



Wyvern College
English Department

Revision Booklet

English Literature
Power & Conflict Poetry
Key Quotations

How to use this booklet:

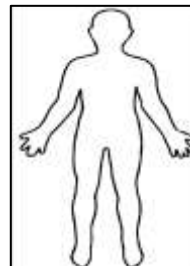
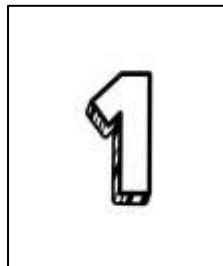
This booklet has been designed to provide you with important quotations you need to learn for each poem in the *Power and Conflict Anthology*.

Alongside these, the English department has provided some suggested analysis for each quotation, which we also advise you learn.

If you are aiming for Grade 6+, we recommend these quotations act as a starting point and you supplement these with ones of your own. The more judicious quotations you can draw on in the exam, the more focused and relevant your answer will be in response to task.

You can learn quotations in a variety of ways:

- **Cue cards:** write the quotation on one side and the accompanying analysis on the other. Ask someone to test you or test yourself.
- **Learn by rote:** repeat quotations over and over until you remember them.
- **Fill in the gap:** write out quotations with key words missing then challenge yourself to fill them in. This is more effective when someone else creates the gaps for you.
- **Dual coding:** draw images to help you remember the wording of each quotation e.g.



Quote: **'We are members of one body'** (Inspector – linked to Socialism)

Focus on memorising a small number of quotations initially. Once you are confident these are fully memorised, move on to a new set. However, to ensure you do not forget the quotations you have already learned, you must also revisit each one frequently.

Top Tip:

- ❖ Begin learning quotations for poems and themes you are **least** confident with and have the most knowledge gaps for. You will need more time to learn these, so start with the difficult ones first!

Introduction

The **AQA Power and Conflict anthology** explores themes of power, war, nature, identity, and human experience. These poems reflect the complexities of conflict, both personal and societal, and the effects on individuals and communities.

In your English Literature Paper 2 exam, you'll analyse one poem and compare it to another. Focus on **themes, language, structure, and context**. Practice linking poems using comparative phrases (e.g., 'Similarly,' 'Likewise,' 'In contrast,' 'Whereas').

Theme	Relevant Poems
Power of Humans	Ozymandias, My Last Duchess, London
Power of Nature	Storm on the Island, The Prelude, Exposure, Kamikaze, Prelude
Conflict and War	Bayonet Charge, Exposure, Charge of the Light Brigade, Exposure, Poppies, Remains
Memory and Trauma	Poppies, Remains, War Photographer, Kamikaze, Emigree, Prelude
Identity and Legacy	Tissue, Checking Out Me History, Emigree

Suggested essay structure:

Introduction:

- set out a **clear argument** in response to the question.
- **briefly summarise** what each poem is about, explaining **how they convey ideas** about the theme. Is this **similar or different**?
- Include reference to the **poet** and/or the **context** of each poem and why this is **significant to the theme**.

Main body:

In the main body of your essay, you will want to deal with both poems simultaneously, ideally comparing them within the same paragraph. Your paragraphs should lead with your response to the question (ideas), then supported with evidence from the poems (quotes/poets' methods). Your paragraphs could take the following structure:

- **Comparative statement in response to the question** e.g. *Both poets suggest that war is futile, and the consequences of conflict are far reaching.*
- **Poem 1:** Which methods does the poet use to convey this idea (language/structure/form)? Provide evidence using subject terminology, then analyse the intended effect on the reader.
- [Use a **comparative word** e.g. similarly, contrastingly, in contrast, likewise etc.]
- **Poem 2:** what methods does the poet use to convey this idea? Provide evidence using subject terminology, then analyse the intended effect on the reader.

- Provide a **comparative statement that summarises the poets' views** of the theme as explored in their poem.

You should aim to make at least 3 detailed points of comparison (this does not necessarily equate to 3 paragraphs).

Conclusion:

- How does each poet intend the reader to respond to key ideas?
- You might give a personal response here and evaluate which poet is more successful in conveying key ideas.

Academic writing:

- ✓ Embed quotations seamlessly (avoid using the word 'quote')
- ✓ Use a range of comparative words and phrases.
- ✓ Use a range of analytical phrases: this emphasises, this conveys, this mirrors, this reflects, this denotes, this highlights, this amplifies etc.
- ✓ Good analysis will **'say something, then say something else'**, which might be a developmental point, but could be an alternative interpretation.

Mark scheme

Mark/ Level	A0	Typical Features	✓
Level 6 <i>Convincing critical analysis and exploration</i> 26 – 30 marks	A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Critical, exploratory comparison ▪ Judicious use of precise references to support interpretation(s) 	
	A02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of writer's methods with subject terminology used judiciously ▪ Exploration of effects of writer's methods to create meanings 	
	A03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context/text/task 	
Level 5 <i>Thoughtful, developed consideration</i> 21 – 25 marks	A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thoughtful, developed comparison ▪ Apt references integrated into interpretation(s) 	
	A02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examination of writer's methods with subject terminology used effectively to support consideration of methods ▪ Examination of effects of writer's methods to create meanings 	
	A03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thoughtful consideration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by examination of detailed links between context/text/task 	
Level 4 <i>Clear understanding</i> 16 – 20 marks	A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear comparison ▪ Effective use of references to support explanation 	
	A02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear explanation of writer's methods with appropriate use of relevant subject terminology ▪ Understanding of effects of writer's methods to create meanings 	
	A03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear understanding of ideas/perspectives/ contextual factors shown by specific links between context/text/task 	
Level 3 <i>Explained, structured comments</i> 11 – 15 marks	A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some explained comparison ▪ References used to support a range of relevant comments 	
	A02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explained/relevant comments on writer's methods with some relevant use of subject terminology ▪ Identification of effects of writer's methods to create meanings 	
	A03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some understanding of implicit ideas/ perspectives/contextual factors shown by links between context/text/task 	
Level 2 <i>Supported, relevant comments</i> 6 – 10 marks	A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supported comparison ▪ Comments on references 	
	A02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of writers' methods ▪ Some reference to subject terminology 	
	A03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some awareness of implicit ideas/contextual factors 	
Level 1 <i>Simple, explicit comments</i> 1 – 5 marks	A01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple comments relevant to comparison ▪ Reference to relevant details 	
	A02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness of writer making deliberate choices ▪ Possible reference to subject terminology 	
	A03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple comments on explicit ideas/ contextual factors 	
0 marks	Nothing worthy of credit/ nothing written		

Ozymandias



Context: Shelley, a Romantic poet, critiques the arrogance of rulers and explores the impermanence of human achievements. Inspired by a statue of Pharaoh Ramesses II.

Themes: power, pride, nature, time, legacy.

Key quotations:

‘Two vast and trunkless legs of stone / Stand in the desert.’

- **Analysis:** The ruined statue emphasises decay and the fragility of human achievements - all that’s left of the Pharaoh’s legacy is crumbled stone. Ozymandias’ egotism and misplaced belief that his memory would live forever are ironic as nature has seen to it that both things have been eroded. The alliteration emphasises how out of place the remains of Ozymandias’ statue are in the natural landscape of the desert.
- **Methods:** alliteration, symbolism.

‘Sneer of cold command’

- **Analysis:** The use of alliteration reinforces Ozymandias’ attitude as callous and unsympathetic. The noun 'sneer' depicts the condescending, haughty and arrogant look on Ozymandias' statue. The harsh “s” sound could also symbolise hissing – the way he may have spoken to people – hissing commands at them in a dangerous almost snake-like way. This quote shows Ozymandias was arrogant, conceited, and egoist. He behaved condescendingly with others. He wanted everyone to bow, fawn, and obey his orders.
- **Methods:** alliteration

‘My name is Ozymandias, kings of kings’

- **Analysis:** Ozymandias openly criticises leaders and their ability to rule. This suggests he views himself as omnipotent – a ruler of all people and other kings. ‘King of Kings’ - a phrase taken from Biblical language - could imply that his subsequent obscurity was a punishment from God who Ozymandias appears to compare his own power to. The harsh ‘k’ emphasises his misplaced authority; he sounds demanding, forcing power over others. It’s almost like the people are being spat on and showered by sheer intimidation.
- **Methods:** alliteration, symbolism

Comparison Opportunities:

- **My Last Duchess** (Arrogance of rulers/those in power).
- **Storm on the Island** (Nature’s power vs. human effort).

My Last Duchess



Context: The poem is based on the actual Duke of Ferrara (Alfonso II) who held the title from 1559 – 1597 and whose wife, Lucrezia de' Medici, died under suspicious circumstances when she was just 16 years old. In the poem, he is telling the messenger of his potential new wife about his late wife.

Themes: power, pride, control, gender roles, conflict, jealousy.

Key quotations:

'That's my last Duchess painted on the wall / Looking as if she were alive'

- **Analysis:** The Duke saw her as a possession when she was alive and proudly flaunts her painting now she's dead. It reveals his desire of controlling others. He is proud of how realistic the painting is, but it also acts as a reminder of what happens to people who cross him. The Duke wants the messenger to know how much people will do to please him and serves as a warning to his new Duchess.
- **Methods:** possessive pronouns, dramatic irony, ominous tone

'I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together'

- **Analysis:** The Duke nonchalantly confesses to having the last Duchess murdered – he does not fear the consequences because he feels he's above punishment. The sibilance of "smiles stopped" sounds spiteful and echoes "same smile" from earlier in the poem when he's explaining how it annoyed him that she smiled at other people. It shows his obsession with her and how closely she was being watched by him. It feels almost mocking to mention her smile again and reinforces that this was her downfall in his eyes. He seems almost triumphant that he won, and she got her comeuppance.
- **Methods:** sibilance, motif

'Notice Neptune, though, / Taming a sea-horse'

- **Analysis:** The Duke sees similarities between himself and Neptune (God of the sea) – the verb "taming" has connotations of dominance and implies submission by someone or something wild and free. The 'seahorse' could symbolise the last Duchess who he controlled in both life and death. Ironically, the reader (and the messenger) sees the Duke very differently to how he thinks he's presenting himself. The last word of the poem is 'me!' highlighting his inflated sense of self – he brings focus back to him and his possessions and reinforces the idea that his last duchess was just another thing for him to own.
- **Methods:** metaphor, symbolism, alliteration

Comparison Opportunities:

- **Ozymandias** (Pride, control, legacy, power of man, misuse of power).
- **London** (Oppression, misuse of power, power of institutions).

London



Context: The poem tells the story of a speaker walking through the city of London and noticing suffering all around them. Blake explores the theme of misuse of power - he wrote the poem to illustrate how London, the city he loved, was changing beyond recognition due to its industrialisation. He also wanted to show how many people living in the city were being forgotten by those with wealth and power.

Themes: conflict, poverty, control, misuse of power, oppression

Key quotations:

'Marks of weakness, marks of woe'

- **Analysis:** This reveals the people of London are unhappy with the order imposed on them, nor with the social constraints that they cannot escape. The noun 'mark' has a dual meaning: to notice something, but also to physically imprint something. The impact of living in this corrupt place is having a noticeable impact on the people there. This creates a melancholy tone. "Mark" could also mean the lines of sadness, over-work and poverty in the faces of the people the poet meets. Symbolic of the injustice of the poor after the industrial revolution caused the loss of multiple jobs.
- **Methods:** repetition, alliteration, narrative voice

'The mind-forged manacles I hear'

- **Analysis:** Represents the inner conflict of the people of London who are trapped in their own minds, controlled by a corrupt government and a 'black'ning church' that keeps the poor people poor. It portrays the idea of self-limitation and learned hopelessness. 'Manacles' has connotations of slavery, oppression, and victimisation, suggesting that Blake feels that London is oppressing its residents, but the use of 'mind-forg'd' suggests that the people have the choice to escape, and yet do not.
- **Methods:** repetition, alliteration, narrative voice

'And blights with plagues the marriage hearse'

- **Analysis:** The sense that the existence of young prostitutes in the city is destroying the institution of marriage. The noun 'Blight' is the notion of something that frustrates plans or hopes. The juxtaposition between marriage, which has connotations of new beginnings, joy and happiness, and 'hearse' (the end of the life and grief) shows how little hope there is for the poverty-stricken people of London to break free of physical and mental constraints
- **Methods:** repetition, alliteration, narrative voice

Comparison Opportunities:

- **Checking Out Me History** (Oppression, misuse of power, loss of identity).
- **War Photographer** (Impact of suffering, mental conflict).

Bayonet Charge



Context: The poem describes the thoughts and behaviours of a soldier during battle in World War I. The poem vividly portrays the intense fear, confusion, and adrenaline of a soldier as he charges towards the enemy with a bayonet (a shotgun with a dagger/sword at the end of it).

Themes: conflict, war, violence, death, loss of identity, patriotism

Key quotations:

‘Bullets smacking the belly out of the air –‘

- **Analysis:** The onomatopoeia is used for to create an alarming effect. The verb ‘smacking’ symbolises a full-frontal assault, leading to the shock and confusion the soldier feels after this attack. The air is personified as losing its breath to the violence around it. Overall, the image creates highlights the visceral nature of war and the ever-present dangers the soldiers are exposed to.
- **Methods:** personification, onomatopoeia

‘Threw up a yellow hare that rolled like a flame’

- **Analysis:** The hare could be a metaphor for the soldier who has realised he is being a coward (yellow was a colour used to symbolise cowardice); he will need to fight as he has been trained if he wants to survive. The adjective yellow could also symbolise the dirty yellow colour of mustard gas drifting across the field. The hare might also represent fear, weakness, and vulnerability – the battle has forced the hare for its hiding place in the field, much like the soldier from the trench. The noun ‘flame’ symbolises the “fire” within him like a rush of adrenaline – as he makes the decision to fight or take flight.
- **Methods:** metaphor, symbolism, simile

‘His terror’s touchy dynamite’

- **Analysis:** The final line implies the soldier is about to lose control of his emotions. His fear seems to have become a weapon; he is driven by his ‘terror’, and this is what is driving him towards the enemy. The alliterative ‘t’ and the punchy ‘d’ create a phrase that sounds like a repeated punch as though the language itself is ready to attack. The ‘t’ sound could also represent his fear, as if the slightest touch will make him jump. Or represent the time ticking of a bomb (dynamite). “Dynamite” also represents the explosiveness of the weapons.
- **Methods:** alliteration, metaphor

Comparison Opportunities

- **Charge of the Light Brigade** (Heroism vs. futility, consequences of conflict).
- **Exposure** (Suffering in war, individual experiences, mental and physical conflict).

Extract from *The Prelude*



Context: A Romantic poet reflects on childhood and nature. This extract from a much larger poem explores a boy's awe and fear of nature's power, showing the relationship between humanity and the natural world.

Themes: Power of nature, fear, childhood, identity.

Key quotations:

'It was an act of stealth / And troubled pleasure'

- **Analysis:** The boy knows he shouldn't be stealing the boat but can't resist the temptation to row it on the 'glittering' lake. He gets 'pleasure' from being surrounded by nature and almost seeks to show his power over it as suggested by the noun 'stealth'. The oxymoron 'troubled pleasure' foreshadows later events when the boy is confronted by the power of nature and realises his own significance in the face of it.
- **Methods:** oxymoron, noun

'A huge peak, black and huge'

- **Analysis:** When the boy is confronted by a 'huge peak' the mood changes and nature becomes both frightening and awe-inspiring. The colour imagery of 'black' represents the darker, powerful side of nature, one the boy hasn't seen before and is clearly disturbed by. The repetition of 'huge' emphasises the boy's insignificance to the mighty natural world around him.
- **Methods:** repetition, colour imagery

'There hung a darkness, call it solitude'

- **Analysis:** The boy's experience leaves a lasting impact, highlighting nature's power to evoke fear and reflection. The noun 'solitude' emphasises the boy's individual experience which has altered the way he thinks about and interacts with nature. The black of the peak has left an impression of 'darkness' on the boy – we no longer see any of the light imagery from the first part of the poem.
- **Methods:** repetition, colour imagery

Comparison Opportunities

- **Storm on the Island** (Power of nature).
- **Exposure** (Nature's overwhelming impact, individual experience, mental conflict).

Exposure



Context: Owen, a WWI soldier, reflects on the physical and emotional suffering of soldiers during trench warfare, emphasising the harshness of war and nature. Owen highlights some of the less considered issues of war: the boredom, the ongoing suffering and the sense of hopelessness.

Themes: war, power of nature, suffering, futility

Key quotations:

‘Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knife / us...’

- **Analysis:** The wind is personified as a murderer. The winds have no mercy, and the soldiers feel as if they are being stabbed with cold. This image links to being stabbed with real bayonets in battle. The soldiers’ brains ‘ache’ with both cold and, possibly, the extreme fatigue, loneliness, and despair that they all felt. Nature is depicted as the enemy, more lethal than the opposing army.
- **Methods:** personification, sibilance

‘Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence. Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow’

- **Analysis:** The alliterative ‘s’ sounds (sibilance) mimic the sound of the bullets streaking through the air. It could also be sharp intakes of breath of men in shock. It could also mimic the sound of shivering as these men are freezing to death. The bullets are described as ‘less deadly’ than the snow. People at home in Britain would have been shocked to hear that their brave soldiers were being killed by harsh conditions rather than combat. The image of the air ‘shuddering black’ with snow contrasts with joyful images of Christmas back home in England.
- **Methods:** personification, sibilance

‘But nothing happens’

- **Analysis:** This refrain emphasises the futility of war and the soldiers’ boredom, desolation, and fatigue. The phrase provides a contrast to what we normally think of war to be like – chaotic, violent, and busy. Owen highlights the agony of the soldiers who are waiting for fighting to happen at any moment, but that it doesn’t always arrive. They are then left exposed to the elements and die a slow death that way instead.
- **Methods:** repetition, refrain

Comparison Opportunities

- **Bayonet Charge** (War’s physical and emotional toll).
- **Storm on the Island** (Nature’s hostility).

Storm on the Island



Context: Heaney reflects on the vulnerability of humans in the face of nature's power, possibly linked to the political "storm" of The Troubles in Ireland.

Themes: war, power of nature, fear, isolation

Key quotations:

'We are prepared'

- **Analysis:** The island community come together in the face of the storm. The speaker of the poem speaks for a community who 'prepare' themselves against the fury and power of nature. Doing what they have always done – prepare to weather the storm.
- **Methods:** present tense, pronoun

'Spits like a tame cat / Turned savage'

- **Analysis:** This simile shows how the islanders have never been able to own or tame nature – they are at its mercy. It highlights the point that nature is unpredictable and untameable. The contrast between 'tame' and 'savage' shows unpredictability, much like the storm that surrounds them. The Islanders will never be able to control nature.
- **Methods:** simile

'Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear'

- **Analysis:** This paradox reflects the overwhelming power of the storm and the wider natural world. The speaker recognises that unlike conventional wars, the islanders are going into battle with 'nothing' but 'empty air' – the weather, not a person or people. This line links to the Roosevelt's saying 'the only thing to fear is fear itself'. The speaker knows that is they are prepared; they can withstand anything.
- **Methods:** paradox

Comparison Opportunities

- **The Prelude** (Awe of nature, power of nature, power of man).
- **Exposure** (Nature as a hostile force, power of man).

Poppies



Context: The poem tells the story of a mother's experience of watching her son go off to war and her reaction to this. The poem shows the effect of war on those left behind and explores the intense emotions of memories and loss.

Themes: loss, suffering, consequences of conflict, helplessness, individual experience, memory

Key quotations:

'Spasms of paper red; disrupting a blockade'

- **Analysis:** The poppy provides a powerful piece of imagery – the 'spasms of red' on a 'blockade' could symbolise a soldier who has been brutally shot dead in action. The speaker shows fear through using the symbol of remembrance as a token of goodbye. The verb 'Spasms' has connotations of wounds and suffering because of the violence of war. Spasms also provoke an image of unnatural, painful, distressing death or injury. The 'red' is a metaphor of the bloodshed of war. Noun of 'paper' implies a disposability and weakness which Weir relates to the loss of life on the battlefield.
- **Methods:** colour imagery, metaphor

'The world overflowing like a treasure chest'

- **Analysis:** The simile suggests the excitement and potential that the future held for the son. The image of a treasure chest could also indicate the son's hope for adventure and the victory he would hope to secure in the battlefield. The son sees his future full of opportunity, but his mother worries, highlighting the opposing experiences of parent and child in conflict. This is possibly a veiled critique of war and the effects of propaganda on youth.
- **Methods:** simile, hyperbole

'The dove pulled freely against the sky'

- **Analysis:** This image is subtly tragic, as the 'dove' flies away from the hope and peace that it personifies and leaves the narrator. The memory of the son leaving is the last moment the mother will ever have with him. The dove represents the symbol of peace – showing the narrator that their son is now at peace – possibly showing us that her son has died in the war. The phrase 'freely against' juxtaposes the idea that her son's soul (symbolised by the dove) has left (freely) but the narrator wants the soul and the son to come back to her.
- **Methods:** metaphor, symbolism

Comparison Opportunities

- **War Photographer** (Personal cost of war, mental anguish, loss).
- **Remains** (Effects of war on individuals, identity, significance of memory).

Remains



Context: The poem tells the story of a mother's experience of watching her son go off to war and her reaction to this. The poem shows the effect of war on those left behind and explores the intense emotions of memories and loss.

Themes: loss, suffering, consequences of conflict, helplessness, individual experience, memory

Key quotations:

'And one of them legs it up the road / probably armed, possibly not'

- **Analysis:** On reflection, the soldier isn't even sure that the looter was a threat – he's uncomfortable with the idea that he might have killed an innocent man. Armitage is perhaps highlighting how soldiers are trained to blindly follow orders without consideration for their own mental or physical health. The colloquial term 'legs it' emphasises how this is a personal account from a soldier who has lived and breathed conflict.
- **Methods:** Colloquial tone

'And the drink and the drugs won't flush him out –'

- **Analysis:** The soldier's desperate to get the memory of what he's done out of his head. He's self-medicating with drink and drugs to forget, but it doesn't work. The dash implies that this isn't the end of his torment – he's stuck in a cycle of regret and suffering after what he did. The verb 'flush' has connotations of disposing or discarding something unwanted and trying to cleanse himself. The alliterative 'Drink' and 'drugs' sounds abrupt, like he's spitting these words out in frustration.
- **Methods:** Colloquial tone, alliteration, metaphor

'His bloody life in my bloody hands'

- **Analysis:** The blood on his hands is a symbol of his guilt. The repetition of 'bloody' could act as a pun describing the violent, gruesome nature of the looter's death, or it could be used as slang / cursing to reinforce his colloquial tone. He feels cursed and haunted by what he's done.
- **Methods:** Colloquial tone, repetition

Comparison Opportunities

- **War Photographer** (Emotional scars of conflict, mental conflict, violence, and death).
- **Exposure** (Suffering of soldiers).

War photographer



Context: A photographer reflects on the horrors of war and the detachment of those who view war through media. Inspired by Duffy's friendship with a war photographer.

Themes: war, memory, suffering, detachment

Key quotations:

'Spools of suffering set out in ordered rows'

- **Analysis:** The photographer begins to develop the pictures he's taken. By putting the photographs in 'rows' the photographer is trying to make order out of the chaos that is conflict and death. A 'spool' is a cylinder which has photographic paper wrapped around it – it could, in this context, symbolise the cyclical, never-ending cycle of war. The 'spools' plural emphasises the volume of the suffering he has witnessed.
- **Methods:** sibilance, metaphor

'Half-formed ghost'

- **Analysis:** On a literal level, the photo is developing so looks ghostly as the image becomes stronger throughout the development time. Metaphorically, the man in the photo has died and this is the last image of him. 'Half-formed' could also suggest that the man's life was cut short as often happens in conflict.
- **Methods:** metaphor

'The reader's eyeballs prick with tears'

- **Analysis:** The suffering the photographer has witnessed is not appreciated or shared by the public who see his images. Their eyeballs 'prick' (sting) for only a moment before they go back to their lives ignorant of the suffering that is happening in the conflict zones the photographer has visited. Duffy is perhaps criticising western attitudes to war in foreign places and the media's representation of them.
- **Methods:** metaphor, verb

Comparison Opportunities

- **Remains** (Emotional impact of war, consequences of war, violence).
- **Poppies** (Personal response to war, loss).

Tissue



Context: This poem explores the fragility of human power and identity through the metaphor of paper, reflecting themes of impermanence and the interconnectedness of human experience.

Themes: identity, power, fragility

Key quotations:

‘Paper that lets the light / shine through, this / is what could alter things’

- **Analysis:** The speaker wants us to reflect on ourselves, our communities and the world and how if we viewed things in the same way we do paper, (temporary, fragile) we could find more freedom and peace. The light imagery used throughout the poem symbolises truth and hope.
- **Methods:** metaphor

‘Might fly our lives like paper kites’

- **Analysis:** The simile suggests that our lives are not always in our control, but more like kites being blown by the wind. Connotations include a lack of control but could be seen as a happy or childlike image. The stanza overall talks about ‘fine slips’ (money) and how we let ourselves be controlled by things that really don’t carry much importance. She asks us to reevaluate how we live our lives and what we could do better to redress the balance.
- **Methods:** simile

‘See how easily / they fall away on a sigh’

- **Analysis:** The enjambment throughout the poem could show how time never stops and how it is impossible to properly keep track of things, with paper perhaps our best way of living on permanently. The fast pace could also create the effect of showing how difficult it is to keep track and organise our lives. In this image, Dharker imagines how easily buildings could fall if they were made from paper – how someone could blow them over with a ‘sigh’. Perhaps she is suggesting that we put too much emphasis on building monuments and owning property when really life is all about the connections you make with others.
- **Methods:** metaphor

Comparison Opportunities

- **Ozymandias** (Fragility of human power, legacy, memory).
- **Checking Out Me History** (Identity).

Checking Out Me History



Context: John Agard was born in Guyana and moved to Britain when he was young. Guyana was part of the British Empire and therefore Britain could dictate what was being taught in schools there. Children were sat in classrooms in the Caribbean being taught about British battles, nursery rhymes and British historical figures who didn't represent people outside of Europe. Agard conveys how understanding your cultural identity and heritage can empower you and help you create your own place in the world.

Themes: identity, power, memory

Key quotations:

'Dem tell me / Dem tell me / Wha dem want to tell me'

- **Analysis:** The speaker represents someone who feels as though they have been forcefully distanced from their own culture. The use of non-standard English emphasises his rebellion against what he has been taught by the British Empire. 'Dem' refers to people in power who have made decisions which have an impact on people outside of Europe, including what is taught in schools and what is written in the history books. There is a distinction between 'Dem' and himself – the speaker does not see themselves as part of the same group who is making the decisions. The speaker is trying to empower themselves by learning about their own heritage and cultural history, rather than listening to what 'dem' tell him.
- **Methods:** repetition, Non-Standard English, accusatory tone

'Bandage up me eye with me own history / blind me to me own identity'

- **Analysis:** Connotations of injury or pain in 'bandage' – he has had to fight against the constructs in place to regain his identity. The speaker feels hurt by their sheltered upbringing – they feel cut off from their cultural roots and heritage. The lack of punctuation shows the speaker's refusal to be bound by the rules of communicating. He is trying to show that Creole still has power. The speaker hasn't been taught about black history and feels as though he has only learned about European history which doesn't represent him or the rest of the world.
- **Methods:** alliteration, metaphor, lack of punctuation

'Dem never tell me bout Mary Seacole / From Jamaica / she travel far...'

- **Analysis:** This suggests that historical figures, like Mary Seacole, are forgotten and overlooked because they are not British. The italics are used for stanzas about black history and characters which he had to research and learn about. He was not taught about these people in school and there isn't room for them in the curriculum, which is why these stanzas are also narrower. 'From Jamaica' is separated to highlight that her birthplace is the reason why she wasn't deemed important by the British who would rather teach students about 'how Robin Hood used to camp' and how 'ole King

Cold was a merry old soul'. The speaker feels that 'dem' value nursery rhymes and stories over actual people who did important things in the world.

- **Methods:** Italics, repetition, stanza, critical tone

Comparison Opportunities

- **Tissue** (Identity, conflict, priorities).
- **London** (Oppression, loss, pain, anger).

The Charge of the Light Brigade



Context: Written by Tennyson to commemorate the bravery of British soldiers during the Crimean War, despite the disastrous leadership that led to their deaths. The poem reflects both patriotism and the futility of war.

Themes: conflict, heroism, remembrance, duty, futility of war

Key quotations:

'Into the jaws of Death, / Into the mouth of Hell'

- **Analysis:** From this image, the reader pictures the death and destruction that awaits the soldiers as they ride towards the Russian army. The personification of Death and Hell emphasise the inevitability of the soldiers' deaths as it's like they're being swallowed with no chance of escape. This image creates a very bleak picture and highlights the tragic nature of the wrong command which led to their deaths.
- **Methods:** repetition, personification

'Cannon to the right of them, / Cannon to the left of them,

- **Analysis:** The repetition of the cannons gives the feeling of being surrounded. The rhythm created by the repetition and beats of the syllables mimics the rhythm of the horses' feet as they ride towards the Russians. It shows how inevitable their deaths were, but how bravely they fought.
- **Methods:** repetition

'Reel's from the sabre-stroke / Shatter'd and sunder'd'

- **Analysis:** The alliterative 's' sounds (sibilance) mimic the sound of the sabres (swords) swooshing through the air. It could also be the sharp intakes of breath of men in pain and shock. 'Shattered' means broken and destroyed. 'Sundered' means to break into parts. This could refer to the army as they get split up from one another. However, it could also represent how bravely the cavalry fought – they were patriotic to the end.
- **Methods:** sibilance

Comparison Opportunities

- **Bayonet Charge** (Bravery and chaos in war).
- **Exposure** (Futility of war).

Kamikaze



Context: Explores the conflict between personal choice and national duty through the story of a Japanese kamikaze pilot who turns back from his mission, facing social ostracism as a result.

Themes: conflict, patriotism, family, duty, memory, shame

Key quotations:

‘A shaven head full of powerful incantations’

- **Analysis:** The noun ‘incantations’ has connotations of magic and chanting. It suggests the indoctrination of pilots, with the ritualistic language reflecting cultural and military pressures. The chanting connotation could link to the way pilots were taught to obey their superiors, and act how they have been taught without question. The ‘shaven head’ of the pilots could reflect their lack of identity – when they become a kamikaze pilot, their duty is to their country who they now ‘belong’ to.
- **Methods:** metaphor

‘A green-blue translucent sea’ & ‘fishes flashing silver’ & ‘pearl-grey pebbles’

- **Analysis:** There is a semantic field of colour; ‘green-blue translucent’, ‘dark shoals’, ‘flashing silver’ and ‘pearl-grey’. The senses of touch (‘feathery’) and taste (‘salt-sodden’) are also evoked. As the pilot flies over the sea, these sensory images remind him he is still alive, and life is for living and relishing. There is no mention of the senses in the section of the poem that deals with events after his choice. There is silence and it is ‘as though he had never returned’.
- **Methods:** semantic field, colour imagery, sensory language

‘He must have wondered / which had been the better way to die.’

- **Analysis:** The final lines of the poem represent the poem’s wider themes of duty, shame, and the futility of conflict. Although the pilot doesn’t experience a physical death, he suffers from an emotional, mental, and societal death, leaving him to question whether he made the right decision in turning back. Japanese society dedicated that by not fulfilling his duty, the pilot had bought shame not only on himself, but his family and country. Death was inevitable either way.
- **Methods:** alliteration, enjambment

Comparison Opportunities

- **Poppies** (Impact of war on families, importance of memory, loss).
- **The Émigrée** (Exclusion and identity, societal pressures, patriotism).

The Emigree



Context: The word Émigrée is the feminine version of émigré – it means a woman who leaves one country to live in another. The poem is about a woman who left her homelands as a child and emigrated to another country. She thinks about her birth country and almost feels protective and maternal over it. She refuses to accept the negative things she hears about it even though she hears that it is now at war and ruled by tyrants.

Themes: consequences of conflict, memory, loss, identity

Key quotations:

'There once was a country...I left it as a child / but my memory of it is sunlight-clear'

- **Analysis:** The opening line uses an almost child-like tone to reinforce how young she was when she left, and to show the innocence with which she remembers her country. It sounds like she is about to tell a fairy-tale or story and makes the reader consider how truthful her version of reality is. 'Sunlight-clear' has positive connotations which link to how clearly and vividly she remembers her country. It highlights how important this place is to her and her sense of identity. We get the impression that she didn't leave by choice and is grasping on to the memory of it. She won't let herself forget it.
- **Methods:** metaphor, hyperbole, enjambment
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'It may now be a lie, banned by the state / but I can't get it off my tongue. It tastes of sunlight.'

- **Analysis:** Synaesthetic detail (where senses are mixed i.e. hear smells or taste sounds). She thinks her homeland was a beautiful place which overtook her senses. Perhaps her memories are so overwhelming that she can't separate the details anymore. She delights in her memory of her home country and feels as though she wants it to remain part of her and her identity. She is talking about her native language being banned, but she refuses to let it slip away. It is important to her and connects her to this place.
- **Methods:** synaesthesia, hyperbole, end-stop

'I have no passport, there's no way back at all/ but my city comes to me on its own white plane.'

- **Analysis:** She feels trapped and oppressed in her new country – she can't physically go back home, but the memories she has of it make her feel like she's still connected to it. The colour imagery of 'white' has connotations of innocence, perfection, cleanliness, and purity. This is how she wishes to remember her country. She feels as though the distance between her, and her birth country doesn't matter – she can be with it again whenever she wants just by remembering it.

- **Methods:** metaphor, personification, colour imagery, enjambment

Comparison Opportunities

- **Checking Out Me History** (Identity and cultural heritage, memory).
- **Tissue** (Fragility of human constructs and memory).

How to analyse structure

As well as analysing poetic devices, imagery, and individual language choices, you will also need to consider how the structure of each poem reinforces the key ideas, themes and messages explored within it.

Here is a list of structural methods that you can analyse:

- ✓ **Form** e.g. sonnet, dramatic monologue, open form
- ✓ **Stanzas** e.g. size, length, format, order, cyclical
- ✓ **Lines** e.g. length, isolated lines
- ✓ **Enjambment**
- ✓ **Caesura**
- ✓ **Rhyme** e.g. regular rhyme scheme, rhyming couplets, half-rhyme
- ✓ **Meter** e.g. iambic pentameter
- ✓ **Free verse**
- ✓ **Repetition**
- ✓ **Refrain**

When annotating a poem, ask yourself these questions to consider the effect of its structure:

- Does the poem rhyme? If yes, what impact does this have on the poem's mood, and why has the poet chosen to do this? What might an irregular rhyme scheme or free verse tell the reader about the speaker's emotions?
- Are there any lines which are longer than others or stand alone? What do these lines say and why might the poet have chosen to draw the reader's attention to this moment/idea in the poem?
- Does the poet use lots of enjambment or caesura? Why might the poet have wanted to control the pace of the poem? How does this reflect the poem's themes or ideas?
- Are any words or phrases repeated in the poem? Why are these words significant? How do they emphasise the poet's message?

