



Formby High School English Department

KS4 Knowledge Organisers

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE



Assessment Objectives

READING (50%)	
Read and understand a range to texts to:	
AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas Select and synthesise evidence from different texts
AO2	Explain, comment on analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views
AO3	Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts
AO4	Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references
WRITING (50%)	
AO5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate clearly, effectively, and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts
AO6	Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (This requirement must constitute 20% of the marks for each specification as a whole.)
SPOKEN LANGUAGE (<i>Unweighted</i>)	
AO7	Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting
AO8	Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback to presentations
AO9	Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations.



ASSESSMENT: KEY EXAMINATION COMMAND WORDS (1 OF 2)

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES AND THEIR RELATED COMMAND WORDS

Assessment Objective	Description	Key words/phrases e.g.	Example questions
AO1	<p>Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas</p> <p>Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.</p>	<p>Identify</p> <p>List</p> <p>Select</p> <p>Summarise</p> <p>Synthesise</p>	<p>List five reasons why Obed Ramotswe went to South Africa.</p> <p>What does the writer mean by 'Time is money' in Line 2?</p> <p>According to these two writers, why should Americans change their attitudes to leftover food?</p>
AO2	<p>Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views</p>	<p>Explain</p> <p>How does the writer...?</p> <p>Analyse</p> <p>What impressions...?</p>	<p>How does the writer make these lines tense and dramatic?</p> <p>What impressions do you get of the work in the mines from these lines?</p>
AO3	<p>Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts</p>	<p>Compare</p> <p>Identify similarities and differences</p>	<p>Both these texts are about waste. Compare the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writers' attitudes to waste • How they get their arguments across
AO4	<p>Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references</p>	<p>To what extent do you agree?</p> <p>Evaluate</p> <p>How effective is?</p> <p>What do you think and feel?</p>	<p>'In the last twenty lines or so of this passage, the writer encourages the reader to feel sympathy for Obed.' To what extent do you agree with this view?</p> <p>What do you think and feel about Lydia M. Child's views about running a household?</p>



ASSESSMENT: KEY EXAMINATION COMMAND WORDS (1 OF 2)

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES AND THEIR RELATED COMMAND WORDS

Assessment Objective	Description	Key words/phrases e.g.	Example questions
AO5	<p>Communicate clearly, effectively, and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences</p> <p>Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts</p>	<p>Communicate</p> <p>Select</p> <p>Adapt</p> <p>Organise</p>	<p>A proposal has been made to hold a motorcycle race on the roads in your area. You have decided to write an article for your community magazine to share your views on this proposal. You could write in favour or against this proposal.</p> <p>Write a lively article for the magazine giving your views</p>
AO6	<p>Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.</p>	<p>Range</p> <p>Clarity</p> <p>Purpose</p> <p>Accurate</p>	<p>Creative Prose Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose one of the following titles for your writing: • Making a Difference • The Choice • Write about a time when you were at a children's party • Write a story which begins: I didn't know if I had the courage to do this...

**Key words in the marking bands**

	Reading	Writing
Band 5	Perceptive, accurate, wide range	Sophisticated, ambitious, convincing ideas Controlled, accurate, ambitious
Band 4	Accurate, good range	Consistent, well-judged, detailed ideas Secure
Band 3	Relevant, some range	Clear, appropriate, developed ideas Mostly secure
Band 2	Some relevance, limited range	Some awareness (purpose, audience), little development of ideas Some control
Band 1	Basic, struggles to engage	Basic, limited ideas Limited control



Year 10 Autumn Term 1

Overview

Section A (20%) – Reading Understanding of one prose extract (about 60-100 lines) of literature from the 20th century assessed through a range of structured questions

AO1, AO2, AO4

Approaches

Using 20th century literary extracts to introduce key skills such as:

- Exploring explicit and implicit meaning
- Selecting apt evidence/information and relevant subject terminology
- Commenting, explaining and analysing the craft of the writer
- Making evaluative judgements on texts

Assessment task

Summer 2022 paper (Section A)

Further Support:

<https://www.bbc.com/education/topics/ztpy7hv>
<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/qualification-resources.html?subject=English&level=GCSE>

		Content
Q1	5 marks	You will be directed to a section of the text, e.g. lines 1-5 and will have to list five things that you learn about a topic/character. You should bullet point your answers .
Q2	5 marks	This question will ask you how the writer shows something or what impression we get of a certain character. The question requires you to analyse how language and tone are used to achieve effects. You should include direct reference to the text in your answer.
Q3	10 marks	This question tests the ability to explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effect and influence readers. It expects candidates to use subject terminology and direct reference to the text to support their views.
Q4	10 marks	This question asks you to write detailed analysis of how language and the organisation of events are used to achieve effects and influence the reader. It expects candidates to use subject terminology and direct reference to the text to support their views. The question will ask something similar to, 'What impression does the writer give of...'
Q5	10 marks	This questions asks you to write a persuasive evaluation of the text and its effects, supported by convincing, well selected examples and purposeful textual references. The question will ask something like, 'Evaluate the way...is presented in this passage' and will give you three bullet points to get you started which will be similar to the following: Write about your own thoughts and feelings about how...is presented in the passage; write about how the writer has created these thoughts and feelings.



Year 10 Autumn Term 2

Overview

This section will test creative prose writing through one 40 mark task. Candidates will be offered a choice of four titles giving opportunities for writing to describe and narrate, and imaginative and creative use of language. This response should be a narrative / recount.

AO5 and AO6

Approaches

Looking at the features of prose writing such as:

- Openings/endings
- Plot and characterisation
- Developing tension/pace
- Appropriate narrative devices Include opportunities for developing accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation

Assessment task

Teacher's choice of narrative task

Further Support:

BookTrust: Everybody Writes

BBC GCSE Bitesize: English- Creative writing

<https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceSingle.aspx?rId=1308>

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**Writing Prose
Success Criteria**

Students will choose one title from a list of four. Students should spend 45 minutes on this question. 10 minutes of that time should be taken to carefully plan your ideas. 24 marks for content and organization 16 marks for technical accuracy (Total 40 marks = 20% of GCSE)

Content

- Register is convincing and compelling for audience
- Assuredly matched to purpose
- Extensive and ambitious vocabulary with sustained crafting of linguistic devices

Organisation

- Varied and inventive use of structural features
- Writing is compelling, incorporating a range of convincing and complex ideas
- Fluently linked paragraphs with seamlessly integrated discourse markers

Technical accuracy

- Wide range of punctuation is used with a high level of accuracy
- Uses a full range of appropriate sentence forms for effect
- Uses Standard English consistently and appropriately with secure control of complex grammatical structures
- High level of accuracy in spelling, including ambitious vocabulary
- Extensive and ambitious use of vocabulary

Assessment Objectives:

AO5 Communicate clearly and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences.

Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

AO6 Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structure for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Before Starting:

1. Read through the task choices carefully.
2. Before making your choice, think about experiences that you have had (or that you know about) which you could use to answer the task. Or, if choosing to write purely from imagination, how will you make your narrative sound convincing and authentic?
3. Choose a task that you think you would have plenty to write about.
4. Spend 5-10 minutes planning carefully to make sure that you can produce an interesting and engaging piece of writing.

Things to avoid:

Don't be tempted to give your reader all of the information they need about your narrative too quickly. You need to control what your reader knows. If you give out all of the key details about what is going to happen in your opening paragraph then you may shut down the ways in which you can add interesting detail later on.

Planning:

Plan

- Use a system that makes most sense to you – e.g. a spider diagram, bullet points, table, notes.
- A plan should be tightly focused – don't waste time writing out full sentences, key words and ideas are all that are needed.

Things to consider

- Key details – what happened and in what order?
- People – who is involved? How are you going to let your reader know key details about them?
- Structure – think about your beginning and how your narrative will end. Are you building to a particular point of interest for the reader?
- Detail – which areas will you develop further to add interest for your reader?

TIP 1: Write something manageable:

You only have a short amount of time so make sure that you don't have too many characters or too many things happening.

If you spread yourself too thinly you won't be able to fully showcase your skills.

Examples of previous Component 1 Writing questions:

Write about a time when you broke the rules.

Write about a time when you had to go shopping with a relative.

The Wedding.

Grandma.

A memory of primary school.

Continue the following: It really wasn't the result I was looking for.

Write a story which ends:
...and that was the worst job of my life.

Write a story which ends:
...and I felt so sorry for myself.

Structure:

Using structural features like dialogue or flashbacks can add interest as long as you use them carefully and your writing makes sense. Your writing *must* be **coherent**.

TIP 2: Be aware of your reader:

For the highest marks you **must** fully engage the reader's interest.

Write about people and events in a way that makes your reader care about them. This could happen in a number of ways. For example, they could be interested or amused, horrified or worried.

Develop detail in a way that engages your reader. Influence them through what you **show** them and your development of the content.

Checklist for improving your writing:

- ☑ Have you tried to engage your reader?
- ☑ Have you made your reader learn things through implied detail (what you have shown them)?
- ☑ Have you provided interest by developing detail?
- ☑ Have you structured your work carefully?
- ☑ Have you proof-read your work for errors?



Year 10 Spring Term 1

Overview

This section will test through structured questions the reading of two high-quality unseen non-fiction texts (about 900-1200 words in total), one from the 19th century, the other from the 21st century. Non-fiction texts may include, but will not be limited to: letters, extracts from autobiographies or biographies, diaries, reports, articles and digital and multi-modal texts of various kinds from newspapers and magazines, and the internet.

AO1 AO2, AO3 and AO4.

- Approaches**
- Using extracts/texts from 19th and 21st century non-fiction writing to develop key skills such as:
- Exploring explicit and implicit meaning
 - Selecting apt evidence/information and relevant subject terminology
 - Commenting, explaining and analysing the craft of the writer
 - Making evaluative judgements on texts
 - Selecting and synthesising information from two texts
 - Comparison of content/ideas and how these are conveyed

Assessment task

Summer 2022 Section A ‘Punch and Judy’

Further Support:

<https://www.bbc.com/education/topics/ztpy7hv>
<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/qualification-resources.html?subject=English&level=GCSE>

		Content
Q1	3 marks	This question will be based on the first text and divided into small parts, such as a, b and c. You will have to find a detail in the text for each part.
Q2	10 marks	This is a language technique question on the first text. You will be asked how the writer uses language and techniques for a particular purpose, such as to convey a point of view
Q3	3 marks	This question will be based on the second text and divided into small parts. You will have to find a detail in the text for each part.
Q4	10 marks	This question will be on the second text. You will be asked what you think and feel about a situation in the text, or how successful the writer is in conveying a point of view to you.
Q5	4 marks	This question will ask you to consider both texts. It is a search and find question where you will find short details and evidence from both texts.
Q6	10 marks	This question will ask you to consider both texts again and compare their ideas and attitudes and how they are presented to you.



Year 11 Autumn Term 1

Overview

This section will test transactional, persuasive and/or discursive writing through two equally weighted compulsory tasks (20 marks each). Across the two tasks candidates will be offered opportunities to write for a range of audiences and purposes, adapting style to form and to real-life contexts in, for example, letters, articles, reviews, speeches, etc.

AO5 and AO6.

Approaches

Looking at the features of transactional/persuasive writing such as:

- Purpose, audience, format and tone
 - Apt use of vocabulary and techniques to develop point of view/argument etc.
 - Organisation and structure of non-fiction writing
- Practise writing for real-life contexts in, for example, letters, articles, reviews, speeches, reports

Opportunities for developing accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation

Assessment task

Teacher's choice of task

Further Support:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/ztpy7hv>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z2xpdmn>

Text Type	Key Information
Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of addresses and date • a formal mode of address e.g. Dear Sir/Madam or a named recipient • effectively/fluent sequenced paragraphs • an appropriate mode of signing off: Yours sincerely/faithfully
Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadsheet = formal/local or tabloid = informal • a clear/apt/original title • a strapline and subheadings • an introductory (overview) paragraph • effectively/fluent sequenced paragraphs
Leaflet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear/apt/original title • organisational devices such as inventive subheadings or boxes /bullet points • effectively/fluent sequenced paragraphs.
Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear address to an audience • effective/fluent linked sections to indicate sequence • rhetorical indicators that an audience is being addressed • a clear sign off e.g. 'Thank you for listening'.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear/apt/original title • subheadings • an introductory (overview) paragraph with your opinion • effectively/fluent sequenced paragraphs. • Ending with recommendation

Non-fiction Writing:

Assessment Objectives:

AO5 Communicate clearly and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences.

Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

AO6 Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structure for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Component 2 Exam facts:

- Two writing tasks
- 20 marks each
- 5 minutes to plan
- 25 minutes to write
- Write 300-400 words per task

Before Starting:

1. Read each task carefully (remember you *have to* do both).
2. Highlight the keywords in the task that suggest audience, content, purpose, style, structure and so on.
3. Try to step back from the task – sometimes you are asked to give your views – try to consider how you feel or what your immediate reaction is.
4. Use the planning time to form a clear plan.

Planning:

Why plan?

Planning helps you to capture your immediate reactions and views about a task.

- Planning allows you to jot down useful vocabulary.
- Planning allows you to consider the structure of your work.
- Planning will save you time in the long run.

Things to consider:

- The content of your writing – what angle will allow you to write in sufficient detail?
- Words, phrases and ideas that are suited to the topic and will enhance your writing.
- Structure – how will you present your work. Have you been asked for a specific structure (e.g. a formal letter)?
- Remember to write in full sentences and paragraphs.
- How will you begin your work, how will your ideas develop and how will you conclude your work?
- Once you have written down your ideas in a plan, remember to give some consideration to the order that you will write.

Work out in advance what kind of planning works best for you. Do you prefer to plan using a mind map, a spider diagram, a flow chart or a different style?

Top tips:

- Remember to use a range of appropriate and well selected details to develop and support your points
- Always leave enough time to proofread your work.

Examples of previous Component 2 Writing questions:

Write a lively article for your school/college magazine with the heading: A Teenager's Guide to Managing Parents.

Write your article.

You have been asked to give a talk to your class with the title: The person I'd most like to spend a day with.

Write down what you would say in your talk.

Write a review for a teenage magazine of a book, film or TV programme/series you have enjoyed in the last year and why it might appeal to others of your age.

Write your review.

Your headteacher has decided that there should not be an end of year celebration such as a school prom or party. The headteacher believes it would just be an excuse for students to show off in an expensive way.

Write a letter to your headteacher giving your opinions on this.

How will my work be marked?:

Your writing in both Component 1 and Component 2 is marked using very specific criteria. You are awarded marks for AO5 Communication and organisation and AO6 Vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation.

In Component 2, AO5 is marked out of 12 and AO6 is marked out of 8. During your revision, you should have a look at the mark scheme that the examiners will use, this will help you to see exactly what they are looking for.

Remember, getting the basics (full stops and capital letters) is just as important as trying to include some more complex sentences. Aim to include an accurate range of sentence types and vocabulary.

Checklist for improving your writing:

- ☑ Have you planned your work carefully?
- ☑ Have you included sufficient detail?
- ☑ Have you considered the language you use?
- ☑ Have you structured your work carefully?
- ☑ Have you varied your punctuation for effect?
- ☑ Have you proof-read your work for errors?

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

Macbeth

Poetry Anthology

An Inspector Calls

A Christmas Carol

Unseen Poetry

Plot			
Act 1	On the way back from battle Macbeth and Banquo meet 3 witches who give predictions that Macbeth will be Thane of Cawdor and king. King Duncan executes the current Thane of Cawdor and gives his title to Macbeth. He makes his son, Malcolm, heir. Macbeth writes a letter to his wife about the news. She plans to kill Duncan so Macbeth can become king. Duncan arrives at their castle. Lady Macbeth taunts her husband for being a coward.		
Act 2	Macbeth has a hallucination of a dagger reflecting his guilty conscience - but kills Duncan and, with Lady Macbeth's help, the bloody daggers are planted on the drugged guards. Malcolm and his brother flee and Macbeth is made king.		
Act 3	Banquo suspects Macbeth has murdered Duncan. Macbeth hires assassins to murder Banquo but his son Fleance escapes. Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost at his banquet - a sign of his guilty conscience.		
Act 4	Macbeth visits the Witches and they give him more predictions. Macbeth orders the killing of Macduff's family. Macduff and Malcolm agree to invade Scotland.		
Act 5	Lady Macbeth's mental state deteriorates and, eventually, she commits suicide. Malcolm's army invades through Burnham wood and eventually Macbeth killed by Macduff. Malcolm is proclaimed king.		
Lines per character	Macbeth 715 Macduff 180	Lady Macbeth 259 Ross 135	Malcolm 211 Banquo 113

Themes		
Ambition	Children	Natural world
Kingship	Blood	Gender
Fate and free will	Sleep	Light/dark
Appearance and reality	Visions	Manhood

Assessment Objectives	
	Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:
AO1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response use textual references, and quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO4	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation

Characters	
Macbeth	A loyal warrior who becomes evil, murderous and deceptive as he becomes obsessed with the witches' prophecies of power
Lady Macbeth	Macbeth's wife who fuels his ambition in the beginning but loses her control and kills herself in despair by the end.
Banquo	Macbeth's best friend who also receives prophecies from the witches. He is murdered by Macbeth
Fleance	Banquo's son who escapes and eventually fathers a line of kings.
Duncan King of Scotland	A fair and respected leader at the start of the play. Murdered by Macbeth.
Macduff	A brave warrior who is loyal to Duncan and is consistently suspicious of Macbeth. Kills Macbeth at the end.
Malcolm	Duncan's son and next in line to the throne. Becomes the rightful king at the end.
The Three Witches	(Weird Sisters) - Supernatural forces of nature who seem to know the future. They equivocate with Macbeth.

Vocabulary	
Meter	
Blank Verse	
Rhymed Verse	
Prose	
Iambic Pentameter	
Rhyme/Rhythm	
Heroic Couplets	
Soliloquy	
Dramatic Irony	
Concealment	
Gender	
Imagery	
Tragedy	
Hamartia	
Prophecy	
Imagery	
Symbols	
Metaphor	
Regicide	

Form	
	Shakespeare uses soliloquy to allow the characters to communicate their true thoughts to the audience.
	Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's Tragedies and follows specific conventions. The climax must end in a tremendous catastrophe involving the death of the main character; the character's death is caused by their own flaw(s) (hamartia). The character has something the audience can identify with which outweighs their flaws so we care about them.
Sample Extract Question	
	Look at how Macbeth and Lady Macbeth speak and behave in Act 1 scene 7 from 'Pr'ythee peace!' to 'nothing but males'. How do you think an audience might respond to this part of the play? Refer closely to details from the extract to support your answer. [15]

Sample Extract Response

In this extract, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are contemplating murdering Duncan. Macbeth says 'I dare do all that may become a man' which means that if he goes through with their scheme then he would no longer be a man. However, Lady Macbeth emasculates Macbeth by snarling, 'When you durst do it, then you were a man;'. This tells the audience that if Lady Macbeth doesn't get her way she manipulates Macbeth by belittling him despite everything he has done for her. She also backs up her statement by commenting that he would 'be more than what you were' which reinforces the idea of Lady Macbeth manipulating Macbeth to get her way. Later on in the extract she tries to persuade Macbeth by exaggerating how she would kill her own baby for him, 'plucked my nipple from his boneless gums and dashed the brains out.' The verb 'dashed' helps emphasise how brutal it would be if she killed her own child. On the other hand Macbeth is still nervous about their plan and asks 'if we should fail' but she instantly responds with 'screw your courage

to the sticking place/And we'll not fail.' This metaphor emphasises how Lady Macbeth thinks if he doesn't care about his courage then they would succeed with their plan. The audience gets the impression that Lady Macbeth is the leading role in the relationship because of how she has taken control and is trying to manipulate Macbeth into going through with their plan.

Commentary

AO1 The response focuses on the task and conveys ideas with general coherence and uses a mostly appropriate register. It has a straightforward approach to the task and shows an understanding of key aspects of the text. The response is supported with apt direct reference, including quotations.

AO2 The response comments on and begins to analyse use of language with some relevant subject terminology.



'Macbeth is a play about violence'. Write about how Shakespeare presents violence at different points in Macbeth [25] *5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Exemplar response

Violence is a theme carried throughout 'Macbeth' due to the large amounts of death and war in the play.

For example, the play begins with a detailed description of how the three witches cursed a person for being rude to them. She has his 'finger' - a quite disgusting detail - which she adds to the eerie broth they are creating. This is shocking as they have no problems with inflicting suffering upon anyone they wish to, it is rather violent.

Next, we hear of the war Macbeth and Banquo fought in. Though it is described positively it is quite violent as you hear they fought as 'doubly recharged cannons' to violently kill the opposing army. Also, the death of the previous Thane of Cawdor is lightly dismissed, 'Go pronounce his present death and with his former title greet Macbeth'. The death of another man is overshadowed by Macbeth's success, which is quite shocking to me as they are taking lives so carelessly without guilt or hesitation.

Throughout the play there is some violent and vulgar imagery created by Shakespeare. For example, when Lady Macbeth describes how she would have 'dashed the brains out' of her own innocent child for Macbeth, the verb 'dashed' being violent and harsh to shock the audience.

This can also be seen when Banquo was killed. Macbeth's guilt forces him to see Banquo's ghost and exclaims 'Do not shake thy gory locks at me'. The adjective 'gory' is quite disgusting and reminds us of the violent way he has just been killed under the orders of his best friend.

Another scene that comes to mind when thinking of violence is the murder of Macduff's entire estate. After a tender scene between his wife and his son the castle is attacked. The assassins show no mercy by stabbing the young boy, to which he says 'he has killed me mother'. This is quite a heart-breaking line which makes you question the morals of those people who 'savagely slaughtered' Macduff's family, the ominous alliteration in that phrase emphasising the ruthless nature of the attack.

When Macduff kills Macbeth at the end of the play there is the violent and gruesome act of putting his head, violently cut off Macbeth's body, on to a stick and displaying it proudly at Malcolm's coronation. Although this was normal to do at those times, it is still a very disturbing act to see for modern audiences.

Commentary

AO1 - The answer is sustained and on task, and ideas are conveyed with considerable coherence. An appropriate register is used and overall the approach to the task is thoughtful. A secure understanding of key aspects of the text is shown and considerable engagement, and the response is justified by well chosen reference to the text including quotations.

AO2 - The response discussed and increasingly analyses Shakespeare's use of language, form and structure. There are thoughtful references to the meanings and effects of stylistic features used by Shakespeare. Use of subject terminology is apt.

AO4 - Technical accuracy is of a high standard.

Band 4

15+5 = 20/25

Poetry

[Link to Eduqas resources](#)



GCSE

English Literature

The Schoolboy (William Blake)



The Poet – context (AO3)

William Blake (1757–1827) had little formal education, leaving school at the age of 10, then studying drawing in his teens, before becoming an engraver. As an artist and poet, he gained very little recognition in his own lifetime; however, his influence grew after his death, and he is now considered to be a key figure in the Romantic movement. Although a Christian, he disagreed with the established church and was critical of authority, supporting both the French and American revolutions.

The Poem – context (AO3)

Blake originally included the poem in his *Songs of Innocence* in 1789, but he moved the poem to *Songs of Experience* when the collections were published together in 1794, perhaps reflecting how the speaker's natural innocence and joy are destroyed by the experience of school. Influenced by the pastoral tradition, which idealised nature, its themes of childhood, nature and personal freedom are typical of the Romantic movement.

The Poem – content (AO1)

A schoolboy recalls the joy of waking up in the freedom of nature on a summer morning, while he sits in a classroom feeling imprisoned and miserable. He believes his 'youthful spring' is being wasted in school and that his formal education is unnatural: it kills his joy and limits his potential.

Key quotations (AO1)

'I love to rise in a summer morn,
When the birds sing on every tree;'

'And the sky-lark sings with me.'

'But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away;'

'Under a cruel eye outworn.
The little ones spend the day.'

'Nor in my book can I take delight,'

'How can the bird that is born for joy,
Sit in a cage and sing'

'How can a child when fears annoy.
But droop his tender wing.'

'O! father & mother, if bud are nip'd,
And blossoms blown away.'

'How shall the summer arise in joy...
When the blasts of winter appear.'

“ ”

Language and imagery (AO2)

The poem uses a series of metaphors, mainly related to nature and the seasons. The schoolboy is compared to a caged bird; the teacher is 'a cruel eye outworn'.

Example of analysing a quotation:

The metaphor 'How can the bird that is born for joy, / Sit in a cage and sing' suggests that, just as it's cruel to lock up a bird, it's also unnatural and harmful to separate a child from nature and limit its freedom. Although this is a rhetorical question, Blake omits the question mark, perhaps suggesting he sees this is a statement of fact.



GCSE

English Literature

The Schoolboy (William Blake)



Thinking more deeply about *The Schoolboy*

1. What is the overall mood of the first stanza? (AO1)
2. What might 'the huntsman' and his 'horn' foreshadow later in the poem? (AO1)
3. How might the content of the first stanza link to Blake being a Romantic poet? (AO3)
4. How does the second stanza contrast the first? (AO1)
5. What is the effect of the image 'under a cruel eye outworn'? (AO2)
6. In the third stanza, how do we know that the schoolboy wants to learn? (AO1)
7. What do the words 'drooping' and 'dreary' suggest about the schoolboy's day in school? (AO2)
8. What is the effect of the two rhetorical questions in the fourth stanza? (AO2)
9. To whom does the schoolboy appeal for help in the fifth stanza? (AO1)
10. Why does Blake compare school children to 'buds' that are 'nipped' and 'blossoms' that are 'blown away'? (AO2)
11. Can you sum up Blake's argument expressed through the extended metaphor in the final two stanzas? (AO1)
12. After originally publishing this poem in his collection *Songs of Innocence*, why might Blake have later moved it to *Songs of Experience*? (AO3)

Form and structure (AO2)

It is a lyric poem written from the point of view of the schoolboy, with the final two stanzas directly addressing his parents. The first stanza establishes the ababb rhyme scheme, which does not vary throughout the poem, perhaps reinforcing the idea of the drudgery of the school day.

Connections and contrast

This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid.

The Schoolboy could be compared and/or contrasted with these poems from the Anthology:

- *Blackberry Picking* – themes of nature and childhood; memory; personal emotions.
- *Drummer Hodge* – themes of nature and childhood; a lack of power.
- *I Shall Return* – themes of nature and childhood; personal emotions; memory.
- *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* – theme of nature; personal emotions; freedom.

Links for Further Research

- [The Schoolboy Wikipedia page](#)
- [Zoomorphosis - a William Blake blog](#)
- [An online video biography of William Blake](#)
- [The Romantics - A BBC Documentary Series by Peter Ackroyd](#)





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English Literature

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud (William Wordsworth)



The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- William Wordsworth (1770–1850) was one of the key figures of the Romantic movement, which emphasised the importance of nature, emotion and individual experience.
- Wordsworth grew up in the Lake District, England, which greatly influenced his love for nature.
- The poem reflects Wordsworth's belief in the healing power of nature and its ability to inspire creativity.
- The poem was inspired by a walk he took with his sister, Dorothy Wordsworth, in 1802 near Ullswater in the Lake District. Dorothy's journal entry describes the scene that inspired the poem.

The poem (structure and form) (AO2)

Structure:

- The poem consists of four stanzas, each with six lines (sestets), following a consistent rhyme scheme (ABABCC).
- The steady rhythm mirrors the flowing, harmonious movement of nature.

Form:

- Lyric poem: Expresses personal feelings and emotions.
- Iambic tetrameter: Four iambs (unstressed-stressed syllables) per line create a gentle rhythmic flow, echoing the natural scene.
- Enjambment reflects the speaker's flowing thoughts and the 'continuous' beauty of the daffodils.

The poem (content and context) (AO1, AO3)

What is the poem about?

- The speaker recalls seeing a field of golden daffodils by a lake. The daffodils appear to dance joyfully in the breeze, creating a lasting impression on the speaker. Later, when he feels lonely or contemplative, the memory of the daffodils brings him joy and comfort.

Deeper meaning:

- The poem explores the healing power of nature, the interplay between memory and emotion, and the idea of solitude as a source of inspiration.
- Wordsworth emphasises the profound emotional and spiritual wealth nature can provide, even when physically absent.

Context of the poem:

- Romanticism: Focuses on the beauty of nature, individual experience and emotional depth.
- Industrial Revolution: The poem contrasts the tranquility of nature with the rapid urbanisation of Wordsworth's time. The Romantic Movement was a reaction against this spread of industrialisation.

Language and imagery (AO2)

- The simile 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' emphasises the speaker's isolation.
- The imagery and colour of 'A host, of golden daffodils' emphasises their number and value.
- The personification of the daffodils 'Fluttering and dancing in the breeze' highlights their movement and joyfulness.
- The juxtaposition of 'bliss of solitude' highlights how solitude can bring peace and happiness.
- Vivid natural imagery (daffodils, 'sparkling waves', stars) emphasises the beauty of nature.
- The verbs 'fluttering', 'dancing', 'tossing' contrast with the 'vacant' or 'pensive' thoughtful stillness of the speaker.
- The personification of 'My heart ... dances with the daffodils' emphasises the joy of the speaker's memory of the daffodils.



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English Literature

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud (William Wordsworth)



Key questions to ask (10 key questions)

1. What is meant by 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' in the opening line? (AO1)
2. What is the effect of using the imagery and colour 'golden' to describe the daffodils? (AO2)
3. What is the effect of the personification used to describe the movement and liveliness of the daffodils dancing? (AO2)
4. What is the effect of the simile 'continuous as the stars that shine'? (AO2)
5. What is meant by 'they Out-did the sparkling waves in glee'? (AO1)
6. What is the effect of the of the repetition of the word 'gazed' in stanza 3? (AO2)
7. Why do you think solitude is described as 'bliss' in the poem? (AO2)
8. What is the effect of 'they flash upon that inward eye'? (AO2)
9. What is the effect of the personification as the speaker's heart 'dances with the daffodils'? (AO2)
10. Why do you think that daffodils and nature are so important in this poem? (AO3)

Links for further research

- [Wordsworth Trust: Information on Wordsworth's life, works, and the Lake District](#)
- [Romanticism - Poetry Foundation: Context about the Romantic movement](#)
- [Project Gutenberg: Free access to Wordsworth's works](#)
- [Dorothy Wordsworth's journals](#)



Connections and contrasts (AO3)

The Schoolboy by William Blake:

Both poems celebrate the beauty of nature. However, Wordsworth finds solitude uplifting, while Blake focuses on the loss of joy through structured routines.

Cousin Kate by Christina Rossetti:

Both poems reflect on memory. However, Wordsworth's memory is joyful, while Rossetti's is painful and full of regret.

Sonnet 29 by Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

Both poems explore emotional solace. However, Wordsworth finds comfort in nature, while Browning focuses on love.

Blackberry Picking by Seamus Heaney:

Both poems celebrate nature's beauty. However, Wordsworth finds lasting joy, while Heaney reflects on nature's fleeting pleasures.

Kamikaze by Beatrice Garland:

Both poems highlight the power of memory. However, Wordsworth's memory is uplifting, while Garland's is bittersweet and tied to loss.

Disabled by Wilfred Owen:

Both poems reflect on past experiences. However, Wordsworth's are comforting, while Owen's are filled with regret and loss.

I Shall Return by Claude McKay:

Both poems long for the solace of nature. However, Wordsworth finds joy in memory, while McKay dreams of future healing.

This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid.



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English Literature

Cousin Kate (Christina Rossetti)

The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- Christina Rossetti (1830–1894) is sometimes called the 'greatest Victorian woman poet'.
- She began writing poetry when she was very young and had written over 50 poems by the age of 16.
- She suffered from times of depression throughout her life and never married.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

The poem is about an innocent young girl who is taken advantage of by a wealthy lord. She becomes pregnant but he abandons her, and she is cast out and shunned by her neighbours. Society considers her 'shameful' and impure because she had sex outside of marriage. The lord then marries her cousin, Kate. Kate held on to her purity by not having sex with the lord until they were married. However, the narrator is smug and triumphant at the end as Kate cannot have children and so the lord will not have a legitimate heir for his lands and titles.

Structure and form (AO2)

- It is a narrative poem, written from the viewpoint of the 'cottage maiden'.
- It has many features of traditional ballads which were often about the theme of love and meant to teach a moral lesson.
- It is written in six stanzas.
- Each stanza has 8 lines and every other line rhymes.
- This regular rhyme scheme is one of the features of a traditional ballad.
- It is told in the first person and directed to the narrator's cousin, Kate.
- Stanzas one to five are in the past tense to show what has happened to the narrator.
- Stanza six is in the present tense to describe the narrator's current situation and how she finally triumphs with a fitting retribution for Kate.
- The poem has been carefully structured to tell the story of the narrator's downfall, but each stanza also refers to her current feelings of sadness, bitterness and anger towards Kate and the lord.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

The poem explores the nature of love and lust. It highlights the inequality of the unnamed narrator and the Lord. It explores themes of gender, morality and hypocrisy as women were expected to be chaste and submissive.

Context of the poem (AO3)

The poem highlights the double standards of the period as no blame is attached to the lord for his behaviour. Rossetti wrote *Cousin Kate* in 1862 during the Victorian period, when women were thought to be inferior to men and were subject to stricter moral expectations than men. The poem looks at society's expectations of women and the injustice of gender inequality. It highlights the patriarchal nature of Victorian society. The need for a male heir is evidence of this. It also portrays women as property or things to be owned which was typical of the time.

Language and Imagery (AO2)

- The simile 'He wore me like a silken knot' suggests that the lord considered the narrator to be just an attractive accessory to flaunt. Fashion accessories change with the season implying that the relationship with the narrator will be fleeting and not permanent. A 'silken knot' can easily be undone - like their relationship.
- The alliteration of 'howl' suggests that the narrator's despair is animalistic in its nature.
- The interrogative 'why did a great lord find me out To fill my heart with care' suggests that the narrator regrets everything that has happened and would change things if she could.
- The oxymoron of 'lead a shameless shameful life' shows that the narrator enjoyed her affair with the lord even though it was wrong by Victorian standards.



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Cousin Kate (Christina Rossetti)



12 key questions to ask about the poem

1. Who do you think the poem is addressed to and why? (AO1)
2. Why is the first line 'I was a cottage maiden' written in the past tense? (AO1)
3. What is the effect of the two rhetorical questions in stanza one? (AO2)
4. What is the effect of the image 'He lured me to his palace home'? (AO2)
5. What is the effect of the image 'an unclean thing'? (AO2)
6. What do you think the symbolism of the 'dove' is in the poem? (AO1)
7. What is the effect of the metaphor 'Even so I sit and howl in dust'? (AO2)
8. Why has the poet included so many examples of contrasts across the poem? (AO1)
9. What is the effect of the metaphor 'gift' in the final stanza? (AO2)
10. Why do you think there is a difference in tone between the first and last stanzas? (AO2)
11. Why do you think it would have been important at the time for the lord to have a child 'To wear' his 'coronet'? (AO3)
12. Why do you think society approved of Kate and not the narrator? (AO3)

Key quotations (AO1)

- 'I was a cottage maiden'
- 'He lured me to his palace home'
- 'His plaything and his love'
- 'He changed me like a glove'
- 'Chose you, and cast me by'
- 'Even so I sit and howl in dust'
- 'Your love was writ in sand'
- 'Yet I've a gift you have not got'
- 'Cling closer, closer yet'
- 'Why did a great lord find me out'
- 'To lead a shameless shameful life'
- 'He wore me like a silken knot'
- 'So now I moan, an unclean thing'
- 'Call me an outcast thing'
- 'You sit in gold and sing'
- 'I would have spit into his face'
- 'My fair-haired son, my shame, my pride'



Connections and contrasts (AO3)

This is not an exhaustive list and other comparisons may be valid.

Sonnet 29 by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Both poems explore themes of love and relationships as well as resilience and strength.

Catrin by Gillian Clarke

Both poems explore themes of love and family relationships, motherhood, conflict and strength.

Kamikaze by Beatrice Garland

Both poems explore love and family relationships, shame, honour, breaking of society's expectations and individual strength.

Dusting the Phone by Jackie Kay

Both poems explore themes of love and relationships.

Links for further research

- [A blog about Christina Rossetti](#)
- [Christina Rossetti podcast with Melvyn Bragg](#)
- [Christina Rossetti: Vision and Verse](#)





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English Literature

Sonnet 29 (Elizabeth Barrett Browning)



The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) was a successful poet of the nineteenth century.
- She suffered with an undiagnosed illness which meant that she had long periods of confinement and severe bouts of ill health.
- Her father's wealth came from plantations powered by slave labour. He was a very strict and controlling with Elizabeth and all his children.
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning was an advocate of gender equality and the abolishment of slavery.
- She met and fell in love with fellow poet, Robert Browning. They courted in secret and they eloped to be married. When he found out, her father disowned her and she never saw him again.
- *Sonnet 29* is one of 44 sonnets contained in 'From the Portuguese' and were written as private love letters between her and her husband to be.
- They moved to Italy, where her health improved and she gave birth to one son.
- She died in Robert Browning's arms in 1861.
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning is considered one of the Romantic poets.

Structure and form (AO2)

- The poem is a sonnet: a traditional form of expressing feelings and emotions connected with love.
- It consists of fourteen lines and is made up of an octave and a sestet.
- The rhyme scheme is ABBA, ABBA, CBCBCB.
- Mainly iambic pentameter: five iambs (unstressed-stressed syllables) per line create a strong beat, echoing the passion she feels.
- Contains a volta in line 5. This is the turning point in the poem.
- The sonnet rules are not applied consistently; this may reflect a desire to rebel and break the strict rules of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's society.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

The speaker writes directly to her love, expressing how she longs for them to be together. She uses an extended metaphor of wild vines to represent her thoughts, wrapping around the tree to symbolise how they love each other.

The speaker acknowledges that her thoughts of them being together are nothing compared to the reality of being physically in each other's company. She commands him to return to her as once they are together, her thoughts and longing surrounding them will fall away and the longing will be satisfied.

It ends with an image of them being united and joyous together.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

The poem explores the power of love and the yearning of desire. It presents nature as representing wild desire, passion and freedom. Barrett Browning emphasises the emotional and spiritual joy that true love can provide. There is a sense of renewal and new beginnings.

Context of the poem (AO3)

The poem would have been seen as risqué in the strict moral code of Victorian society. In discussing a woman's passions and by using sensual, almost sexual imagery, Elizabeth Barrett Browning was pushing the boundaries of women in a patriarchal society.

The poem shares imagery with that found in the biblical old testament book, *Song of Solomon*.

The poem reflects the poet's connection with the Romantic poets, given that it emphasises emotions, imagination and personal experiences.

Key quotations (AO1)

1. 'I think of thee!'
2. 'my thoughts do twine and bud / About thee, as wild vines, about a tree'
3. 'soon there's nought to see / Except the straggling green which hides the wood'
4. 'O my palm-tree'
5. 'I will not have my thoughts instead of thee / Who art dearer, better!'
6. 'Renew thy presence'
7. 'set thy trunk all bare'
8. 'And let these bands of greenery which insphere thee / Drop heavily down'



Language and imagery (AO2)

- Extended metaphor of 'wild vines' and 'a tree' represents how the speaker shows her thoughts are focused on her love like a vine wrapping around a tree.
- Later, the metaphor starts to take on a more physical idea, as the images start to symbolise their bodies.
- Sensual imagery such as 'bare thy trunk', 'burst' and 'heavily' create a feeling of urgency.
- Exclamatory language, such as 'I will not have my thoughts instead of thee / Who art dearer, better!', indicates the persona's excitement.
- Imperatives are used to show the speaker's impatience for them to be together such as 'renew thy presence', 'rustle thy boughs', 'set thy trunk'.
- Sensory imagery such as 'shattering' creates a focus on the senses.
- Assonance, such as 'I do not think of thee – I am too near thee', is used to create euphony and a sense of longing.



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English Literature

Sonnet 29 (Elizabeth Barrett Browning)



Connections and Contrasts (AO3).

This is not an exhaustive list and other comparisons may be valid.

- **'The Schoolboy' by William Blake:** Both poems use nature in central images to express strong emotions.
- **'Cousin Kate' by Christina Rossetti:** Both poems use a strong female voice to express longing and desire in a patriarchal society.
- **'I wandered lonely as a cloud' by William Wordsworth:** Both poems explore emotions through nature. They both also talk about solitude. However, Wordsworth finds comfort in solitude, while Barrett Browning wants to be reunited with her love.
- **'Blackberry Picking' by Seamus Heaney:** Both poems celebrate nature's beauty. However, Barrett Browning finds lasting joy and a timelessness in nature and her relationship, while Heaney reflects on nature's fleeting pleasures.
- **'I Shall Return' by Claude McKay:** Both poems use the sonnet form. McKay longs for the solace of nature while Barrett Browning wants to be reunited with her love.
- **'Dusting the Phone' by Jackie Kay:** Both poems detail a love relationship, narrated from a female speaker's point of view. In both cases, the speakers are yearning to be reunited with their love.

10 Key Questions to ask about the poem

1. Who is the speaker in the poem, and what is their emotional state? (AO1)
2. How does Barrett Browning use natural imagery to describe her longing? (AO1)
3. What is the significance of the "vine" and "tree" extended metaphor in the poem? (AO2)
4. How does the poet convey longing and desire in the poem? (AO1)
5. How does the poem develop into a more physical yearning of love? (AO1)
6. How does the use of sonnet form contribute to the meaning of the poem? (AO2)
7. Do you think the poem depicts a strong female speaker? Justify your answer. (AO1/AO2)
8. How does the poet use sensory language in the poem? (AO2)
9. Why does Barrett Browning use a strong exclamatory tone? (AO2)
10. How might the poem subvert Victorian ideals? (AO3)

Key Questions to Ask (10 Key Questions)

1. Who is the speaker in the poem, and what is their emotional state?
2. How does Barrett Browning use nature imagery to describe her longing?
3. What is the significance of the "vine" and "tree" extended metaphor in the poem?
4. How does the poet convey longing and desire in the poem?
5. How does the poem develop into a more physical yearning of love?
6. How does the use of sonnet form contribute to the meaning of the poem?
7. Do you think the poem depicts a strong female speaker? Justify your answer.
8. How does the poet use sensory language in the poem?
9. Why does Barrett Browning use a strong exclamatory tone?
10. How might the poem subvert Victorian ideals?

Links for Further Research

- [Elizabeth Barrett Browning Further info](#)
- [Elizabeth Barrett elopes with Matthew Browning](#)
- [Poetry Foundation - Elizabeth Barrett Browning](#)





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English Literature

'Drummer Hodge' (Thomas Hardy)



The poet – Contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem (AO3)

Thomas Hardy (1840–1928) was born in Higher Brockhampton in rural Dorset to a working-class family. While training as an architect, he began to write poetry, before achieving success as a novelist. His novels were set in the south-west of England he knew so well that included Dorset; he used the old Anglo-Saxon name for this region, Wessex.

Though more famous for novels such as *Far From The Madding Crowd* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Hardy wrote a series of notable poems about the Boer War and World War One, often from the viewpoint of ordinary soldiers, influencing a younger generation of war poets.

Connections and contrast

This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid.

'Drummer Hodge' could be compared and/or contrasted with these poems from the Anthology as they explore similar themes:

- 'The Schoolboy' – nature and childhood
- 'Blackberry-Picking' – nature, childhood and place
- 'I Shall Return' – nature, childhood and place
- 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' – nature and place
- 'Disabled' – war and loss
- 'Kamikaze' – war and isolation
- 'Remains' – war and place

The poem

Content (AO1)

'Drummer Hodge' describes the hasty burial of a drummer boy killed in the Boer war, in a landscape that was utterly alien to him. Hardy reflects on the fact that Hodge will never see England again, but instead will become part of the soil and vegetation of a foreign land on the other side of the world, far from his home.

Context (AO3)

'Drummer Hodge', originally titled 'The Dead Drummer', was published in 1899, during the Second Boer War in what became South Africa. This was a conflict between the Boers, the descendants of Dutch settlers ('Boer' is Dutch for 'farmer') and the British Empire.

Hardy was inspired to write the poem after reading about a local boy who was killed at the start of the war. Drummer boys were sometimes as young as thirteen or fourteen years old. They served in the armed forces, often playing in military bands, but also using their drums for communication on the battlefield. There was a stereotype in Victorian war literature of boys becoming men through war; Hardy, who was anti-war, deliberately challenges this stereotype in the poem.

Form and structure (AO2)

The poem's ABAB rhyme scheme creates a regular rhythm, appropriate for a poem about a drummer boy. The first stanza describes Hodge's present, the second his past and the third his future. Each stanza starts with a pair of lines describing Hodge, followed by a pair describing the landscape in which he is buried and ending with a pair describing the night sky above his grave.

Key quotations (AO1)

- *'They throw in Drummer Hodge, to rest Uncoffined'*
- *'His landmark is a kopje-crest'*
- *'And foreign constellations west Each night above his mound.'*
- *'Young Hodge the drummer never knew'*
- *'Fresh from his Wessex home'*
- *'strange stars'*
- *'Yet portion of that unknown plain Will Hodge forever be'*
- *'His homely Northern breast and brain Grow up some Southern tree'*
- *'strange-eyed constellations'*
- *'His stars eternally.'*



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English Literature

'Drummer Hodge' (Thomas Hardy)



Language and imagery (AO2)

The poem uses word choices that show that the African landscape and the stars above were unfamiliar to Hodge, such as 'unknown', 'strange' and 'foreign'. Hardy amplifies this sense of unfamiliarity by using Afrikaans words like 'kopje' (meaning 'hill'), 'veldt' (meaning 'open grassland') and 'Karoo' (a southern African plain).

Example of analysing a quotation:

Hardy describes Hodge's final resting place as a 'kopje-crest / That breaks the veldt around', using the Afrikaans words 'kopje' and 'veldt' to emphasise how strange the African landscape would have seemed to a young British lad. This is ironic, as he will 'for ever' be a part of this 'unknown plain'.

Links for further research

- [The Thomas Hardy Society Website](#)
- [BBC - Poetry Season - Poets - Thomas Hardy](#)
- [Drummer Hodge](#)

Key questions to ask about 'Drummer Hodge'

1. Who might 'they' be in the first line? (AO1)
2. What do the words 'throw' and 'uncoffined' suggest about how Hodge was buried? (AO2)
3. In Victorian times, the name 'Hodge' was a stereotypical name for an ordinary country boy. Why might Hardy have used this name for the dead drummer? (AO1 / AO3)
4. How do we know that Hodge would have been a teenager? (AO1 / AO3)
5. Why is it significant to Hardy that Hodge came from 'Wessex'? (AO3)
6. What is the effect of Hardy using Afrikaans words such as 'kopje-crest', 'veldt' and 'Karoo'? (AO2 / AO3)
7. Why are the stars above Hodge's grave described as 'foreign', and 'strange'? (AO1 / AO2)
8. What is ironic about Hodge's final resting place? (AO1)
9. What does the adjective 'homely' suggest about Hodge? (AO2)
10. What is the effect of the juxtaposition of Hodge's 'Northern breast and brain' with 'some Southern tree'? (AO2)
11. What structural similarities do the three stanzas share, and what effect might these have? (AO2)
12. How might nature seem more sympathetic than mankind in the poem? (AO1)



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English Literature

'I Shall Return' (Claude McKay)



The poet – context (AO3)

Claude McKay (1889–1948) was born in rural Jamaica. He published his first collection of poetry, *Songs of Jamaica* in 1912 and was awarded a grant enabling him to travel to America. He moved to the district of Harlem in New York City, where he contributed to what became known as the Harlem Renaissance, becoming increasingly involved in campaigning for social justice and racial equality. He travelled extensively in Europe and North Africa and published several novels, including the highly successful *Home to Harlem*.

The poem – context (AO3)

Given the fact that McKay had migrated from rural Jamaica to the USA, *I Shall Return* is at least semi-autobiographical in its depiction of a speaker who longs to return to the natural beauty of their homeland. However, although McKay travelled extensively, he never did return to Jamaica.

I Shall Return was published in the collection *Harlem Shadows* in 1922, which is seen as a key work in the Harlem Renaissance. In the early 20th century, Harlem was a focal point for Black migrants from the South, resulting in an explosion of creativity and development in literature, music, theatre, visual arts, fashion and political thinking in the Black community, which ultimately had a huge impact on American culture.

The poem – content (AO1)

In *I Shall Return*, the speaker vows to return to their homeland, anticipating the joy they would feel at seeing the natural beauty of this place once again, and suggesting they have dreamed about it many times since leaving. They also imagine hearing the music and seeing the dancing and interaction of people in the community to which they once belonged. The poem ends by describing how these sights and sounds of home would bring them comfort after many years of painful separation.

Form and structure (AO2)

I Shall Return is a Shakespearean sonnet, which is appropriate as it is about the speaker's love for their homeland and desire to see it once more. Their longing for home is highlighted by the repetition of the title phrase throughout the poem. The first two quatrains describe the natural beauty of the place, while the third focuses on its people and culture. The closing couplet emphasises the 'pain' the speaker has felt since leaving home, and how a connection to their place of origin can 'ease' this pain.

Connections and contrast

This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid.

'I Shall Return' could be compared and/or contrasted with these poems from the Anthology:

I Wandered Lonely as A Cloud by William Wordsworth

Both poems explore themes of nature, memories and place.

Drummer Hodge by Thomas Hardy

Both poems explore themes of nature, place and identity.

Blackberry-Picking by Seamus Heaney

Both poems explore themes of nature, place and memories.

Sonnet 29 by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Both poems explore themes of nature and love.



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English Literature

'I Shall Return' (Claude McKay)

Key questions to ask about the poem

1. What is the effect of the repetition of 'I shall return' throughout the poem? (AO2)
2. What impression of the speaker's homeland is created in the second line? (AO1)
3. As well as describing the vivid colours of the speaker's homeland, what other connotations do the words 'golden' and 'sapphire' have? (AO2)
4. What is the effect of the personification in 'the streams / That bathe the brown blades of the bending grasses'? (AO2)
5. What impression does the phrase 'my thousand dreams' suggest about the speaker's life since leaving home? (AO1)
6. In the first two quatrains of the sonnet, the speaker concentrates on describing the natural beauty of their homeland. What do they describe in the third quatrain? (AO1)
7. What is the effect of the metaphor 'delicious tunes'? (AO2)
8. What does the adjective 'dim' suggest about the speaker's memories of home? (AO2)
9. What is the impact of the final line of the poem? (AO1)
10. What form is used by McKay for the poem? Why might this be appropriate? (AO2/AO3)
11. How might the subject matter of the poem link to McKay's life? (AO3)
12. *I Shall Return* was published in *Harlem Shadows*, a key text in the Harlem Renaissance. How might the content of the poem link to this artistic and cultural movement? (AO3)

Language and imagery (AO2)

The title phrase is repeated throughout the poem, giving a sense of the speaker's determination to see their homeland again. The repetition of the adjective 'long' in the final line emphasises the length of the painful time spent abroad. The beauty of their homeland's sights and sounds is shown by metaphors such as 'sapphire skies' and 'delicious tunes'.

Example of analysing a quotation

The adjectives 'golden' and 'sapphire' convey the bright colours and beauty of the speaker's homeland; both words also have connotations of preciousness, suggesting how much these memories of home mean to the speaker.

Key quotations (AO1)

1. 'I shall return again'
2. 'I shall return / To laugh and love and watch with wonder-eyes'
3. 'golden noon'
4. 'sapphire skies'
5. 'the streams / That bathe the brown blades of the bending grasses'
6. 'And realise once more my thousand dreams'
7. 'dear delicious tunes / That stir the hidden depths of native life'
8. 'stray melodies of dim remembered runes'
9. 'To ease my mind of long, long years of pain'

Links for further research



[Poetry Foundation biography of McKay and links to poems](#)

[Video on the Harlem Renaissance](#)

[Web page on the Harlem Renaissance](#)

[Harlem Shadows by Claude McKay read by Denise Ray](#)



GCSE

English Literature

'Decomposition' (Zulfikar Ghose)



The poet (AO3)

- The Pakistani-American poet Zulfikar Ghose wrote the poem 'Decomposition' in 1967.
- Ghose was born in 1935 in Punjab, but his parents moved to Bombay (where the poem is set) in 1942. Bombay is now known as Mumbai.
- After the Partition of India in 1947, Ghose moved to England with his parents. The Partition of India was the dividing up of British India into two independent countries – India and Pakistan. This led to large-scale migrations across the countries' borders, as people moved based on religion and beliefs. There were often violent outbreaks, along with widespread homelessness and starvation. It is thought that the poem is set against this background and in this time of Indian history.
- Ghose is also a well-known novelist who lived in Texas, America, until his death in 2022.
- Much of his work explores the themes of poverty, helplessness, death, decay and selfishness.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

The poem is about how the speaker sees a photograph he has taken of an old beggar sleeping on the pavement in Bombay. The beggar is so thin – his limbs 'could be cracks in the stone' – and insects run over his body. It looks as if his body is already decomposing and decaying.

Behind the beggar, a crowd has gathered to watch a 'pavement trickster' performing in the hope of receiving money from them. The crowd does not pay any attention to the starving beggar, as it is not an unusual sight.

The poet calls his picture 'The Man in the Street', but then regrets having taken and named the picture, as he realises he should not exploit or take advantage of a person's suffering for his art. The poet feels ashamed of himself at the end of the poem.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

The poem explores human suffering and questions the ethics of exploiting that suffering for artistic reasons. It raises the question of whether it is right to benefit from someone else's pain.

The poem deals with the themes of decay and identity, and encourages the reader to consider the cruelty of a society that remains indifferent to suffering and the marginalisation of some individuals.

It also highlights ideas of loneliness and dehumanisation in its portrayal of the beggar. The poem challenges readers to reflect on how they might behave when confronted with such a sight.

The poet further explores the theme of self-reflection and guilt as he comes to realise his mistake by the end of the poem.

Context of the poem (AO3)

- The poem is set in Bombay – modern-day Mumbai – which is India's largest and most densely populated city. It is the commercial and financial capital of the country.
- Today, it has a population of over 18 million, with the majority living in slums and in poverty.

Structure and form (AO2)

- It is written in free verse, with no regular rhythm which lends itself to the creation of a sombre mood.
- The lack of rhyme and rhythm emphasises the serious nature of the poem and the ethical questions it raises.
- It is written in the first person, so we can appreciate the thoughts and feelings of the speaker.
- The poem moves from the past to the present, as it is suggested that the poet has taken the photograph some time ago. At the end of the poem, he reconsiders his actions in the present, feeling guilt and regret for exploiting the man's suffering as a way of furthering his artistic endeavours.

Connections and contrasts (AO3)

- **'Drummer Hodge' by Thomas Hardy:** Both poems are about the dehumanisation of people.
- **'Catrin' by Gillian Clarke:** Both poems explore the idea of identity.
- **'Kamikaze' by Beatrice Garland:** Both poems focus on the themes of identity, isolation and the marginalisation of individuals.
- **'War Photographer' by Carol Ann Duffy:** Both poems focus on the themes of society's indifference and ignorance, as well as desensitisation.
- **'Remains' by Simon Armitage:** Both poems consider ideas about guilt and regret. They also both deal with the themes of dehumanisation and lack of power.
- **'Origin Story' by Eve L Ewing:** Both poems focus on ideas of identity and isolation.



GCSE

English Literature

'Decomposition' (Zulfikar Ghose)



Key questions to ask about the poem

1. Why do you think the photographer wanted to take a picture of the sleeping beggar? (AO1)
2. Why do you think the title 'Decomposition' was used? (AO1)
3. What is the effect of the simile 'his shadow thrown aside like a blanket'? (AO2)
4. What does the line 'His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone' mean? (AO1)
5. What is the effect of the metaphor 'a fossil man'? (AO2)
6. Why do you think the crowd is 'indifferent to this very common sight' of the sleeping beggar? (AO1/AO3)
7. What is the effect of the adverb 'glibly' in the line 'glibly called it 'The Man in the Street''? (AO2)
8. Why have the poet's feelings changed at the end of the poem? (AO1)
9. Do you think the poet was right to take the photograph? Explain your answer. (AO3)
10. What do you think is the main message of the poem? (AO1)

Key quotations (AO1)

1. 'I have a picture I took in Bombay'
2. 'a beggar asleep on the pavement'
3. 'his shadow thrown aside like a blanket'
4. 'His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone'
5. 'routes for the ants' journeys, the flies' descents'
6. 'he lies veined into stone, a fossil man'
7. 'quite / indifferent to this very common sight'
8. 'and glibly called it 'The Man in the Street''
9. 'chides me now for my / presumption'
10. 'at attempting to compose / art of his hunger and solitude'



Language and imagery (AO2)

- The poet uses a contrast in the line a 'beggar asleep on the pavement'. The adjective 'asleep' suggests he is in a vulnerable and defenceless position because of his poverty. The idea of sleep usually implies comfort and peacefulness, but this is sharply juxtaposed with the image of the hard, uncomfortable 'pavement'.
- The imagery of being 'Brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion' suggests how the oppressive nature of the heat has forced the beggar to accept his situation and despair. The assonance in the line also adds to the feeling of lethargy and tiredness.
- The juxtaposition of the crowd being 'bemused by a pavement trickster' but 'indifferent' to the beggar stresses how unfeeling society can be to those who are marginalised. It emphasises the shallowness of a society more concerned with fleeting entertainment than with true human suffering.
- The photograph's title 'The Man in the Street' is ambiguous, as it could have more than one meaning. It could refer literally to the sleeping beggar, but it could also act as a metaphor for all those people who are displaced or marginalised in society. The noun 'Man' could have a universal relevance.

Links for further research

- You might want to read another poem to help with your understanding of some of the themes in 'Decomposition', such as ['Living Space' by Imtiaz Dharker](#) – which deals with physical poverty in the Mumbai slums through poorly constructed housing.
- [A YouTube interview with Zulfikar Ghose](#)





GCSE

English Literature

Catrin (Gillian Clarke)



The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- Gillian Clarke is a Welsh poet born in Cardiff in 1937 and now lives in West Wales.
- She is known as a poet, playwright, broadcaster and lecturer.
- She was appointed as the National Poet for Wales from 2008–2016.
- She is considered to be one of the most respected and influential writers in Wales.
- Many of her poems are based in Wales.
- Her poems cover topics such as industrialisation and nature.
- However, her poems also deal with more personal issues such as the complexity of womanhood and relationships, childhood and the fragility of life.

Structure and form (AO2)

- It is an autobiographical poem written in the first person.
- Stanza one describes labour and childbirth.
- Stanza two is shorter and deals with the present and another confrontation between the mother and the daughter who is pushing the boundaries of her mother's authority.
- The poem is written free-verse in order to make the emotions sound authentic and almost conversational.
- The irregular rhyme scheme might stress the emotional complexity of the relationship and how unpredictable relationships can be.

Language and imagery (AO2)

- The metaphor 'red rope of love' suggests the poet considers the labour of childbirth to be a battle – like a tug of war contest.
- The adjective 'red' has connotations of blood and pain but also love, reflecting the complexities of their relationship and the constant struggle of motherhood.
- The use of direct address 'I can remember you, child,' creates a sense of nostalgia.
- The oxymoron of 'wild, tender cries' indicates the complex feelings during childbirth.
- The repetition of the plural personal pronoun 'we want, we shouted' implies the unity and connection between mother and daughter at this point.
- Enjambment is used to suggest the on-going emotions she feels during labour.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

- The poem is about the birth of her daughter, *Catrin*.
- The poet describes how she remembers the birth of her daughter and the struggles of labour as they both strove to break free of each other.
- The first stanza describes the poet's experience in the labour room as she gazes out of the window and notices people going about their everyday routines.
- She describes the labour as being painful and a struggle.
- The second stanza is set when *Catrin* is growing up and shows the teenage confrontations and rebellions as she pushes the boundaries set by her mother.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

- The poet writes about the transformative effect motherhood can have and the complex bond she shares with her daughter.
- It shows the changing relationship between mothers and daughters.
- Even when the daughter is older and rebelling against the restrictions she has imposed, the poet still struggles to let go of her growing daughter because of her intense attachment.

Context of the poem (AO3)

- *Catrin* was written in 1978.
- It is an autobiographical account of the birth of her daughter, *Catrin*, and their relationship as the daughter grows up.
- It is quite a feminist poem as Clarke wanted to show women voicing their experiences – a move away from the way women were once presented as just homemakers.



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English Literature

Catrin (Gillian Clarke)



Key Quotations (AO1)

- 'I can remember you, child'
- 'Our first/Fierce confrontation'
- 'The tight/Red rope of love'
- 'I wrote/All over the walls with my/ Words'
- 'Tender circles/Of our struggle to become/ Separate'
- 'To be two, to be ourselves'
- 'Neither won nor lost the struggle'
- 'In the glass tank clouded with feelings/Which changed us both'
- 'And your rosy/Defiant glare'
- 'That old rope/Tightening about my life'
- 'Trailing love and conflict'

Key Questions to ask (10 Key Questions)

1. Who do you think the poem is addressed to and why? (AO1)
2. What is the emotional state of the poet in stanza one? (AO1)
3. Why do you think the poem is written in the first person and what effect is created? (AO2)
4. What is the effect of the enjambment in stanza one? (AO2)
5. What do you think the 'red rope of love' is? (AO1)
6. How does the use of free-verse contribute to the meaning of the poem? (AO2)
7. What is the effect of the image 'wild tender circles'? (AO2)
8. Why has the poet organised the poem into two stanzas? (AO2)
9. What tone is created by 'your rosy defiant glare'? (AO2)
10. What do you think the poem tells us about motherhood? (AO3)

Connections and Contrasts (AO3).

'Cousin Kate' by Christina Rossetti:

Both poems deal with the themes of motherhood, love, family relationships and conflict

'Sonnet 29' by Elizabeth Barrett-Browning:

Both poems deal with types of love and relationships

'Kamikaze' by Beatrice Garland:

Both poems are about love, family relationships and conflict

'Dusting the Phone' by Jackie Kay:

Both poems look at love and relationships.

'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' By William Wordsworth:

Both poems are about memories

'Decomposition' by Zulfikar Ghose:

Both poems are about identity

'Blackberry Picking' by Seamus Heaney:

Both poems are about the passing of time, growing up and memories

'Remains' by Simon Armitage:

Both poems are about memories and conflict

'Origin Story' by Eve L Ewing:

Both poems are about the theme of identity

Links for Further Research

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGh-yMWpDMg>
- <https://www.gillianclarke.co.uk/gc2017/catrin/>





GCSE

English Literature

'Blackberry-Picking' (Seamus Heaney)



The poet – contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem (AO3)

- Seamus Heaney (1939–2013) was born at his parents' farmhouse, Mossbawn, in County Derry, Northern Ireland, the eldest of nine children.
- His rural upbringing informed much of his early poetry, including 'Blackberry-Picking'.
- As well as being a prolific poet, Heaney also became known as a playwright and translator; his version of the Anglo-Saxon poem 'Beowulf' was particularly successful.
- In 1995, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Connections and contrasts (AO3)

This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid.

'Blackberry-Picking' could be compared and/or contrasted with these poems from the Anthology:

- 'The Schoolboy' by William Blake
Both poems explore themes of childhood, nature and memory.
- 'Drummer Hodge' by Thomas Hardy
Both poems explore themes of childhood, nature and place.
- 'Catrin' by Gillian Clarke
Both poems explore themes of childhood and memory.
- 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud' by William Wordsworth
Both poems explore themes of nature, memory and place.

The poem

Content (AO1)

The speaker looks back to childhood, describing how, in late August, when blackberries began to ripen, the taste of the first mature berries gave them the urge to pick more. They recall how they filled any containers they could find, even picking unripe berries, leaving their hands scratched and stained with blackberry juice. They stored their haul in an old bathtub in a cattle shed, but soon the berries began to rot and turn sour. The speaker felt like crying at the unfairness of this and reveals that they did this year after year, hoping the berries would keep their sweetness despite knowing that they wouldn't.

Context (AO3)

'Blackberry-Picking' was included in Heaney's first poetry collection, *Death of a Naturalist*, in 1966. Despite being a late-20th-century writer, Heaney was a traditionalist, and his poetry tends to hark back to the past. In an increasingly urbanised society, much of his early poetry explored rural life and nature. As an Irish Catholic born into a Protestant-run part of the United Kingdom, he was particularly interested in exploring Irish culture. For much of Heaney's life as a writer, Northern Ireland was divided by the violent political conflict known as the Troubles.

Structure and form (AO2)

The two stanzas reflect the contrasting experience the speaker has with picking blackberries: the first describes the speaker's enthusiasm for tasting and picking the blackberries, while the second shows their feelings changing to disgust and disappointment as the berries decay.



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English Literature

'Blackberry-Picking' (Seamus Heaney)

Language and imagery (AO2)

- Heaney employs sensory language to convey the experience of picking blackberries vividly.
- Similes are used to show the pleasure of tasting the blackberries – 'sweet / Like thickened wine' – but also suggest feelings of guilt: 'our palms sticky as Bluebeard's'.

Example of analysing a quotation:

Heaney's description of how the blackberries 'burned / Like a plate of eyes' is a striking simile, as it not only suggests the berries' visual resemblance to eyeballs but also implies the speaker's feelings of guilt for picking so many, as if the eyes are watching and judging him.

Key quotations (AO1)

- 'Late August, given heavy rain and sun
For a full week, the blackberries would ripen'
- 'a glossy purple clot'
- 'its flesh was sweet / Like thickened wine'
- 'summer's blood was in it'
- 'that hunger / Sent us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots'
- 'big dark blobs burned / Like a plate of eyes'
- 'our palms sticky as Bluebeard's'
- 'we found a fur, / A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache'
- 'the sweet flesh would turn sour'
- 'I always felt like crying'
- 'Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not'

“ ”

Key questions to ask about 'Blackberry-Picking'

1. How does Heaney use the first two lines to set up the rest of the poem? (AO1)
2. How does the setting of the poem link to its context? (AO3)
3. Why might Heaney have used the second person in the line 'You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet'? (AO2)
4. What effect does eating the first ripe blackberry have on the speaker? (AO1)
5. Who might Heaney be referring to when he uses the first-person plural, 'we' and 'us'? (AO1/AO3)
6. What is the effect of the personification 'that hunger / Sent us out'? (AO2)
7. What evidence is there that the speaker and the other blackberry pickers are picking unripe blackberries? (AO1)
8. What does Heaney mean when he describes the speaker's hands as 'sticky as Bluebeard's'? (AO1/AO3)
9. What are the connotations of the words 'hoarded' and 'cache' used to describe the collection of blackberries? (AO2)
10. How does Heaney show the speaker's disgust at the decaying blackberries? (AO1/AO2)
11. What do the words 'always' and 'each year' tell us about the speaker's experience with blackberry picking? (AO1/AO2)
12. What is the effect of the juxtaposition of the verbs 'hoped' and 'knew' in the final line? (AO2)

Links for further research

- [Poetry Foundation biography of Heaney and links to his poems](#)
- [RTÉ tribute to Heaney after his death](#)
- ['Blackberry-Picking' analysis video](#)
- [Podcast episode on 'Blackberry-Picking'](#)





GCSE

English Literature

Kamikaze (Beatrice Garland)



The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- Beatrice Garland is an English poet born in Surrey in 1938.
- She won the National Poetry Prize in 2001.
- The poem was written in 2013 and is part of the poetry collection 'The Invention of Fireworks'.
- In her poetry, Garland often explores the themes of life and death in the natural world.
- Beatrice Garland has said: "I spend a lot of the day listening to other people's worlds". In this poem she tells a story, told by someone else about an event and culture that is outside her own experience as a teacher and clinician.

Structure and form (AO2)

- *Kamikaze* is a narrative poem mostly told in the third person through the reported speech of the pilot's daughter.
- Stanzas 1 to 5 are narrative stanzas about the father's journey and are written in the third person.
- Stanza 6, where sentence 2 begins, shifts in time and focus and is told directly from the point of view of the pilot's daughter – speaking in her own words.
- The final two stanzas are about the aftermath of the pilot's decision to return home. It reverts back to the third person.
- There is no set rhythm or rhyme.
- There are only three sentences in the poem with each one marking a significant moment in the action and time.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

The poem is about a kamikaze pilot failing to complete a suicide bombing mission during WW2.

When flying, the pilot looks out of his plane and remembers the beauty and power of nature. This sight helps him make the decision to return home.

On his return, he is shunned and rejected by his family and society. They believe his actions are cowardly and shameful because he has broken the Japanese code of honour, bravery and patriotism.

At the end, the pilot wonders if it would have been better to commit suicide by carrying out his kamikaze mission.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

The poem explores the power of honour, shame and family relationships. It deals with the ideas of external and internal conflict. External conflict focuses on the physical conflict of WW2 whereas the internal conflict deals with the thought process of the pilot as he debates whether or not to abort the mission and return home.

Context of the poem (AO3)

Kamikazes were Japanese fighter pilots who were expected to complete suicide bombing missions in WW2 (1939–1945).

It was considered to be an honourable and patriotic way to die and over 3,000 kamikaze pilots died doing this in WW2.

Kamikaze pilots were responsible for the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941 where the USA suffered one of its heaviest losses.

Section 3 (connections and contrasts) (AO3)

- **Sonnet 29 by Elizabeth Barratt Browning:** Both poems are about love, relationships, resilience and strength.
- **Cousin Kate by Christina Rossetti:** Both poems deal with love and family relationships. They both focus on ideas of shame and honour because of the breaking of society's expectations. Characters in both poems face isolation.
- **Catrin by Gillian Clarke:** Both poems explore themes of love and family relationships. Both deal with different types of conflict and identity. Both poems focus on memories.
- **Dusting the Phone by Jackie Kay:** Both poems deal with different types of relationships.
- **The Schoolboy by William Blake:** Both poems look at the effects of nature.
- **I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud by William Wordsworth:** Both poems focus on the presentation of nature and the power of memories.
- **Drummer Hodge by Thomas Hardy:** Both poems look at the themes of war and death.
- **Disabled by Wilfred Owen:** Both poems consider ideas about war and death. They both consider the notion of sacrifice and patriotism whilst exploring the issues of isolation and identity. Both poems deal with the power and effect of memories.
- **Decomposition by Zlfikar Ghose:** Both poems consider the themes of identity and isolation.
- **War Photographer by Carol Ann Duffy:** Both poems consider ideas about war, death and trauma. Both deal with themes of identity and the attitudes of society.



GCSE

English Literature

Kamikaze (Beatrice Garland)



Section 2c: Key quotations (AO1)

1. 'Her father embarked at sunrise'
2. 'a shaven head/full of powerful incantations'
3. 'a one-way/journey into history'
4. 'little fishing boats/strung out like bunting'
5. 'the dark shoals of fishes/flashing silver'
6. 'a tuna, the dark prince, muscular, dangerous'
7. 'my mother never spoke again/in his presence'
8. 'they treated him/as though he no longer existed'
9. 'til gradually we too learned/to be silent'
10. 'he must have wondered/which had been the better way to die'

Section 2a: Language and imagery (AO2)

- The reference to 'sunrise' is directly linking the events to the pilot's culture as Japan is referred to as Land of the Rising Sun.
- The metaphor 'journey into history' implies the pilot is part of an important historical event but he is also literally going to be history himself by dying.
- The simile 'little fishing boats/strung out like bunting' implies how lively and tempting the life he has left behind seems in contrast with his deathly mission.
- The peaceful image of the 'dark shoals of fishes' in the sea contrasts with the violence and danger of the war in the skies.
- The 'fishes/flashing silver' could refer to the planes and be a metaphor for glory and honour.
- The parenthesis and aside in '- yes, grandfather's boat - ' suggests how the daughter is speaking to her children which makes the event seem more personal.
- The alliteration and sibilance of 'safe/to the shore, salt-sodden, awash' could be reflecting the movement and sound of the waves.
- The metaphor, 'once/a tuna, the dark prince, muscular dangerous' suggests the power of nature and perhaps its ability to transform.
- The adjectives 'dark' and 'dangerous' also have connotations of something mysterious and sinister. The word 'prince' suggests the natural superiority of the tuna and the system of hierarchy within the sea.
- The onomatopoeic 'chattered and laughed' contrasts with the silence that the kamikaze pilot must now endure.

Section 1–10: Key questions to ask about the poem

1. There is more than one speaker in the poem. Who are the different speakers and what is the effect of this? (AO1)
2. Why does Garland use 'Kamikaze' as the title? (AO1)
3. What is the significance of the 'samurai sword' and 'powerful incantations' in the poem? (AO2)
4. What is the significance of the 'cairns of pearl grey pebbles'? How do you think the 'cairns' affect the pilot? (AO1)
5. What is the effect of the listing in stanza 5 of the poem? (AO2)
6. Why do you think the poet has included the infinity symbol, the 'figure of eight' in stanza 3? (AO2)
7. Do you think the reaction of the pilot's wife is fair? Justify your answer. (AO1/AO2)
8. The pilot is referred to as 'Her father' or 'he' but never by name. Why do you think this is and what is the effect? (AO2)
9. What is the effect of the last two lines? (AO2)
10. How might the poem reflect attitudes of Japanese society at the time? (AO3)

Section 2 links for further research

- [A newspaper article about kamikaze pilots](#)
- [Mr Bruff meets Beatrice Garland to talk about 'Kamikaze'](#)
- [The story of a kamikaze pilot – BBC news](#)





GCSE

English Literature

'War Photographer' (Carol Ann Duffy)

The poet – Contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem (AO3)

- Carol Ann Duffy was born in Glasgow in 1955. She is of Scottish and Irish descent and moved to England as a child.
- She is considered one of the most important and widely read poets in Britain today.
- Duffy had been inspired to write the poem as a result of her friendships with the war photographers Don McCullin and Phillip Jones Griffiths (who photographed the Vietnam war).
- She was interested in how war photographers had to record horrifying events without being able to help the people involved.

Connections and contrasts (AO3)

This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid. 'War Photographer' could be compared and/or contrasted with these poems from the Anthology:

- 'Drummer Hodge' by Thomas Hardy
Both poems are about war and death and the dehumanisation of the victims.
- 'Disabled' by Wilfred Owen
Both poems deal with aspects of war, conflict and memories.
- 'Decomposition' by Zulfikar Ghose
Both poems explore ideas about identity and dehumanisation.
- 'Kamikaze' by Beatrice Garland
Both poems consider ideas about war, conflict and the expectations of society to do a job. Ideas about guilt, trauma and memories are also covered in both poems.
- 'Remains' by Simon Armitage
Both poems focus on war, conflicting feelings, trauma, guilt, memories and desensitisation.
- 'Catrin' by Gillian Clarke
Both poems deal with different types of conflict.

The poem

Content (AO1)

Stanza 1 describes the photographer developing his photographs in his dark room as he remembers the different locations he has visited to photograph wars. Stanza 2 shows the contrast between 'rural England' and normal life with the atrocities he has seen. In stanza 3, as the picture develops and features begin to form, he remembers the suffering of the man in the picture. Stanza 4 describes how readers will only respond to pictures of suffering for a split second before returning to their daily lives.

The poem is really about the horrors of war and how people often become desensitised by what they see in newspapers or on television. The poem also shows the true horror of war and the suffering of innocent victims. It deals with the trauma of those who see such suffering and are unable to help.

Context (AO3)

The poem was published in 1985 in the collection of poems titled *Standing Female Nude*. War photographers are civilians, not soldiers, who risk their lives to take photographs of armed conflicts and their consequences, so people at home can be made aware of these situations. War photographers have often been injured and sometimes killed while doing their job.

The poem refers to real-life conflicts. 'Belfast' refers to the Northern Ireland Troubles towards the end of the 20th century. 'Beirut' is a reference to The Siege of Beirut, which was caused by a breakdown of ceasefire in the Lebanon War in 1982. 'Phnom Penh' is the capital of Cambodia, where a genocide occurred between 1975 and 1979, which killed almost 3 million Cambodians.

Structure and form (AO2)

The poem is written in third person to reflect the detachment a war photographer must feel when doing the job. There are four stanzas with six lines each, suggesting regularity and the routine nature of his job. Each stanza has a similar and consistent rhyme scheme (ABBCDD), which again creates a feeling of structure and routine to his work. Each stanza focuses on a different aspect of the war photographer's job. The strict, controlled structure contrasts the chaos, confusion and lack of structure in war.



GCSE

English Literature

'War Photographer' (Carol Ann Duffy)



Language and imagery (AO2)

The 'dark room' could have both a literal and metaphorical meaning. He is literally developing his photographs in a darkened room, without any light. However, the 'dark room' could also be a metaphor for his heart, which is 'dark' because of the brutality, suffering and death that he has witnessed. It suggests the trauma he experiences.

Duffy uses religious imagery comparing the photographer developing his photographs to a priest delivering a sermon. Words like 'ordered rows', 'Mass' and 'church' add to this semantic field of religion. The imagery is appropriate as a war photographer and a priest witness death, pain and suffering regularly and have to respond sensitively to what they see.

The plosive alliteration of the harsh 'B' sound is used in 'Belfast. Beirut' suggests the pain and brutality of war.

The pronouns 'he' and 'his' are used to refer to the war photographer, instead of him being identified by an actual name. This creates a distancing effect and suggests how he has to feel a detachment from his work and the photographs he takes.

Key quotations (AO1)

- 'In his dark room he is finally alone'
- 'spools of suffering set out in ordered rows'
- 'as though this were a church and he / a priest'
- 'He has a job to do.'
- 'the feet / of running children in a nightmare heat'
- 'He remembers the cries /of this man's wife'
- 'A hundred agonies in black and white / from which his editor will pick five or six'
- 'The reader's eyeballs prick / with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers'
- 'he stares impassively at where / he earns his living'
- 'and they do not care'

Key questions to ask about 'War Photographer'

1. Why does Duffy use the title 'War Photographer'? (AO1)
2. What are the two possible meanings of 'his dark room'? (AO1)
3. What is the significance of the 'priest' and 'Mass' metaphor in stanza 1? (AO2)
4. Why does Duffy list the locations using full stops in the line 'Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh.'? (AO2)
5. How does Duffy contrast what the photographer witnesses through his job with his normal life at home in stanza 2? (AO1)
6. What are the possible meanings of a 'nightmare heat'? (AO2)
7. Do you think the poem depicts the profession of a war photographer as an exciting one? Justify your answer. (AO1/AO2)
8. What do the words 'prick with tears' suggest about the attitude of the general public? (AO2)
9. What does the adverb 'impassively' suggest about the feelings of the war photographer? (AO1/AO2)
10. Has this poem changed the way you think about news reports and photographs from current conflict zones? (AO3)

Links for further research

[Interview with Nick Ut, a war photographer in the Vietnam war](#)



GCSE

English Literature

Dusting the Phone (Jackie Kay)



The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- **Jackie Kay** (b. 1961) is a contemporary Scottish poet, playwright, and novelist.
- Kay's work often explores themes of identity, relationships, love, and longing.
- She identifies as a lesbian, and her work frequently draws on her experiences of love and heartbreak.
- '*Dusting the Phone*' reflects Kay's ability to capture the nuances of human emotions in everyday situations, particularly the tension between hope and despair in love.

The poem (structure and form) (AO2)

Structure:

- The poem is written in free verse, reflecting the chaotic, unstructured nature of the speaker's thoughts.
- Short, fragmented lines mimic the speaker's anxiety and the disjointed nature of waiting.
- The free verse enhances the flow of the speaker's obsessive thoughts.

Form:

- Modern lyrical poem: Expresses the speaker's intimate emotional state.
- Conversational tone makes the emotions seem personal and relatable.
- Repetition mirrors the cyclical nature of obsessive thinking.

The poem (content and context) (AO1, AO3)

What is the poem about?

The speaker describes the anxiety and emotional turmoil of waiting for a phone call from a lover. The act of dusting the phone becomes symbolic of their obsessive longing, frustration, and the desire for connection. The speaker's fixation on the phone symbolises their emotional vulnerability and unfulfilled desires.

Deeper meaning:

The poem examines the complexities of unrequited love and the self-doubt it creates. It explores themes of emotional longing, dependency, and the way modern technology intensifies feelings of connection and disconnection. Kay describes how love can be both consuming and isolating.

Context of the poem:

Kay explores modern relationships and the way contemporary forms of communication, like phones, reflect emotional experiences.

The universal themes of love and obsession are depicted in a modern context, highlighting complex and fragile human emotions.

Language (AO2)

- The metaphor of 'dusting the phone' reflects the speaker's obsessive anticipation and frustration. The act also highlights the futile and repetitive nature of their waiting.
- The personification of the phone as something that has 'trapped' the speaker suggests the phone has control over their mental state.
- The list of metaphors describing the future as 'a long gloved hand. An empty cup. A marriage. A full house.' convey the uncertainty, possibilities, or emptiness of the future.
- The phone is a symbol of bad news or danger. 'The phone rings heralding some disaster. Sirens.' The metaphorical sirens signal alarm, a warning or an emergency.
- Rhetorical questions 'Who would ring me to tell?' and 'Or else. What?' reveal the speaker's self-doubt and desperation.



GCSE

English Literature

Dusting the Phone (Jackie Kay)



Key questions to ask (10 key questions)

1. What is the effect of the verb 'heralding' in the phrase 'The phone rings heralding some disaster'? (AO2)
2. What is the effect of the repetition of 'Sirens'? (AO2)
3. What is the effect of the short sentence 'Nobody knows'? (AO2)
4. What is the effect of the verb 'assault' in the line 'I assault the postman for a letter'? (AO2)
5. What is the effect of each of the metaphors listed to describe the future as 'a long gloved hand.', 'An 'empty cup.', 'A marriage.', 'A full house.'? (AO2)
6. What is the effect of 'I am waiting on the phone. Silver service'? (AO2)
7. What is the effect of the personification of the phone which 'sends me hoaxes'? (AO2)
8. What is the effect of the personification of 'my lonely cotton sheets'? (AO2)
9. What is the effect of the two short sentences in the final stanza 'I want you. All the time.'? (AO2)
10. What is the effect of the line 'Come on, damn you, ring me.'? (AO2)

Links for further research:

- [In My Own Words – a programme about Jackie Kay](#)
- [Jackie Kay - Background - BBC Bitesize](#)
- [Jackie Kay - Scottish Women Poets](#)
- [Read An Interview with Jackie Kay \(2024\) from writers make worlds](#)
- [Read about Jackie Kay according to the Scottish Poetry Library](#)

Connections and contrasts (AO3)

*This list is not exhaustive and other comparisons are valid.

- ***The Schoolboy* by William Blake:** Both poems explore emotional experiences but in contrasting ways. While Blake laments the loss of joy due to structured routines, Kay examines the mental anguish caused by unfulfilled longing.
- ***Cousin Kate* by Christina Rossetti:** Both reflect on relationships and the power in those relationships—Rossetti's focus is on painful regret, whereas Kay's is on the obsessive torment of waiting.
- ***Sonnet 29* by Elizabeth Barrett Browning:** Both explore love and emotional longing. Browning finds joy in her love's presence, while Kay expresses anguish in its absence.
- ***Decomposition* by Zulfikar Ghose:** Both poems explore ideas about power and powerlessness.
- ***Kamikaze* by Beatrice Garland:** Memory plays a central role in both poems. Garland's is bittersweet and tied to loss, whereas Kay's memory is tied to longing and dissatisfaction.
- ***Disabled* by Wilfred Owen:** Both reflect on conflicts. Owen's poem is filled with regret and loss arising from the external and internal conflict, while Kay's poem explores the conflict of being in love and the conflict of longing.
- ***I Shall Return* by Claude McKay:** Both long for emotional peace. McKay dreams of healing through nature, while Kay finds herself trapped in obsessive waiting.



GCSE

English Literature

Remains (Simon Armitage)



The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- Simon Armitage is an English poet, born in 1963.
- He became Poet Laureate in 2019 and took over the position from Carol Ann Duffy.
- Armitage wrote the poetry collection *The Not Dead* to make people aware of the moral dilemma ordinary soldiers faced as part of their day-to-day life when on duty.
- He helped to raise the public's awareness and appreciation of PTSD and the last effects of war on the servicemen and women.

Structure and form (AO2)

- The poem is a dramatic monologue from the point of view of a soldier on active duty. He is telling his experiences directly to the reader.
- The poem begins *in media res* and plunges the reader immediately into the action.
- There are 7 stanzas of 4 lines and a final stanza of 2 lines to perhaps suggest the continuous suffering of the soldier.
- The lack of rhyme and rhythm emphasise the seriousness of the situation and the soldier's suffering.
- The poem moves from a feeling of collective responsibility in the first half to the narrator's individual feeling of guilt in the second half.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

The poem tells the story of a group of British soldiers on a routine patrol in Iraq. They spot a man who could possibly be an armed looter, and the three soldiers open fire, killing him. The man dies painfully, and his body is carelessly thrown into the back of a lorry and taken away without respect.

The poem is narrated by Guardsman Tromans, one of the soldiers involved. He is deeply affected by what happened and feels overwhelmed with guilt and regret. Even after returning home, he can't forget what he did. The memory haunts him, and he relives the moment again and again. In an attempt to cope, he returns to alcohol and drugs, but nothing helps — he remains tormented by his actions.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

The poem is about war and death, but it also deals with the repercussions and consequences of conflict and the psychological and damaging effects it can have on those involved.

The poem also describes the long-lasting effects of trauma and guilt and makes the reader understand that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is not a condition that is easily treated. The poem also exposes the reader to consider the moral ambiguity of warfare.

Context of the poem (AO3)

Simon Armitage was involved with a documentary on Channel 4 (*The Not Dead*) exploring how soldiers were affected by war, even after returning home. He wanted to increase awareness of PTSD and create sympathy and understanding for soldiers suffering from such trauma.

Armitage wrote a collection of poems (also called *The Not Dead*), one of which is *Remains*.

The poem is based on the experiences of Guardsman Tromans, who was a soldier in Iraq in 2003 and who consequently suffered from PTSD.

Connections and contrasts (AO3)

- ***Drummer Hodge* by Thomas Hardy:** Both poems are about death and the dehumanisation of people in war and conflict.
- ***Disabled* by Wilfred Owen:** Both poems deal with death and the idea of loss and sacrifice in war. The theme of memories and flashbacks are used in both poems.
- ***Decomposition* by Zulfikar Ghose:** Both poems explore ideas about lack of identity and desensitisation.
- ***Catrin* by Gillian Clarke:** Both poems look at different types of conflict.
- ***Kamikaze* by Beatrice Garland:** Both poems focus on the themes of war, death and duty. Both poems deal with the effects of memories.
- ***War Photographer* by Carol Ann Duffy:** Both poems focus on the themes of the brutality of war, desensitisation, trauma and memories.



GCSE

English Literature

'Remains' by Simon Armitage

Key quotations (AO1)

1. "we got sent out/to tackle looters raiding a bank."
2. "probably armed, possibly not."
3. "Well myself and somebody else and somebody else"
4. "I see every round as it rips through his life"
5. "and he's there on the ground, sort of inside out"
6. "and tosses his guts back into his body"
7. "End of story, except not really."
8. "His blood-shadow stays on the street"
9. "But I blink/and he bursts again through the doors of the bank"
10. "And the drink and the drugs won't flush him out"
11. "he's here in my head when I close my eyes"
12. "his bloody life in my bloody hands."

“ ”

10 key questions to ask about the poem

1. Who is the speaker in the poem, and what is their emotional state? (AO1)
2. Why does Armitage include colloquial language? (AO1)
3. Why do you think the first half of the poem uses the plural pronoun 'we' but the second half uses the singular pronoun 'I'? (AO2)
4. What does the line 'I see broad daylight on the other side' suggest? (AO1)
5. What is the effect of the line 'tosses his guts back into his body'? (AO2)
6. What is the effect of the enjambment in the poem? (AO2)
7. Why is the line 'probably armed, possibly not' repeated? Justify your answer. (AO1/AO2)
8. What is the effect of the image 'the drink and drugs won't flush him out'? (AO2)
9. What does the line 'his bloody life in my bloody hands' mean? Could there be more than one possible meaning? (AO2)
10. Does the poem present being a soldier in a positive or negative war? Give reasons for your opinion. (AO3)

Language and imagery (AO2)

- Armitage uses colloquial phrases such as 'legs it', 'Well', 'So we've hit', 'tosses his guts' to create an informal tone as if we are part of a direct conversation with the narrator. The colloquial language also reflects the tough, no-nonsense approach of army life.
- The uncertainty and ambiguity in the repeated line 'probably armed possibly not' suggests there is a chance that the man was innocent. However, by placing 'probably' first, it suggests to the reader that this is what the soldier is desperate to believe – otherwise he has killed an innocent man.
- The verb 'tosses' implies a careless, casual action which shows a total lack of respect for the victim. Armitage is suggesting how soldiers can become desensitised to death and have to distance themselves from it in order to cope. The word also suggests how the victim is dehumanized and treated as if he is worthless.
- The 'blood-stained shadow' suggests how the soldier's conscience will always be marked or 'stained' by the memory, in the same way that a stain can be difficult to remove from the ground. It is impossible to detach yourself from your shadow and in the same way, the soldier will never be able to detach himself from what he has done.
- The last line has both a literal and metaphorical meaning. Armitage writes 'his bloody life in my bloody hands' to suggest the literal blood from the victim's body. The word 'bloody' could also suggest a swear-word or curse which could reflect the soldier's suffering and regret. The line also has overtones of Lady Macbeth's actions in Shakespeare's play, where she is desperately trying to rub an imaginary spot of blood off her hands. In both cases, the blood is used as a metaphor for the guilt which cannot be removed.

Links for further research

[An interview from 'The Not Dead' documentary with Guardsman Tromans](#)

Please note – there is some bad language in this clip and some difficult ideas and themes are discussed including violence and death.

[An interview with Simon Armitage](#)





GCSE

English Literature

Origin Story (Eve L Ewing)

The poet (contextual information about the poet relevant to the poem) (AO3)

- Dr. Eve Louise Ewing is an American writer and academic.
- She was born in Chicago, in 1986, where she still lives and works.
- Ewing is an associate professor at the University of Chicago, where she teaches courses on education and racial inequality.
- She worked as a middle school language arts teacher and continues to engage with young people in literature on a regular basis.
- As well as her poetry and academic writing, Ewing has authored a number of Marvel comic books, including *Exceptional X-Men*, *Black Panther* and *Ironheart*.
- *Origin Story* was part of Ewing's 2017 award-winning poetry collection, *Electric Arches*. This was her debut collection and a hybrid work that encompasses poems, short stories and visual images.
- In *Electric Arches* and other published works, Ewing explores what it means to be a Black woman in today's society.

Connections and contrasts (AO3) (This list is not exhaustive; other connections and comparisons may be valid)

- **The Schoolboy by William Blake:** Both poems express strong emotions of youth through strong imagery.
- **Cousin Kate by Christina Rossetti:** Both poems use a strong female voice to express broken love and children born in relationships that don't last.
- **Remains by Simon Armitage:** Both poems explore specific times and places through a story of the past and how events of the past affect things in the present.
- **Kamikaze by Beatrice Garland:** Both poems reflect on parents and their relationship.
- **Dusting the Phone by Jackie Kay:** Both poems detail a love relationship and explore ways in which relationships can be handled by the participants.

The poem (content and context)

What is the poem about? (AO1)

The poem is about the poet's own *Origin Story* in terms of her parents' relationship. Given Eve L Ewing's personal context and the nature of the collection the poem comes from, it can generally be agreed that the thoughts are autobiographical and the speaker in the poem is the poet herself.

Ewing recounts various aspects of her mother and father's lives as young adults and how they met. She goes on to explore the nature of love and, more specifically, her parents' love, comparing this to a comic book that is enjoyed at the time but thought of as disposable and not meant to last.

Deeper meaning (AO1)

- **Love:** Perhaps the main idea in the poem is that the speaker feels love is something that is easily lost and needs to be carefully considered and preserved if it is to endure. Although specifically referencing her parents' relationship, much of the discussion of love is universal.
- **Youth:** Another theme of the poem centres around notions of being young. She depicts a sense of new-found freedom in her parents, experimenting with ideas and of them living in the moment in a casual way and not worrying or thinking of the future.
- **Memories of the past:** There is a sense of nostalgia in the poem. References to the fashions and details of the past add to the idea of the poem being a conduit for shared memories.
- **Family:** There is a sense of pride in the poet's family history. Ewing implies her own existence by recounting the 'good ending'. There is a pride in who her parents are and the relationship they shared and the lives they led.

Context of the poem (AO3)

The poem was published in 2017 at a time of a growing understanding of the need to celebrate and record the lived experiences of Black people in a way that was not always the case in the past.

Right from their outset, comics were cheaply bought and widely disposed of once they had been read. Even those that weren't thrown away were easily damaged because of the fragile nature of the paper they were printed on. When comics started to become valuable, collectors understood the need to preserve comics so they would last into the future. The poem details several ways this can be done.

Eve L Ewing has written for several Marvel comic book titles. In the comic superhero world, an 'origin story' refers to the backstory of how a superhero gained their powers. This immediately implies a pride in herself and her own talents and 'powers' as a modern Black woman.

Specific contextual references in *Origin Story* include:

- Chaka Khan – a pop star from Chicago, known as the 'Queen of Funk'
- Greyhound – an American bus company
- afro puff – a type of hairstyle worn by some black people
- communist – someone who believes in communism, where everyone shares wealth equally in society.



GCSE

English Literature

Origin Story (Eve L Ewing)

Structure and form (AO2)

- The form of the poem is free verse.
- Two separate stanzas give each section of the poem a different focus.
- Elements of a 'true' story are used – characters, back story, events and ending.
- Punctuation is used unconventionally, with no capital letters used at the starts of sentences. This gives it a modern, casual feel and separates the past events with the present.
- Parallel structure and anaphora are used to connect the parents.
- A recurring motif of comics is used.

Language and imagery (AO2)

- **Vignettes** are used to detail the speaker's mother and father's appearance and activities when they were young. The use of past tense creates a nostalgic feel.
- An **extended simile** compares love to a comic book.
- An **extended metaphor** compares her parents' love as a comic book, treated casually and disposable.
- **Listing** is used to emphasise the intensity and enjoyment they got out of the relationship.
- **First-person perspective** and the **possessive pronoun** 'my' are both used to connect the content with the autobiographical nature of the poem.
- A **declarative tone** is used to assert the poet's belief in the truth and details of events and opinions in the poem.
- **Assonance** and **alliteration** are used to create the feeling of a strong connection between the parents.

10 key questions to ask about the poem

1. Who is the speaker in the poem, and what is their link to the 'story' of the poem? (AO1)
2. What vignettes does Eve L Ewing use to describe her parents in the poem? (AO1)
3. How does the poet convey nostalgia in the poem? (AO1)
4. What is the significance of the key extended simile, 'love is like a comic book'? (AO2)
5. How does the poem develop the idea that her parents did not 'protect' their love? (AO1/AO2)
6. How does the structure contribute to the meaning of the poem? (AO2)
7. Do you think the poem depicts a strong female speaker? Justify your answer. (AO1/AO2)
8. What is the significance of the ending of the poem? (AO2)
9. Why might Ewing have used a strong declarative tone? (AO2)
10. How might the poem reflect the life and times of the poet? (AO3)

Key quotations (AO1)

1. 'This is true.'
2. 'met at the Greyhound bus station in the mid-eighties in Chicago.'
3. 'my mother, all thick glass and afro puff'
4. 'my father, all sleeveless and soft eye'
5. 'my mother bought one.'
6. 'love is like a comic book. it's fragile'
7. 'love is paper.'
8. 'my parents' love...never saw polyvinyl, never felt a backing'
9. 'memorized, mishandled, worn thin'
10. 'a love like that doesn't last but it has a good ending.'

“ ”

Links for further research

- [Find out more about Eve L Ewing on her official website.](#)
- [Read an interview with Eve L Ewing talking about her poetry collection, *Electric Arches*.](#)
- [Listen to Eve L Ewing being interviewed.](#)
- [Read an interview with Eve L Ewing about her background and context.](#)
- [Watch and listen to Eve L Ewing discussing her work and interest in comic books.](#)
- You can follow Eve L Ewing on Instagram: @eve.ewing



Term	Term
alliteration: repetition of the same letter or sound at the start of consecutive words	oxymoron: a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction
anaphora: the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses	pathetic fallacy: to give human feelings and responses to inanimate things, especially the weather
caesura: a pause or break the middle of a line of poetry	personification: to give something non-human or abstract human characteristics and form
contrast: placing ideas or words that are strikingly different close together for effect	repetition: repeating something that has already been written
couplet: a pair of successive lines of verse, typically rhyming and of the same length	rhyme: correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially at the end of lines
end-stopped line: a line in verse which ends with punctuation, to show that phrase has ended	rhythm: the beat or cadence of a poem
enjambment: the continuation of a sentence without a pause beyond the end of a line, couplet, or stanza	sibilance: the repeated use of the “s” sound close together
hyperbole: exaggerated statements or claims said for effect	simile: a direct comparison between two thing using as or like
imagery: visually descriptive or figurative language, such as similes or metaphors	sonnet: a 14 line poem typically on the subject of love
irony: using language that normally signifies the opposite of what it means	stanza: a verse of poetry made up of poetic lines
juxtaposition: two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect	symbolism: using a symbol or object to represent an abstract idea or concept
metaphor: a comparison between two things where one thing is said to be another for effect	synaesthesia: the blending of the different senses in a piece of poetry

Plot

Act 1
The Birling family celebrate their daughter Sheila's engagement. Inspector Goole arrives to investigate the death of a young woman named Eva Smith who has taken her own life. Mr Birling fired Eva Smith from his factory because she wanted higher wages. Sheila Birling used her influence to have Eva Smith sacked from Milward's. The Inspector informs the family Eva Smith changed her name to Daisy Renton. Sheila notices immediately that her fiancé, Gerald Croft, reacts to the name.

Act 2
Gerald admits he had an affair with Eva/Daisy. He offered her a place to stay and gave her money. Sheila breaks off her engagement to Gerald. Mrs Birling eventually admits she used her influence to make sure Eva was refused help from a charity. Mrs Birling blames the father of Eva's unborn child and wants to see him made an example of.

Act 3
Eric Birling is the father of Eva's child. He gave her money stolen from his father's business and offered to marry her, but she refused both. The Inspector's final speech warns people to care for everyone or they will be taught to in a painful way. In a final plot twist the family question whether the Inspector was real. The younger and older generation react differently when reflecting on their actions. Sheila and Eric change and show regret, their parents do not, and events repeat themselves.

Themes

Class	Consequence	Remorse
Prejudice	Family	Responsibility
Capitalism	Injustice	Redemption
Socialism	Supernatural	Hypocrisy

Assessment Objectives

AO1, AO2 are equally weighted for this question

Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:

- use textual references, and quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response.

AO2 Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.

AO3 5 marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence

Characters

Mr. Arthur Birling
The head of a middle-class family and a prosperous business owner. He is selfish, boastful and self-important. He puts profit above people. He aspires to a knighthood. He is unchanged by the events of the evening and believes he has been hoaxed.

Mrs. Sybil Birling
She is a cold, unsympathetic woman who lacks compassion. She supports her husband, believes her actions are completely justified and refuses to help Eva Smith. She is prejudiced towards "women of that class". She is unchanged at the end of the play.

Inspector Goole
The Inspector highlights the importance of social responsibility and community. His role helps structure the play "one line of enquiry at a time". He explores how each character contributed to Eva Smith's death. He warns the characters and the audience of the consequences of their actions.

Sheila Birling
She is initially "very pleased with life and rather excited". She is shocked by the way Eva has been treated. She becomes more independent as the play progresses. She breaks off her engagement to Gerald. She is incredibly sorry for her behaviour.

Gerald Croft
The upper-class son of Lord and Lady Croft. He claims he was kept away from Sheila due to business while he was having an affair with Daisy/Eva. He sides with Mr. and Mrs. Birling at the end of the play in claiming the Inspector was a hoax.

Eric Birling
He is young, drinks heavily and works for the family business. He threatens to "make a row" when he goes home with Eva. He steals money to support pregnant Eva and offers to marry her. He is ashamed of himself and his parents' actions at the end of the play.

Eva Smith/ Daisy Renton
Eva Smith represents ordinary working-class women. She has no one to turn to when unemployed and pregnant. She highlights the need for the Welfare State established after WW2.

Vocabulary

- Act
- Narrative
- Dramatic Irony
- Characterisation
- Hyperbole
- Metaphor
- Stage Directions
- Simile
- Symbolism
- Foreshadowing
- Interrogative Tone
- Exclamatory Tone
- Satire
- Allegory
- Listing
- Naturalistic
- Dialogue
- Genre

Structure and Form

Written in three Acts. Each act ends with on cliff hanger.

The play is cyclical in nature, with the last Act directly linking to the events of the first.

By the end of the play Sheila and Eric have learned important lessons and are ashamed of their previous behaviour. Mr and Mrs Birling believe their actions were right and justified

Context

Priestley served in the army during WW1 1914-1918 and wrote 'An Inspector Calls' in the winter of 1944-1945 as the "world was suffering" at the end of WW2.

The play is set in 1912 and exposes the "rotteness behind the façade" of the families like the Birlings. The play is a social criticism of "middle-class prosperity and apparent respectability".

Priestley exposes the irony of 1912 attitudes. The dramatic irony of Mr. Birling's claims: "there isn't a chance of war" and that the Titanic is "absolutely unsinkable" reflect his ignorance and pre-war complacency. Birling's speech at the beginning of the play also dismisses the idea of community "as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive". The idea that "a man has to make his own way" is interrupted by the Inspector's arrival to counter this message.

The Inspector's final warning would resonate with the audience who had lived through two world wars. Priestley highlights the way Europe moved towards the 'fire and blood and anguish' of the 1914-1918 War because society did not appreciate that "We are members of one body" responsible for each other.

The concept of "Time" inspired this and other works by Priestley. 'An Inspector Calls' allows the characters to examine the consequences of their actions. They are given an opportunity to change and act differently to break this cycle. The final climax of the play shows that lessons have not been learned just as they were not from WW1 and repeated in WW2.

Tips

- Support points with reference to characters and events and refer back to the question set.
- The provided extract can be useful for language analysis (AO2).

An Inspector Calls

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole play to answer the question.

Write about the theme of responsibility in *An Inspector Calls* and how it is presented at different points in the play.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the play as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the play. [40]

5 of the question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structure.

INSPECTOR *(taking charge, masterfully)* Stop!
They are suddenly quiet, staring at him.
And be quiet for a moment and listen to me. I don't think to know any more. Neither do you. The girl killed herself - and died a horrible death. But each of you helped to kill her. Remember that. Never forget it. *(He looks from one to the other of them carefully.)* But I don't think you ever will. Remember what you did —

ERIC *(unhappily)* My God — I'm not likely to forget.

INSPECTOR Just used her for the end of a stupid drunken evening, as if she was an animal, a thing, not a person. No you won't forget. *(He looks at SHEILA.)*

SHEILA *(bitterly)* I know. I had her turned out of a job. I started it.

INSPECTOR You helped — but didn't start it *(Rather savagely, to BIRLING.)* You started it. She wanted twenty-five shillings a week instead of twenty-two and sixpence. You made her pay a heavy price for that. And now she'll make you pay a heavier price still.

BIRLING *(unhappily)* Look, Inspector — I'd give thousands - yes, thousands —

INSPECTOR You're offering the money at the wrong time, Mr Birling. *(He makes a move as if concluding the session, possibly shutting you notebook, etc. Then surveys them sardonically.)* No, I don't think any of you will forget. Nor that young man, Croft, though he at least had some affection for her and made her happy for a time. Well, Eva Smith's gone. You can't do her any more harm. And you can't do any good now, either. You can't even say 'I'm sorry, Eva Smith.'

SHEILA *(who is crying quietly)* That's the worst of it.

INSPECTOR But just remember this. One Eva Smith has gone — but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, and what we think and say and do. We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other. And I tell you that if the time will soon come when, men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish.
Good night.
He walks straight out, leaving them staring, subdued and wondering.

Exemplar response

Responsibility is central to 'An Inspector Calls' because the play revolves around the death of a young woman, Eva Smith, and to what extent the Birling family and Gerald Croft are responsible for this. Priestley also emphasizes the tragic consequences of the Birling's actions because "we are responsible for each other" and yet Eva Smith became so desperate she took her own life. The play is set in 1912 and exposes the "rottenness behind the façade" of the families like the Birlings. The play is a criticism of "middle-class prosperity and apparent respectability".

We first encounter the theme of responsibility directly when Mr. Birling gives a speech to his family as they celebrate his daughter's engagement. Mr. Birling states that a man "has to look after himself" and dismisses ideas of community as "nonsense" encouraged by "cranks". It is at this point that Inspector Goole arrives to challenge Mr. Birling's ideas and investigate Eva Smith's death.

As the first Act continues Priestley presents the lack of responsibility evident in capitalist values as Mr. Birling claims it is his responsibility to keep profits high and labour costs down. He is also keen to ensure his daughter's marriage to Gerald Croft in order to secure a merger for his business and avoid any potential scandal. He is, however, reminded by the Inspector that public men "have responsibilities as well as privileges". Sheila's sense of responsibility is clear in her guilt for turning Eva "out of a job" is in direct contrast to her father's lack of responsibility and capitalist solution stuttering an offer of "thousands" to end the matter.

Priestley highlights the lack of responsibility for others as the Inspector reveals how Gerald tries to avoid responsibility for his affair with Eva at first denying he knew her. The theme is highlighted most cruelly in Act 2 by Mrs. Birling who admits her prejudice against "girls of that class. Mrs. Birling is reminded "masterfully" by the Inspector that she used her position and influence to deny an unemployed, pregnant Eva "even the pitiable little bit of organized charity". Mrs. Birling's refusal to accept any responsibility also leads to the dramatic irony of her demand to hold the "father" responsible and make an "example" of him.

In Act 3 the theme builds to its peak. The Inspector's exclamation "Stop!" brings a distinct focus to the key message on this theme as the focus of responsibility shifts from the Birling family to a general message to society. Priestley uses the Inspector as a mouthpiece for a more Socialist reminder that all our lives are "intertwined". Priestley emphasizes the number of working class, ordinary people in need of support from the more advantaged in society by repeating the enormous number "millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths". The Inspector's speech warns of "fire and blood and anguish" if society does not take responsibility for "each other".

Overall, the younger generation take responsibility for their actions, learn the Inspector's lesson and provide hope for the future. The older generation however refuse to acknowledge their responsibilities or adapt which results in the final plot twist where events repeat themselves.

Commentary

The opening sentence shows a clear focus on the question and addresses the theme of responsibility. The candidate brings in relevant points and discusses Priestley's purpose in writing the play. The second paragraph keeps the focus firmly on the theme in the play. The response makes some clear AO2 points about technique - e.g. dramatic irony. The candidate also uses the extract. There are appropriate direct references from the extract and other parts of the text, used to support the candidate's astute points. Overall this response shows assured understanding of the demands of the task and covers all the Assessment Objectives in a sustained, integrated way.

Plot	
Stave 1	Scrooge treats Bob, Fred, and others with contempt, only caring for money and himself. On Christmas Eve, he has a visit from Marley's Ghost, who warns Scrooge of his fate of the visit of the three spirits.
Stave 2	The Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge scenes of himself as a young boy in school and as a young apprentice. They also witness Scrooge's breakup with his fiancée and the life and family he could have had. Scrooge reflects on how he has treated others.
Stave 3	The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge people celebrating Christmas: the Cratchit family, people in solitary places and his nephew, Fred. Finally, Scrooge sees two monstrous children: Ignorance and Want.
Stave 4	The Ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come shows Scrooge reactions to his own death and how he is thought of after passing on. This is contrasted with the death of Tiny Tim.
Stave 5	Scrooge wakes on Christmas morning, reborn as a new man. He delights in putting right his wrongs from Stave 1 and opens himself up to helping others and celebrating Christmas.

Themes		
Christmas	Children	Poverty
Generosity	Family	Responsibility
Forgiveness	Injustice	Redemption
Change	Supernatural	Death

Assessment Objectives

AO1, AO2 and AO3 are equally weighted for this question

AO1	Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use textual references and quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations. maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO3	Show understanding of the contexts in which the text was written.

Characters	
Ebenezer Scrooge	The main character. He is miserable, miserly, tightfisted and horrid. He rejects Christmas and refuses to offer help or kindness to anyone. The events of the novel change Scrooge completely into a generous, open-hearted man.
Bob Cratchit	Scrooge's clerk. Bob is hard-working, uncomplaining and loving to his family. He is humble and meek and grateful for all he has.
Fred	Scrooge's nephew. He is positive, kind and warm-hearted. He persists in inviting Scrooge to Christmas dinner, as he realises it is Scrooge who misses out in refusing.
Tiny Tim	Bob Cratchit's youngest son. Tim is a "cripple" and not likely to survive for long. Despite this, he is good natured and thinks of others. He says, "God bless us, everyone!"
Marley's Ghost	Scrooge's dead business partner. He warns Scrooge of his fate after death, if he does not change his ways.
Spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet-to-Come	These three ghosts all play a part in Scrooge's transformation. Each contribute by showing Scrooge key events in Scrooge's life and the lives of others.
Fan	Scrooge's sister and the (dead) mother of Fred. Fan is kind to Scrooge when he is a boy in school.
Fezziwig	Scrooge's old boss. He shows seasonal generosity to his workers, including Scrooge who is his apprentice.
Mrs Cratchit	Bob's wife. She makes the best of not having much money and makes the most of what she has for her family. She is slightly less forgiving of Scrooge than her husband.
Belle	Scrooge's fiancée. She breaks up with Scrooge, as she can see that money means more to him than she does.

Vocabulary	
Stave (Chapter)	
Narrative	
Dramatic Irony	
Prose	
Hyperbole	
Metaphor	
Pathetic Fallacy	
Simile	
Symbolism	
Foreshadowing	
Third Person Intrusive	
Exclamatory Tone	
Humour	
Allegory	
Listing	
Non-linear	
Dialogue	
Genre	

Structure and Form

Written in five chapters called 'staves' (after the musical stave which also has five lines).

The novel is cyclical in nature, with the last stave directly referencing the events of the first.

The stages of Scrooge's redemption are clear. His initial solitude in Stave 1; his gradual realisation and lessons learned in Staves 2-4; his rebirth in Stave 5.

Context	
Written by Dickens in 1843 as a direct comment on the conditions endured by the poor (particularly children) during the 'Hungry Forties'. Initially intending to write a pamphlet on the subject, Dickens felt the novel would have more impact and be a "sledgehammer blow" on behalf of the poor.	Having known periods of poverty and hardship in his own childhood, Dickens was a fierce opponent of the Poor Law, which advocated workhouses and prisons as a solution to the problem of social inequality.
Dickens saw a need for the wealthy to share their fortunes and help the most vulnerable in society. He directly references the views of Thomas Malthus, who saw poverty as inevitable and a need to 'decrease the surplus population'.	Christmas had fallen out of favour by 1843 and was not universally celebrated. Although a Christian holiday, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, it also encompassed pagan traditions around the winter solstice and looked ahead to the coming spring. In addition, Dickens saw Christmas as a time of sharing food, gifts and time. For Dickens, the 'Christmas spirit' is generosity and compassion for others. Dickens can be partially credited with cementing the popularity of the holiday.
Ghost stories were traditional at Christmas. These were often read aloud, and the novella format allows for this. The story uses many tropes of the ghost genre and combines these with a morality tale.	

Tips

- Support points with reference to characters and events and refer back to the question set.
- The provided extract can be useful for language analysis (AO2).
- Remember to integrate points of context into discussion of the characters, events and themes.

A Christmas Carol

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer the question.

Write about the some members of the Cratchit family and how they are important to the novel as a whole.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole.
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel.
- refer to contexts of the novel.

[40]

The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness in it. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the ogre of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for a full five minutes.

After it had passed away they were ten times merrier than before, from the mere relief of Scrooge the Baleful been done with. Bob Cratchit told them how he had a situation in his eye for Master Peter, which would bring in, if obtained, full five-and-sixpence weekly. The two young Cratchits laughed tremendously at the idea of Peter's being a man of business; and Peter himself looked thoughtfully at the fire from between his collars, as if they were deliberating what particular investments he should favour when he came into receipt of that bewildering income. Martha, who was a poor apprentice at a milliner's, then told them what kind of work she had to do, and how many hours she worked at a stretch, and how she meant to lie a-bed tomorrow morning for a good long rest; tomorrow being a holiday she passed at home. Also how she had seen a countess and a lord some days before, and how the lord "was much about as tall as Peter"; at which Peter pulled up his collars so high that you couldn't have seen his head if you had been there. All this time the chestnuts and the jug went round and round; and by and by they had a song, about a lost child travelling in the snow, from Tiny Tim, who had a plaintive little voice, and it very well indeed.

There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being waterproof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely he did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But they were very happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye on them, and especially Tiny Tim, until the last.

Exemplar response

The Cratchit family are a very important to 'A Christmas Carol' because they play a big part in the central story of Scrooge's redemption. They are also important because Dickens wanted to portray the poor of Victorian London in the 19th century in a positive way and they help him do achieve his aims.

We first encounter the father of the Cratchits, Bob, in the first chapter. He is not named by Dickens here - we only discover his name later in the book - and this is perhaps deliberate to show his lowly status - Scrooge only cares of him as a "clerk" and not a human being. Bob is one of the first 'victims' we see of Scrooge's miserly ways - he only has "one piece of coal" and has to "warm himself on a candle" so he is important in establishing Scrooge's meanness and penny-pinching ways. Moreover, Bob reinforces the message of Christmas by "applauding" Fred when he speaks on the benefits of Christmas. Scrooge doesn't want to give Bob Christmas Day off. This was not uncommon at the time and Bob is important in showing the audience how poorly employees were often treated. In the extract, Bob "toasts" Scrooge with his family which shows how grateful he is to Scrooge, despite being so badly treated by him. This was important for Dickens to show how grateful and humble the poor are and weren't the monsters they were thought of.

In Stove three, we see the rest of the Cratchit family. They are obviously poor (Mrs Cratchit is in her "twice turned gown") and they have a small "goose" for dinner. However, they are grateful and make the best of it. Mrs Cratchit and Belinda are "brave in ribbons" and it is said that the goose was treated like a "feathered phenomenon" or a "black swan". This shows how grateful they are and was central to the theme. They are also a loving family and the day is full of fun (they "laughed tremendously").

Tiny Tim is a "cripple" but is selfless and kind-hearted and cares about others as can be seen when he says "God bless us everyone" and thinks of others when he goes to church. He is important because Scrooge has a face to put to his Malthusian comment of "decrease the surplus population" and changes his mind. In fact, Tiny Tim's death shows a stark contrast to Scrooge's - the boy is mourned and will live on, whereas Scrooge will not. Therefore, Tiny Tim plays a hugely important role in Scrooge's redemption.

Finally, the Cratchits are important at the end of the novel - Scrooge buys them a "turkey" and it is the "biggest one in the shop". This shows just how much Scrooge has changed.

Overall, the Cratchits are essential in showing the 'grateful poor' as was Dickens' intention and also play a huge part in showing Scrooge's transformation.

Commentary

The opening sentence shows a clear focus on the question and addresses the 'importance'. The candidate then brings in contextual points and discusses Dickens' intentions in writing the novel. The second paragraph keeps the focus firmly on why Bob is important in the novel. It also brings in some AO2 points about technique as well as some context - discussing how employees were treated.

The candidate also uses the extract here.

There are appropriate direct references from the extract and other parts of the text, used to support the candidate's astute points. Overall this response shows assured understanding of the demands of the task and covers all the Assessment Objectives in a sustained, integrated way.



You are advised to spend about 20 minutes on

3	1
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 and about 40 minutes on

3	2
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Read the two poems, *Yesterday* by Patricia Pogson and *Those Winter Sundays* by Robert Hayden. Both poems describe the relationship between parent and child.

3	1
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 Write about the poem *Yesterday* by Patricia Pogson, and its effects on you. [15]

You may wish to consider:

- what the poem is about and how it is organised
- the ideas the poet may have wanted us to think about
- the poet's choice of words, phrases and images and the effects they create
- how you respond to the poem.

Yesterday

It seems only yesterday
I balanced a tiny foot
on my palm
and marvelled
that anything
so perfect
could be so small.
Now I can fit my hand in
when I clean your shoes.

to make my own pace.
Yet tuned
to your return.

In time the distance
we put between us
will deprive me
of your grace.

I can remember
when I was centered
round you
feeling your feet
strong and determined
testing and strength
of my ribcage
your hard heels
distorting my belly.

Until then
each simple homely act
like rubbing this polish
into your shoes
will focus

my imperfect love.
Patricia Pogson

Now I wave you off
in the morning
and turn away
to continue
with my work
unhindered by your
eager face
grateful to be able

Exemplar response

Pogson's poem "Yesterday" is written from a parent's perspective as they express love for their child. The child is presented as "perfect" in contrast to the "imperfect" mother's love. Their relationship changes over time as the child becomes more independent and the "distance" between mother and child grows.

At start of the poem the phrase "it seems only yesterday" creates a nostalgic tone and reflects the parent's perception of the child growing up very quickly. The verb "marvelled" shows the parent watched in amazement at being able to hold her child's foot in her palm in contrast to the way that the mother's hand now fits in the child's shoes.

In the second stanza the mother reflects on being pregnant. The verb "centred" suggests the mother's life revolved around the child as Pogson describes the sensations of the pregnant mother. The imagery of the baby distorting her "belly" and testing "the strength of my ribcage" shows

that even before birth the child is "strong and determined".

The third stanza marks a change to the present with the word "now" as the parent waves her child off (probably to school) and the mother becomes grateful for the freedom to work "unhindered" without interruption at her "own pace". However, Pogson also shows the mother misses the child and listens out for and is "tuned" to the child's return.

At the end of the poem the mother reflects on the child's kindness and beauty and a future when she will be separated from this "grace". The mother focuses on the symbolic chore of polishing shoes which is described as a "homely act" and contrasts with the image of the "tiny foot" at the start of the poem. The final line stands out as if it also acknowledges that the parent may not have got everything right but their love is constant although "imperfect".

Commentary

The opening sentence shows a clear understanding of the poem. The response makes some clear AO2 points about technique e.g. perspective, imagery, verb choice, personification, symbolism. There are appropriate direct references from the

poem used to support the candidate's astute points. Overall this response shows assured understanding of the demands of the task and covers all the Assessment Objectives in a sustained, integrated way.



Vocabulary

Stanza	Simile	Metaphor	Symbolism	Form	Assonance
Imagery	Tone	Narrative Voice	First Person	Structure	Sibilance
Interrogative	Tense	Verb	Alliteration	Repetition	Onomatopoeia



Assessment Objectives

AO1, AO2 are equally weighted for this question

AO1 Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:

- use textual references, and quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response.

AO2 Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate



Tips

- Discuss the main ideas presented in the poem.
- Support points with reference to the poem and refer back to the question set.
- Explain what key words/phrases suggest.
- Track through the poem in order.
- Don't label or list language features – explain the effect they have.

Now compare *Those Winter Sundays* by Robert Hayden, and *Yesterday* by Patricia Pogson.

[25]

You should compare:

- what the poems are about and how they are organised
- the ideas the poets may have wanted us to think about
- the poets' choice of words, phrases and images and the effects they create
- how you respond to the poems.

Those Winter Sundays

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Robert Hayden

Exemplar response

"Those Winter Sundays" is a poem written from a child's point of view reflecting on the relationship between a father and child. Unlike Pogson's adult reflection on a child's growth, Hayden presents a child reflecting on all the things their father did for them as a child or teenager. Both poems refer to polishing shoes. Pogson presents this image as a symbol of love while Hayden presents this as another job in a list of household chores done by the father as he "polished my good shoes".

Hayden's poem begins by stressing the repetitive and demanding work of the father as he "got up early" seven days a week "Sundays too" and dressed before warming the house and calling his child to "rise and dress". The alliteration and colours "blueblack" emphasise the father's hard work in the cold. The verbs "cracked" and "ached" highlight the impact of "weekday work" and the cold on the father's hands. In contrast to Pogson's affectionate and close relationship between mother and child, the relationship between child and father seems colder and more tense. Hayden presents the work of the

father as unappreciated as "no one ever thanked him".

Hayden's poem highlights a retrospective sympathy and admiration for the father in contrast to Pogson's admiration of the child. There is a sense of conflict between parent and child in "Those Winter Sundays". The verbs "splintering and breaking" may describe both the sounds of the house as it warms or the fractured relationship between father and child. The personified "chronic angers of that house" also suggest a tense atmosphere between parent and child which runs into the third stanza and the way that the child (or teenager) speaks "indifferently" without care of affection to their father.

In the final stanza Hayden's child questions repeatedly "what did I know" to show they had little appreciation at the time of "love's austere and lonely offices" and the serious, lonely job of parenting.

Both poems suggest parenthood is demanding. Pogson focuses on the physical and emotional impact of motherhood while Hayden suggests that only as adults can children fully appreciate the work that parents do.

Commentary

The opening sentence of the response shows a clear focus on the poem. The response also makes a range of clear points of comparison. The response makes some clear AO2 points about technique - perspective, alliteration, verb choice, personification. There are

appropriate direct references from the poem used to support the candidate's astute points. Overall this response shows assured understanding of the demands of the task and covers all the Assessment Objectives in a sustained, integrated way.



Vocabulary

Stanza	Simile	Metaphor	Symbolism	Form	Assonance
Imagery	Tone	Narrative Voice	First Person	Structure	Sibilance
Interrogative	Tense	Verb	Alliteration	Repetition	Onomatopoeia



Assessment Objectives

AO1, AO2 are equally weighted for this question

- AO1
- Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:
 - use textual references, and quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
 - maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response.
- AO2
- Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.



Tips

- Discuss the main ideas presented in the poem.
- Support points with reference to the poem and refer back to the question set.
- Explain what key words/phrases suggest.
- Track through the poem in order.
- Compare this poem with the first poem.