قوة الإسلام

QUWWAT-UL-ISLAM GIRLS' SCHOOL

www.quwwatulislam.com

Together we can achieve more

Key Stage 4

Power and Conflict Poetry Home learning pack

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

- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response
- use textual references, including 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.

AO3: Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Exposure—*Wilfred Owen*

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

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

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

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

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

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

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;
Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,
For love of God seems dying.

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

Task One

Select two or three quotations which really effectively portray nature as a violent, bullying force. Analyse them.

Task Two

Owen uses a consistent and predictable 5-line stanza structure, with consistent half-rhyming (ABBAC). He also has the final line of each stanza 'cut short' compared to the others. What might he be trying to say with his structural choices?

Task Three

Why did Owen write this poem? What is he trying to convey to the people back home about trench warfare?

"*The coldest winter was 1916-17. The winter was so cold that I felt like crying. I didn't actually cry but I'd never felt like it before, not even under shell fire.*" **NCO Clifford Lane**

Extract from 'The Prelude' - *William Wordsworth*

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

Task One

The tone of the poem changes as its story develops. Identify and explain the tone at the beginning *and* at the end, and try to identify the volta (turning point).

Task Two

Identify and analyse language which stresses Wordsworth's awe for the power of the natural world.

Task Three: Find two/three lines where the poet has used punctuation effectively, and analyse how and why he's done it.

Task Four

Wordsworth believed that his experiences of nature changed the way he saw himself, others, and the world. His advice to others was "*to let nature be your teacher*."

What does Wordsworth believe nature has to teach us, based on the extract from 'The Prelude'?

Storm on the Island *SEAMUS HEANEY*

We are prepared: we build our houses squat,
Sink walls in rock and roof them with good slate.
This wizened earth has never troubled us
With hay, so, as you see, there are no stacks
Or stooks that can be lost. Nor are there trees
Which might prove company when it blows full
Blast: you know what I mean – leaves and branches
Can raise a tragic chorus in a gale
So that you can listen to the thing you fear
Forgetting that it pummels your house too.
But there are no trees, no natural shelter.
You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs
But no: when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage. We just sit tight while wind dives
And strafes invisibly. Space is a salvo,
We are bombarded by the empty air.
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

Task One

Track the poem's references to natural materials (rock...slate etc.) and explain how the poet uses them to convey an idea of strength.

Task Two

Identify the military language at the poem's end and analyse how Heaney is presenting nature.

Task Three

"The sea… spits like a tame cat turned savage."

Analyse this simile in as much detail as you can. Explore individual words, the simile as a whole, the sounds of the words, and anything else you can think of.

Kamikaze—*Beatrice Garland*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Task One

The poem tells the story of a kamikaze pilot's fateful decision not to carry out his mission. Track and explain how Beatrice uses nature references to reflect the pilot's mood/attitude.

Task Two

Analyse the use of punctuation for effect in the poem.

Task Three

Why is the poem told from the perspective of the pilot's daughter rather than the pilot himself?

Task Four

Heaney, an Irish poet, describes nature in his poem 'Storm On The Island'. What do you think he believes nature has done to his home country?

"When anyone asks me about the Irish character, I say look at the trees: maimed, stark and misshapen, but ferociously tenacious." Edna O'Brien—Irish writer

Comparison Essay Practice

Select two of the poems from this booklet.

Compare how each poet presents their views on the power of nature. Try to include all of the notes from this booklet, as well as anything else you can think of/remember for both poems.

Power and society sub-cluster

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

- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response
- use textual references, including 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.

AO3: Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Task One

The poem has three speakers/three voices. Highlight the three voices in three different colours. Explain how this choice helps Shelley convey his message.

Task Two

The poem has fourteen lines. What form of poem is this? How/why has Shelley used this form of poetry to help convey his message?

Task Three

The poem features sibilance and negative imagery, as well as individual words with negative connotations, to portray 'Ozymandias'. Select one or two quotations Shelley uses to portray Ozymandias, and analyse them.

Task Four

What *is* Shelley's message in the poem? How far do you think Shelley would agree with the following view?

"Power and pride are vain and temporary possessions that make human beings arrogant, but time will treat everything and everyone equally."

London

I wander through each chartered street,
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forged manacles I hear:

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning shurch appals,
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

William Blake

Task One

The poem is written in the first person and charts the speaker's journey through London one day. Summarise what he finds/sees/hears as he walks around London.

Task Two

The poem has a regular structure of four quatrains, each with an ABAB rhyme-scheme. How do these repetitive, organised and predictable structural choices help Blake to make his point about London, and about society?

Task Three

There are two metaphors in stanza three: one attacking religion, and the other attacking the monarchy. Identify the two metaphors, and analyse how Blake uses them to make his point about London, and about society.

Task Four

What *is* Blake's message about London, and about society? How far do you think Blake would have agreed with these two quotations from famous French revolutionary thinkers?

"Men will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest." *Denis Diderot*

"Everywhere man is born free, and everywhere man is in chains." *Rousseau*

Storm on the Island *SEAMUS HEANEY*

We are prepared: we build our houses squat,
Sink walls in rock and roof them with good slate.
This wizened earth has never troubled us
With hay, so, as you see, there are no stacks
Or stooks that can be lost. Nor are there trees
Which might prove company when it blows full
Blast: you know what I mean – leaves and branches
Can raise a tragic chorus in a gale
So that you can listen to the thing you fear
Forgetting that it pummels your house too.
But there are no trees, no natural shelter.
You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs
But no: when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage. We just sit tight while wind dives
And strafes invisibly. Space is a salvo,
We are bombarded by the empty air.
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

Task One

The poem describes, literally, how some islanders are deceived into feeling ready for an oncoming storm. With quotations, prove that they do feel ready at the beginning of the poem, and that their attitude changes by the end of the poem. Stretch yourself: can you identify the volta (turning point)?

Task Two

The poem is one condensed stanza. Why might Heaney have structured it in this way? What might it reflect?

Task Three

The language suggests safety and security in the opening lines, and then becomes much more violent and aggressive by the end of the poem. Analyse this use of contrast with two quotations—one from the start and one from towards the end.

Task Four

Heaney is an Irish poet. The parliament building is called 'Stormont' - the first seven letters of the poem's title.

When he won the Nobel Prize in 1995, they said it was: "for works of lyrical beauty and ethical depth, which exalt everyday miracles and the living past".

What is *this* poem really about—the 'everyday miracle' of surviving a storm, or 'the living past' of violent political conflicts in Ireland? Can the poem be about both at the same time?

The Émigree *CAROLE RUMENS*

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

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

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

Task One

The poem tells the story of a migrant who looks back fondly on the childhood memories of their home country, and conflicts it with the darker views she holds as an adult.

Summarise what you learn about the home country, both the fond memories and the darker truths.

Task Two

The poem is full of metaphors and similes. Identify a few and analyse how they are used to reveal the poet's views on society.

Task Three

Try to explore how the poem changes over its three stanzas. Is the poet doing anything with the structural choices to help convey her views?

Task Four

The poem contains a repeated motif of sunlight:

"There once was a country… I left it as a child but my memory of it is sunlight-clear"
"It may be at war, it may be sick with tyrants, but I am branded by an impression of sunlight."
"It may by now be a lie, banned by the state but I can't get it off my tongue. It tastes of sunlight."
"My city hides behind me. They mutter death, and my shadow falls as evidence of sunlight."

Explain why you think Rumens uses this image, and why she uses it repeatedly. What do you think Rumens would think of the following famous statement from 1913? 'Sunlight is the best disinfectant' Louis D. Brandeis

Comparison Essay Practice

Select two of the poems from this booklet.

Compare how each poet presents their views on power in society. Try to include all of the notes from this booklet, as well as anything else you can think of/remember for both poems.

Personal responses to conflict

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

- maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response
- use textual references, including 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.

AO3: Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Poppies JANE WEIR

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

Sellotape bandaged around my hand,
I rounded up as many white cat hairs
as I could, smoothed down your shirt's
upturned collar, steeled the softening
of my face. I wanted to graze my nose
across the tip of your nose, play at
being Eskimos like we did when
you were little. I resisted the impulse
to run my fingers through the gelled
blackthorns of your hair. All my words
flattened, rolled, turned into felt,

slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked
with you, to the front door, threw
it open, the world overflowing
like a treasure chest. A split second
and you were away, intoxicated.
After you'd gone I went into your bedroom,
released a song bird from its cage.
Later a single dove flew from the pear tree,
and this is where it has led me,
skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy
making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without
a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

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

Task One

Weir contrasts domestic images with images of conflict. Identify an example of this and analyse it.

Task Two

How many different interpretations can you think of for: "I traced the inscriptions on the war memorial, leaned against it like a wishbone.'?

Task Three

The speaker's mood/emotions are revealed through the poem's use of punctuation. Identify and analyse an example of this.

Task Four

Why did Weir write this poem? How far do you think she would agree with the following statement?

"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die." **Thomas Campbell, Hallowed Ground**

Remains - SIMON ARMITAGE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Task One

Armitage uses graphic, violent imagery to show the impact of the war on the soldier. Analyse an example.

Task Two

Armitage discusses the impact the war has on the soldier when he has returned home. Summarise the problems he faces.

Task Three

The poem has organised and controlled quatrains, until the final stanza, which is 'cut short'. What point is Armitage making?

Task Four

Armitage interviewed a soldier from the first Iraq war to inform this poem. The problem faced, though, is one that happens to soldiers in *all* conflicts. Armitage focuses on one individual to explore a problem faced by many: does this work?

"In World War One, they called it shell shock. Second time around, they called it battle fatigue. After 'Nam, it was post-traumatic stress disorder." Jan Karon

War Photographer—*Carol Ann Duffy*

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

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

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

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

Task One

Most of the poem is very personal, with the pronoun 'he' used constantly. How does Duffy contrast this with the general public's attitude, shown in the final stanza?

Task Two

Duffy uses language to stress the violence/horror of conflict. Identify an example or two, and analyse the language.

Task Three

The poem is structured into consistent, predictable stanzas of six lines. Duffy uses a lot of caesura and enjambment. Write about how these structural choices support Duffy's view on how the war photographer responds to war.

Task Four

Duffy was inspired to write this poem by her friendship with a war photographer. She was especially intrigued by the peculiar challenge faced by these people whose job requires them to record terrible, horrific events without being able to directly help their subjects.

How successfully does Duffy present the difficulties of having to record and report on war without offering help or aid?

Bayonet Charge - TED HUGHES

Suddenly he awoke and was running – raw
In raw-seamed hot khaki, his sweat heavy,
Stumbling across a field of clods towards a green hedge
That dazzled with rifle fire, hearing
Bullets smacking the belly out of the air –
He lugged a rifle numb as a smashed arm;
The patriotic tear that had brimmed in his eye
Sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest, –

In bewilderment then he almost stopped –
In what cold clockwork of the stars and the nations
Was he the hand pointing that second? He was running
Like a man who has jumped up in the dark and runs
Listening between his footfalls for the reason
Of his still running, and his foot hung like
Statuary in mid-stride. Then the shot-slashed furrows

Threw up a yellow hare that rolled like a flame
And crawled in a threshing circle, its mouth wide
Open silent, its eyes standing out.
He plunged past with his bayonet toward the green hedge,
King, honour, human dignity, etcetera
Dropped like luxuries in a yelling alarm
To get out of that blue crackling air
His terror's touchy dynamite.

Task One

The poem is *full* of similes. What does this suggest about how hard conflict is to understand? Explain, with examples of the similes.

Task Two

What is the symbolism of the 'yellow hare that rolled like a flame' and the 'green hedge'?

Task Three

The poem features enjambment across lines and even between stanzas. What point is Hughes making?

Task Four

Hughes' father served in WWI, not Hughes himself. What does his choice to write about WWI suggest?

"The big, ever-present, overshadowing thing was the First World War, in which my father and my Uncles fought, and which seemed to have killed every other young man my relatives had known." *Ted Hughes*

Comparison Essay Practice

Select two of the poems from this booklet.

Compare how each poet presents personal responses to conflict. Try to include all of the notes from this booklet, as well as anything else you can think of/remember for both poems.