

Exposure - Wilfred Owen		Charge of the Light Brigade - Alfred Lord Tennyson	
Themes: Anti War, Reality of War, Misery, Suffering, powerlessness against Nature, pity for group suffering		Themes: Heroism, Glory, Courage under fire	
Content and Purpose Owen wanted to expose the reality and suffering of war. He writes of men dying from the intense cold of the Winter trenches. There is no attack from the Germans; only the weather. The men feel God has abandoned them. Owen sees his men freezing to death around him.	Context World War I - Bitter winter of 1917 which killed thousands. The coldest winter in living memory Owen - soldier poet who wanted to expose the reality of war, the misery and the boredom. This poem is autobiographical. It tells of group suffering.	Content and Purpose Tennyson wrote this as Poet Laureate - the voice of the Victorian nation - rewriting a national disaster as a celebration of heroism and bravery. Tennyson praises the courage of soldiers under fire who obey orders to the death.	Context Crimean War - mid 19 th century in which the wrong regiment become entangled in a fatal mission to charge the Russian guns. 600 men and horses were ambushed. Many died. This was a military catastrophe which hit the news. Tennyson 'spins' this to rework the story.
Language Amazing use of imagery - simile, metaphor, personification of the weather as an assassin Sibilance - repeated 's' sounds for sinister snow - alliteration "feeling for our faces" Personification - 'mad gusts of wind tugging at the wire'. Dawn as the enemy.	Form and Structure Lyrical poem. 3 rd person narrative. Abrupt break halfway when men begin to hallucinate which fractures the past and present. Repeated chorus/refrain - 'But nothing happens' to emphasise boredom of war. Rhetorical questions demand answers.	Language Full of personification - "Jaws of Death" and "Mouth of Hell". Imagery glamorises war as being heroic and splendid. Powerful verbs which recreate the sound and sight of battle - "stormed at with shot and shell"	Form and Structure Driving rhythm which echoes the galloping horses' hooves (~/~/) Use of anaphora/repetition for dramatic effect - "Cannon to the right of them/Cannon to the left of them/Cannon in front of them"
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
Our brains ache in the merciless iced east winds that knife us ... Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces -	Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey	Half a league, half a league, Half a league onward, All in the valley of Death Rode the six hundred.	Theirs not to reason why, Theirs but to do and die: Honour the charge they made!
The Man He Killed - Thomas Hardy		War Photographer - Carole Satyamurti	
Themes: Anti-war, paradox of war, questioning why fighting		Themes: Powerlessness, interpretation, chaos of war	
Content and Purpose Hardy writes of the puzzle of war in which a man is forced to kill another (at close quarters) which, in other circumstances, he would have shared a drink with. Hardy explores how war affects an ordinary working class country boy. Anti-war.	Context Written in 1902 - time of Boer War. Hardy - late Victorian/Edwardian poet. Very few ordinary people would understand the reasons for war. This country man is caught up in a war which he does not understand nor sympathise with. He enlists (joins up) for work and pay.	Content and Purpose A war photographer's job can be pleasant - photographing rich young girls at Ascot - or brutal where an under-aged mother abandons her baby in front from a bomb blast. War is random and chaotic: there is no sense to it. A frame provides some meaning/interpretation for the viewer.	Context Satyamurti writes of the random chaos and cruelty of war and of how it is perceived by the media. A tragic event can be rewritten as a 'triumph of the human spirit', whereas in reality, it reveals fear and flight. The real world is chaotic and brutal and cannot be tidied away by 'Art' ...
Language Archaic (old-fashioned) with dialect terms from local region. Simple and direct language.	Form and Structure Written in form of dramatic monologue with a persona - an ordinary man - caught up in extraordinary times. 1 st person narrative. Conversational tone - frequent interruptions in narrative at line ends/enjambment	Language Unusual juxtaposition of words - "sun-gilded" and "silk-crumpled" for effect. Compound adjectives. Alliteration used to draw our attention to what we 'choose to frame'.	Form and Structure Lack of rhyme scheme or regular structure. 1 st person narrator. Structure echoes content with enjambment echoing the chaos of war and its witnessed events
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
I shot at him as he at me, And killed him in his place.	Yes; quaint and curious war is!	The reassurance of the frame is flexible The firmness of the edges can Convince you This is how things are	I took a pair of peach, sun-gilded girls Rolling, silk-crumpled on the grass ... Even in hell the human spirit Triumphs over all.

Belfast Confetti		What were they Like?	
Themes: Impact of war on individuals, loss of identity and meaning, chaos and confusion		Themes: Horror of war, loss of culture	
Content and Purpose Ciaran Carson writes autobiographically of a time in which a bomb exploded in Belfast. It shatters his peace of mind and leaves him feeling completely disorientated about his whereabouts.	Context Northern Ireland conflict - "the Troubles". The Irish poet writes about terrorism in his home city of Belfast. These were based partly on religious and political factors; the British were resented for interfering in Irish matters. Terrorists used terror to create change.	Content and Purpose Levertov imagines that war has completely destroyed Vietnam - as a country and as a culture. Her two narrators try to replace the jigsaw 'bits' to recreate what Vietnam would have been like before and after war. We don't know who the speakers are.	Context Vietnamese War which was an ideological conflict (capitalism/communism). Levertov was very opposed to this conflict and protested about its unfairness.
Language Use of four distinct word classes - place names from battle sites (Crimea/Raglan); military terms Saracen/gunfire; punctuation types - asterisk *; jargon of violence/riots - Makrolon face shields. Irony of title - confetti is associated with weddings; here associated with shrapnel of death	Form and Structure Poem is an extended metaphor of 'broken type' falling from a typewriter which is shattered. This represents the shrapnel of the bomb and punctuation is used graphically to depict the actual explosion itself. The irregular line lengths emphasise the chaos of the bomb blast. Gunfire = ... A burst of rapid fire - - - - - Structure echoes broken city and chaos from bomb blast.	Language Imagery is key. Shows fragility, beauty and transience of how easily all this art and culture is destroyed. Shocking contrasts between past and present. Peaceful rural idyll with the shattering of bombs and glass. Alliteration to reflect horror of war - "Laughter is bitter to the burned mouth."	Form and Structure Two stanzas structured around questions and answers. Questions highlight the beauty of the culture; answers evidence the destruction and lack of responsibility for this. Two narrators - first possibly an American journalist; second someone familiar with the culture of Vietnam. Questions do not immediately correspond with answers which creates a jarring effect.
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
Suddenly as the riot squad moved in, It was raining exclamation marks,	A Saracen, Kremlin-2 mesh. Makrolon Face shields.	Did they use bone and ivory, Jade and silver, for ornament?	Sir, laughter is bitter to the burned mouth. Sir, their light hearts turned to stone. All the bones were charred.
Poppies - Jane Weir		Catrin - Gillian Clarke	
Themes: Childhood, Motherhood, Loss, Regret, Sadness		Themes: Motherhood, conflict between mother and daughter, strong bonds, individualism	
Content and Purpose Jane Weir writes of her sadness and regret at losing her son to warfare. She reminisces about his boyhood, their shared love and bond, before honouring him among the war dead in the local cemetery.	Context Written from mother's perspective at losing son to war. Any modern war is apt. This poem resonated across the UK with many mothers of soldiers who had gone to Afghanistan, Iraq et al.	Content and Purpose Modern poem about conflict between a mother and her daughter's struggles to be free of the other. Poet writes of her struggles to give birth and of the cord that unites them; then of her struggles with her daughter's wish to be free.	Context Autobiographical poem about giving birth in hospital, then raising a difficult teenager who wants to be her own person. Poet depicts a struggle for autonomy from each other. Realistic and accessible to many.
Language Very influenced by Jane's embroidery. Works as a modern textile artist. Hence semantic field (vocab) of stitching, darts, tucks and pleats used to convey her prickly, repressed emotions. Domestic images of childhood and home.	Form and Structure Free verse - no regular rhyme/rhythm. Jumble of thoughts, feelings and memories. Poem is set against November rituals of remembrance and Armistice Sunday/war memorials. Poppies symbolise grief and loss, bloodshed of war dead.	Language Imagery of sterile hospital room - blank walls, glass tank of emotions. "Tight red rope" symbolises the tug of love between mother and daughter. "Old rope" = bond that can never be broken. Some lovely imagery - "heart's deep pool." Red - colour of conflict, blood, danger.	Form and Structure 1st person narration. Each verse deals with past and present. Free verse, irregular line lengths. Enjambment creates conversational tone of remembered memories/anecdotes. Imagery ties each verse together.
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
I pinned one onto your lapel, Crimped petals, spasms of paper red,	All my words flattened, rolled, turned Into felt, slowly melting. My stomach busy making tucks, darts, pleats,	The tight Red rope of love which we both Fought over.	I can remember you, our first Fierce confrontation Neither won nor lost the struggle

The Prelude: William Wordsworth		Destruction of Sennacherib - Lord Byron	
Themes: Nature's power, our insignificance, isolation, fear and awe		Themes: Power of God and Nature, Shock and awe	
Content and Purpose Wordsworth writes of stealing a rowing boat and rowing across one of the Lake District's great lakes. Frightened by a towering mountain in the dark, Wordsworth returns the boat and is troubled for many days after by recurring dreams of horror and awe.	Context Romantic poet from 19 th century. Wordsworth was heavily influenced by Nature and inspired by the power of the imagination and landscapes to 'shock and awe'. This poem is autobiographical and reflects his growth spiritually and as a poet. It depicts a mystical experience with Nature.	Content and Purpose Taken from Old Testament story of God's power and might against non-believers. Syrian army attack Jerusalem (Christian city of Jews) but are defeated by the Angel of Death whose power wipes the army out completely. A 'shock and awe' poem.	Context Romantic poet, interested in Biblical stories and Nature. Nature is seen as an elemental force; God is part of Nature. Taken from Bible story of how Jerusalem is under siege from the Assyrian army. God's mighty power defeats the infidels and saves the Christian city from barbarism.
Language Focus on awe and power of natural surroundings. Mountain is personified as a giant threat "towering above him." Boat is compared to a swan/fairyland - "elfin pinnacle" "sprite". Images are magical and mysterious.	Form and Structure Part of an epic poem (normally depicts tale of hero and his deeds.) Blank verse - iambic pentameter (~/~). 1 st person narration as autobiographical. One verse as extracted from much larger whole.	Language Archaic (old fashioned). Eg. "smite - struck" and "foe - enemy". Lots of imagery from Nature - wolf, seasons, lake of Galilee, Autumn and Spring. Angel of Death is personified. Purple and gold - symbols of wealth and luxury.	Form and Structure Tightly controlled structure of 6 stanzas (quatrains) of rhyming couplets. Use of anapaestic tetrameter (~~/~~/~~/~/) to echo hoof beats. 3 rd person narrative revealing images of God's power.
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
One summer evening (led by her) I Found A little boat tied to a willow tree Within a rocky cove ...	She was an elfin pinnacle; A huge peak, black and huge ... Strode after me.	The Assyrian came down like a Wolf on the fold, And his cohorts were gleaming in Purple and gold;	For the Angel of Death spread His wings on the blast, And breathed in the face of the foe as He pass'd;
Cousin Kate - Christina Rossetti		A Poison Tree - William Blake	
Themes: Social status and power, Female jealousy and conflict, Inheritance/legacy		Themes: Anger, destructive power of emotions, temptation	
Content and Purpose Rossetti writes of two women: one taken by force by a rich landlord, made pregnant and abandoned; the other married but sterile. The abandoned country girl writes of her jealousy and bitterness at being made an outcast. Her 'secret weapon' is her male child and heir.	Context Christina Rossetti was a Victorian feminist writing of social and class attitudes towards women. She especially championed women who were prostitutes or in men's control/power. She championed fallen women's rights in a patriarchal society of male power.	Content and Purpose Written almost as a parable to tell of the power of poisonous emotions when hidden and nurtured against another. Quite modern in its subject. Release of anger = healing. Nurturing anger = destruction. Purpose is to convey how damaging unexpressed emotions can be.	Context One of the Romantic poets, Blake was a visionary artist, poet and illustrator who knew his Bible inside out. He was a mystic who referred to the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden. This poem is an extended metaphor for the damage which bitterness and hate can cause another.
Language Imagery is of trapped birds in golden cages. Dove = purity. Kept mistress is described as a "plaything" (toy) and "golden knot" (jewellery) or "glove" (disposable). Interesting oxymorons "shameful shameless life" to indicated the paradox of her situation.	Form and Structure Dramatic monologue. Persona is that of a country girl (not Rossetti). 1 st person narration. Internal rhyme similar to ballad form; alternate rhyming lines. Tightly controlled balanced verses to contain the bitterness of emotion. Contrasts of each girls' social position and status.	Language Archaic (old-fashioned), quite Biblical - "foe", "veil'd", "wrath" (anger). Lots of symbolism - snake = Satan; apple = poison/anger; imagery is from horticulture (gardening). Sibilance - "deceitful wiles" imitates the hissing of the snake/Satan.	Form and Structure Narrative form. Four simple verses written in rhyming couplets. Rhyme scheme is tightly controlled and regular. Depicts the growth of a poison tree from a seed, watered by tears and "deceitful wiles" which eventually destroys the friend. 1 st person voice - not necessarily Blake's.
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
He wore me like a golden knot, He changed me like a glove: To lead a shameless shameful life, His plaything and his love.	Even so I sit and howl in dust You sit in gold and sing: So now I moan an unclean thing Who might have been a dove.	"I was angry with my friend: I told my wrath; my wrath did end."	"And I sunned it with smiles, And with soft deceitful wiles."

Half Caste - John Agard		No Problem - Benjamin Zephaniah	
Themes: Racial prejudice, bigotry, narrow-mindedness		Themes: Racial prejudice, Imperialism, stereotyping, narrow-mindedness	
Content and Purpose Agard ridicules the way in which "half-caste" does not reflect the whole person. He uses examples from Art and Music to show that this term is ridiculous! Even our British weather is parodied. Agard pokes fun at our ignorance and half-hearted understanding or race and difference. Gentle humour but biting satire.	Context Agard is a modern performance or "Dub" poet from Guyana and of mixed parentage. He therefore speaks in "Creole" - a mixture of two dialects and uses this to reflect his culture in his writing. He writes of racial prejudice and of the abusive term "half-caste" which he dislikes.	Content and Purpose A performance poem in two verses in the form of a rant which reveals frustration with racism. Prejudice prevents people from really seeing him as he is. He is an academic who uses his poetry as a political weapon. He ridicules stereotypes which limit people into "pigeon-holes" or boxes.	Context Zephaniah is a Jamaican performance "Dub" poet in the vein of Agard. He writes of how he feels judged by others because of his skin colour. He feels stereotyped as a black dancer and athlete but is intellectual. Political in tone. Zephaniah dislikes the Empire and racists. Some of his best friends "are white". Biting.
Language Conversational, non grammatical, non Standard English. Written in Guyanese patois. Lots of repetition in use - "Excuse me, Explain yusef". Frequent questions mock the idiocy of the term "half caste" which is very derogatory. Cultural references - Picasso, Tchaikovsky, demonstrate his intelligence/education.	Form and Structure Written in three verses - intro/middle/end of a narrative. Free verse - irregular rhyme scheme. Some half rhymes. Middle verse = one continuous 'rant' - may show anger. First and last verses 'contain' this rant. Frequent questions and repetition used to involve/address the reader directly.	Language Colloquial language - written in his own patois - which reflects his pride in his own culture and traditions. Non grammatical and Non Standard English. Makes point he is an academic. Ridicules stereotypes which narrow our view of people. "Pigeon-holing".	Form and Structure 1 st person narrative - poet's own feelings and thoughts. Repetition of the phrase "I am not de problem" emphasises that we (the reader) are racist causing needless issues. Ironic last few lines overturning our expectations. "Some of me best friends are white." Every other line rhymes which creates rhythm and pace.
Key Quotes		Key Quotes	
Excuse me Standing on one leg I'm half-caste Yu mean Tchaikovsky Sit down at dah piano An mix a black key Wid a white key Is a half caste symphony/	Wha yu mean When you say half caste But yu must come back tomorrow Wid de whole of yu eye An de whole of yu ear	I am not de problem I greet yu wid a smile Yu put me in a pigeon hole But I am versatile	I am born academic But dey got me on de run Now I am branded athletic Black is not de problem Mother country get it right
The Class Game - Mary Casey			
Themes Prejudice, social class, stereotyping of others, resentment and pride:			
Content and Purpose Mary Casey feels judged by others who are 'posh'. She writes of how she feels labelled by others from a different class, using her own dialect and vocabulary. She feels proud of the working class background she comes from.	Context Written by a Liverpoolian housewife who was an amateur poet. This poem was published in a magazine for budding writers. Working class, Casey is writing about how we perceive others from a different class in society. She challenges class snobbery and class divisions.	Language Very colloquial (conversational). Uses contrasting words to show the difference in social background/class eg. 'corpy/semi' and 'wet nelly/bread pudding'. Written in local dialect. Contrast reflects class divide. Again biting satire about snobbery.	Form and Structure One stanza only - irregular, but written in loosely-rhyming couplets towards end. Last line stands alone - emphasises her pride in being working class. Long 'rant' expresses her anger. Frequent repetition of questions to address the reader directly.
Key Quotes			
How can you tell what class I'm from? Or is it because my hands are stained with toil?	Instead of soft lily-white with perfume and oil?	Bread pudding is wet nelly And me stomach is me belly	And I'm proud of the class I come from.

KNOW YOUR POETS AND CONTEXTS

ROMANTIC	VICTORIAN	WW1
William Blake	Thomas Hardy	Wilfred Owen - soldier and officer
Lord Byron	Christina Rossetti	
William Wordsworth	Alfred, Lord Tennyson - Poet Laureate	

MODERN FEMALE	MODERN MALE	PERFORMANCE POETS
Gillian Clarke	Ciaran Carson - Irish poet	John Agard - Guyanese
Jane Weir		Benjamin Zephaniah - Jamaican
Carole Satyamurti		
Denise Levertov - American		
Mary Casey - Liverpool		

KNOW YOUR THEMES AND WHICH POEMS BELONG TO THEM - MAKE FLASH CARDS FOR THESE AND PLAY AROUND WITH THEM. WHICH FIT BEST?

THEMES	POEM 1	POEM 2	POEM 3
Impact of war on individuals	The Man He Killed	Belfast Confetti	Poppies
Group Suffering in War	Exposure	Charge of the Light Brigade	What were they Like?
Horrors of War	Destruction of Sennacherib	Charge of the Light Brigade	What were they Like?
Different attitudes to war	The Man He Killed	Exposure	Charge of the Light Brigade
Conflict in Personal Relationships	Cousin Kate	A Poison Tree	Catrin
Powerlessness	The Prelude	Exposure	War Photographer
Power of Nature	The Prelude	Destruction of Sennacherib	
Fear	The Prelude	Poppies	
Prejudice - race	Half Caste	No Problem	The Class Game
Prejudice - social class	Cousin Kate	The Class Game	

POEMS WHICH HAVE COME UP ALREADY IN THE EXAM - War Photographer, A Poison Tree, Belfast Confetti.