 2) The guilt eats away at the soldier — he says the dead man is “**here in my head** when I close my eyes”. The potential reference to **Lady Macbeth** in the final line hints that guilt is driving the soldier **mad**.
- 3) The **shift of voice** from first person **plural** (“we”) to first person **singular** (“I”) shows that the soldier feels **personally responsible** for the death. This is confirmed in the final line, where **emphasis** falls on “**my**”.

#### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) There’s a sense that the photographer feels **guilty** about the **ease** of life in England. The phrase, “**ordinary pain** which simple weather can dispel”, shows how **different** life in England is from life in a war zone.
- 2) He refers to taking the picture as doing “what **someone must**”. There’s an element of guilt to his words — he knows that taking photographs may seem **insensitive**, but he feels a **duty** to **record** the moment and make sure that the **world’s attention** is drawn to this **suffering**.



## Negative Emotions

### People fear situations they cannot understand or control

#### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat (Pages 6-7)

- 1) The narrator's mood changes from carefree confidence to deep fear after encountering the mountain. This fear has a lasting effect, with the experience troubling his thoughts and dreams "for many days".
- 2) The mountain's solid "stature" and "measured motion" is contrasted with the speaker's "trembling" — the personified mountain is calm and in control, whereas the speaker is frantically trying to escape.

#### Storm on the Island (Pages 14-15)

- 1) There is also a progression from security to fear in 'Storm on the Island'. The confident opening of "We are prepared" has changed to a confession of "fear" by the end of the poem.
- 2) The fear is amplified because nature is an invisible, abstract force — the speaker calls the storm "a huge nothing". This highlights the fact that the islanders can do nothing to combat it.
- 3) The image of the "tame cat / Turned savage" shows how even familiar things become scary in the storm.

#### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) Beginning the poem in medias res (in the middle of things) immediately alerts the reader to the soldier's fear. The opening description, "Suddenly he awoke and was running", hints that the soldier is not really in control of his body — it's like he's trapped in a nightmare.
- 2) The soldier's terror is shown by repeated references to his sweat — a bodily fluid associated with fear. Even his rifle is "numb", suggesting that he's almost paralysed with fear.
- 3) The final metaphor of "His terror's touchy dynamite" suggests his fear has overwhelmed him.

### Too much pride can lead to arrogance

#### Ozymandias (Pages 2-3)

- 1) The words on the pedestal of the statue show that Ozymandias was a proud, arrogant ruler. He calls himself the "king of kings" and commands other rulers to "Look" at his works and "despair".
- 2) The reference to his "sneer of cold command" suggests that he thought everyone else was inferior to him, and that he treated his subjects badly.

#### My Last Duchess (Pages 8-9)

- 1) The Duke is proud of his name, art collection and reputation. What he viewed as the flirtatious behaviour of his last Duchess hurt his pride — she didn't appreciate his "gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name".
- 2) The poem hints that this all led to the Duchess's death — the Duke arrogantly boasts that he was too proud even to criticise her behaviour ("I choose / Never to stoop"). Instead he had her killed.
- 3) Several of the Duke's comments to his visitor also display his arrogance, e.g. "Will't please you sit and look at her?" is almost a command — the visitor has no choice but to sit and admire the portrait.



### Hopelessness is another negative emotion to think about...

There are several poems where situations seem hopeless, including 'London' and 'Exposure' (see p.40). Think about how poets present hopeless scenes, and the effect hopelessness has on the people involved.

# Identity

I don't know what this 'ity' is — it's usually cars, walls or my bank balance that I dent...

- 1) Belonging to a family is an important part of human identity.
- 2) National identity and patriotism can have powerful effects, particularly in war.

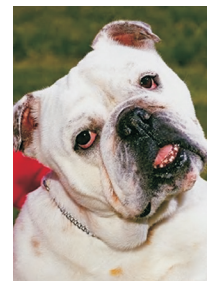
## Family identity is precious

### Poppies (Pages 20-21)

- 1) The boy's identity as a son is clearly established in the poem — his mother smooths down his collar and mentions that they used to “play at / being Eskimos” when he was younger.
- 2) However, the son has a new identity as a soldier — his “blazer” is a visual reminder of this. The mother moving from his bedroom to the “war memorial” reflects this change — the bedroom is a symbol of family identity, but the war memorial symbolises his new identity as a soldier.
- 3) The mother still clings to his identity as her son and the poem ends with her trying to hear his “playground voice” — he's still her child and she longs for him to return to her.

### Tissue (Pages 24-25)

- 1) The opening three stanzas explore the importance of family history and heritage — there's a reference to recording family histories in “the back of the Koran”.
- 2) These pages are treasured — they are “smoothed and stroked”, almost as if they were living things. The repetition of this phrase later in the poem, in reference to the “grand design” of a human body, shows how important family history and heritage is in forming an individual's identity.



Buster wished his owner would stroke him rather than pages in a book.

## National identity has a powerful influence on people

### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) National identity often becomes more important in times of war. During World War Two, many Japanese people saw it as a great honour to be a kamikaze and die for their country. The “incantations” that fill the pilot's head may refer to the patriotic propaganda used by the government to promote national identity.
- 2) However, the pilot's decision to turn around was unpatriotic — he failed in his duty to his country.
- 3) The end of the poem explores the tension between family identity and national identity. For the pilot, family identity was more important, but his family's patriotism was so strong that they treated him as if he was dead, meaning that he lost his identity as a husband and a father.

### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) The speaker feels that his personal identity has been shaped too much by British national identity.
- 2) He believes that learning about key figures in Caribbean history will help develop his true identity.
- 3) The poem ends with the speaker's assertion that he is “carving out me identity”. The forceful statement shows he intends to continue learning — “carving” hints at a difficult process with a permanent result.



### ***National identity is also important to Tennyson's speaker...***

The speaker in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' believes that the men should be honoured as national heroes. He praises them for their display of bravery and for following their orders without question.

## Individual Experiences

No friends, no lovers, no-one to share experiences with — yep, that sounds about right for this lot...

- 1) Conflicts can involve **thousands** of people, but everyone involved has their **own experience** of it.
- 2) Focusing on individual experiences allows the poet to present a **place**, **action** or **event** from a **specific**, unique **point of view**.

### Conflict can leave individuals feeling isolated

#### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) There are no **other** soldiers present in the poem — the soldier seems **isolated** and **alone**.
- 2) The only other living thing is a “**yellow hare**” that gruesomely crawls “in a **threshing circle**”. Focusing on a **single animal** mirrors the soldier’s isolation and emphasises how **far** he is from any **help** or **comfort**.
- 3) The soldier feels he’s ultimately **insignificant** in the “**cold clockwork** of the **stars** and the **nations**”. Although he understands that he’s part of a **wider picture**, he feels completely **isolated** from it.

#### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) The photographer is described as being “**finally alone**” — this could suggest that he needs **space** and **quiet** to reflect on his experiences, but also hints at his **guilt** about being able to **escape** the “suffering”.
- 2) His isolation in the war zone is highlighted by the fact that it’s a “**stranger’s features**” he photographs, and that he seeks approval “**without words**” from the man’s wife. Although he **records** people’s suffering, he doesn’t **share** in it — this **distances** him from them.
- 3) The emphatic closing remark of “**they do not care**” emphasises how **different** he feels from everyone else — the **ambiguity** surrounding who “**they**” are hints that he feels **isolated** from the rest of the world.

### Individuals have unique experiences of places

#### London (Pages 4-5)

- 1) The poem opens with “**I**” and takes the form of a **dramatic monologue** describing a **walk** through London.
- 2) The speaker seems to be **removed** from the suffering he sees, allowing him to **observe** and **comment** on the **bigger picture**. This means that he can recognise the “**mind-forged manacles**” that trap people, and he can criticise **institutions** like the monarchy and the church for their corruption and lack of action.
- 3) The speaker’s description of the city is entirely **negative**, which makes the reader question whether he’s **biased**. Even in the **joyful** event of a wedding he can only picture a **funeral** (“the **marriage hearse**”).

#### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat (Pages 6-7)

- 1) The narrator is **alone** in his “**act of stealth**” as he takes the boat and sets out across the lake. When the mountain **frightens** him, he describes it in **personal terms**, claiming that the mountain “**Strode after me**”. This **personification** suggests that he feels nature is **reacting** to him as an **individual**.
- 2) He describes the **effect** the event has on him as “**solitude / Or blank desertion**”, emphasising how the event has left him **isolated** and alone. His view of nature has been changed and he’s left feeling **insignificant** compared with the “**huge and mighty forms**” of nature.



#### **Other poems also focus on individual experiences...**

The speaker in ‘The Emigrée’ seems alone in her views of her old city and appears isolated in the new city, where other people threaten her. ‘Remains’ looks at one soldier struggling to deal with his experiences.

## Practice Questions

*There are some exam-style questions just around the corner, but first here are some questions that you don't need to write a full essay to answer. One or two short paragraphs should be enough.*

### Power of Humans

- 1) How is the Duke's power and control emphasised in 'My Last Duchess'?
- 2) Describe two examples of human misuse of power from 'Checking Out Me History'.
- 3) How does Dharker present human power as temporary in 'Tissue'?

### Power of Nature

- 1) Do you think nature is more powerful in 'Exposure' or 'Storm on the Island'? Explain your answer.
- 2) In the extract from 'The Prelude', how does the speaker's understanding of nature's power change?
- 3) How is the power of nature significant in 'Kamikaze'?

### Effects of Conflict

- 1) How does Tennyson create a sense of the men's heroism in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'?
- 2) Do you think that the speaker in 'Remains' regrets killing the looter? Why / Why not?
- 3) In 'Poppies', how does the mother's separation from her son affect her actions?

### Reality of Conflict

- 1) How does the tone of 'Exposure' help to convey the reality of war?
- 2) How is the horror of war depicted in 'Bayonet Charge'?
- 3) In 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', how does the poet create a vivid picture of the battlefield?

### Loss and Absence

- 1) How is the speaker's sense of loss presented in 'The Emigrée'?
- 2) What does the pilot in 'Kamikaze' lose? How is this presented?
- 3) In 'London', how does the image of the "marriage hearse" emphasise the absence of hope?

## Practice Questions

### Memory

- 1) Who do you think is more affected by memories of war, the photographer in 'War Photographer' or the soldier in 'Remains'? Explain your answer.
- 2) How is the speaker in 'The Emigrée' influenced by her memories of her city?
- 3) In 'Kamikaze', how is memory presented as a powerful force on a) the pilot and b) his daughter?

### Negative Emotions

- 1) How does Blake present the speaker's anger in 'London'?
- 2) How does the speaker in 'Checking Out Me History' use humour to support his anger?
- 3) In 'War Photographer', why does the photographer feel guilty? How does his guilt affect him?
- 4) How is the feeling of fear developed in a similar way in 'The Prelude' and in 'Storm on the Island'?
- 5) In 'Bayonet Charge', how does Hughes create a vivid picture of the soldier's fear?
- 6) Why do you think Shelley chose to emphasise the arrogance of the ruler in 'Ozymandias'?

### Identity

- 1) In 'Poppies', how is the mother affected by her son's new identity?
- 2) How does the speaker in 'Tissue' present family history as being important?
- 3) How are personal and national identity connected for the speaker in 'Checking Out Me History'?

### Individual Experiences

- 1) How does the poet create the sense that the photographer in 'War Photographer' is isolated?
- 2) In 'London', what evidence is there that the speaker's experience of the city might be biased?
- 3) In the extract from 'The Prelude', why is it significant that the speaker is alone?

## Practice Questions

*In the exam you'll have to compare two poems which share a common theme, so no prizes for guessing what these questions are going to ask you to do. Don't try and do them all in one go — choose one, jot down a plan and have a crack at writing an answer. Then come back tomorrow and try another one.*

### Exam-style Questions

- 1) Man is often portrayed as being in conflict with nature. Explore the ways in which nature is portrayed as the enemy of man in 'Exposure' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
- 2) Compare the way in which the reality of war is presented in 'Bayonet Charge' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
- 3) Compare the way that poets present loss in 'Poppies' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
- 4) Compare the way that negative feelings are presented in 'London' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
- 5) "There is no type of identity that is more important than family identity."

Using this quotation as a starting point, write about the theme of identity in 'Kamikaze' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

Remember to comment on how the poems are written.

## Forms of Poetry

Form is about the rules poets follow when writing poetry. And like all good rules, they're there to be broken...

- 1) Form can be **rigid** and **regular** or **loose** and **irregular**.
- 2) Poets **choose** a form to create different **moods** and **effects**.

### Some poems have a strict, regular form...

#### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) The poem has a **rigid form**, with eight **similar** stanzas that each have four long lines and a **half-line** at the end. There's also a regular **ABBAC** rhyme scheme.
- 2) This form reflects the **monotonous existence** of the soldiers in the **trenches**. There is no hope of **change** for the men, and the **half-lines** at the end of each stanza reinforce this — the **gaps** they leave emphasise the **lack** of action or hope.

#### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) The poem consists of four six-line stanzas, each with lines of **similar length** and a regular **ABBCDD** rhyme scheme. The regularity of the poem reflects the photographer's **work** — the poem is made up of "**ordered rows**", just like the "**spools**" he lays out in his darkroom.
- 2) This **regular** form echoes the careful, **methodical process** that the photographer goes through.
- 3) It also highlights a **similarity** between the work of the photographer and that of the poet — just as the photographs put the **suffering** of war into "**black and white**", the poem presents the **dangerous** and **unpredictable** work of the war photographer in an **ordered** and **comprehensible** way.

### ...whereas others have a less rigid form

#### The Charge of the Light Brigade (Pages 10-11)

- 1) Tennyson uses an **irregular form** to reflect the **chaos** of war — it is made up of six **unique** stanzas, each with between six and twelve lines and a **different rhyme scheme**.
- 2) Although there's no regular rhyme scheme, **lots of rhyme** is used to **drive** the poem forwards like the **galloping cavalry**. **Rhyming triplets** like "reply", "why" and "die" create **momentum** that's then **broken** by an unrhymed line ("Death"). This mirrors the **stumbling** of the horses as they're shot at.

#### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) The poem uses **different** stanza forms to separate the **humorous attacks** on British historical and cultural figures from the **serious details** about heroic Caribbean figures.
- 2) The British stanzas are all **quatrains** — this regular form mirrors the speaker's **restrictive** education, especially when contrasted with the **free verse** and **song-like chants** used in the Caribbean stanzas.
- 3) The Caribbean stanzas are presented in **italics** with short, sometimes **one-word lines**. These short lines **slow** the **pace** of the poem, forcing you to **pay attention** to the stories described.



#### Other poems use specific forms...

'Ozymandias' is a sonnet, although it doesn't use a traditional sonnet rhyme scheme. 'My Last Duchess' is a dramatic monologue, where a single speaker (the Duke) addresses an implied audience (the visitor).

## Poetic Devices

If your teacher's told you to write about it, and it's got a fancy name, there's a good chance it's a poetic device.

- 1) Poets use all kinds of **devices** to **liven up** their writing. These pages pick out a few of the important ones, but there are **lots more** you could write about.
- 2) You need to be able to **identify** different techniques used in the poems and make **comparisons** between them.
- 3) It's really important that you don't just **say** what the technique is, but **comment** on the **effect** that it has on the poem.

### Punctuation affects how a poem flows

#### Tissue (Pages 24-25)

- 1) Lots of lines and stanzas **defy restrictions** and **flow** into the next — this **enjambment** reflects the **freedom** that the speaker **longs** for.
- 2) The fifth stanza presents a **contrast** between the **freedom** of **nature** and the **restrictiveness** of **human constructs** like "borderlines". This contrast is emphasised by the use of **enjambment** ("The **sun** shines through / their borderlines") and **caesura** ("Maps too.")

#### The Emigrée (Pages 26-27)

- 1) Enjambment in the first two stanzas of 'The Emigrée' mirrors the **freedom** the speaker had in the **city** she left. Phrases like "the graceful **slopes** / **glow**" suggest that she was **free** and life was **easy** there.
- 2) This enjambment suggests that the speaker is **absorbed** in her memories and gets **carried away** describing them. She enjoys **remembering** and **speaking** about the city.
- 3) However, in the final stanza, each line is **end-stopped**. This reflects how the speaker sees her new city as a "**city of walls**". There's a sense that the speaker feels **restricted**.

### Repetition reinforces a point

#### The Charge of the Light Brigade (Pages 10-11)

- 1) There are **repeated references** to the "**six hundred**" men who made up the Light Brigade — repetition of the **number** emphasises the **human cost** of the battle.
- 2) Tennyson also uses repetition to develop a **vivid picture** of the battlefield. The repetition of phrases such as "**valley of Death**" and "**mouth of Hell**" creates a horrific, frightening scene.
- 3) In the third and fifth stanzas, repetition of "**Cannon** to right of them, / **Cannon** to left of them", emphasises how the Light Brigade are completely **surrounded** by Russian gunfire.

#### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) The speaker in 'Remains' uses repetition **early on** in the poem to create the sense that the looter's death was a **collective act**. In the second stanza, "**all**", "**three**" and "**somebody else**" are repeated to highlight that other people were involved. However, this repetition makes the point feel almost **over-emphasised** — it hints that the speaker may be trying to **shift responsibility** from himself.
- 2) The phrase "**probably armed, possibly not**" from the first stanza is repeated in the sixth stanza. This highlights the way that the speaker keeps **replaying** the looter's **death** in his **mind**.



# Poetic Devices

## Irony can highlight the gap between expectations and reality

### Ozymandias (Pages 2-3)

- 1) 'Ozymandias' focuses on the irony that the king's achievements are ultimately worthless — all that's left of his kingdom is a ruined statue.
- 2) The inscription on the statue's base is ironic with hindsight — the king warned other rulers to "despair" when they saw his "works", but none of his creations are left now.
- 3) The irony also challenges the reader to consider their own view of human achievement — many people are similarly blind in their quest for power.



"Some would say it's ironic that although I have no power left, you still have to learn about me..."

### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) The pilot's reception when he returns home is ironic. He chose not to die when he abandoned his mission, but his family's shame led them to treat him as if he was dead anyway.
- 2) There are ironic reminders of the pilot's failure to complete his mission — for example he sees "boats / strung out like bunting", but there will be no celebrations of the pilot's heroism.
- 3) The irony is ultimately tragic — the poem's closing lines are poignant as they question whether it would have been "better" for the pilot if he had completed his suicide mission.

## Poets appeal to the senses to create a vivid picture

### London (Pages 4-5)

- 1) The poem is based around the scenes the speaker sees as he walks around the streets of London — the images of "marks of woe" on "every face", the "black'ning church" and the "blood" that runs down "palace walls" combine to create a picture of pain, corruption and death.
- 2) Sounds are also important — the combination of the "infant's cry of fear", the "chimney-sweeper's cry" and the "youthful harlot's curse" create a noisy, unpleasant impression of the city.

### Poppies (Pages 20-21)

- 1) The mother's memories of her son are very physical (e.g. "graze my nose" and "playground voice").
- 2) Before he goes she touches his collar and removes "cat hairs" from his shirt, but restrains from stroking his hair — their physical connection has lessened as he's grown up, and now he physically leaves her.
- 3) In the final stanza, the mother leans against the war memorial and "traced / the inscriptions" on it — she needs to physically touch something to feel connected to her son.

### The Emigrée (Pages 26-27)

- 1) The speaker's positive associations with the past and the city are emphasised by the use of sight and taste.
- 2) Imagery of light ("white streets" and "slopes / glow") creates an almost heavenly picture of the city.
- 3) The speaker says her "child's vocabulary" "tastes of sunlight" — the recollection of an element of her childhood in the city generates a strong, physical sensation of pleasure.



### You could also think about the use of contrasts...

Lots of the poems use contrasts for emphasis, e.g. oxymorons in 'London' show how even innocent things have been corrupted, and in 'Bayonet Charge', the reality of war contrasts starkly with patriotic ideals.

## Use of Sound

Poems are often intended to be read aloud, so the sounds words make are particularly important.

- 1) **Onomatopoeia** is an effective way of adding **dramatic sounds** to a poem.
- 2) Poets repeat **similar sounds** to create a particular **mood** or **effect**, e.g. **sibilant sounds** create a **hissing** noise which can be **threatening** or **unsettling**.

### Onomatopoeia can mimic the noise of a battlefield

#### The Charge of the Light Brigade (Pages 10-11)

- 1) Onomatopoeic verbs like “**thunder’d**” and “**Shatter’d**” imitate the **chaotic**, deafening noise of **battle**.
- 2) By **replicating** the powerful, **threatening** noise of the battlefield, Tennyson shows how **frightening** it must have been, and emphasises the **heroism** of the Light Brigade.

#### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) In the opening stanza, the onomatopoeic verb “**smacking**” creates a loud and **jarring** effect with its **harsh ‘c’** sound. It acts as a **violent** reminder of the **dangers** the soldier faces.
- 2) The “**crackling** air” in the final stanza sounds **dangerous** and emphasises the fact that the soldier is **completely surrounded** by gunfire — nowhere is **safe**.

### Repeated sounds create different effects

#### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat (Pages 6-7)

- 1) The **repetition** of **sibilant sounds** in lines 24-29 (e.g. “**struck**”, “**still**”, “**stars**”) emphasises the sinister way that the mountain seems to **glide after** the narrator. This creates a **threatening** mood that reflects his **fear**.
- 2) Repetition of gentle “**l’** sounds (e.g. “**Small**”, “**still**”, “**melted all**”) creates **consonance** in lines 8-11. This produces a **flowing effect**, which reflects the **gentle** movement of the boat across the **lake**.

#### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) **Assonance** is used to emphasise the men’s **painful experience** — **long ‘oh’ sounds** are repeated in the third stanza (“**grow**”, “**only know**”, “**soaks**”) and sixth stanza (“**Slowly** our ghosts drag **home**”). The **drawn out** sounds reflect the men’s **exhaustion** and the long, **monotonous days** in the trenches.
- 2) Owen uses **sibilance** to **recreate** the noise of the battlefield — the line “**Sudden successive** flights of bullets **streak** the **silence**” imitates the sound of **bullets whistling** through the air.

#### Storm on the Island (Pages 14-15)

- 1) Phrases such as “**spray hits**” and “**spits**” contain **sibilant**, **assonant ‘i’** and **plosive** sounds. These combine to imitate the **fitful spitting** sound of **sea spray**, which contributes to the “**savage**” description of the sea.
- 2) The wind is also described using **sibilant** sounds — it “**dives** / And **strafes** **invisibly**. **Space** is a **salvo**.” — this imitates the wind **whistling** across the island. **Plosive** sounds, e.g. “**Space**” and “**bombarded**”, create a sense of **sudden gusts** of wind, which add to the feelings of **uncertainty** and **fear**.



### Alliteration is another poetic use of sound...

Dharker uses alliteration (“rivers... roads, / railtracks”) in ‘Tissue’ to hint at freedom from human constraints. In ‘Poppies’, the alliterative “hoping to hear” emphasises the mother’s deep longing for her son’s safe return.

# Imagery

Imagery is when a poet uses language to create a picture — it includes similes, metaphors and personification.

- 1) Personification can make things seem more real or lifelike.
- 2) Similes and metaphors create powerful descriptions.

## Personification gives a vivid impression of an object or place

### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat (Pages 6-7)

- 1) The personification of the mountain makes it seem threatening — the phrase “Upreared its head” creates a monstrous image.
- 2) The personified mountain “Strode after” the narrator, giving a vivid sense that it means to harm him. Its calm but relentless pursuit increases his terror.

### The Emigrée (Pages 26-27)

- 1) The city is initially personified as being “sick with tyrants”, suggesting it has been damaged in some way.
- 2) However, in the third stanza, the city is personified positively. It returns to the speaker in a “white plane” and takes her “dancing” — this could reflect the vividness of the speaker’s memories.
- 3) In the closing lines of the poem, the speaker’s city “hides behind” her — the personification makes it sound as if the speaker has to defend her attachment to the city.

## Similes and metaphors can be powerful ways of making a point

### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) The metaphor, “dug in behind enemy lines”, describes the way that the speaker can’t get the memory of the looter’s death out of his mind — it emphasises the lasting effect the death has had on the speaker. It also highlights the continuing sense of threat that he feels from the memory.
- 2) The phrase “dug in” hints at how deeply the memory is embedded and that it won’t be easily removed.

### Poppies (Pages 20-21)

- 1) The simile describing the mother leaning against the war memorial “like a wishbone” reinforces her desperate wish for her son to return safely. Her leaning also hints that she’s searching for some support.
- 2) Another simile is used to illustrate the son’s excitement at leaving — “the world overflowing / like a treasure chest” gives a vivid sense of his anticipation and the varied, rich experiences he hopes for.

### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) The speaker uses metaphors of blindness to emphasise the history hidden from him by his formal education. Plosive words like “Bandage” and “Blind” at the start of lines give the metaphors extra power.
- 2) In comparison, metaphors of light are used to describe the Caribbean heroes — e.g. “Toussaint” is a “beacon”, while “Mary Seacole” is a “healing star” and a “yellow sunrise”. These positive metaphors help reinforce the speaker’s point that these figures are worthy of being studied.



### Other poems also use personification...

Owen and Heaney both personify nature — in ‘Exposure’ it is personified as the enemy of the men, and in ‘Storm on the Island’ personification is used to make the storm seem more threatening and dangerous.

# Rhyme and Rhythm

Rejoice happily, your teacher has marshmallows — there's no excuse for spelling 'rhythm' wrong in the exam.

- 1) **Rhyme** and **rhythm** affect the **mood** of a poem and how it **flows**.
- 2) They can also be used to create a particular **effect** or to emphasise the **message** of a poem.

## Rhyme can reinforce a poem's message

### London (Pages 4-5)

- 1) The regular **ABAB** rhyme scheme emphasises the **unrelenting suffering** and **lack of change** in the city.
- 2) The rhymes are **simple** and often **monosyllabic** (e.g. "street" and "meet"), giving the poem a **strong beat**. This could replicate the thudding sound of a **heartbeat**, presenting the city as **mass of humanity**.

### My Last Duchess (Pages 8-9)

- 1) **Rhyming couplets** are used throughout the poem to help create a rigid form — this shows how the Duke controls the **poem**, just as he controlled his **wife's fate**.
- 2) The regularity of the rhymes also mirrors the Duke's **stubborn, unwavering character** — the rhyme scheme allows no space for **change** or **questioning**, just as the Duke chooses "Never to stoop".

### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) 'Checking Out Me History' uses **lots** of rhyme but has **no** regular rhyme scheme. Agard uses rhyme **differently** in the British and Caribbean stanzas to **emphasise** his **points** about education and identity.
- 2) Lots of **simple rhymes** (e.g. "cat" and "dat") are used in the British quatrains. The rhymes sound **childish** and make the British **history** the speaker was taught seem **trivial**.
- 3) Rhyme is used **less frequently** and **less regularly** in the Caribbean stanzas. This reflects the speaker's wish for **freedom** from the restrictions of his **formal education**.

## A poem's rhythm affects its pace and mood

### The Charge of the Light Brigade (Pages 10-11)

- 1) The **regular rhythm** creates a sense of the **energy** and **speed** of the cavalry charging into battle. This sense of **action** and **excitement** also helps to emphasise the soldiers' **heroism**.
- 2) The **metre** is mainly **dactylic** — one **stressed** syllable is followed by two **unstressed** ones (e.g. "All in the **v**alley of **D**eath"). This creates a **galloping** effect, like the sound of the horses' hooves.

### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) Enjambment, caesura and varying line lengths create an **irregular rhythm** that mirrors the soldier **struggling** and **stumbling** through the mud.
- 2) The lack of a regular rhythm also adds to the soldier's feeling of "**bewilderment**" and **helplessness** — there is no **calmness** or **order** that a regular rhythm may offer.



### **Rhyme schemes are important in other poems...**

'Exposure' has a regular ABBAC rhyme scheme which contributes to the feeling of monotony and misery. In 'Ozymandias', the lack of a conventional rhyme scheme reflects how human power can be destroyed.

## Voice

The voice is a key feature of a poem — it can have a big effect on how the poet’s message is conveyed.

- 1) A **first-person voice** gives you one person’s **perspective**.
- 2) Poetry can reproduce **spoken language** to hint at the **speaker’s character**.

### Using a first-person narrator makes the poem more personal

#### Poppies (Pages 20-21)

- 1) The use of the first person allows the poet to express the mother’s **memories** and **emotions**, e.g. “I was **brave**”. The narrator speaks **personally** and **intimately**, as if she is expressing her most **private thoughts**.
- 2) **Domestic** language and imagery gives the mother a **unique** voice. For example, she describes her **nervousness** with **sewing imagery** — “my stomach busy / **making tucks, darts, pleats**”.

#### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) In the later stanzas, the voice **switches** to the **direct speech** of the pilot’s **daughter**.
- 2) This signals a change of **tone** — the direct speech makes the poem more **personal**, but it also presents information in a more **matter-of-fact** way. This helps the reader to **empathise** with the daughter.

### Poems can include features of spoken language

#### My Last Duchess (Pages 8-9)

- 1) The poem is written entirely in the **Duke’s voice**. **Interjections**, e.g. “how shall I say?”, and **contractions**, e.g. “’twas” and “Will’t”, give the sense that the Duke is speaking **aloud**.
- 2) **Questions** (“Will’t please you rise?”) and references to “**Sir**” show that the Duke is having a **conversation**. However, the fact that we **only** ever hear the Duke’s voice emphasises his **power** and need for **control**.

#### Remains (Pages 18-19)

- 1) Armitage uses **colloquial language** (e.g. “legs it”) and **contractions** (e.g. “I’m”) to make the poem sound like a **spoken account**. The colloquial tone means that the looter’s death is presented as an **everyday event** that’s a normal part of the **speaker’s job**.
- 2) Using the soldier’s **authentic voice** helps the conflict to seem **real** and **human**, and gives the reader a deeper sense of the soldier’s **troubled mind**.

#### Checking Out Me History (Pages 30-31)

- 1) **Phonetic spellings** (e.g. “Wha” and “dat”) reflect the speaker’s **Caribbean accent** — this shows that he is **proud** of his Caribbean **heritage**.
- 2) The speaker also uses **non-standard grammar** and **broken syntax** (e.g. “and first Black / Republic born”). This suggests that he wants to **rebel** against the standard English **grammar** he’s been taught.
- 3) The phonetic spellings reinforce the speaker’s **anger**, e.g. “**Dem**” is a more forceful sound than “They”.



### **Third-person narrators are more removed from the action...**

The narrator in ‘War Photographer’ is separate from the photographer, allowing the reader to observe him at a distance. The narrator of ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’ is able to comment on the battle from afar.

## Beginnings of Poems

Poets know that first impressions are important, so there's usually something to say about openings of poems.

- 1) The **beginning** of a poem often **sets the tone** for the rest of the poem.
- 2) Poets aim to **draw in** their readers, and to establish something of the poem's **meaning**.

### Openings can be used to set the scene

#### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) The opening phrase of 'Exposure', "**Our brains ache**", introduces the idea of **pain** and **suffering**, and also highlights the fact that this is a **collective experience**, shared by many soldiers.
- 2) "Our brains ache" is also a reference to "**My heart aches**" — the opening of 'Ode to a Nightingale' by John **Keats**, a '**Romantic**' poet (see p.2). The 'Romantics' believed that **nature** could **inspire** and **restore**, so Owen's reference to Keats here seems **ironic** — nature in 'Exposure' is **deadly**.
- 3) The "winds" that "**knife**" the soldiers in the first line establish nature as an **enemy**.

Structure is the way that poets order and develop their ideas in a poem. The beginnings and endings of poems are key structural devices.

#### Storm on the Island (Pages 14-15)

- 1) The opening of 'Storm on the Island' — "**We are prepared:**" — also hints at a **collective experience**. This contributes to the initial feeling of **safety** — the islanders seem to have **strength** and safety in numbers.
- 2) The first two lines have several further references to **solidity**, including "**rock**" and "**good slate**". Both lines are also **end-stopped**, which reinforces the sense of security.
- 3) However, the opening sets the scene for the **arrival** of the **storm** — the reader may **question** why the **sturdiness** of the buildings is emphasised and whether the **confidence** of the opening is **justified**.

### Some openings use a structural device

#### Ozymandias (Pages 2-3)

- 1) The **narrator** only speaks for one line — the rest of the poem is the **reported speech** of the "**traveller**".
- 2) This creates a **distance** between the **reader** and **Ozymandias** — the reader only hears a **second-hand account** about Ozymandias, reducing the **importance** of the ruler.
- 3) The **insignificance** of Ozymandias is also shown by the fact that the traveller is "from an **antique** land". The word "**antique**" emphasises that the king has little **relevance** anymore.

#### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) The poem begins *in medias res* (in the middle of the action) — this puts the reader in a similarly **confused** position to the soldier who "**awoke**" to find himself in battle.
- 2) Starting the poem with the **dramatic adverb**, "**Suddenly**", establishes a sense of **urgency** and reflects the sense of **panic** that is present throughout the poem. It also grabs the **reader's attention**.
- 3) The soldier is already "**running**" as he wakes up — this makes his experience sound like a **nightmare**.



### You can comment on the beginning of any poem...

'The Charge of the Light Brigade' begins with rhythmic repetition that immediately gives a sense of movement. 'Remains' and 'The Emigrée' both open with phrases that make them sound like stories.

# Endings of Poems

Relief might be your emotion when you reach the end of a poem, but please don't write that in your exam...

- 1) Last lines can **sum up** or neatly **round off** a poem.
- 2) Poems often end with a **powerful** or **memorable** image.



Paul feared that the ending might not be as fun as the beginning.

## Last lines can create a sense of finality...

### My Last Duchess (Pages 8-9)

- 1) The focus at the end **shifts** back to the Duke's **art collection** — he points out his statue of “**Neptune**” and is keen to tell his visitor that “**Claus of Innsbruck**” made it for him, showing again his **pride** and **vanity**.
- 2) This confirms that, for the Duke, the **story** of his last Duchess is **over** — he has moved on and she is now just another **possession** in his **art collection**.

### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) ‘War Photographer’ ends with a **rhyming couplet** describing the photographer **flying away** from England, back to a war zone. He's **leaving** England and **ending** this chapter of his life.
- 2) **Monosyllabic words** are used to give **emphasis** to the closing phrase — “**they do not care**”. The **simple** words hint that he's **frustrated** by the wider world's **apathy** about suffering elsewhere.

### Tissue (Pages 24-25)

- 1) The ending sums up the speaker's ideas about the **preciousness** of **life** and the **importance** of **heritage**.
- 2) The final section of the poem (from line 25) **builds up** to the ending. It suggests that human beings — a “**grand design**” of “**living tissue**” — are more **impressive** and **significant** than other man-made structures.
- 3) The final line of the poem **stands alone**, which makes it seem **significant**. The line uses a **direct address** (“your skin”), which encourages the reader to **consider** their own heritage.

## ...or they can leave you with doubts

### Bayonet Charge (Pages 16-17)

- 1) The final line (“His terror's **touchy dynamite**.”) is **ambiguous** and makes the reader **question** the soldier's **fate**. Ending with “dynamite” implies **danger**, and the adjective “touchy” suggests an **explosion** is imminent.
- 2) The ending also feels **sudden**, just as the beginning does. The poem is a **snapshot** of this soldier's experience of war — the reader does not get a **complete picture**.

### Kamikaze (Pages 28-29)

- 1) The poem ends with a return to the **third-person voice** and **speculation** about the pilot's feelings. The daughter will never know exactly how her father **felt**, and will always be full of **regret** and **uncertainty**.
- 2) The **reader** is also left wondering whether the pilot felt he made the **right decision** — there is **no answer** to the question of whether he **wished** he had fulfilled his suicide mission.



### Other poems feature interesting endings...

‘London’, ‘Exposure’ and ‘Remains’ all end with particularly negative images that offer no hope of change or improvement. Similarly, ‘The Prelude’ and ‘Storm on the Island’ both end with fear of nature.

# Mood

Sadly there are no teenage-angst poems in this cluster, but there's still plenty for you to write about moods.

- 1) The mood is the **feeling** or **atmosphere** created in a poem.
- 2) Poets often **change** the mood of the poem as it progresses.

## Imagery can be used to create a specific mood

### Exposure (Pages 12-13)

- 1) **Bleak natural imagery** reflects the **hopeless, dejected mood** of the soldiers.
- 2) **Traditional poetic imagery** is **subverted** to emphasise the **grim** nature of their experience. “**Dawn**” brings **misery** instead of **hope**, and the **snow** is “**black**” and “**deathly**” rather than **white** and **pure**. Even the “**fires**” of home are “**crusted dark-red jewels**” — they offer **no warmth** or comfort.
- 3) The **repetition** of “**But nothing happens**” also contributes to the **tedious, monotonous** mood. It confirms that there is **little hope** of the mood **changing**.

### War Photographer (Pages 22-23)

- 1) **Religious imagery** in the first stanza creates a **solemn mood**. The **similes** comparing the **darkroom** to a “**church**”, and the **photographer** to “a **priest** preparing to intone a Mass” make this sound like a **funeral**.
- 2) This mood **endures** throughout the poem — it emphasises the **care** the photographer takes over his work, his **respect** for the victims of the war and his **sorrow** at the suffering and loss of life his photographs depict.



“But I thought you liked puns.”  
“Stop it — I’m just not in the mood.”

## Some poems have a change in mood

### The Prelude: Stealing the Boat (Pages 6-7)

- 1) At the start of the extract, the mood is mostly **happy, light** and **carefree** — the speaker seems **confident** and **comfortable**, and nature seems **beautiful** and **tranquil**.
- 2) However, the mood **changes** suddenly and completely with the line “When, from behind that craggy steep...”. It becomes **sinister** and **threatening** as the mountain “**Upreared** its head” and “**Strode after**” the narrator, the **personification** emphasising its **power** and **hostility**.
- 3) The poem ends in a **philosophical mood** — the speaker **reflects** on the **experience** and his new **understanding** of nature’s **power**.

### Storm on the Island (Pages 14-15)

- 1) The poem is structured around the **switch** in mood from **safety and security** to **fear and threat**.
- 2) The **confident** opening of “**We are prepared**” is mirrored by the **helpless** “**We are bombarded**” in line 18 — the storm is **uncontrollable** and all the islanders can do is “**just sit tight**”.
- 3) The poem ends with the word “**fear**” — this is the **overriding emotion** of the islanders.



### ‘Remains’ and ‘The Emigrée’ also have shifts in mood...

The laid-back, almost jovial mood at the start of ‘Remains’ changes when the speaker’s guilt takes over. In ‘The Emigrée’, the speaker’s nostalgic mood is challenged by people threatening her in the final stanza.



## Practice Questions

*It's the end of the section and yep, you guessed it — time for some questions to check if you've taken everything in. Try to answer them without looking back through the section — that's the best way to see if you're on the way to being a poetry pro.*

### Forms of Poetry

- 1) Explain how the form of 'War Photographer' mirrors the photographer's work.
- 2) Comment on the form of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'. How does it reflect the chaos of war?
- 3) In 'Checking Out Me History', how does Agard use form to ridicule his British education?

### Poetic Devices

- 1) Give an example of enjambment in 'Tissue' and explain its effect.
- 2) Give an example of repetition in 'Remains'. What effect does it have?
- 3) How does Shelley use irony in 'Ozymandias'? Does this influence your view of the king?
- 4) How does Garland use irony in 'Kamikaze' to make the pilot's fate seem tragic?
- 5) In 'London', how does Blake use appeals to the senses to emphasise the suffering in the city?
- 6) In 'The Emigrée', what is the effect of using the sense of taste in the second stanza?

### Use of Sound

- 1) Do you think that the sounds of the battlefield are more realistic in 'Bayonet Charge' or 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'? Explain your answer.
- 2) Give some examples of repeated sounds in 'Exposure'. What effect do they have?
- 3) Give some examples of plosive words in 'Storm on the Island' and explain their effect.

### Imagery

- 1) In 'The Prelude: Stealing the Boat', how does Wordsworth use personification to make the speaker's encounter seem more frightening?
- 2) In 'Poppies', how are similes used to show the contrasting emotions of the mother and her son?
- 3) Find a metaphor used to describe a Caribbean hero in 'Checking Out Me History'. Explain the meaning and significance of the metaphor.

## Practice Questions

### Rhyme and Rhythm

- 1) Describe the effect of the rhyming couplets used in 'My Last Duchess'.
- 2) Explain how Agard uses rhyme in 'Checking Out Me History' to emphasise the poem's message.
- 3) How does the rhythm of 'Bayonet Charge' contribute to the mood of the poem?

### Voice

- 1) How does the first-person voice help the reader to empathise with the speaker in 'Poppies'?
- 2) In 'My Last Duchess', how does Browning create the impression of a conversation taking place?
- 3) What is the effect of the colloquial language in 'Remains'?

### Beginnings of Poems

- 1) How does the beginning of 'Storm on the Island' show the islanders' state of mind?
- 2) Why do you think Shelley chose to only have the first line of 'Ozymandias' in the narrator's voice?
- 3) Choose a poem not mentioned on page 56 and write about the effect of its opening.

### Endings of Poems

- 1) What does the ending of 'My Last Duchess' show you about the Duke's character?
- 2) Why do you think Dharker chose to separate the last line of 'Tissue' from the rest of the poem?
- 3) What is the effect of the last line of 'Bayonet Charge'? Do you think the soldier survived the war?

### Mood

- 1) What is the mood in the final stanza of 'War Photographer'? Is this different from the first stanza?
- 2) What is the mood at the end of the extract from 'The Prelude'? How is this mood created?
- 3) What is the effect of the shift in mood in 'Storm on the Island'? What does the shift in mood suggest about the power of nature?

## Practice Questions

Here's your third and final batch of exam-style questions. Sections Four and Five have lots of handy advice about writing a great exam answer, so have a read of those pages if you're looking for some hints and tips.

### Exam-style Questions

1) Explore the ways in which individual experiences are portrayed in 'War Photographer' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

2) Compare the way that poets present memories in 'Remains' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

3) "A first-person narrator is the most effective way of conveying human emotions in a poem."

Using this statement as a starting point, compare the use of narration in 'The Prelude: Stealing the Boat' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

4) Compare the way that the power of nature is presented in 'Storm on the Island' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

5) "Striving for power is ultimately pointless."

Using this statement as a starting point, compare the presentation of human power in 'Ozymandias' and one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

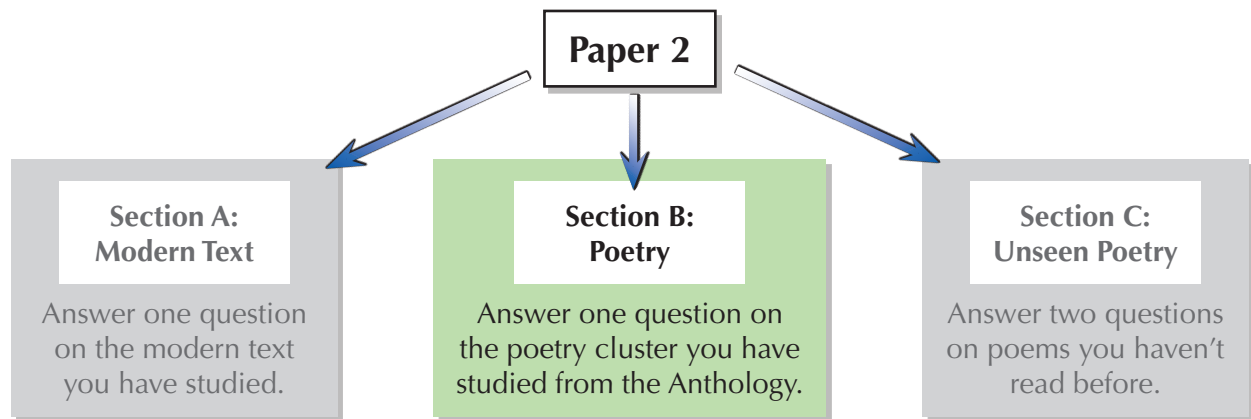
Remember to comment on how the poems are written.

## The Poetry Exam

If you're doing AQA English Literature, you'll have to sit two exams — this book will help you prepare for the Poetry Anthology section of Paper 2.

### This is how your Paper 2 exam will work

- 1) The Paper 2 exam lasts for **2 hours and 15 minutes**. It will be split into **three sections**, like this:



- 2) The next few pages give you **tips** on how to answer the question in **Section B**.
- 3) Section B has **one question** about **each** poetry cluster. You should only answer **one** of these questions — make sure you answer the question on the 'Power and Conflict' cluster.
- 4) Section B is worth **30 marks**, which is about **20%** of your **entire GCSE**. In the exam, you should spend about **45 minutes** on **Section B**.
- 5) You're **not allowed** to take your own anthology or any **notes** about the poems into the exam.

### Read the question carefully and underline key words

- 1) Read the question for 'Power and Conflict' carefully. Underline the **theme** and any other **key words**.
- 2) The question will give you **one poem** and ask you to **compare** it with **any other poem** from the **same** cluster. You'll be given a **list** of all the poems to help you choose — pick one that relates to the **theme**.
- 3) Here's the kind of **question** you'll get in the exam:

You need to **compare** the writer's techniques, e.g. **form**, **structure** and **language**, in two poems. This is the **theme**.

2 6 **Compare** the ways poets **present** ideas about **loss** in 'The Emigrée' and in **one other poem** from 'Power and Conflict'.

Choose another poem that has **loss** as a theme.

### There are three main ways to get marks

There are **three main things** to keep in mind when you're **planning** and **writing** your answer:

- Give your own **thoughts** and **opinions** on the poems and support them with **quotes** from the text.
- **Explain** features like **form**, **structure** and **language**.
- Describe the **similarities** and **differences** between poems and their **contexts**.

# How to Structure Your Answer

A solid structure is essential — it lets the examiner follow your argument nice and easily. The best way to make sure you write a well-structured essay in the exam is to make a plan before you start writing (see p.67).

## Start with an introduction and end with a conclusion

- 1) Your **introduction** should begin by giving a **clear answer** to the question in a sentence or two. Use the rest of the introduction to **briefly develop** this idea — try to include some of the **main ideas** from your **plan**.
- 2) The **main body** of your essay should be three to five paragraphs that **compare** the two poems.
- 3) **Finish** your essay with a **conclusion** — this should **summarise** your **answer** to the question. It's also your **last chance** to **impress** the examiner, so try to make your final sentence **memorable**.

## Compare the poems throughout your essay

- 1) In each paragraph of the main body, write about **one poem** and then **explain** whether the **other poem** is similar or different. **Don't** just write several paragraphs about **one poem**, followed by several paragraphs about **the other**.
- 2) **Every paragraph** should **compare** a feature of the poems, such as their **form**, their **structure**, the **language** they use or the **feelings** they put across.
- 3) **Link** your ideas with words like '**similarly**', '**likewise**' or '**equally**' when you're writing about a **similarity**. Or use phrases such as '**in contrast**' and '**on the other hand**' if you're explaining a **difference**.

Remember to start a new paragraph every time you start comparing a new feature of the poems.

## Use P.E.E.D. to structure each paragraph

- 1) **P.E.E.D.** stands for: **P**oint, **E**xample, **E**xplain, **D**evelop.

**POINT** — Begin each paragraph by making a **comparison** between the two poems.

**EXAMPLE** — Then give an **example** from one of the poems.

**EXPLAIN** — Explain **how** the example **supports** your opening point.

**DEVELOP** — Develop your point by writing about its **effect** on the reader, how it **links** to another part of the poem, how it relates to the poem's **context**, or by adding to the **comparison** with the other poem.

After you've explained your first example, give an example from the other poem and explain that too.

- 2) This is just a **framework** to make sure your paragraphs have all the **features** they need to pick up marks — you **don't** have to follow it **rigidly** in **every** paragraph.
- 3) Here's an **example** of how you could use **P.E.E.D.** to structure a paragraph:

Give examples from both poems.

Sometimes you can develop your point for both poems at the same time.

'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and 'Bayonet Charge' both emphasise the sounds of battle. Tennyson repeats the onomatopoeic verbs "Volley'd", "thunder'd" and "Storm'd" to suggest the noise of the cannons that the Light Brigade faced. Similarly, in 'Bayonet Charge', the metaphor "blue crackling air" uses onomatopoeia to vividly depict the noise of machine gun fire. In both poems, this emphasis on sound adds a horrifying dimension to the depictions of conflict, making them vivid and realistic for the reader.

Start with a **point** that compares the two poems.

**Explain** how the examples relate to your opening point.

## How to Answer the Question

The exam is no time to discover your inner politician — you actually need to answer the question you're given.

### Look closely at language, form and structure

- 1) To get **top marks**, you need to pay **close attention** to the **techniques** the poets use.
- 2) **Analyse** the **form** and **structure** of the poems, which includes their **rhyme scheme** and **rhythm**.
- 3) Explore **language** — think about **why** the poets have used certain **words** and **language techniques**.
- 4) You also need to **comment** on the **effect** that these techniques have on the **reader**. The examiner wants to hear what **you think** of a poem and how it makes **you feel**.
- 5) This is the kind of thing you could write about **language**:

'Poppies' makes frequent references to the injury and bereavement caused by conflict. The poem opens with a reference to the poppies placed "on individual war graves". By emphasising the personal, individual loss that conflict can cause, Weir highlights the narrator's fear that her own son will be killed in battle. The narrator's anxiety about the violence of conflict is further suggested by the depiction of poppy petals as "spasms of paper red". This metaphor evokes a vivid image of the physical injury that the narrator fears her son may suffer as a soldier, which helps the reader to understand the narrator's fears and to empathise with her. In contrast...

Analyse the effects of key quotes.

Always develop your ideas.

### Always support your ideas with details from the text

- 1) To get **top marks**, you need to **back up your ideas** with **quotes** from or **references** to the text.
- 2) **Choose** your quotes **carefully** — they have to be **relevant** to the point you're making.
- 3) **Don't** quote **large chunks** of text — instead, use **short** quotes and **embed** them in your sentences.

✗ Dharker's poem suggests that it is important to remember family history — "a hand / has written in the names and histories, / who was born to whom, / the height and weight, who / died where and how, on which sepia date".

This quote is too long and it doesn't fit into the sentence structure.

✓ In 'Tissue', Dharker emphasises the importance of heritage by describing how the "names and histories" written in the Koran have become "transparent with attention".

These quotes are nicely embedded into the sentence.

- 4) **Don't** forget to **explain** your quotes — you need to use them as **evidence** to support your **argument**.

✗ Garland shows that nature is very powerful. During his mission, the pilot in 'Kamikaze' "looked far down" and saw "little fishing boats" on "a green-blue translucent sea" and "dark shoals of fishes / flashing silver".

This just describes what happens in the poem.

✓ Garland presents nature as a powerful force in the pilot's life. The simile comparing the "dark shoals of fishes" that he saw from his plane to "a huge flag" suggests that the pilot felt nature itself was signalling to him that he should abandon his mission.

This explains how the quotes support the argument.

## How to Answer the Question

The examiner doesn't have a list of right and wrong answers for this exam — you'll get plenty of marks for original or creative interpretations of the poems, as long as they're relevant and your points are developed well.

### Give alternative interpretations

- 1) You need to show you're aware that poems can be **interpreted** in **more than one** way.
- 2) If a poem is a bit **ambiguous**, or you think that a particular line or phrase could have several **different meanings**, then **say so**.

Some of the language used in 'The Emigrée' seems to suggest that the "city" is a real place: in the second stanza, the narrator refers to its "white streets" and "graceful slopes". However, other parts of the poem imply that the "city" may not be a physical place at all, but may symbolise a person, time or emotion that the narrator has lost. This interpretation is supported by the depiction of the "city" in the final stanza, when it is personified as a being that has "shining eyes" and "lies down in front of" the narrator.

Remember to support your interpretations with evidence from the poem.

- 3) Be **original** with your ideas — just make sure you can back them up with an **example** from the text.

### Show some wider knowledge

- 1) To get a top grade, you need to **explain** how the **ideas** in the poems relate to their **context**.
- 2) When you're thinking about a particular poem, consider these aspects of **context**:

**Historical** — Do the ideas in the poem relate to the **time** in which it's **written** or **set**?

**Geographical** — How is the poem shaped and influenced by the **place** in which it's set?

**Social** — Is the poet **criticising** or **praising** the **society** or **community** they're writing about?

**Cultural** — Does the poet draw on a particular aspect of their **background** or **culture**?

**Literary** — Was the poet influenced by other **works of literature** or a particular **literary movement**?

- 3) Here are a couple of **examples** of how you might use **context** in your **answer**:

Agard uses repetition and phonetic spellings in 'Checking Out Me History' to link the poem to the traditions of oral poetry. Oral recitation of poetry and history is common in the Caribbean, so by using these techniques, Agard is affirming his Caribbean roots and identity.

The first words of 'Exposure', "Our brains ache", reference the opening of John Keats's poem, 'Ode to a Nightingale' — "My heart aches". This highlights the way that 'Romantic' ideals about nature have been destroyed by war. For the soldiers in the trenches, nature is an enemy rather than anything beautiful or inspirational.

## How to Answer the Question

It's not just what you write that gets you a top grade, it's how you write it. Your writing style should be clear and precise, and you need to use the correct terms to show the examiner you know what you're talking about.

### Use sophisticated language

- 1) Your writing has to sound **sophisticated** and **stylish**.

✗ The narrator of 'The Emigrée' says lots of good things about the "city".

Not very sophisticated.

✓ Carol Rumens' narrator presents an idealised view of the "city".

This sounds much better.

- 2) It should be **concise** and **accurate**, with no **vague words** or **waffle**.

✗ Blake uses lots of strong words and descriptions to express his anger.

This is too vague.

✓ Blake uses a range of emotive words and images to express his anger.

Use more specific language.

- 3) Your writing should also show an **impressive range** of **vocabulary**.

Don't keep using the same word to describe something.

✗ In 'Poppies', the narrator feels cut off from her son. The word "blockade" shows that she feels cut off from him. The idea that she feels cut off from her son is also shown by the description of his hair as "gelled blackthorns".

Vary how you say things — it sounds much more impressive.

✓ In 'Poppies', the narrator feels cut off from her son. This sense of separation is emphasised by the metaphor describing his hair as "gelled blackthorns", which suggests that her son has become prickly and unapproachable.

- 4) However, make sure you **only** use words that you know the **meaning** of. For example, don't say that a poem has a '**volta**' if you don't know what it **really means** — it will be **obvious** to the examiner.

### Use technical terms where possible

- 1) To get top marks, you need to use the **correct technical terms** when you're writing about poetry.  
2) There's a handy **glossary** at the back of this book that **explains** these terms.

#### Don't write

✗ Carol Rumens uses nice images.

✗ The poet uses words that are also sounds.

✗ The sentences run on from one line to the next.

#### Write

✓ Carol Rumens uses effective metaphors.

✓ The poet uses onomatopoeia.

✓ The poet uses enjambment.

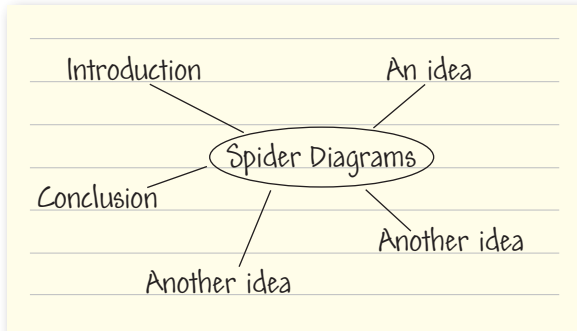


# Planning Your Answer

In an exam, it's always tempting to launch straight into writing your answer, but that can end in disaster. Making a plan is the key to a sophisticated, well-structured essay. Trust me — it's worth it.

## In the exam, spend five minutes planning your answer

- 1) Always **plan** your answer **before** you start writing — that way, you're less likely to forget something **important**.
- 2) Write your plan at the **top of your answer booklet** and draw a **neat line** through it when you've finished.
- 3) **Don't** spend **too long** on your plan. It's only **rough work**, so you don't need to write in full sentences. Here are a few **examples** of different ways you can plan your answer:



Bullet points with...

- Intro...
- An idea...
- The next idea...

Tables with...

A point...	Quote to back this up...
Another point...	Quote...
A different point...	Quote...

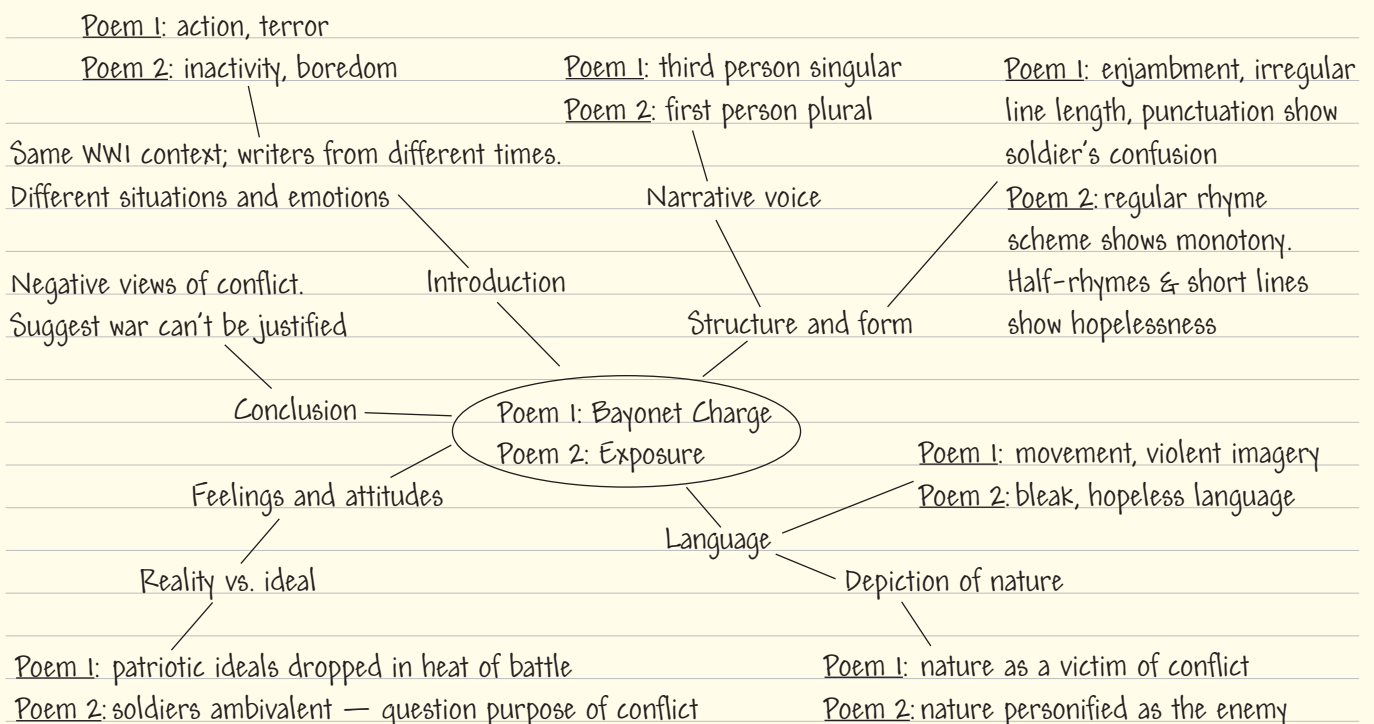
- 4) A good plan will help you **organise** your ideas — and write a good, **well-structured** essay.

## Here's a sample question and plan

26

Compare the way poets present the reality of conflict in 'Bayonet Charge' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

[30 marks]



## Sample Answer

Here's how you could use the plan on page 67 to write a really good answer.

Although the action of both 'Bayonet Charge' and 'Exposure' occurs on the battlefields of World War One, the poems offer two very different portrayals of the reality of conflict. While 'Bayonet Charge' depicts the violent action and overwhelming terror experienced by a soldier going into battle, 'Exposure' focuses on the boredom and inactivity of men waiting in the freezing trenches of the Western Front while "nothing happens" on the battlefield. Both poets present war as a profoundly negative experience, in which hope, faith and sense of self are overpowered by pain and fear.

The poems use different narrative voices. 'Bayonet Charge' is written in the third person. The anonymity of the subject, "he", and the fact that he is the only human mentioned in the poem make him seem isolated and alone, even though it is clear that he must be surrounded by other soldiers. This sense of isolation heightens the feeling of terror in the poem by reflecting the soldier's acute focus on his own survival. In contrast, 'Exposure' is written in the first person plural ("our memory", "we hear"), which creates a sense of the shared suffering experienced by the millions of soldiers who fought and died in the First World War. This emphasises the vast scale of misery and loss of life in the war.

The poets also use other aspects of form and structure to present the reality of conflict. In 'Bayonet Charge', Hughes uses enjambment and uneven line lengths to create an irregular rhythm, echoing the confusion experienced by the soldier. The irregular rhythm is heightened by caesurae in lines 11 and 15. These help to turn the second stanza into a pause in the action, which reflects the soldier's experience of time apparently standing still as he struggles to understand "the reason / Of his still running". In contrast, Owen uses a regular rhyme scheme (ABBAC) to emphasise the monotony experienced by the soldiers. Despite this regularity, half-rhymes such as "wire" / "war" create a sense of jarring discomfort that mirrors the soldiers' suffering.

The different experiences of conflict presented in 'Exposure' and 'Bayonet Charge' are conveyed through the contrasting language the poets use. Owen's language is bleak and hopeless — dawn is personified as a "melancholy army" "massing in the east", a metaphor which has a powerful effect on the reader by subverting their expectations — dawn is usually a symbol of hope, but here it only brings more "poignant misery". The soldiers' sense of hopelessness is also evident in the phrase "love of God seems dying", which suggests that the horrific reality of conflict is causing them to lose their faith in God, or perhaps to believe that a God who can subject them to such suffering has lost faith in them. In contrast to this bleak, despairing imagery, 'Bayonet Charge' is filled with frantic movement. Active verbs such as "running", "stumbling" and "plunged" help to create a vivid image of the soldier's desperate actions as he races into battle. The sense of movement in the poem is also conveyed by the opening phrase, "Suddenly he awoke", which places the reader in the middle of the action from the start. This phrase gives the poem a nightmarish quality, highlighting the feelings of confusion and terror that are driving the soldier.

Both poems include vivid descriptions of nature, which help to convey the reality of war. However, while Hughes presents nature as a victim of conflict, Owen personifies it as the soldiers' main enemy. 'Bayonet Charge' highlights the impact of conflict upon the natural world. The phrase "shot-slashed furrows" uses violent imagery and sibilance to create a

Compare the poems in your opening sentence.

Sum up the main argument of your essay.

Try to develop your ideas.

Compare the poems' form and structure.

Use the correct technical terms.

Use examples to support your argument.

Compare the language used in the two poems.

Give a personal response.

Suggest more than one interpretation of the poem.

## Sample Answer

vivid picture of the damage that conflict does to the environment. Similarly, the distressing image of a “yellow hare” crawling “in a threshing circle” powerfully demonstrates the way that nature suffers at the hands of war. The image of the hare with “its mouth wide / Open silent” also symbolises the overwhelming, inexpressible fear experienced by the soldier as he runs into battle. In contrast, nature is personified as an enemy in ‘Exposure’, for example, its “merciless iced east winds” “knife” the soldiers. The sibilance in this metaphor reflects the sound of the wind and the sharp pain that it causes the men. Throughout the poem, this personification of nature highlights the danger that the soldiers are in and creates a bitter sense of irony — although the men are fighting in a war, the greatest danger they face is nature rather than any human force or army.

Both poems suggest that the reality of conflict does not match up to the ideal. In ‘Bayonet Charge’, Hughes questions the patriotic ideals of “King, honour, human dignity, etcetera”, arguing that in the heat of battle they are “Dropped like luxuries” as terror takes over. Information about the horrors of World War One was readily available in the 1950s when Hughes wrote this poem, and there is a sense of pity for the soldiers who fought. Similarly, in ‘Exposure’, the narrator questions whether anything is achieved by the soldiers’ sacrifice. On the surface, the phrase “Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn” suggests the soldiers believe their sacrifice is necessary to protect the “kind fires” of home, but the complex, broken syntax reflects their lack of conviction that this is true. This reveals the sense of alienation many soldiers felt: they believed no-one at home appreciated their sacrifice.

‘Bayonet Charge’ and ‘Exposure’ both present vividly negative views of the reality of conflict for soldiers on the front line. The experience of the soldiers in the two poems is very different: Hughes focuses on the raw terror and active suffering of a soldier going into battle, whereas Owen concentrates on the hopelessness and passive suffering of men dying from exposure. However, both poets use structure, form and vivid imagery to powerfully convey the soldiers’ suffering. Both narrators question the patriotic ideals used to justify war, suggesting instead that there can be no justification for the bleak and dehumanising reality of conflict.

Use quotes to support your argument.

Explain the effect of the examples you give.

Start your paragraphs with a comparison.

Bring in some contextual details to your answer.

Your last sentence should sum up your argument, and it needs to be memorable.

### How to write a top grade answer

There’s no single way of getting a **grade 9**, but these **handy hints** will help you on your way:

- 1) Be **original** — examiners get bored of reading the **same thing** over and over again, so coming up with your **own interpretations** will impress them (as long as you can **back up** your ideas with **evidence**).
- 2) Be **critical** — this means giving your **own opinions** about the poems. For example:

The phrase “poignant misery of dawn” compels the reader to experience the scene as the men in the trenches do: a bleak, melancholic landscape, devoid of hope and at the mercy of the elements.

- 3) Get to grips with **context**. It’s not enough just to mention a link to context — you need to really **explore** the **effect** it has on the poem, or on your **understanding** of it. For example:

Blake supported the French Revolution, in which the ruling classes were overthrown. This raises the question of whether his heavy use of rhetoric in ‘London’ may have been intended to persuade British citizens to stage a similar revolution.

## Adding Quotes and Developing Points

The next couple of pages will give you a chance to practise your P.E.E.D. skills by adding quotes and developing the points in some sample answers. Enjoy...

You can find the answers  
for this section on p.80.

### Complete this plan by adding quotes and developing points

- 1) Below is an [exam question](#) and a [plan](#) for answering it.
- 2) Find [quotes](#) from the poems to back up each of the [language points](#) in the table (marked **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**).
- 3) Make brief notes on your [personal response](#) to each poem (marked **E** and **F**) to complete the plan.

01

Compare the ways in which power is presented in 'Ozymandias' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

**[30 marks]**

	Ozymandias	My Last Duchess
<b>Themes and ideas</b>	Power of man insignificant compared to power of time/nature.	Duke's obsession with power over people and objects.
<b>Language</b>	Arrogant language ... <b>(A)</b> Irony ... <b>(B)</b>	Objectification of Duchess ... <b>(C)</b> Sinister language ... <b>(D)</b>
<b>Form and Structure</b>	Second-hand account. Sonnet with irregular rhyme scheme.	Dramatic monologue. Rhyming couplets. Enjambment.
<b>Personal Response</b>	<b>(E)</b>	<b>(F)</b>

### Add quotes to improve these answers

In the [sample answers](#) below, replace each letter (**A**, **B** and **C**) with a [suitable quote](#).

02

Compare how poets present the effects of conflict in 'Remains' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

**[30 marks]**

#### Answer Extract 1

'Remains' and 'War Photographer' both use powerful imagery to show the suffering that conflict brings to those living in war zones. In 'Remains', Armitage uses violent imagery, such as **(A)**, to convey the horror of the looter's death. The metaphorical description of the looter as **(B)** emphasises his suffering. Similarly, in 'War Photographer', the graphic description of **(C)** creates an emotive image of the suffering conflict causes. This has a powerful and disturbing effect on the reader, who has probably never experienced life in these war-torn places.

#### Answer Extract 2

Armitage suggests that the soldier resents the way that conflict has affected him. His haunting memories are emphasised by the repetition of **(A)** which emphasises his frustration at the situation. The frustrated tone of 'Remains' contrasts with the religious language used in 'War Photographer', which compares the photographer to **(B)**. This gives the poem a solemn tone, while the metaphor **(C)** suggests that the experience of conflict has made the photographer aware of the fragility of human life, rather than making him angry.

# Adding Quotes and Developing Points

## Have a go at developing these answers

- Here are some more **sample answers** to question 2 on p.70.
- In these extracts, the sentences followed by a letter (**A** or **B**) need to be **developed further**. Write an **extra sentence** to **develop** each point.

Remember — to develop your point you can write about its effect on the reader, how it links to another part of the poem, or how it relates to the poem's context.

02

Compare how poets present the effects of conflict in 'Remains' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

[30 marks]

### Answer Extract 1

Armitage and Duffy both suggest that those who experience conflict are left with powerful memories that continue to affect them even after leaving the war zone. In 'Remains', the metaphor of the looter as being "dug in behind enemy lines" conveys the way that the memory of the shooting is still deeply embedded in the soldier's mind. **(A)**. The photographer in Duffy's poem is also left with terrible memories: the sensory memory of "the cries / of this man's wife" creates an emotive image of a family torn apart by war. **(B)**.

### Answer Extract 2

Both poems use form to help illustrate the effects of conflict on their subjects. The uneven line lengths and lack of rhyme in 'Remains' give the poem an irregular rhythm, which mirrors the soldier's confusion and the way that he hasn't been able to return to a normal life. **(A)**. 'War Photographer', in contrast, has less variation in line lengths, and the poem has a regular ABBCDD rhyme scheme. This makes the poem seem calm and ordered, reflecting the photographer's way of coping with his experiences of conflict. **(B)**.

### Answer Extract 3

The subjects of 'Remains' and 'War Photographer' both seem to be affected more deeply by their experiences of conflict once they return home. The soldier in 'Remains' is haunted by guilt for his part in the killing of the looter. Repetition of the phrase "probably armed, possibly not" reflects the way that the soldier replays the shooting in his own mind. **(A)**. Similarly, the photographer's hands "did not tremble" in the war zone, but "seem to now". This suggests that he was calm when confronted with the dangers of war, but physical symptoms of stress and trauma emerged later. **(B)**.

## Mark Scheme

Over the next few pages, you're going to put your examiner's hat on (I know, it's a dream come true) and mark some sample answers. This will help you to see what you need to do to get a great mark in your exam.

### This section gets you to mark a range of sample answers

- 1) **Marking** sample exam answers is a **great way** to find out **exactly** what you need to do in the exam to get the grade you want.
- 2) Most of the answers in this section are only **extracts**, not **full answers**. The essay you'll write in the exam will be **longer** — more like the one on pages 75-76.
- 3) The mark scheme below is **similar** to the one that the **examiners will use** to mark your exam answers.
- 4) Read the mark scheme **thoroughly** and make sure that you **understand everything**.
- 5) Once you **understand** the mark scheme, use it to mark the sample exam answers on the next few pages. Don't forget to **explain** why you chose each grade.

### Use this mark scheme to mark the sample answers

Grade band	What is written
8-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows an insightful and original comparison of the two poems</li> <li>• Effectively integrates a full range of precise examples to support interpretations</li> <li>• Closely analyses the poets' use of language, structure and form, making effective use of technical terms throughout</li> <li>• Gives a detailed exploration of how the poets' techniques affect the reader</li> <li>• Convincingly explores original and alternative interpretations of the ideas, themes, attitudes and context of the poems</li> </ul>
6-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a carefully thought out, developed comparison of the two poems</li> <li>• Integrates well-chosen examples to support interpretations</li> <li>• Explores the poets' use of language, structure and form, using correct technical terms</li> <li>• Examines the way the techniques used in the poems affect the reader</li> <li>• Gives careful consideration to the ideas, themes, attitudes and/or context of the poems, offering some original interpretations</li> </ul>
4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives a clear comparison of the two poems</li> <li>• Provides relevant detail to support interpretations of the poems</li> <li>• Explains how the poets have used some features of language, structure and form, using some relevant technical terms</li> <li>• Comments on how some of the techniques used in the poems affect the reader</li> <li>• Shows a clear understanding of the ideas, themes, attitudes and/or context of the poems</li> </ul>

You can also be awarded **grades 1-3**. We **haven't included** any **sample answer extracts** at 1-3 level though — so those grades aren't in this mark scheme.

## Marking Answer Extracts

Here's your first set of sample answers. For each one, think about where it fits in the mark scheme on page 72. Most answers won't fit the criteria for any one band exactly — it's about finding the best fit.

### Have a go at marking these answer extracts

For each extract:

- Write down the grade band (4-5, 6-7 or 8-9) you think the answer falls into.
- Give at least two reasons why you chose that grade band.

03

Compare the ways the poets present negative feelings in 'London' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

[30 marks]

#### Answer Extract 1

'London' and 'Checking Out Me History' both use language to present negative feelings. In 'London', the narrator uses phrases like "every infant's cry" to show why London makes him angry. He also describes the church and the palace in negative ways, for example "black'ning church", to show that he is angry with them. In 'Checking Out Me History', the narrator shows that he is angry with British society by making British history sound unimportant ("all dat"), and by repeating the words "Dem tell me".

#### Answer Extract 2

Both poets use imagery to convey their anger at authority. In 'London', the phrase "black'ning church" suggests the churches are literally blackened by soot, but also hints that the speaker considers the Church to be rotten and corrupt. The emotive reference in the previous line to the crying "chimney-sweeper", a victim of child labour, suggests that the church is morally 'blackened' by its failure to help the poor and exploited. Similarly, Agard uses metaphors such as "Bandage up me eye" and "Blind me" to express the narrator's resentment of his formal education. The pairing of "Bandage" and "Blind me" creates a sense of irony — the bandage has blinded the narrator rather than healing him. This irony underscores the narrator's bitterness about the way his formal education caused him to lose his "history" and his "identity".

#### Answer Extract 3

Both poets use repetition to emphasise their anger. In 'London', Blake repeats the words "mark" and "every". This emphasises the feelings of despair that the narrator senses in "every face" he meets in London, which helps the reader understand why the situation in the city upsets him. Similarly, in 'Checking Out Me History', the repetition of the phrase "Dem tell me" throughout the poem makes the narrator sound angry and frustrated. It also demonstrates the narrator's sense of alienation from the education system, "Dem". This helps to present his frustration to the reader in a clear way.

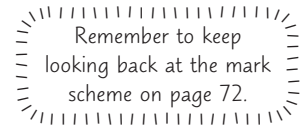
## Marking Answer Extracts

You must be getting the hang of this now — if you get much more practice you'll be putting those English examiners out of a job. Remember to look out for comparison of the two poems in these extracts.

### Have a go at marking these answer extracts

For each extract:

- Write down the grade band (4-5, 6-7 or 8-9) you think the answer falls into.
- Give at least two reasons why you chose that grade band.



04

Compare how memory is presented as a powerful force in 'Kamikaze' and **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

[30 marks]

#### Answer Extract 1

Powerful memories significantly influence the actions of both the pilot in 'Kamikaze' and the speaker in 'The Emigrée'. The speaker in 'Kamikaze' suggests that the pilot chose to turn his plane around after remembering waiting for his "father's boat" to return "safe" from fishing trips. The subsequent repetition of "safe" hints that the pilot cannot bring himself to complete his suicide mission as it will mean that his children are left without a father. Repetition is also used to show the power of memories in 'The Emigrée' — the word "sunlight" is repeated at the end of each stanza, which shows how the speaker maintains her positive view of her city despite the threats she and the city face. The repetition of words in both poems reflects the repetition of memories in the characters' minds, highlighting the enduring power that memories have.

#### Answer Extract 2

The pilot in 'Kamikaze' and the speaker in 'The Emigrée' both have happy memories of their childhoods which affect them as adults. In 'Kamikaze', the pilot's memories make him turn his plane around. He remembers playing with his brothers — they built "cairns of pearl-grey pebbles". This is why he didn't want to die in the war. In 'The Emigrée', the speaker has happy memories of where she lived as a child. She says that her memories of it are "sunlight-clear" which shows that they are positive memories and they are still clear to her. She also says that her "original view" of the city "cannot break", showing that they are also strong memories.

#### Answer Extract 3

Both poets present memory as a powerful force that shapes and influences individuals. In 'Kamikaze', the "powerful incantations" of patriotic messages that fill the pilot's head are replaced by idyllic childhood memories, including awaiting the "safe" arrival of his "father's boat", which foreshadows the pilot's safe landing of his plane. It is these enduring, formative memories that direct the pilot's actions — not the Japanese propaganda. The speaker in 'The Emigrée' has memories that are so vivid that they are personified, appearing to her and even taking her "dancing". This personification emphasises the power that her positive memories hold — they are so powerful that they materialise in a physical form that she engages and interacts with. In both instances, childhood memories are shown to have tangible impact on adult characters, influencing their actions and moods.



## Marking a Whole Answer

New page, new question and answer. Only this time it's the whole answer, not just an extract...

### Now try marking this whole answer

- Write down the grade band (4-5, 6-7 or 8-9) you think the answer falls into.
- Give at least four reasons why you chose that grade band.

Make sure you've read the mark scheme on page 72.

05

Compare how poets present the power of nature in 'The Prelude: Stealing the Boat' and in **one** other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

[30 marks]

'The Prelude: Stealing the Boat' and 'Storm on the Island' both present nature as a powerful force which can have a profound effect on humans. In Wordsworth's poem, the narrator experiences nature's power when he sees a "huge" mountain while rowing "A little boat" on a lake, while in Heaney's poem an island community experiences the violent power of nature in the form of a great storm that "pummels" them. Both poems present nature as having power over humans — in Heaney's poem the impact of this power is physical, whereas in Wordsworth's poem it is psychological.

Wordsworth and Heaney both use personification to present nature as a dominant force that can threaten humans. Wordsworth's narrator describes how the mountain "strode after" him with "measured motion". The word "measured" and the use of alliteration in this phrase emphasise nature's power by making it sound as if the mountain is moving deliberately and unstoppable towards the narrator. The suggestion that the mountain is chasing the narrator makes it seem threatening, and enables the reader to share in the narrator's fear. Heaney also personifies nature, using language usually associated with war, such as "strafes" and "bombarded" to describe the actions of the wind. The use of such violent imagery emphasises the power of the storm, and suggests that the wind is deliberately attacking the island. This highlights how destructive the storm could be, which helps to clarify the islanders' fear.

In both poems, the sense of threat caused by nature's power is heightened by the use of contrasting imagery. In Wordsworth's poem, the "grim shape" of the mountain contrasts with pretty images such as "sparkling light", which are used to describe nature in the first 20 lines. This contrast emphasises the power of the mountain, and increases the sense of fear after the narrator encounters it. Heaney also uses contrast to intensify feelings of fear. For example, the simile comparing the sea during the storm to "a tame cat / Turned savage" juxtaposes a safe image with a violent one to show that the storm has the power to make even familiar things seem frightening. The enjambment across these lines places emphasis on "Turned", making nature's transformation from familiar to terrifying seem even more sudden and shocking.

Both poems have a distinct turning point, which makes the power of nature seem more dramatic. In 'The Prelude: Stealing the Boat', the volta in line 21 represents the moment when the narrator first encounters the "huge peak", and at this point the mood of the poem shifts from

This answer continues  
on page 76.

## Marking a Whole Answer

confidence to fear. For example, in line 12 the narrator describes himself as “Proud of his skill” as he rows across the lake, which makes him sound confident and perhaps even arrogant. In contrast, after seeing the mountain, he becomes fearful and preoccupied — he rows with “trembling oars”, and is “in grave / And serious mood”. The suddenness of this shift from confidence to fear emphasises the dramatic impact that the power of nature has on the narrator. Similarly, in ‘Storm on the Island’, the volta in line 14 represents the arrival of the storm. The language used after this turning point, such as “We just sit tight”, emphasises the islanders’ lack of power, which contrasts with the poem’s confident opening statement, “We are prepared”. As in Wordsworth’s poem, this change of tone emphasises nature’s power over humans, suggesting that, despite all their preparations, the island community is powerless in the face of the storm.

Both poets use other aspects of form and structure to reinforce their depictions of nature’s power over humans. In the final 10 lines of ‘The Prelude: Stealing the Boat’, which describe how the encounter with the mountain continued to affect the narrator “for many days”, Wordsworth uses caesurae and enjambment to break up the sentences — “No familiar shapes / Remained, no pleasant images of trees.” These fractured sentences reflect the narrator’s feelings of confusion as he struggles to make sense of his experience, demonstrating the powerful effect that nature has had on him. In ‘Storm on the Island’, Heaney uses a caesura in line 14, just before the arrival of the storm. This sudden pause represents the calm before the storm, and creates a sense of expectation, reflecting the islanders’ anxiety as they wait for the storm to arrive. The caesura also reflects the way that life stops when a storm comes, as people “sit tight”, waiting for it to pass. This highlights the extent to which the islanders’ lives are controlled by nature.

Both poems emphasise the physical presence of nature in order to highlight its power. In ‘The Prelude: Stealing the Boat’, Wordsworth repeats the word “huge” in the phrase “a huge peak, black and huge” to emphasise the mountain’s size, suggesting that its physical appearance seemed overwhelming to the narrator. In common with other Romantic poets, Wordsworth suggests that nature has a formative effect on human identity: it is this experience of nature’s visible, domineering physical presence that has such a lasting psychological impact on the narrator, with “huge and mighty forms” haunting him day and night. In contrast, in ‘Storm on the Island’, Heaney focuses on the invisibility of the winds that seem to attack the island — “We are bombarded by the empty air”. This paradox of the storm’s violent but invisible physical power emphasises the islanders’ powerlessness in the face of the storm, showing that it is impossible for them to fight back against the “huge nothing” that assaults them. This realistic portrayal of nature as a powerful physical force is informed by Heaney’s childhood: growing up on a farm in rural Northern Ireland meant that nature played an important role in his life.

Despite being written more than a century apart, ‘The Prelude: Stealing the Boat’ and ‘Storm on the Island’ have much in common. Both use vivid imagery to show that nature can be a frightening force, and both demonstrate nature’s power to alter the way people think, feel and behave. However, Wordsworth focuses on nature’s power to shape the human personality, while in ‘Storm on the Island’ Heaney focuses on human resistance to nature’s elemental forces.

# Glossary

alliteration	Where words that are close together <a href="#">start</a> with the <a href="#">same sound</a> , e.g. “ <a href="#">f</a> lowing <a href="#">f</a> lakes that <a href="#">f</a> lock”.
ambiguity	Where a word or phrase has <a href="#">two or more</a> possible <a href="#">interpretations</a> .
assonance	When words share the same <a href="#">vowel sound</a> but their consonants are different, e.g. “ <a href="#">m</a> ight <a href="#">f</a> ly our <a href="#">l</a> ives <a href="#">l</a> ike paper <a href="#">k</a> ites”.
autobiographical	Describing something that happened in the <a href="#">poet’s life</a> .
blank verse	Poetry written in iambic pentameter that <a href="#">doesn’t rhyme</a> .
caesura (plural <a href="#">caesurae</a> )	A <a href="#">pause</a> in a line of poetry. E.g. around the full stop in “Maps too. The sun shines through”.
chronological	When events are arranged in the <a href="#">order</a> in which they <a href="#">happened</a> .
colloquial	Sounding like everyday <a href="#">spoken</a> language, e.g. “One of my mates goes by”.
consonance	<a href="#">Repetition</a> of a <a href="#">consonant sound</a> in nearby words, e.g. “num <b>b</b> as a sm <b>ashed</b> arm”.
dialect	A <a href="#">variation</a> of a <a href="#">language</a> spoken by people from a particular <a href="#">place</a> or <a href="#">background</a> . Dialects might include different words or sentence constructions, e.g. “what happen to de Caribs”.
dramatic monologue	A <a href="#">form</a> of poetry that uses the assumed voice of a <a href="#">single speaker</a> who is <a href="#">not the poet</a> to address an <a href="#">implied audience</a> , e.g. ‘My Last Duchess’.
emotive	Something that makes you <a href="#">feel</a> a particular <a href="#">emotion</a> .
empathy	When someone <a href="#">understands</a> what someone else is experiencing and how they <a href="#">feel</a> about it.
end-stopping	Finishing a line of poetry with the <a href="#">end</a> of a <a href="#">phrase or sentence</a> .
enjambment	When a sentence or phrase runs over from <a href="#">one line</a> or <a href="#">stanza</a> to the <a href="#">next</a> .
euphemism	An <a href="#">indirect</a> word or phrase used instead of something <a href="#">upsetting</a> or <a href="#">offensive</a> , or to <a href="#">conceal meaning</a> . E.g. the narrator of ‘My Last Duchess’ says “all smiles stopped” to avoid saying that his wife died.
first person	When a poet writes about themselves or their group, using words like “ <a href="#">I</a> ”, “ <a href="#">my</a> ”, “ <a href="#">we</a> ” and “ <a href="#">our</a> ”.
form	The <a href="#">type</a> of poem, e.g. a sonnet or a ballad, and its <a href="#">features</a> , like number of lines, rhyme and rhythm.
free verse	Poetry that <a href="#">doesn’t rhyme</a> and has <a href="#">no regular rhythm</a> or <a href="#">line length</a> .
half-rhymes	Words that have a <a href="#">similar</a> , but not identical, <a href="#">end sound</a> . E.g. “crisp” and “grasp”.
homonyms	Words that are <a href="#">spelt</a> and <a href="#">pronounced</a> the same, but have <a href="#">different meanings</a> , e.g. “tissue”.
iambic pentameter	Poetry with a <a href="#">metre</a> of <a href="#">ten syllables</a> — five of them stressed, and five unstressed. The <a href="#">stress</a> falls on <a href="#">every second syllable</a> , e.g. “That’s <a href="#">my</a> last <a href="#">Duchess</a> <a href="#">painted on</a> the <a href="#">wall</a> ”.
iambic tetrameter	Like iambic pentameter but with a metre of <a href="#">eight</a> syllables — four stressed and four unstressed. E.g. “But <a href="#">most</a> through <a href="#">midnight</a> <a href="#">streets</a> I <a href="#">hear</a> ”.
imagery	Language that creates a <a href="#">picture in your mind</a> . It includes <a href="#">metaphors</a> , <a href="#">similes</a> and <a href="#">personification</a> .
<i>in medias res</i>	When a narrative starts in the <a href="#">middle of the action</a> , e.g. ‘Bayonet Charge’.
internal rhyme	When two or more words in the <a href="#">same line</a> rhyme, e.g. “ <a href="#">tears</a> between the bath and pre-lunch <a href="#">beers</a> ”.
irony	When <a href="#">words</a> are used to <a href="#">imply the opposite</a> of what they normally mean. It can also mean when there is a difference between <a href="#">what people expect</a> and <a href="#">what actually happens</a> .
juxtaposition	When a poet puts two ideas, events, characters or descriptions <a href="#">close to each other</a> to encourage the reader to <a href="#">contrast</a> them. E.g. Agard juxtaposes figures from British and Caribbean history.
language	The <a href="#">choice of words</a> used. Different kinds of language have <a href="#">different effects</a> .
layout	The way a piece of poetry is visually <a href="#">presented</a> to the reader, e.g. line length, how the poem is broken up into different stanzas, whether lines create some kind of visual pattern.

# Glossary

metaphor	A way of describing something by saying that it <a href="#">is something else</a> , e.g. “the loose silver of whitebait”.
metre	The arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables to create <a href="#">rhythm</a> in a line of poetry.
monologue	<a href="#">One person</a> speaking for a long period of time.
mood	The <a href="#">feel</a> or <a href="#">atmosphere</a> of a poem, e.g. humorous, threatening, eerie.
narrative	Writing that tells a <a href="#">story</a> , e.g. ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’.
narrator	The <a href="#">person</a> speaking the words. E.g. the narrator of ‘Poppies’ is a mother whose son has gone to war.
onomatopoeia	A word that <a href="#">sounds like</a> the thing it’s describing, e.g. “rumbles” and “jingle” in ‘Exposure’.
oral poetry	Poetry that is intended to be spoken <a href="#">aloud</a> , rather than read.
oxymoron	A phrase which appears to <a href="#">contradict</a> itself, e.g. “marriage hearse”.
personification	Describing a non-living thing as if it has <a href="#">human qualities</a> and <a href="#">feelings</a> , or <a href="#">behaves</a> in a human way, e.g. “My city hides behind me.”
Petrarchan sonnet	A form of <a href="#">sonnet</a> in which the first eight lines have a regular ABBA rhyme scheme and <a href="#">introduce</a> a problem, while the final six lines have a different rhyme scheme and <a href="#">solve</a> the problem.
phonetic spellings	When words are spelt as they <a href="#">sound</a> rather than with their usual spelling, e.g. “dem” instead of “them”. It’s often used to show that someone is speaking with a certain <a href="#">accent</a> or <a href="#">dialect</a> .
plosive	A <a href="#">short burst of sound</a> made when you say a word containing the letters b, d, g, k, p or t.
rhetoric	Language used by the poet to <a href="#">persuade</a> you of a particular view.
rhetorical question	A <a href="#">question</a> that doesn’t need an answer, but is asked to <a href="#">make</a> or <a href="#">emphasise</a> a point.
rhyme scheme	A <a href="#">pattern</a> of rhyming words in a poem. E.g. ‘London’ has an <a href="#">ABAB</a> rhyme scheme — this means that the <a href="#">first</a> and <a href="#">third</a> lines in each stanza rhyme, and so do the <a href="#">second</a> and <a href="#">fourth</a> lines.
rhyming couplet	A <a href="#">pair of rhyming lines</a> that are next to each other, e.g. the last two lines of ‘War Photographer’.
rhyming triplet	<a href="#">Three rhyming lines</a> that are next to each other, e.g. lines 13-15 of ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’.
rhythm	A <a href="#">pattern of sounds</a> created by the arrangement of <a href="#">stressed</a> and <a href="#">unstressed</a> syllables.
sibilance	Repetition of ‘ <a href="#">s</a> ’ and ‘ <a href="#">sh</a> ’ sounds, e.g. “ <a href="#">s</a> entries <a href="#">whi</a> sper, <a href="#">c</a> urious, <a href="#">n</a> ervous”.
simile	A way of describing something by <a href="#">comparing</a> it to something else, usually by using the words “like” or “as”, e.g. “the world overflowing / like a treasure chest”.
sonnet	A form of poem with <a href="#">fourteen lines</a> , that usually follows a <a href="#">clear rhyme scheme</a> .
stanza	A <a href="#">group of lines</a> in a poem.
structure	The <a href="#">order</a> and <a href="#">arrangement</a> of ideas and events in a poem, e.g. how it begins, develops and ends.
syllable	A single <a href="#">unit of sound</a> within a word. E.g. “all” has one syllable, “always” has two.
symbolism	When an object <a href="#">stands for something else</a> . E.g. the statue of Ozymandias symbolises human power, and the dove in ‘Poppies’ symbolises mourning.
syntax	The <a href="#">arrangement</a> of words in a sentence or phrase so that they make sense.
third person	When a poet writes about a character who <a href="#">isn’t</a> the speaker, using words like “ <a href="#">he</a> ” or “ <a href="#">she</a> ”.
tone	The <a href="#">mood</a> or <a href="#">feelings</a> suggested by the way the narrator <a href="#">writes</a> , e.g. confident, thoughtful.
voice	The <a href="#">characteristics</a> of the <a href="#">person</a> narrating the poem. Poems are usually written either using the poet’s voice, as if they’re speaking to you <a href="#">directly</a> , or the voice of a <a href="#">character</a> .
volta	A <a href="#">turning point</a> in a poem, when the argument or tone <a href="#">changes dramatically</a> .

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# Answers

These are the answers to the exercises in Section Five. They're only suggestions, so don't worry if what you've written doesn't match exactly — there are lots of possible answers.

## Page 70 — Adding Quotes and Developing Points

Sample Plan

- (A) "sneer of cold command"
- (B) "Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
- (C) "That's my last Duchess painted on the wall"
- (D) "Then all smiles stopped together."
- (E) The collapse of the ruler's "works" suggests that power is fleeting, which makes the reader question their own attitude towards power.
- (F) The Duke's coldness and complete control is unsettling, and the reader is left in little doubt that the Duke had his wife killed.

Answer Extract 1

- (A) "he's there on the ground, sort of inside out"
- (B) "the image of agony"
- (C) "running children in a nightmare heat"

Answer Extract 2

- (A) "probably armed, possibly not"
- (B) "a priest preparing to intone a Mass"
- (C) "All flesh is grass."

## Page 71 — Adding Quotes and Developing Points

Answer Extract 1

- (A) Using the term "enemy" gives an indication of the potential threat that the memory holds for the soldier.
- (B) The photographer and the bereaved wife are affected by the conflict in very different ways, but this painful image helps the reader to empathise with both of them.

Answer Extract 2

- (A) This irregular form creates a disjointed experience for the reader, giving them a sense of the soldier's disrupted state of mind.
- (B) Through this regular form, Duffy creates something ordered from the chaos of war, just as the photographer does through his photographs.

Answer Extract 3

- (A) In the first stanza this phrase isn't dwelt on and is part of the easygoing, colloquial tone. However, when it's repeated it is a sinister reminder of the soldier's questionable actions.
- (B) Duffy subverts the traditional notion of home as a refuge — home offers no comfort and instead forces him to confront his memories and guilt.

## Page 73 — Marking Answer Extracts

Answer Extract 1

I think this answer would get a grade 4-5 because it makes a point comparing the two poems and supports the point with quotes from the poems. To get a higher grade it needs to develop the ideas more fully and explain the effect of the quotes in more detail.

Answer Extract 2

I would give this answer a grade 8-9 because it gives a detailed analysis of the poets' use of language, uses the correct technical vocabulary and offers different interpretations of the phrase "black'ning church".

Answer Extract 3

I think this answer would get a grade 6-7. It makes a good point comparing the poems, and it suggests what the impact on the reader might be. To get a higher grade, the effect of the quotes needs to be explained in more detail.

## Page 74 — Marking Answer Extracts

Answer Extract 1

I would give this extract a grade 6-7 because it makes a point, gives examples from the text and starts to analyse language. To get a higher grade, the point needs to be developed more, e.g. it could comment on the effect on the reader.

Answer Extract 2

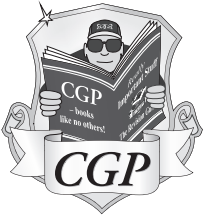
I think this answer would get a grade 4-5. This is because it makes points about the poems and backs them up with examples that are briefly explained. To get a higher grade it needs to offer more explanation of how the quotes support the point.

Answer Extract 3

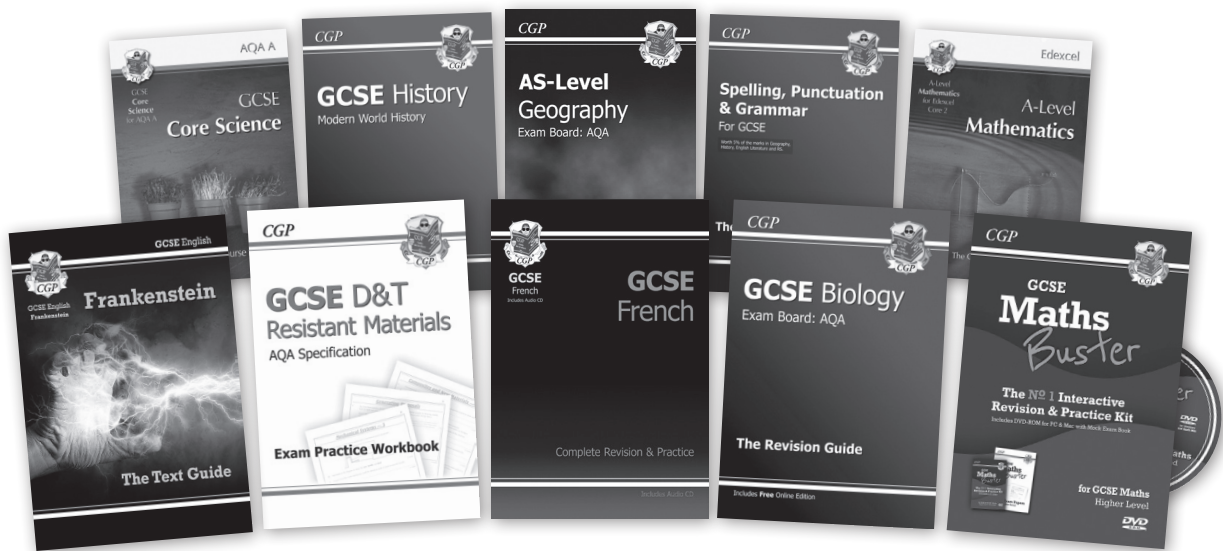
I think this answer would get a grade 8-9 because it integrates examples from the poems and explains them effectively. It also includes some relevant knowledge of context.

## Pages 75-76 — Marking a Whole Answer

I think this answer should be awarded a grade 8-9 because it makes a wide range of detailed comparisons and focuses on the effects of form, structure and language on the reader. It also makes relevant references to context, uses a range of technical vocabulary, and gives well-explained examples of the poets' techniques.



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