

GCSE English Literature

Paper 2 – Modern Texts and Poetry

Section B – Poetry

Power and Conflict Cluster

Annotated Poems



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AQA Literature – Paper 2 – Poetry
Power & Conflict Cluster – Thematic Links

Poem	Power/Conflict/Other
Ozymandias	Power/Authority/Nature
London	Power/Society
My Last Duchess	Power/Love/Politics
Tissue	Power (Politics)/Nature/Society
Charge of the Light Brigade	Conflict/War
Exposure	Conflict/War
Bayonet Charge	Conflict/War
Remains	Conflict/War
Poppies	Conflict/War
War Photographer	Conflict/War/Society
The Émigrée	Conflict/War/Society/Home
Kamikaze	Conflict/War/Society/Home
Checking out me history	Conflict/Society
Extract from, The Prelude	Power/Nature
Storm on the Island	Power/Nature/Society (Troubles)

Form – Petrarchan Sonnet– 14 lines – Octet and Sestet – separated by a Volta –
 Octave – tells the story of the discovery of the fallen statue, and the details of the statue. Sestet – we discover the desperation for control that Ozymandias went to, and the truth that Nature has wiped everything away. Volta shows the shift from discovery of things to discovery of truth. Rhyme scheme – ABABACDCEDEFEF – different to normal P. Sonnet (ABBAABBACDDECE – reflects Shelley’s rejection of form (he was writing in a sonnet competition) as a Romantic poet, and the general message that form should be altered for the needs of the message, not stuck to, as Nature will destroy all attempts at control, leaving only the emotion behind.
 Generates a respect for Nature, and a willingness not to try and control how we are remembered.

Synecdoche – individual part representing the whole thing – hand of the sculptor; heart of Ozymandias.
 Tells us that all that remains are these negative representations – all we remember or learn about the sculptor, who might have been a great artist, is that he undermined Ozymandias.
 All that remains of the leader is the negative, arrogant and power hungry aspects of their personality. Where his heart should have been true and kind, instead it was power-hungry.
 Both have tried to control how Ozymandias is remembered, but by doing to, both have tarnished their own legacies – the sculptor will not be remembered as a great artist, nor will Ozymandias be remembered as a great leader. Irony that they have lasted forever (through Art), but not as they wished, because they tried to control it.
 Generates a feeling that trying to control how Nature allows us to be remembered is futile – we should try and live our lives well and not worry (influenced by later Romantic poet views?)



Percy
Bysshe Shelley
(1792–1822)

Ozymandias

- 1 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
- 5 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:
- 10 '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.

Alliteration – repetition of the opening sounds of words–
 Makes key phrases memorable – we remember the emotionless facial expression of Ozymandias – he cares more about being remembered than being a kind and good leader.
 At the end of the poem – alliteration draws our attention to what remains now – we realise that all that Ozymandias had has gone, and Nature has turned it into the same sand and desert that surrounds the area – it has taken everything, and turned it all into the same – Nature has the power to take away everything.
 Generates a feeling that trying to control how Nature allows us to be remembered is futile – we should try and live our lives well and not worry (influenced by later Romantic poet views?)

Caesura – pause created by punctuation in a line – forces the reader to pause, creating a sense of drama throughout the poem. Makes the reader reflective of the actions of the sculptor and Ozymandias, and how Nature has destroyed almost everything in their memory. Pauses almost seem to undermine Ozymandias – as he wants us to reflect on his greatness, we actually reflect on how foolish it seems that he tried to force himself to be remembered – sense of Irony.
 Generates a feeling that trying to control how Nature allows us to be remembered is futile – we should try and live our lives well and not worry (influenced by later Romantic poet views?)

Form – Dramatic Monologue – told from the point of view of a figure who is observing London. The form allows the poem to have a personal tone, as the personal pronouns make the figure's experiences seem authentic and real; this makes the figure's conclusion that London is a place that is corrupt and not fair to all more impactful. Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

Rhyme – Rhyming ABAB couplets; Metre; Iambic Tetrameter – creates a sense of rhythm, as if the poem is following the steady walking of the figure – they are not emotional, they are simply observing real life. Further, it might create a juxtaposition between the steady flow of the poem, and the jarring inequality between the rich and poor in London. Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

Anaphora – 'In every' – reflects that the issues that London faces are reflected across all of society, and all generations; creates an overwhelming sense that this oppressive, unfair treatment is at a critical point. Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet,
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.
In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls;
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most, thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

Antanacsis – 'mark' and 'chartered' – Blake uses these phrases to show the difference between parts of London; the figure, as an educated person, can recognise ('mark') the signs ('marks') of poverty on the poor; 'chartered' reflects that London is controlled by the rich 'chartered' can also mean to be sailed on, reflecting that though the rich feel like they control the Thames, Blake feels that Nature can not be controlled. Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

Metaphor – 'mind-forged manacles' – Shows the depth of the oppression of the poorest in society in London – they cannot seem to escape this unfairness; perhaps that it is mind-forged suggests that it is a problem within society, that people can break out of, just like in the French Revolution? Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

Synecdoche – 'cry', 'sigh', 'curse', 'tear' – Uses these simple, stereotypical actions of groups in society – reflects how the rich see them? By speaking of chimney sweepers (children), soldiers (men), harlots (women), and infants (babies), Blake shows how all in society are judged by the rich upper classes, despite using them in order to keep themselves strong. Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

Oxymoron – 'marriage hearse' – Blake shows how the destruction of decency and fairness in society is destroying one of the most fundamental pillars of society; prostitution has led to the sanctity of marriage being defiled, as women sold their bodies (and had children out of wedlock) and plagued marriages with infidelity. Perhaps Blake uses the Oxymoron to show just how fundamentally broken society is, and how important it is to make a change. Sense of shock? Sense of sadness/willingness to change?

Form – Blank Verse – single stanza – Reflects the Power and order in Nature – Nature seems to have little order from the outside; from within, Nature has its own purpose and order (we just do not understand it). Single stanza represents the continuous flow of life through Nature – it never truly breaks or pauses, and the poem represents this. As the Prelude was autobiographical, perhaps it represents the flow of Wordsworth's life, or that he desires connection with Nature? Generates a respect for Nature – understanding of the link between Nature and Wordsworth.



William Wordsworth
(1770–1850)

Extract from, *The Prelude*

- 1 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
5 Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
10 Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
15 The horizon's utmost boundary; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
20 Went heaving through the water like a swan.
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Upreared its head, I struck and struck again,
25 And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
30 And through the silent water stole my way

Simile – Figure creates the relatable imagery of the swan to reflect the grace and ease with which they row – makes the scene seem peaceful and relaxing. Later, the peak becomes like a living thing – creates a sense of threat, as we can imagine how huge and terrifying that must be. Irony of using Nature to represent man-made objects (boat) and Man to represent Nature (the peak) – does this reflect Wordsworth's desire to form a relationship between Man and Nature, or does it reinforce that the figure is confused as this point as to the relationship between Nature and Man (does he think he can control it)? Generates a respect for Nature, and an understanding that Nature and Man are not the same.

Lexical Field of grief – represents how Wordsworth presents the loss of the innocence of childhood – he seems to grieve after what he has seen – it has had an enormous and deep impact upon him.
'Solitude' suggests that the figure has lost a connection they held closely, as if they are left alone without it – represents Wordsworth's relationship with Nature as an orphan?
'grave and serious' - reflects that the figure has changed – is more pragmatic and adult – perhaps even understands the death of their innocence has occurred.
'a trouble' – sense that the figure does not want to let go of their view of Nature – this realization about the world is one that saddens them, even though he cannot get rid of the truth.
Great sense of sympathy for the figure, as they have lost a sense of innocence, and it has made them extremely sad.

Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark, –
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
35 That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
40 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

Lexical Field of Light – Start of the poem – represents the beauty and joy of Nature; the light it gives is almost magical. Suggestion of oxymoron (glittering idly) represents that the naïve figure does not see the truth in the light?

Middle (line 16) – stars and the grey sky – clear representation of the beauty of Nature, and its potential dullness (to humans) – does this show our lack of understanding of Nature? Could we see the stars and their beauty without the sky to make them clear?
End of the poem – after the figure's experience of the peak, darkness sets in – sense of understanding of the threat of Nature, as well as its beauty. Might represent Wordsworth becoming a man, and realising the complexity of the world, and its shades of darkness. Nature fulfilling the role of parent to the orphaned poet.
Generates an understanding of the importance of Nature in Wordsworth's life – helps us understand that Nature is neither good nor evil, like life.

Nature also personified (Her) – Mother Nature – replacing his mother as a nurturer and carer? Parent role of raising the figure?

Message: The poem tells, through a story told by a jealous Count who had his wife killed (for treating everyone with the same amount of friendliness) how power can corrupt people into believing they are worth more than they are, and from stopping the world being a better place.

Context:

Poem loosely based on the Duke of Ferrara – 16th Century. Browning fascinated with the Renaissance – a period of intellectual revolution in art, literature and politics. Favoured those who could see beyond their life, and could create new things in the world. The Duke clearly is not one of these people.

Pronouns – first person and third person – referring to himself and his former wife.

The first person pronouns, present throughout the poem, reflect the control that the Duke seeks to have over his wife's memory – everything has to be recalled through his point of view.

After the first line, the Duchess is only mentioned through pronouns (except in line 15, when he speaks of her sitting for the painting). This suggests the lack of personal depth in their relationship, and his lack of remorse at her no longer being alive.

Reflects the distance in the relationship – as the poem develops, we see how the Duke created that distance by not speaking to his wife about his feelings – he cared more for himself and his pride than her.

Sense of resentment towards the jealous Duke.



Robert Browning
(1812–1889)

My Last Duchess

Ferrara

- 1 That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: **Fra Pandolf's hands**
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
5 Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
'Fra Pandolf' by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
10 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
15 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say 'Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much,' or 'Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat': such stuff
20 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart – how shall I say? – too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
25 Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule

Form – Dramatic Monologue – told by the Duke himself, discussing a portrait of his late wife, and his relationship. **At the beginning, the poem seems to have a light, lyrical tone** (it is in Heroic Couplets) **which contrasts sharply with the dark tone the poem takes – the Duke had his wife murdered. The form, mixed with the tone (Metre) reflects the contrast of power – those who have it often do not have the vision or compassion to use it fairly. As the poem goes on, the intention is to shock the reader, leaving them with a feeling of resentment towards the Duke, and possible those in power who hold back others.**

- 30 She rode with round the terrace – all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, – good! but thanked
Somehow – I know not how – as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd **stoop** to blame
35 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech – (which I have not) – to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, 'Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark' – and if she let
40 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
– E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to **stoop**. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
45 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
50 Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
55 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Synecdoche – part of body representing all. 'Fra Pandolf's hands'.

The Duke sees the artist, who was a friar (religious leader) as nothing but a tool for his aims – only the hands that made the painting matter. Could this reflect how selfish he is? Or could it be because of his all consuming jealousy for his wife – he only thinks of the hands because all other thoughts are on his wife?

Sense of resentment towards the jealous Duke, who is clearly self-centred.

Vocab:

Countenance – face

Earnest – honest and true

Durst – dared

Courtesy – good manners

Officious – interfering

Trifling – something unimportant

Munificence – generosity

Dowry – gift before marriage

Repetition – 'stoop' – 'bow down to'

The Duke is clearly obsessed with a sense of pride – he uses the word to show how he is above showing his anger for his wife disrespecting his name, by receiving it with as much pleasure and respect as any other gift. The addition of the adverb 'never' shows how the Duke's pride stopped him from doing the right thing – he would not lower himself to admitting he was angry, nor would he ever have allowed himself to be honest with his wife.

Sense of frustration towards the jealous Duke, who was too proud to be honest with his wife, and was so obsessed with his pride that he had her killed.

Punctuation – exclamation and question marks in the first two stanzas, and the final, not during the third, fourth and fifth. **There is irony, as the stanzas that describe the battle have no punctuation that indicates emotion or enquiry, when it would probably have been most appropriate.** Tennyson deliberately does this to draw attention away from the battle (which was a disaster) and focus the readers' emotions and questions (which are all rhetorical) on the bravery of the soldiers. Tennyson builds excitement at the start, and embeds a feeling of pride at the end of the poem. As the modern reader, we understand that Tennyson's use of punctuation is disingenuous, as he seeks to control how the reader should feel.



Alfred
Lord Tennyson
(1809–1892)

The Charge of the Light Brigade

Anaphora –
repetition of 'rode
the six hundred' –
**Tennyson keeps
focus on the soldiers,
and their bravery.**

The Anaphora
becomes Epistrophe
during the battle
(Stanza 4); lines

ending with 'six
hundred'; the loss of
the first part ('rode
the') reflects the loss
of life in the battle;

keeping the 'six
hundred' throughout
shows that the
soldiers stayed
together and did
their duty, even
though many died.

They are all one to
the reader, no
matter what
happened to them.

Sense of pride
towards the soldiers,
who were brave
and did their duty.

1 Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
5 'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
2.
10 'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier kneel
Some one had blunder'd:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
15 Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
3.
20 Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
25 Into the jaws of Hell,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

4.
Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
30 Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
35 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

5.
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
45 They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

6.
50 When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made!
55 Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

Form – Elegy – expresses lamentation or mourning over the loss of someone or something. Tennyson twists the form, which would have been expected to have a sad, sombre tone, to having a tone of celebration and pride, for the bravery and sacrifice of the soldiers. As a modern reader, we see the irony that Tennyson twists the form to change the tone, where he also twisted the facts of the battle to fit his message of patriotism, perhaps due to his responsibility, as poet laureate, to present positive images to the British public. The intention is for the reader to feel pride for the soldiers, and not feel sad or indignant over the loss of life.

Metaphor – 'jaws of Death', 'mouth of Hell';

Tennyson uses
relatable imagery to
describe the
battlefield; by using
the image of Hell
(which would have
been especially
impactful to the
Christian readers) it
creates a sense that
the battle is
enormously dangerous,
and that there is no
way the soldiers could
ever survive.

Furthermore, the image
of mouths and jaws
suggests that once the
soldiers go in, they will
be crushed, and will
not come out,
suggesting that they
were brave for just
entering the battle.
When some soldiers
do return, they seem
incredibly, impossibly
brave and heroic.
Admiration and pride
towards the soldiers'
bravery and
patriotism.

Form – Elegy – poem of lamentation – Reflects the mourning for the lost lives of the soldiers.

Partial, slant rhyme throughout – reflects the disconnect between what people thought of war, and what it ended up being for the soldiers. Might also reflect the inconsistent action and rhythm of war – it has some structure, but not the structure we expect.

Generates a sense of understanding for the reader, as they see the unexpected consequences of war – this creates a great deal of sympathy and pathos.



Wilfred
Owen
(1893–1918)

Exposure

- 1 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 ...
- 5 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,
10 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
15 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,
20 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,
25 Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.
– Is it that we are dying?

Caesura and Enjambment – seen throughout the poem – Caesura reflects the unpredictable, start-stop, nature of war. Might also reflect the continued opportunities that the soldiers have to reflect, or perhaps the disintegration of their mental health.

Enjambment reflects the endlessness of war, and the lives of the soldiers – at times when they think they should move and act, war keeps them where they are; the wait seems to go on forever, but often ends soon after.

Generates a sense of understanding for the reader, as they see the unexpected consequences of war – this creates a great deal of sympathy and pathos.

- Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires, glozed
30 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;
35 Nor ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,
For love of God seems dying.
- Tonight, this frost will fasten on this mud and us,
36 Shrivelling many hands, puckering foreheads crisp.
The burying-party, picks and shovels in shaking grasp,
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,
But nothing happens.

Anaphora – 'but nothing happens' – Repetition reinforces the monotony of war. At the start, it might seem like a relief – there is no danger. However, as the poem continues, a sense of frustration and concern sets in. At the end of the poem, the meaning might change to reflect the feeling that we have learned little from conflict and war, and we are doomed to repeat these mistakes.

Epistrophe – 'dying' – reflects the different types of dying in the poem – the soldiers are not physically dying, but the poem reveals the slow death the soldiers experience due to the mental health effects of war. As the poem continues, it might reflect their PTSD, and their slow death, and the loss of faith in God – how could their faith not fade? Generates a sense of understanding for the reader, as they see the unexpected consequences of war – this creates a great deal of sympathy and pathos.

Form – Blank Verse – single stanza – Reflects the Power and order in Nature – lack of rhyme representative of the lack of predictability from our perspective. Single stanza reflects the need for Humanity to stand together against Nature (or is against extremists/prejudice?); might also represent how the world is one, no matter what is in it? Sense of togetherness, and respect for Nature and its power.



Seamus
Heaney
(1939–2013)

Pathetic Fallacy – Giving human characteristics to Nature. Reflects the power of Nature, and creates a figure – makes it more relatable to the reader. Possible interpretation that Nature can overpower Humanity?. Sense of understanding of the Power of Nature, in that the world will reform itself, no matter what we do – sense of awe?.

Lexical Field of War – Reflects the possible violence and destructive power of Nature over Humanity – this is not a war we are winning! Also, reflects that in the face of Nature's power, we can only defend ourselves, and hope for the best – Nature is the aggressor when we want it to be. Irony of the oxymorons reflects that we cannot understand Nature, let alone defend ourselves against it. Sense of understanding of the Power of Nature, in that the world will reform itself, no matter what we do – sense of awe?.

Storm on the Island

- 1 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
- 5 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
- 10 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
- 15 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.

Oxymoron – words placed next to each other with different meanings – highlights difference, creates contrast or sharpened intended effect. Reflects the great serenity and peace in Nature, along with its unpredictability, and capacity to destroy; Nature can be both live-giving and destructive, often with little warning. Sense of understanding of the Power of Nature, in that the world will reform itself, no matter what we do – sense of awe?.

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Caesura and enjambment – scattered throughout; Caesura represents the times that the soldier (and the reader) can pause to think about things – the random placement tells us how unpredictable war is. Enjambment – reflects the soldier's running, creating breathlessness with the reader. Sympathy and Empathy.

Metaphor – the soldier has no power or choice in the battle – he is being told what to do by his generals (the hand). The clock could be the government or God/Fate – the soldier does not understand why anyone would put him in this position, or allow him to be in this position; the adjective 'cold' represents that the decision-makers have no compassion or care for human life. Sympathy because of the lack of choice given to the soldier, and because of what will probably happen to him.



Ted
Hughes
(1930–1998)

Bayonet Charge

- 1 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
- 5 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 –
- 10 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
- 15 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,
- 20 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.

Form – Free Verse; no rhyme or Prosody; this reflects that like the poem, war is not structured, it is chaotic; the soldiers would have thought that war was organised and well-led – like the poem, it does not match out expectations. Sense of remorse or sadness; sympathy; pathos

Simile – creates relatable imagery of the soldier's fear during the conflict. The pride, represented by the 'patriotic tear' has become fear and panic, and has taken over his feelings; the simile suggests that his new fear (which was inspiration before) is weighing him down – this will slow him down, and make him an easier target. Sympathy for the soldier; indignation towards the government for putting the soldiers in this situation.

Form – Dramatic Monologue – told from the point of view of a figure who has taken part in a conflict (in this case, the Gulf War – against Iraq for invading Kuwait). The form allows the poem to have a personal tone, as the personal pronouns make the figure's experiences seem authentic and real; also, the conversational tone of the poem, with broken sentences, easy to understand diction, and with the lack of rhyme and prosody, makes the account seem more realistic, as a soldier would not necessarily consider such things when reporting their memories. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier as the poem progresses/sense of immersion in their story.

Antanacsis – 'bloody' – Final line of the poem summarises the figure's thought process – he feels a sense of frustration towards the victim, possibly because he didn't think he should have killed him, or because he is frustrated that his death has haunted him forever (perhaps he is exhausted by the memory of it); second meaning reflects the soldier's sense of guilt – he feels responsible for what he did (blood is a metaphor for guilt here), despite three soldiers opening fire. Allusion to Macbeth – sense that the guilt will never leave them. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier at the end of the poem.

Personification of the bullet. Shows the deep connection that the soldier has with the death – feels responsible, as his bullets have taken his life away; verb 'rip' suggests that the soldier views his actions as violent and savage, possibly unnecessary. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier when we learn what happened, and concern for his mental wellbeing.

Juxtaposition between the actual act and the impact. When describing the event, it is very simple, colloquial and matter-of-fact. However, more evocative imagery is used when discussing the trauma and impact of the event – this shows the potentially soul-altering effect of the soldier carrying out his job – his account as a soldier differs greatly from his trauma as a person. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier when we learn what happened, and concern for his mental wellbeing.

In Media Res – starting the poem in the middle of the story. Reinforces the conversational style of the poem, whilst also offering hints that these traumatic experiences have been felt by the soldier many times before. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier when we learn what happened, and concern for his mental wellbeing.



Simon
Armitage
(b. 1963)

Remains

- 1 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.
- 5 Well myself and somebody else and somebody else
are all of the same mind,
so all three of us open fire.
Three of a kind all letting fly, and I swear
- I see every round as it rips through his life –
- 10 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
15 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.
- 20 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 –
- 25 he's here in my head when I close my eyes,
dug in behind enemy lines,
not left for dead in some distant, sun-stunned, sand-smothered land
or six-feet-under in desert sand,

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

Caesura and Enjambment – throughout the poem. The placement reflects the conversational style of the poem, making it seem more realistic. However, Caesura on line 4, 9, 13, 17, 18, 22, 23 reflects the soldier's thoughts and guilt – when he pauses to think about what happened, he cannot get rid of his doubts about what he did. Could the enjambment, which has been intentionally placed by the poet, reflect the endless memories and guilt of the soldier? Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier as the poem progresses/sense of immersion in their story.

Isocolon – 'Blink/Sleep/Dream' – reflects that at all of these times when the figure is supposed to be resting or thinking of other things, he is haunted by the memory of what happened – as he goes deeper into the unconscious, his guilt grows (when he is awake, the man is a criminal, when he sleeps, doubt creeps in, and when he dreams, he sees the horror of what he did). Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier at the end of the poem, as well as a surprising level of sympathy for the criminal who was killed.

Metaphor – 'Blood-shadow' – Powerful imagery of the memory of the victim – represents the long-lasting memory and impact that his death has had on the figure – imagery of the shadow reflects the absence of light (life) that the soldier is responsible for; blood represents his guilt. That he has to walk over the place repeatedly reinforces his guilt, as well as foreshadowing the mental revisiting that the soldier will experience when he is home. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the soldier at the end of the poem, as we can see how his mental trauma developed.

Form – Dramatic Monologue – told from the point of view of a parent, who lost their son at war. Creates a personal tone, making the poem more authentic and relatable. The Dramatic Monologue allows the reader to understand the emotions that parents who lose their children at war. Lack of rhyme scheme and Metre – might reflect the disappointed, emotional state of the figure – they have no care for any recognition of structure, such is their grief.

Generates a sense of empathy, as the poem is relatable. Sense of sympathy for parents who lose their children at war.

Similes – ‘treasure chest’ – reflects

how naïve she sees her child as being; they thought the world was full of adventure and joy, but like the riches in a chest, they were shallow and meant nothing – greed for glory and ambition led to disaster.

‘like a wishbone’ - Creates a sense of hopelessness – the figure

understands that there is no hope for their child to return, so they use an image of luck and superstition.

Sense of fruitlessness and fragility – they would be happy to sacrifice themselves, but there is no-one to grant their wish; they are emotionally fragile enough to easily be pulled apart.

Poppies

1 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,
5 spasm of paper red, disrupting a blockade
of yellow bias binding around your blazer.

10 Sellotape banded 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
15 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
20 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,

25 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.

30 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
35 your playground voice catching on the wind.

Generates a sense of empathy, as the poem is relatable. Sense of sympathy for parents who lose their children at war.

Alliteration – Adds pace, and draws attention to the phrase in the first stanza.

The example represents the anger and frustration that the figure feels – they feel like they lost their child emotionally, to patriotic loyalty, before they lost them physically.

Adds pace, which might reflect how difficult it is for them to come to terms with why they lost their child – the rush it out, adding urgency, and possibly a venomous tone, as they lost their child.

Sense of sympathy for parents who lose their children at war.

Caesura – Pauses in the middle of the line make the poem seem more authentic, and relatable. Pauses might reflect how difficult it is to tell the story. Might also reflect the wish and desire to pause, and reflect, in the memory of their son.

Enjambment – makes the poem seem more realistic, as if a story is being told, not a poem.

Might also reflect the endless grief of the figure – their life has lost a part of its structure and flow due to their loss.

Generates a sense of empathy, as the poem is relatable. Sense of sympathy for parents who lose their children at war.

Message: The poem shows the hidden impacts of war on those who experience it at all levels, and the lack of care that those in power, and back home, have for those who suffer at war, when their lives are comfortable.

Context:

Carol Ann Duffy is a poet who shows truths about hidden parts of the world.

Her friend was a photographer, who was tasked with capturing images of war – she wanted to unlock the truth of what they experienced.

Form – Dramatic Monologue – told from the point of view of a figure whose job is to photograph images of war for a newspaper. The form allows the poem to feel personal, as we see the juxtaposition between the development of the photographs at home, and the memories of what he has seen. This sharpens the sense of tragedy in the poem, as well as making it more relatable to the reader. Sense of deepening Pathos towards the photographer as the poem progresses/sense of immersion in their story.

Juxtaposition – images of war with images from home. The photographer reflects on how easy those back home have it, and how little difficulty they face in their lives.

This contrast reflects the figure's frustration in the final stanza of the poem – the editor selects the best photos, without caring for the 'agonies' of the people; the reader feels sadness between their relaxed Sunday morning routine – reflects the hypocrisy of those back home – they do not really care, and do not understand like the photographer does. Sense of sympathy towards the photographer, as his frustration is understandable; sense of indignation towards developed societies for not paying proper attention to suffering?



Carol Ann Duffy
(b. 1955)

War Photographer

- 1 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
5 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
10 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,
15 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
20 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.

Metaphors – create relatable imagery throughout the poem.

'Spools of suffering set out in ordered rows' – represents the film from his camera, with images of death and destruction. Imagery creates idea of dead bodies, buried in a cemetery.

'All flesh is grass' – represents how his memories of war are filled with death and destruction – he seemed to walk on the bodies of the dead.

'half-formed ghost' – represents the photograph being developed; might reflect memories of the people he has seen die and suffer – perhaps they are half-formed because he never truly understood them, so cannot know them – does he feel guilt?

'a hundred agonies' – represents the mass of suffering that the photographer has captured – he carries all of them with him every day.

Sense of deepening Pathos towards the photographer as they have experienced such awful things.

Form – Free Verse – the poem seems to form no fixed rules of rhyme or prosody (structure). This might reflect the endless possibilities that paper has – it can have any form, and no form. Perhaps it also represents that the world as it is, though it seems to, has no real structure; is this because it will be reformed anyway? Sense of understanding of the Power of Nature, in that the world will reform itself, no matter what we do – sense of awe?.

Conceit – Paper – represents all the uses of paper – it can be used to record great thoughts, memories, information (maps), records of sales and even us – paper, like humanity, has so many incredible qualities, and has been so flexible in how it has adapted to the world. Perhaps it also represents how things were simpler in the past, with more significant things being recorded – comment on how humanity has lost sight of this bigger picture? Dharker seems to be more positive about paper's ability to record great events – have we lost our way? Are we too consumed with shallow, materialistic gain, than we should be about moving the world forward? Reflect on humanity's power to influence the world – perhaps desire a move back to the past?



Imtiaz
Dharker
(b. 1954)

Tissue

- 1 Paper that lets the light
shine through, this
is what could alter things.
Paper thinned by age or touching.
- 5 the kind you find in well-used books,
the back of the Koran, where a hand
has written in the names and histories,
who was born to whom,
- 10 the height and weight, who
died where and how, on which sepia date,
pages smoothed and stroked and turned
transparent with attention.
- 15 If buildings were paper, I might
feel their drift, see how easily
they fall away on a sigh, a shift
in the direction of the wind.
- 20 Maps too. The sun shines through
their borderlines, the marks
that rivers make, roads,
railtracks, mountainfolds,
- Fine slips from grocery shops
that say how much was sold
and what was paid by credit card
might fly our lives like paper kites.

- 25 An architect could use all this,
place layer over layer, luminous
script over numbers over line,
and never wish to build again with brick
or block, but let the daylight break
30 through capitals and monoliths,
through the shapes that pride can make,
find a way to trace a grand design
- 35 of paper smoothed and stroked
and thinned to be transparent,
turned into your skin.

Punctuation – consistent Caesura and Enjambment– Lines flow in an almost natural way from one to the next – does this reflect that the power of Humanity flows from generation to generation, or to each part of the world? Caesura creates opportunities for the reader to pause and reflect with the poet, building up the effective imagery and ideas – possible irony that the poet builds up their message in the same way they say paper can be used? Reader is supposed to realise their role in the world (they should try and move the world on, rather than become obsessed with material things) and try to enjoy it.

Lexical field of construction – ‘architect’; ‘brick or block’; ‘grand design’– Contrast between what we use now – imagery is simple and linear – nothing special can be made – is this what our society creates? By using the paper (humanity’s potential and ability), amazing things could be created – allusion to God (‘grand design with living tissue’) – are we not fulfilling our divine purpose? Reader is supposed to realise the potential they have, and that their current world is not using it.

Quartets (before final line) – Does this reflect the orthodox shape of paper – it has remained broadly the same through time (like Humanity) – though the structure is the same, the potential for use is almost endless. Final line converts the image clearly into us – we have all of the potential and greatness of paper (humanity) – it is what we do with it now that counts. Reader is supposed to realise the potential they have, and that their current world is not using it.

Form – Free Verse – no fixed rhyme, line length, or prosody – Might reflect the lack of structure in the life of someone who has emigrated, as they are without the structures that home often provides. Three stanzas – each seems to reflect a part of the poet - the memory of their life before, how they carried memories with them, and how their memories are held even in their new life. Perhaps this strengthens the resolve of the figure not to let go of their memories?

Generates a sense of sympathy for those who have had to flee their homes; perhaps allows us to empathise with them?

Synaesthesia – Using more than one sense – Imagery relates to the positive memories of the city. The memory of their previous life is so strong that it has spread across their senses, emphasizing their love for what they no longer have.

Reflection of sunlight and the Synaesthesia might also create a sense of confusion, possibly due to the child-like way in which the figure describes their memories. Perhaps the poet is suggesting that the figure doesn't quite understand the reasons why they left, or the reality of their life – Synaesthesia might reflect this mixed-up, confused, state of mind.

Respect for the figure, as their love has remained despite the trauma of having to leave.

Ellipsis – '...' – creates tension as a cliffhanger – starts the poem in the first line – creates the image of a fairy tale – does this indicate from the very beginning that the figure has embraced their imagination over convention? Might also create a sense of loss – the ellipsis tails off, which creates a sense of loss – perhaps the city which they loved no longer exists – they have to go to their memories for the city.

Sense of sympathy for the figure, as they are desperate to remain positive about their city.



Carol
Rumens
(b. 1944)

The Emigrée

- 1 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.
- 5 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
- 10 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.
- 15 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;
- 20 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,
- 30 and my shadow falls as evidence of sunlight.

Juxtaposition – placing contrasting ideas in the same line or sentence – Consistent juxtaposition of how the city is remembered by the figure, and the reality of the situation – links to the conflict between Imagination and Convention. In the figure's mind, they only remember the city as a positive place, but Convention (reality) wants to show them that it is not what they remembered – they refuse to do this, as to do so would be too painful. In the final stanza, this conflict becomes defiance – the figure's sadness at the reality of her city, which they become aware of now, and the 'shadow' shows that there was light, after all.

Sense of sympathy for the figure, and respect as they have not left their positive memories behind.

Epistrophe – ending lines with the same word/phrase – 'sunlight' – Serves as a reminder of the figures determination to remember their city in the most positive way – the city will only ever be remembered in a positive way.

Creates a sense of defiance – as the reasons to change their memories grow (reality in Stanza Two, memory of the oppression in Stanza Three), the figure refuses to give up, and always ends remembering the positives.

Sense of sympathy for the figure, and respect as they have not left their positive memories behind.

Anthropomorphism – giving non-human feature human characteristics – city as a person – The city seems to be like a defenceless child (this creates a sense of indignation towards those who have corrupted it), and the figures takes pleasure in looking after it, and giving it the love they think it deserves.

Possible mixture of roles – as a person, and almost as a child/animal - does this reflect that the city needs to be taken care of, or of the confused state of the figure – they will use almost any image that will present the city in a positive light? Final stanza is a dream – confusion/desperation??

Sense of sympathy for the figure, as they are desperate to remain positive about their city.

Form – Free Verse – the poem is supposed to be read in whatever way the reader chooses – they decide on the times at which they pause – reflects Agard's wish for a society that is allowed to choose for itself. Rhyme that exists gives the poem a lyrical, rhythmic quality, reflecting Agard's Creole background – occasionally creates the rhythm of a nursery rhyme – is it just pleasing, or is it sending the message that this unfairness has been in place since birth?

In stanzas about the figures of colour from history – the shortened line length speeds up the reading, making these sections have a greater sense of urgency and rhythm – perhaps it reflects the huge difference between their history and what we are taught? Perhaps it is to show the rhythm and beauty in their history, or that he has to squeeze in as much as he can in the short space society will allow him?

Generates a sense of indignation towards those in society who are holding us back from all of history – sense of pride for them.

Anaphora – repetition of the opening word of a line or stanza 'dem tell me' – As it is written in Agard's Creole dialect, it immediately creates a sense of distance between those in power in society and the figure of the poem. Use of the pronouns also reflects that 'dem' (third person) and 'me' (first person) are in an unequal relationship – we are only taught what those in power want us to know, not all of history.

Anaphora is broken up by repetition of 'never' – 'but dem never tell me' – this reflects the poet's indignation at having the history of people of colour withheld from him – could it also suggest that a change is not something he can see happening?

Generates a sense of indignation towards those in society who are holding us back from all of history – sense of pride for them.



John
Agard
(b. 1949)

Checking Out Me History

1 Dem tell me
Dem tell me
Wha dem want to tell me

Bandage up me eye with me own history

5 Blind me to me own identity

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

10 Toussaint
a slave
with vision
lick back
Napoleon
battalion

15 and first Black
Republic born
Toussaint de thorn
to de French

20 Toussaint de beacon
of de Haitian Revolution

Dem tell me bout de man who discover de balloon
and de cow who jump over de moon

Dem tell me bout de dish ran away with de spoon

25 but dem never tell me bout Nanny de maroon

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

30

Dem tell me bout Lord Nelson and Waterloo
but dem never tell me bout Shaka de great Zulu

Dem tell me bout Columbus and 1492

35 but what happen to de Caribs and de Arawaks too

Dem tell me bout Florence Nightingale and she lamp
and how Robin Hood used to camp

Dem tell me bout ole King Cole was a merry ole soul
but dem never tell me bout Mary Seacole

40 From Jamaica
she travel far
to the Crimean War
she volunteer to go
and even when de British said no
she still brave the Russian snow

45 a healing star
among the wounded
a yellow sunrise
to the dying

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

Enjambment – no punctuation in the poem – Poet allows the reader to place their own pauses where they wish – gives the reader the power that society has never given them. The poet wants to make it clear that even though those in power in society have tried to enforce their own view on history

Lack of ending of the lines might reflect the endless unfairness and discrimination that has been in place in how history is taught - end of the poem leads the reader to want to take on his fight, as they are given the chance to.

Generates a sense of indignation towards those in society who are holding us back from all of history – sense of pride for them.

Metaphors – Agard compares figures of colour from history, using positive, relatable imagery.

For each figure, imagery relating to light and freedom is used – these are figures who provided goodness to the world, who healed others, and inspired them to follow. Relatable imagery helps the reader, who has not been allowed to learn about these figures, to understand the power and light that they brought to lives.

Generates a sense of indignation towards those in society who are holding us back from all of history – sense of pride for them.

Form – Dramatic Monologue – figure is the child of a pilot in the Imperial Air Force who was supposed to be a Kamikaze pilot, but returned home. Form is represented through a lack of rhyme and metre – this makes the poem's story seem more realistic and relatable. As the poem develops, we see that she is thinking of her mother's retelling of the story, then telling his story in her own words (the *italics*), which makes the poem seem even more realistic and authentic. When reading, the intention is for the reader to feel a sense of Pathos towards the pilot, who came home and lost all honour, and sympathy for the figure, who has had to deal with the shame of her father's actions.

Lists – in Stanza One, reflecting the things he took with him; in Stanza 5, all of the sea creatures left at home. The lists reflect the different paths of the men in the family – the first list reflects all of the material things that got the father to be a pilot. The second list shows all of the natural bounty (good things) in his past that, when compared, seem more magical than the items that convinced him to be a kamikaze pilot. When reading, the intention is for the reader to feel a sense of sympathy for the pilot – the beauty of Nature, which he is unwilling to give up, is much more powerful than the items that were given to him to convince him to die.

Caesura – throughout the poem – particularly in Stanza 4, when the figure speaks to her own children. Gives the poem a more natural flow, making the poem seem authentic. Might also reflect the pauses and reflections the figure has – she has to support her mother's decision to disown the father as she is honourable, but struggles with her love for him. Final two lines suggest that this is something she thinks about often. When reading, the intention is for the reader to feel a sense of sympathy for the figure, as she is conflicted about how she should feel towards both of her parents.



Beatrice
Garland
(b. 1938)

Kamikaze

1 Her father embarked at sunrise
with a flask of water, a samurai sword
in the cockpit, a shaven head
full of powerful incantations
5 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
10 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
15 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
20 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

25 - 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
30 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
35 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
40 was no longer the father we loved.*
And sometimes, she said, he must have wondered
which had been the better way to die.

Metaphor – 'the dark prince' It is unclear where the image comes from, as it suggests power and danger. It might come from their society, where tuna is respected as a powerful creature of the sea; it might also be from the perspective of the mother, who blames the powerful memories of the fish in the sea for convincing the father to change his mind. When reading, the intention is for the reader to feel a sense of sympathy for the pilot – the beauty of Nature, which he is unwilling to give up, is much more powerful than the items that were given to him to convince him to die.

Simile – 'strung out like bunting' relatable image which allows the reader to picture the distance away the pilot is from the boats. To the mother, they are images of celebration, thanking the father for his sacrifice. Perhaps to the father, he interpreted them as invitations to come home, and not die as he should have. When reading, the intention is for the reader to feel a sense of sympathy for the pilot, and indignation towards the mother, for her feeling of shame at the pilot's decision not to die.