

Poem	Ideas in the poem	Five key Quotes					Structure	Context
Valentine – Carol Anne Duffy	The title suggests a typical love poem but the opening line, but then contradicts the traditional, stereotypical images of love. The poet offers a more realistic portrayal of love through the extended metaphor of an onion.	“Not a red rose or a satin Heart”	“I give you an onion”	“a wobbling photo of grief”	“Its platinum loops shrink to a wedding ring, if you like”	“cling to your knife”	The poem ends on a sinister note to show the more obsessive, dangerous side of love.	Carol Ann Duffy is a lesbian and, at the time of writing the poem would have been unable to marry her partner.
She Walks in Beauty – Lord Byron	The poet celebrates the beauty of a woman where he is infatuated with the inner radiance and innocence. However, there is the sense that she is mysterious as her hair is linked to an omen, which suggests she may be false and win people through her smiles.	“She walks in beauty.”	“starry eyes/tender light,”	“Which waves in every raven tress.”	“smiles that win, the tints that glow”	“A heart whose love is innocent!”	The poem is full of enjambment, which could suggest he cannot pause for breath as he is too excited to share his feelings about how beautiful she is.	Lord Byron was one of the great romantic poets. He was believed to have wrote the poem about a woman who he met at a party and was taken by how beautiful she was.
Cozy Apologia – Rita Dove	The poem is in first person and it autobiographical. She is affectionate humorous in her description of her husband as a knight. It is a love poem, but she recognises that work and day to day life keeps them apart. However, there is the implied meaning that this relationship, whilst not romantic, makes her happy.	“I could pick anything and think of you”	“the chain mail glinting”	“You’re bunkered in your Aerie, I’m perched in mine.”	“We’re content, but fall short of the Divine.”	“I fill this stolen time with you”	The rhyme scheme is irregular which could represent the oncoming storm (Fred) which allows her to stop work and contemplate her relationship.	Rita Dove is American and married to the writer Fred Viebahn (probably the “Fred” in the poem).
Hawk Roosting – Ted Hughes	Power is an idea that is expressed in the poem – the hawk meditates on this and suggests that he is a God keeping things the way there are. The inanimate stillness gives the reader the sense that the hawk deliberates his powers of destruction. The hawk is arrogant and believes that is in control of all creation. The ‘I’ shows his superiority.	“I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.”	“And the earth’s face upward for my inspection.”	“Now I hold Creation in my foot.”	“My manners are tearing off heads –“	“The allotment of death.”	The rhyme scheme is regular and consistent to represent the power and strength of the hawk.	Hughes said the poem wasn’t about cruelty – he just wanted to show a hawk’s natural way of thinking.’
Ozymandias – Percy Shelley	The poem is about a traveller who recalls a statue in the dessert that portrays a tyrant leader. The sculptor mocked the cruel king through his sinister creation, but as has time who has reduced the empire that he boasted of to nothing. The poem includes a moral message that could be a criticism of the monarchy that no one is immortal and power is fragile.	“I met a traveller from an antique land,”	“And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,”	“Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!”	“Nothing beside remains.”	“The lone and level sands stretch far away.”	The poem is written in a sonnet form and uses iambic pentameter which creates a strong sound when read aloud. This could be so it sounds powerful, but this is ironic as the pharaoh’s empire is lost.	Percy Bysshe Shelley was a Romantic poet. He held some radical political and social views, which are implied in the poem.
As Imperceptibly As Grief – Emily Dickinson	The poet deals with the idea that grief is difficult to understand, but that like the seasons it will not last. There is the suggestion that the new day should ease the grief, but there is a fear and sense of foreboding created by what comes after grief. When grief disappears into the beautiful, there is the sense that she is now alone and empty.	“As imperceptibly as Grief/ The Summer lapsed away-“	“The dusk drew earlier in,”	“A courteous, yet harrowing grace,”	“As guest who would be gone.”	“Our summer made her light escape Into the beautiful.”	The lack of rhyme scheme creates a despondent and depressing mood in the poem.	Emily Dickinson was a recluse, lived opposite a graveyard and saw many friends die, which could be the reason for the melancholic tone in the poem.
Death of a Naturalist – Seamus Heaney	The poem is both a description of Heaney’s experience with nature as a boy, and a metaphor for the loss of his childhood innocence, as he looks back wistfully at his youthful naivety.	“But best of all was the warm thick slobber”	“I would fill jampotfuls of the jellied”	“You could tell the weather by frogs too”	“Some sat Poised like mud grenades, their blunt heads farting.”	“The great slime kings Were gathered there for vengeance”	The tone at the end of the poem is negative as the speaker becomes more aware of the dangers – “angry frogs”	Seamus Heaney’s four year old brother died in a car accident when Heaney was a young boy. The death affected him badly and many of his poems are about loss of innocence.
To Autumn Keats	Keats personifies autumn and addresses it directly – he suggests Autumn has all the time in the world “sound asleep”. The tone in the poem is wistful as Keats was aware of his own mortality	“Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,”	“Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;”	“Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;”	“Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where are they?”	“And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.”	The poem is an ‘ode’ which is like a dedication – Keats is writing to Autumn to celebrate it although he could also be advancing “to” the premature autumn years of his life (as he died very young)	Keats dies at the age of 25 from tuberculosis or consumption. He didn’t have the opportunity to have children or marry.
The Prelude – William Wordsworth	The natural world is represented in the poem and his description of his boyhood and youth. There is a warmth in the imagery of the weather despite it being winter, creating a happy and free feeling in the poem.	“and in the frosty season”	“I heed not the summons.”	“It was a time of rapture”	“And not a voice was idle”	“The orange sky of evening died away.”	The final words – “in the west/The orange sky of evening died away”, are positive suggesting the vivid image of a sunset as we return to the warm glow of the evening.	William Wordsworth was one of the first and most influential of the Romantic era. His poetry was interested in the natural environment, particularly the English countryside
Afternoons – Philip Larkin	The poet presents the lives of the mothers as unfulfilled and unsatisfactory highlighting the mundane routines in washing and parenting. The poem creates a negative, depressing tone at the end where the mothers have lost autonomy.	“Summer is fading”	“in the hollows of afternoons young mothers assemble”	“An estateful of washing”	“Their beauty is thickened”	“Something is pushing them to the side of their own lives”	The last line “to the side of their own lives” echoes the idea of “setting free their children” from the first stanza.	Philip Larkin’s poetry celebrates the ordinary details of day to day life. Larkin never married, had children or even left the UK in his whole life
A Wife in London – Thomas Hardy	The poem focused on a wife who sits alone, cold in the city of London who is brought the tragic news of the death of her husband. The irony comes the following day when she receives a letter from her husband, which arrives after his death thus adding to her grief and trauma,	“She sits in the tawny vaour”	“A messenger’s knock cracks smartly”	“The fog hangs thicker”	“His hand, whom the worm now knows”	“And of new love that they would learn.”	The poem is structured in two halves “The Tragedy” and “The Irony” showing it is like chapters in a tragic story. The two halves could suggest her life has been split into two.	Thomas Hardy was a novelist – so was a storyteller The poem relates to the Boer War.
London – William Blake	The poem is a criticism of the church and the monarchy who allow for such destitution to exist in the city. The poem uses repetition to show how many people suffer in poverty creating a pessimistic and despondent tone in the poem.	“I wander thro’ each charter’d street,”	“Marks of weakness, marks of woe.”	“In every cry of every Man,	“Every blackning Church appalls,”	“Runs in blood down Palace walls”	The poem ends negatively: – “blights with plagues” suggests everything good is destroyed. “Plagues” implies decay and pestilence	Blake lived and worked in London during the Victorian era, a time of great poverty and industrial change.
Living Space – Imtiaz Dharker	The title juxtaposes the idea in the poem – suggesting there is room to live, however, the poem contrasts this and highlights the unsafe, dangerous, cramped conditions that people living in poverty are being forced to live in. There is a hope that the people living in these Mumbai slums can have faith in a better life.	“There are just not enough straight lines.”	“Beams balance crookedly”	“The whole structure leans dangerously”	“someone has squeezed a living space”	“the bright, thin walls of faith.	The enjambment of the poem reflects how the structures lean over and are on top of each other and the central stanza is “squeezed” in to reflect how living spaces are “squeezed” into small gaps.	Born in Pakistan but raised in Scotland, Imtiaz Dharker has an interest in representing a different culture
Dulce – Wilfred Owen	The poet portrays the horror and trauma the soldiers experienced in war so that he can debunk the myth that it is sweet and seemly to die for one’s country.	“Bent double, like old beggars under sacks”	“coughing like old hags, we cursed through sludge”	“Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!”	“guttering, chocking, drowning”	“Dulce et decorum est”	The final words of the poem – “the old Lie”, allows Owen to highlight how war is not honourable or glorious, but cruel, degrading, dirty and horrifying.	Wilfred Owen was killed in action on 4 November 1918 exactly one week (almost to the hour) before the signing of the Armistice which ended the First World War.
Mametz Wood – Owen Sheers	The use of imagery evokes the horror of war and shows the soldier’s to be fragile and vulnerable. The poet switches between the soldiers and the Earth to show how it was witness to such a senseless tragedy.	“For years afterwards the farmers found them –	“the wasted young”	“the china plate of a shoulder blade,	“and broken bird’s egg of a skull,”	“twenty men buried in one long grave,”	The rhyme scheme is irregular which could represent the oncoming storm (Fred) which allows her to stop work and contemplate her relationship.	Mametz Wood was an objective during the 1st Battle of the Somme in 1916. The 38th Welsh Division lost 4,000 men during the attack which lasted five days.
The Soldier – Rupert Brooke	The poem represents the patriotism of pre-war England and suggests that it is honourable and heroic to die for one’s country where you will be immortalised in England forever. It shows an acceptance of death and a willingness to die for England.	“If I should die, think only this of me:”	“some corner of a foreign field That is for ever England.”	“Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.”	“And think, this heart, all evil shed away,”	“In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.”	The poem is written in a sonnet form to suggest the patriotism and love the poet has for England.	Rupert Brooke wrote the poem before WW1 broke out so there was no way he would have known about the true atrocities soldiers faced in battle hence an idealistic glorification of being a soldier.
The Manhunt – Simon Armitage	The title is associated with the search of a convict, however, this juxtaposes the idea that he is the victim and the hunt is for the man the soldier used to be before he was injured in the war. There is a distance between the speaker and the soldier suggesting that there is still conflict in the relationship due to the emotional trauma of the soldier.	“After the first phase,”	“frozen river which ran through his face,”	“damaged, porcelain collar-bone,”	“the foetus of metal beneath his chest”	“unexploded mine buried deep in his mind”	The end of the poem is negative in that the soldier metaphorically has an unexploded bomb in his mind.	Told from the perspective of a soldier’s wife – deals with the idea of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and its impact on the soldier and those around him/her.

