

Power and Conflict Poetry

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Title War Photographer by Carol Ann Duffy

The poem in a nutshell....



Written in third person, the poem describes a photographer in his darkroom as he develops prints from his latest job in the field.

As the images which slop in his trays emerge, he is filled horror at the memories of the violent scenes he has witnessed and photographed.

His hands shake, as Duffy uses powerful imagery and effective contrast to explore not only the conflict in war but the conflict within himself, and in the wider world of media reporting.

Written in four stanzas, each of six lines (sestet) with a regular rhyme scheme, this poem seems to be imposing order into the chaotic world of war that the war photographer works in.

Context

- The poem comes from Duffy's friendship with Don McCullin and Philip Jones Griffiths, two well-respected photographers who specialised in war photography.
- Duffy is fascinated by what makes someone do such a job, and how they feel about being in situations where a choice often has to be made between recording horrific events and helping.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'spools of suffering set out in ordered rows'	Sibilance and metaphor	The use of sibilance highlights this image, which creates a suggestion of graves or bodies 'in ordered rows'. There is also contrast in this image: 'spools of suffering' which seems chaotic yet in 'ordered rows'.
'tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers'	Internal rhyme	Duffy uses internal rhyme in this poem in a few places, possibly as a way of exploring the war photographer's internal feelings of conflict. Here we see how, for the newspaper readers, seeing these images only affects them for a short while and their lives continue as normal, unlike the victims of war.
'A hundred agonies in black-and-white'	Colour imagery	The scenes in his negatives are compared to 'agonies', a powerful noun to tell us about the pain of conflict. Because they are in 'black-and-white' they have been made to seem merely factual or simplified. She seems to be suggesting that their pain is not given enough recognition.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

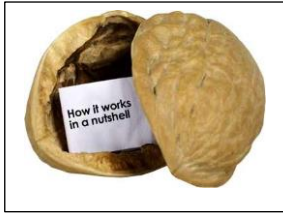
Conflict in war: the horrors are explored with words like 'blood stained', or the 'cries' of a wife and also the imagery (above). But the main **conflict is that of the war photographer as he grapples with what he does for a living:** 'impassively' photographing 'running children's' 'agonies in the 'nightmare heat' of war.

Poems that can be linked

Remains, which explores the haunting memories of war from the perspective of a soldier.

Title Remains by Simon Armitage

The poem in a nutshell....



Written in first person from the perspective of a soldier, this poem can be seen as having two halves.
In the first, the voice recounts a memory from war in which he and two other soldiers killed looters raiding a bank.
In the second, he explains how the memory of this scene still haunts him. There is a suggestion that he is suffering from PTSD.
The voice of this narrator is powerful as he moves from past to present tense (giving his memories a sense of immediacy) and uses colloquial language . His ordinary tone and use of colloquialisms, brings these horrors closer to the reader , as they are told in this very everyday, ordinary voice. The makes his mental scars more painful for the reader.

- This poem is part of a small collection of poems written for **'the Not Dead'**. This term refers to the **ex-service men and women who have survived wars and are now dealing with its after-effects**. Each of these poems focuses on a flashback scene that the ex-soldier has struggled to forget.
- **'Remains'** was written for a soldier who served in Basra, Iraq.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'one of them legs it up the road'	Colloquial language	This use of colloquial language, which occurs mainly in the first half of the poem, makes the description of killing seem casual . In the second half the tone is less casual as he explains his memories and how 'the drugs won't flush him out' . The use of imagery here shows his tortured mind.
'every round as it rips through his life'	Alliteration of the 'r' sound	The harsh 'r' sound reflects the violence of the image . It portrays his memory more vividly as it seems to bring it to life through its sound .
'his bloody life in my bloody hands'	Metaphor	The repetition of 'bloody' shows us that this memory of death keeps returning. It also suggests that his tortured memories of war are flooded with guilt for taking this man's life, making the reader sympathise with him .

Aspects of Power or Conflict

The **horrors of war are explored through the voice of a soldier suffering with PTSD**. We hear his **flashback** story of war and then the on-going battle, told in the present tense, of his **recurring memories of** conflict and **killing**.

Poems that can be linked

'War Photographer', which explores the internal conflict for photographers who shoot with their cameras rather than with guns.

Both poems rely on auditory imagery to sensationalise the panic, disorder and conflict of war.

PEAL Table: Cluster 1, *War Photographer* and *Remains*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
War Photographer	The poet of War Photographer uses sibilance (alliteration) and metaphor	'spools of suffering set out in ordered rows'	The use of sibilance highlights this image, which creates a suggestion of graves or bodies 'in ordered rows'. There is also contrast in this image: 'spools of suffering' which seems chaotic yet in 'ordered rows'.	Both poets use alliterative effects to create a sense of panic, disorder and to highlight the violence of war and conflict.
Remains	The poet of Remains also uses alliteration.	'every round as it rips through his life'	The harsh 'r' sound reflects the violence of the image. It portrays his memory more vividly as it seems to bring it to life through its sound.	
War Photographer	The poet of War Photographer uses imagery and metaphor	'A hundred agonies in black-and-white '	The scenes in his negatives are compared to 'agonies', a powerful noun to tell us about the pain of conflict. Because they are in 'black-and-white' they have been made to seem merely factual or simplified. She seems to be suggesting that their pain is not given enough recognition.	Both poets use imagery and metaphor to allow the reader to picture the terrible effects of war and conflict.
Remains	The poet of Remains also uses imagery and metaphor	' his bloody life in my bloody hands '	The repetition of 'bloody' shows us that this memory of death keeps returning. It also suggests that his tortured memories of war are flooded with guilt for taking this man's life, making the reader sympathise with him.	
War Photographer	Carol Ann Duffy uses internal rhyme to highlight a casual attitude towards war and suffering.	'tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers'	Duffy uses internal rhyme in this poem in a few places, possibly as a way of exploring the war photographer's internal feelings of conflict. For the newspaper readers, seeing these images only affects them for a short while and their lives continue as normal, unlike the victims of war.	Both poets highlight the sometimes casual and uncaring attitudes towards conflict. The author of War Photographer has used internal rhyme whereas the author of Remains has used examples of colloquial language.
Remains	On the other hand, Simon Armitage uses colloquial language to highlight a casual attitude towards war and suffering.	'one of them legs it up the road'	This use of colloquial language, which occurs mainly in the first half of the poem, makes the description of killing seem casual. In the second half the tone is less casual as he explains his memories and how 'the drugs won't flush him out'. The use of imagery here shows his tortured mind.	

Title Charge of the Light Brigade by Alfred Lord Tennyson

The poem in a nutshell....



This poem follows the journey of a light brigade of some 600 British soldiers as they charge head-first into the cannons and gunfire of a much-larger Russian army. The tone of the poem is one of pride; the poet does not mourn the loss of these soldiers nor does he show anger towards the men who gave these wrong orders. Instead, their bravery is celebrated. The poet uses repetition, imagery and a strong rhythm to highlight the army's gallant charge into battle.

Context

- Tennyson wrote "The Charge of the Light Brigade" in a few minutes on December 2, 1854.
- It is based on the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimean War which was fought from 1853 to 1856.
- On 25 October 1854, Lord Raglan decided to attack the Russians. He sent an order but it was fatally misinterpreted and 673 Light Brigade cavalrymen were sent charging down the valley with Russian guns all around. Between 100 and 200 soldiers are thought to have died.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'Into the jaws of Death, into the mouth of Hell'	Metaphor	The reader pictures the death and destruction that awaits the soldiers as they ride towards the Russian army. It is as if they are being swallowed by Hell and Death itself.
'Cannon to right of them, Cannnon to left of them, Cannon behind them'	Repetition Rhythm	The repetition of the cannons gives the feeling of being surrounded on all sides. The rhythm created by the repetition and beats of the syllables mimics the rhythm of the horses' feet as they ride towards the Russians.
'Reel'd from the sabre- stroke Shatter'd and sunder'd'	Alliteration (sibilance) Effective language	The alliterative 's' sounds (sibilance) mimics the sound of the sabres (swords) swooshing through the air. Could also be 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 a group or to men as individuals.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

This poem highlights the **reality of conflicts** and the **deaths** that are often a result. It **celebrates the bravery** of soldiers and seeks to **honour and glamorise the sacrifices these men made**.

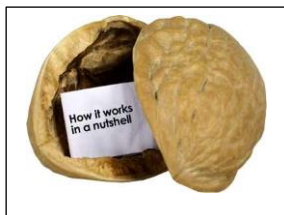
Poems that can be linked

Bayonet Charge

Exposure

Title Bayonet Charge by Ted Hughes

The poem in a nutshell....



This poem follows the journey of a **single soldier** as he goes from sleeping in a camp to running either **from or towards a sudden battle**. The poet emphasises the soldier's terror, shock and confusion at finding himself in such a **horrific scene**. Much of the poem's imagery **centres on the destruction of the once peaceful and natural scene of a green field**. The poet questions the idea of **blind patriotism** as this soldier questions what his purpose in this war really is.

Context

- Ted Hughes (1930-1998) was born in **Yorkshire**, in the North of England, and grew up in the **countryside**. He served in the **RAF for two years**.
- The themes of the countryside, human history and mythology therefore already deeply influenced his imagination by the time he started writing poetry as a student.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'Bullets smacking the belly out of the air – He lugged a rifle numb as a smashed arm'	Metaphor and simile	The bullets puncture the air and the image of 'smacking' refers to the winded feeling the soldier has as he runs for his life across the field. His ' numb ' rifle and ' smashed arm ' have a dual meaning: he could feel numb to the pain he has to cause with the rifle. He could have literally smashed his rifle into his arm in his panic. This highlights both the soldier's inexperience and trauma at what he has had to do in the war .
'In what cold clockwork of the stars and the nations Was he the hand pointing that second?	Rhetorical Question and Metaphor	The soldier questions his purpose . His reference to 'clockwork' could suggest that these conflicts happen regularly and possibly arbitrarily. He refers to himself as 'the hand' which could refer to clock hands. He feels like a part of a machine. Is he in control? Is this what he wanted when he signed up to the army?
'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'	Alliteration (sibilance) Imagery Enjambment	The alliterative ' s ' sounds (sibilance) mimics the sound of the bullets destroying the soil of the field . 'Slashed' creates violent imagery. The yellow hare represents the innocence of nature in conflict. The 'threshing circle' is a farming term but has connotations of violence and destruction . The imagery of the hare's 'mouth wide open silent' has connotations of pain and death. The enjambment in this section, and throughout the poem, highlights the speed and panic of the situation and possibly the soldier's inability to complete his thoughts in time (or at all) .

Aspects of Power or Conflict

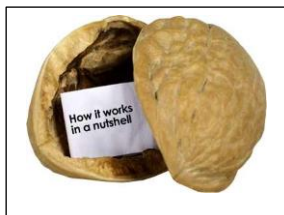
This poem highlights the **reality of conflicts** and the **sheer fear and terror** that soldiers feel. It **questions the idea of patriotism** and highlights **the damage to both humans and nature** that war and conflict can cause.

Poems that can be linked

Charge of the Light Brigade
Exposure

Title Exposure by Wilfred Owen

The poem in a nutshell....



This poem centres on a group of British soldiers as they wait in the trenches and battlefields for war. The main conflict here is between the soldiers and the biting winter weather. Owen highlights the extreme conditions these men were subjected to in WW1. This is not the type of danger and suffering people expected the British soldiers to be dying of. Owen wanted to expose the realities of life for (and the fates of) soldiers in WW1.

Context

- Wilfred Owen was born in 1893 and died in 1918, just one week before the end of WW1.
- He joined the war in October 1915, but, after some traumatic events on the battlefield, he was sent to hospital to be treated for shell-shock.
- He wrote poetry throughout his time in the war and they are famous for their vivid imagery and shocking truths about the reality of war.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knife us...'	Personification	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 is in contrast to being stabbed with real bayonets in a real battle. Their brains ache with both cold and, possibly, the extreme fatigue, loneliness and despair that they all felt.
'Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence. Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow'	Alliteration (sibilance) Imagery	The alliterative 's' sounds (sibilance) mimic the sound of the bullets streaking through the air. Could also be sharp intakes of breath of men in shock. 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.
'The burying-party, picks and shovels in shaking grasp, Pause over half-known faces'	Effective language	The reader is presented with the image of these soldiers burying their own men. The 'shaking grasp' could be because of the cold. It could also be the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (or 'shell-shock'). The 'half-known' faces could refer to the fact that these men didn't know each other very well. Or maybe they no longer recognise each other...

Aspects of Power or Conflict

This poem highlights the **reality of conflicts** and the **deaths** that are often a result. It focuses more on the conflict of the soldiers and the harsh conditions they faced in WW1 rather than any actual battles. It seeks to **dismiss the glamorisation of patriotism and expose the truths of WW1.**

Poems that can be linked

Bayonet Charge

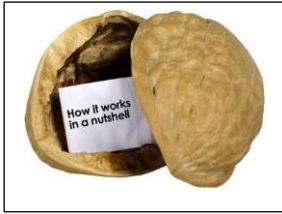
Charge of the Light Brigade

PEAL Table: Cluster 2, *Charge of the Light Brigade*, *Bayonet Charge* and *Exposure*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
Bayonet Charge	The author of Bayonet Charge has used sibilance to highlight the violence in the poem.	‘the shot-slashed furrows’	The alliterative ‘s’ sounds (sibilance) mimics the sound of the bullets destroying the soil of the field. ‘Slashed’ creates violent imagery.	Both poets have used sibilance to create sound effects which highlight the violence and pain evident in these poems.
Exposure	The author of Exposure has also used sibilance to highlight the violence in the poem.	‘Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.’	The alliterative ‘s’ sounds (sibilance) mimic the sound of the bullets streaking through the air. Could also be sharp intakes of breath of men in shock. Could also mimic the sound of shivering as these men are freezing to death.	
Charge of the Light Brigade	The author of Charge of the Light Brigade has used metaphors to present the horror of the conflict.	‘ Into the jaws of Death, into the mouth of Hell ’	The reader pictures the death and destruction that awaits the soldiers as they ride towards the Russian army. It is as if they are being swallowed by Hell and Death itself.	Both poets have used strong imagery to highlight the sometimes horrific and shockingly difficult conditions soldiers face in conflict.
Bayonet Charge	The author of Bayonet Charge has also used a metaphor as well as a simile to present the violence and difficulty of conflict.	‘ Bullets smacking the belly out of the air – He lugged a rifle numb as a smashed arm ’	The bullets puncture the air and the image of ‘smacking’ refers to the winded feeling the soldier has as he runs for his life across the field. His ‘numb’ rifle and ‘smashed arm’ have a dual meaning: he could feel numb to the pain he has to cause with the rifle. He could have literally smashed his rifle into his arm in his panic. This highlights both the soldier’s inexperience and trauma at what he has had to do in the war.	
Charge of the Light Brigade	The author of Charge of the Light Brigade has used effective language to highlight the violence of the conflict.	‘ Reel’d from the sabre-stroke Shatter’d and sunder’d ’	‘Shattered’ means broken and destroyed. ‘Sundered’ means to break into parts. This could refer to the army as a group or to men as individuals.	Both poets have used effective language to highlight the different types of pain and struggle that soldiers suffer from in conflicts.
Exposure	The author of Exposure has used effective language to highlight the less obvious struggles that these soldiers go through.	‘ The burying-party, picks and shovels in shaking grasp, Pause over half-known faces ’	The reader is presented with the image of these soldiers burying their own men. The ‘shaking grasp’ could be because of the cold. It could also be the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (or ‘shell-shock’). The ‘half-known’ faces could refer to the fact that these men didn’t know each other very well. Or maybe they no longer recognise each other.	

Title: Kamikaze by Beatrice Garland

The poem in a nutshell....



In this narrative poem, Beatrice Garland explores the testimony of the daughter of a kamikaze pilot. Unlike many of his comrades, this pilot turns back from his target and returns home.

The poem vividly explores the moment that the pilot's decision is made and sketches out the consequences for him over the rest of his life. Not only is he shunned by his neighbours but his wife refuses to speak to him or look him in the eye. His children, too, gradually learn that he is not to be spoken to and begin to isolate and reject him.

Context

- Beatrice Garland was born in Oxford in 1930 and she recalled being forced to read poetry at school if she misbehaved, but actually quite enjoying it.
- During the Second World War, the term 'kamikaze' was used for Japanese fighter pilots who were sent on suicide missions. They were expected to crash their warplanes into enemy warships. The word 'kamikaze' literally translates as 'divine wind'.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'green-blue translucent' 'pearl-grey'	Sensory imagery and semantic field of colour	The first section is full of vivid impressions of the senses. 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 evoked. The impressions remind the pilot he is alive and life is for 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'.
"Her father embarked at sunrise"	Use of the verb "embarked" having a double meaning	The first stanza describes narrator's father getting ready for the battle, and how he was all embedded for the Kamikaze attack that Japanese used against the US Navy during the World War Two. The use of verb 'embarked' in the very first line of this stanza has double meaning; first to board a plane and second to embark upon a new adventure. This is a willingly done positive connotation, but reading through the whole poem it comes out the word 'embark' is suitably used in terms of the relevance of the poem's theme.
"till gradually we too learned to be silent, to live as though he had never returned"	Use of enjambment	Towards the end of the poem, the "chattering and laughing" of the previous line is silenced. The use of enjambment presents the daughter's voice as calm, measured language, as though the storyteller is deliberately suppressing or withholding her feelings. The narrating daughter appears at the end to have become sympathetic to her father's actions and regretful of the way she, and other family members, shunned her him for what they had initially judged to be a shameful return. This line demonstrates that the speaker finally accepts that the family had condemned the pilot to a form of living death.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

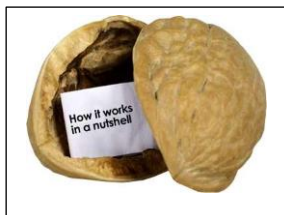
- Central to the poem is the power of society to make individuals conform to its expectations
- Internal conflict (the pilot's internal conflict between carrying out his suicidal duty to society and reacting to the powerful lure of nature)
- Conflict between family members

Poems that can be linked

- ✓ *The Émigrée*
- ✓ *Poppies*

Title: Poppies by Jane Weir

The poem in a nutshell....



The poem is about the nature of grief. The speaker is a mother who is speaking directly to her son who has gone off to the war which she struggles to come to terms with. **The poem demonstrates the inner emotion of a narrator who is trying to remain calm and composed but is breaking with sadness inside.**

Context

- Jane Weir, born in 1963, grew up in Italy and Northern England, with an English mother and an Italian father. She has continued to absorb different cultural experiences throughout her life, also living in Northern Ireland during the troubled 1980s.
- The poem is set in the present day but reaches right back to the beginning of the Poppy Day tradition. Armistice Sunday began as a way of marking the end of the First World War in 1918. It was set up so people could remember the hundreds and thousands of ordinary men who had been killed in the First World War. Today, the event is used to remember soldiers of all wars who have died since then.
- When *Poppies* was written, British soldiers were still dying in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a way of trying to understand the suffering that deaths caused, the poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy asked a number of writers to compose poems, including Jane Weir.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
I wanted to graze my nose across the tip of your nose, play at being Eskimos like we did when you were little	Past tense "wanted"	The speaker is longing for her son to be a child again. She wants to nurture him and protect him like she did when he was a child. However, this is contrasted with harsh reality that he is going off to war and she realises the risks that he may encounter.
After you'd gone I went into your bedroom, released a song bird from its cage	Metaphor/symbolism	The "song bird" could be a metaphor for the mother's emotions. When he is out of sight, she can finally express her true feelings and the hurt/worry that she is feeling. It is evident that she is in distress when he leaves to go to war.
I traced the inscriptions on the war memorial, leaned against it like a wishbone.	Simile	This quotation serves as a reminder of the risks the speaker's son faces. The reference to a "wishbone" demonstrates that the mother is vulnerable and fragile.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

- ✓ Conflict of the mother's feelings towards her son growing up
- ✓ The grief of those left behind when a loved-one is killed in war.
- ✓ Motherhood; the impulse to protect a grown son or daughter; to always view them in her mind as a child.

Poems that can be linked

- ✓ Kamikaze
- ✓ Exposure

PEAL Table: Cluster 3, *Kamikaze* and *Poppies*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
Kamikaze	The author of <i>Kamikaze</i> has used sensory imagery and semantic field of colour to remind the reader that life goes on.	'green-blue translucent' 'pearl-grey'	The first section is full of vivid impressions of the senses. 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 evoked. The impressions remind the pilot he is alive and life is for 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'.	Both poets have used strong imagery to highlight quite different responses to the effects of conflict: the feeling that life goes on and life is precious.
Poppies	The author of <i>Poppies</i> , on the other hand, has used metaphor and symbolism to convey a very similar idea.	'After you'd gone I went into your bedroom, released a song bird from its cage'	The "song bird" could be a metaphor for the mother's emotions. When he is out of sight, she can finally express her true feelings and the hurt/worry that she is feeling. It is evident that she is in distress when he leaves to go to war.	
Kamikaze	Beatrice Garland has used effective language to highlight the mixed emotions people felt about going into conflict.	"Her father embarked at sunrise"	The first stanza describes narrator's father getting ready for the battle, and how he was all embedded for the <i>Kamikaze</i> attack that Japanese used against the US Navy during the World War Two. The use of verb 'embarked' in the very first line of this stanza has double meaning; first to board a plane and second to embark upon a new adventure. This is a willingly done positive connotation, but reading through the whole poem it comes out the word 'embark' is suitably used in terms of the relevance of the poem's theme.	Both poets have chosen strong and sometimes unlikely language to encourage readers to consider the different emotions that people felt when they went into conflicts.
Poppies	Jane Weir has also used effective language to highlight the emotions that people felt during conflicts.	'I wanted to graze my nose across the tip of your nose, play at being Eskimos like we did when you were little'	The speaker is longing for her son to be a child again. She wants to nurture him and protect him like she did when he was a child. However, this is contrasted with harsh reality that he is going off to war and she realises the risks that he may encounter.	
Kamikaze	Beatrice Garland has used enjambment to present emotions and feelings.	"till gradually we too learned to be silent, to live as though he had never returned"	Towards the end of the poem, the "chattering and laughing" of the previous line is silenced. The use of enjambment presents the daughter's voice as calm, measured language, as though the storyteller is deliberately suppressing or withholding her feelings. This line demonstrates that the speaker finally accepts that the family had condemned the pilot to a form of living death.	Both poets have used techniques to highlight the effects that conflict can have on family members of men who have gone to war.
Poppies	Jane Weir has used a simile to present emotions and feelings.	'I traced the inscriptions on the war memorial, leaned against it like a wishbone.'	This quotation serves as a reminder of the risks the speaker's son faces. The reference to a "wishbone" demonstrates that the mother is vulnerable and fragile.	

Title Storm on the Island by Seamus Heaney

The poem in a nutshell....



- The poem describes the extreme force of nature and the impact that the elements have on island life.
- The island's occupants adapt to the demands nature places on their homes and jobs.
- Beginning of poem suggests readiness for storm but as it goes on we see more violent language describing weather and war-like imagery.

Context

- Heaney's father was a farmer in rural County Derry and much of Heaney's poetry is about the countryside and farm life of his childhood.
- Storm on the Island could be a metaphor for the political storm that raged across Northern Ireland in the second half of the twentieth century. The storm pummeling the island in the poem could represent the violence in Northern Ireland during the Troubles.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
The sea is described as 'exploding comfortably'	Oxymoron	Striking and unusual description for reader as it seems contradictory. Suggests this is something that it has done before and will do again. Appeals to senses as this is something we can visualise and imagine the sound of.
"the flung spray hits/The very windows, spits like a tame cat/ Turned savage"	Simile	Sea is uncontrollable, unpredictable. Wild like a cat.
"We are bombarded by the empty air"	Image of combat. Powerful, violent verb 'bombard'	Attacked by a threat that cannot be seen. Reinforces unpredictability of attacks and powerlessness to defend against the elements.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

Power of nature. Powerlessness of humans.

Conflict in Ireland? Human desires to control and monitor vs. Nature's destructive force.

Poems that can be linked

Checking out me History – powerlessness in cultural sense.

London – powerlessness of one vs something bigger

Title London by William Blake

The poem in a nutshell....



- Very negative in tone. Reflects Blake's disillusionment with state.
- A walk through London reveals it to be a place where freedom is restricted and poverty is rife.
- Institutions such as the Church and the monarchy are riddled with hypocrisy as money is spent on their upkeep rather than improving the life chances of the poor.

Context

- *London* was published in 1793, four years after the outbreak of the French Revolution. Is Blake calling for the poor people of London to rise up and seize power?
- London was becoming more and more industrial. Blake expresses his concerns on impact for city and its people.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
"And mark in every face I meet/ Marks of weakness, marks of woe."	Repetition of 'mark', emphasises physical misery that London inhabitants display	Reader is forced to acknowledge inescapability of physical damage caused by London. We too feel imprisoned by repetition?
"The mind-forg'd manacles I hear."	Metaphor	Sympathy from the reader as the restrictions on freedom are caused by the mind.
"And blights with plagues the marriage hearse"	Juxtaposition	Striking for reader as two images, 'marriage' and 'hearse', aren't normally associated are placed together. London is a city of duplicity and a difficult environment in which to sustain happiness. An attack on the Church and the hypocrisy of this institution?

Aspects of Power or Conflict

Power of state – individuals are powerless to restrictions imposed from above 'chartered streets'

Political **conflict** – Church and King are reinforcing the inequality of society. Poor are victims.

Potential **power** of people – if they were to rise up in revolution.

Poems that can be linked

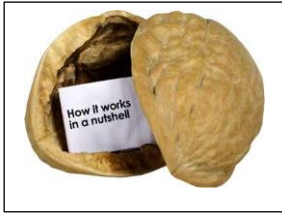
Storm on the Island

PEAL Table: Cluster 4, *Storm on the Island* and *London*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
Storm on the Island	The poet has used imagery and effective language in Storm on the Island.	"We are bombarded by the empty air"	Attacked by a threat that cannot be seen. Reinforces unpredictability of attacks and powerlessness to defend against the elements. Creates the image of combat. Powerful, violent verb 'bombard'	The poets have used different techniques to achieve ideas about a lack of power.
London	The poet has used repetition in London.	"And mark in every face I meet/ Marks of weakness, marks of woe."	Reader is forced to acknowledge inescapability of physical damage caused by London. Repetition of 'mark', emphasises physical misery that London inhabitants display We too feel imprisoned by repetition?	
Storm on the Island	The author has used contrast in the form of an oxymoron	The sea is described as 'exploding comfortably'	Striking and unusual description for reader as it seems contradictory. Suggests this is something that it has done before and will do again. Appeals to senses as this is something we can visualise and imagine the sound of.	Both poets have used strong contrasts to create ideas about power.
London	On the other hand, the author of London has used contrast in the form of juxtaposition	"And blights with plagues the marriage hearse"	Striking for reader as two images, 'marriage' and 'hearse', aren't normally associated are placed together. London is a city of duplicity and a difficult environment in which to sustain happiness. An attack on the Church and the hypocrisy of this institution?	
Storm on the Island	The poet has created imagery through the use of a simile	"the flung spray hits/The very windows, spits like a tame cat/ Turned savage"	Sea is uncontrollable, unpredictable. Wild like a cat.	Both poets have created imagery to allow the reader to picture and feel the struggles each subject has with power.
London	Whereas the author of London has created imagery through the use of a metaphor	"The mind-forg'd manacles I hear."	Sympathy from the reader as the restrictions on freedom are caused by the mind.	

Title From 'The Prelude', by William Wordsworth

The poem in a nutshell....



A poem written in a conversational style, 'the real language of men' in which the speaker confronts the difference between the human and the non-human world and learns.

Context

- Part of a much longer poem on 'the growth of a poet's mind' — 'the child is father of the man': events in childhood shape us as adults
- An example of poetry of the Romantic Movement¹—it's a revelation, an epiphany, an example of what Wordsworth called 'spots of time'
- The incident took place on Ullswater, in the Lake District where Wordsworth grew up—'The Boat Stealing Incident'

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'Troubled pleasure'	Oxymoron	Contains the paradox the child feels: they are aware they have broken a social taboo, yet feel pleasure, and so are 'troubled' (line 6).
'straight I unloosed her chain' 'lustily I dipped my oars into the silent lake'	Effective language Juxtaposition/contrast	Reflects the speaker's confidence and possible arrogance and excitement. This juxtaposes with language later in the poem when the power of nature is realised.
'struck and struck again' 'trembling oars'	Effective language Juxtaposition/contrast	Reflects the speaker's fear and panic in the wake of the huge mountain he encounters. This juxtaposes with language earlier in the poem before the power of nature is realised.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

- Dialect or fruitful conflict between the human and non-human worlds which results in growth in our understanding of the universe and our place in it
- Human beings must realise the limitations of their power
- The adult must acknowledge their debt to their childhood

Poems that can be linked

- 'Storm on the Island'
- 'Émigrée'
- 'Tissue'
- 'Ozymandias'

¹ 'Romanticism may be regarded as the triumph of the values of imaginative spontaneity, visionary originality, wonder, and emotional self-expression over the classical standards of balance, order, restraint, proportion, and objectivity. Its name derives from romance, the literary form in which desires and dreams prevail over everyday realities.' *Oxford Companion to English Literature* (7 ed.)

Title Émigrée by

The poem in a nutshell....



The speaker is an adult living in exile looking back at the city in which they spent their childhood. Despite their understanding that 'it may be sick with tyrants', the speaker cannot but see it as a good place—they are 'branded by an impression of sunlight', even though it is unattainable—perhaps because it never existed.

Context

- The city is never specified, and it could be any one of many places throughout history where people have had to go into exile because of a change of regime or natural disaster—recent examples might be Tehran, Damascus, Aleppo, Beirut, Baghdad, Sarajevo
- Poem is from Rumens's 1993 collection *Thinking of Skins*

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'There once was a country...'	Effective language	An <u>echo</u> of the opening of <u>conventional children's stories</u> : 'Once upon a time...' or 'Long ago and far away...'
'branded by an impression of sunlight'	Effective language	'Branded' is a word torn with <u>ambiguity</u> : it is a sign of being <u>owned</u> , and it is a way of <u>marking out</u> as having a particular bad or shameful quality.
'bright, filled paperweight'	<u>Metaphor</u>	The memory has no more value than a <u>trinket</u> with no lasting value

Aspects of Power or Conflict

- There is a conflict between memory and reality—the speaker acknowledges that their memories are not their own
- It is, like the Garden of Eden, a place the speaker is locked out of—'I have no passport'; it is unattainable, a 'land of lost content'¹
- It's a poem about human limitation

Poems that can be linked

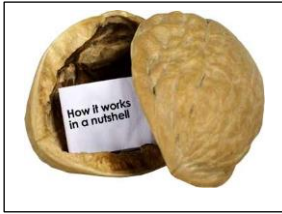
- From 'The Prelude'
- 'Ozymandias'
- London

PEAL Table: Cluster 5, Extract from *The Prelude* and *Emigree*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
The Prelude	William Wordsworth has used effective language and juxtaposition/contrast	'straight I unloosed her chain' 'lustily I dipped my oars into the silent lake'	Reflects the speaker's confidence and possible arrogance and excitement. This juxtaposes with language later in the poem when the power of nature is realised.	Both poets used strong language to describe the power of nature.
Emigree	The poet of Emigree has also used effective language	'branded by an impression of sunlight'	'Branded' is a word torn with ambiguity: it is a sign of being owned, and it is a way of marking out as having a particular bad or shameful quality	
The Prelude	Wordsworth has used further examples of effective language and juxtaposition/contrast	'struck and struck again' 'trembling oars'	Reflects the speaker's fear and panic in the wake of the huge mountain he encounters. This juxtaposes with language earlier in the poem before the power of nature is realised.	The poets used effective language and imagery for contrasting reasons: one to show the power of nature and one to show how fleeting power can be.
Emigree	The author of Emigree, on the other hand, has used a metaphor	'bright, filled paperweight'	The memory has no more value than a trinket with no lasting value	
The Prelude	The author of The Prelude has included more contrast with an oxymoron	'Troubled pleasure'	Contains the paradox the child feels: they are aware they have broken a social taboo, yet feel pleasure, and so are 'troubled' (line 6).	Both poets deal with the idea of childhood and a child's reaction to power.
Emigree	The author of Emigree, however, has included effective language	'There once was a country...'	An echo of the opening of conventional children's stories: 'Once upon a time...' or 'Long ago and far away...'	

Title: Tissue by Imtiaz Dharker

The poem in a nutshell....



The speaker in this poem uses paper as a metaphor for life. She considers how paper can 'alter things' and refers to the soft thin paper of religious books, in particular the Muslim holy book, The Qur'an. There are also real life references to other lasting uses we have for paper in our lives such as maps, receipts and architect drawings. Each of these items is connected to important aspects of life: journeys, money and home all show how paper maps out our lives. In the final stages of the poem, she may be suggesting that the significance of human life will outlast the records we make of it on paper or in buildings. There is also a sense of the fragility of human life, and the fact that not everything can last.

Context:

- Imtiaz Dharker (1954-) is a contemporary poet who was born in Pakistan and grew up in Scotland. She has written five collections of poetry and often deals with themes of identity, the role of women in contemporary society and the search for meaning.
- In her other poems, Dharker has written about the way she values things which may seem to be trivial or easily lost or destroyed. This poem is about the possible power of something as thin and fragile as paper.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
All of the references to paper through the poem, such as 'fine slips' and 'luminous scripts'.	Extended metaphor	Paper acts as a metaphor for life and the way we live it. It shows how paper can be so fragile yet be enormously powerful when it is used to convey information.
'might fly our lives like paper kites'	Simile	The simile suggests that <u>our lives are not always in our control, but more like kites being blown by the wind</u> . Connotations include a lack of control, but could be seen as a <u>happy or childlike image</u> .
'see how easily / they fall away on a sigh'	Enjambment	The enjambment throughout the poem could show how time never stops and how it is impossible to <u>properly keep track of things, with paper perhaps our best way of living on permanently</u> . The fast pace could also create the effect of showing how difficult it is to keep track and organise our lives.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

- **What will last?** There is a sense of the fragility of human life and the fact that not everything can last. In the final stages of the poem, the poet links the idea of a building being made from paper to human skin, using the words 'living tissue' and then 'your skin'. She may be suggesting that the significance of human life will outlast the records we make of it on paper or in buildings
- **Power:** this poem refers to the power of paper to change things and to record our memories.
- **Instability:** the speaker suggests that paper (used as a metaphor for buildings) is at the mercy of greater forces, such as the weather.

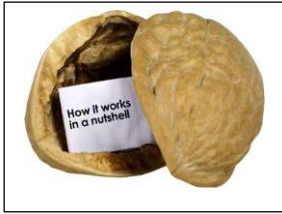
Poems that can be linked

Ozymandias

War Photographer

Title: Ozymandias by Percy Bysshe Shelley

The poem in a nutshell....



The narrator of Shelley's poem says he met a traveller from an "antique" (ancient) land and then tells us the story the traveller told him. The man had seen the remains of a huge statue in the desert. There were two enormous legs without a trunk and next to them lay a damaged "visage" (face). At the foot of the statue were words which reflected the arrogance and pride of Ozymandias. Those words seem very hollow now as the magnificent statue is destroyed and none of the pharaoh's works have lasted.

Context

- **Percy Bysshe Shelley** (1792-1822) is one of the most famous poets in all of English literature. He was one of a group of poets who became known as **The Romantics**. He came from a wealthy family, but was expelled from university for writing about **atheism** (not believing in God) which led to him to fall out with his father who disinherited him.
- Shelley was well known as a 'radical' during his lifetime and some people think *Ozymandias* reflects this side of his character. Although it is about the remains of a statue of Ozymandias (another name for the Egyptian pharaoh Rameses II) it can be read as a criticism of people or systems that become huge and believe themselves to be invincible.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'king of kings'	Repetition / dramatic irony / juxtaposition	The repetition of 'kings' shows how arrogant Ozymandias was, yet when compared to the crumbling ruins of his statue, the poem undermines him and shows that he did not last forever as he thought he would.
'boundless and bare / The lone and level sands stretch far away.'	Alliteration	Alliteration is used three times in this quote, drawing attention to the words that show the ruin and destruction of time, and how even the mightiest of civilisations will eventually be forgotten and decay into dust.
'Nothing beside remains.'	Caesura	The caesura highlights to the reader how Ozymandias is no longer known and feared, despite his arrogance. The clear and blunt language perhaps also reveals how the narrator is unsympathetic towards the now long-gone ruler.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

- **Even the mightiest will fall:** Ozymandias thought his works would last forever and would be above everyone else's. Not true. Nothing is left intact and his own statue is in ruins.
- **You can't beat time.** Even a king dies and so will all the things he has built.
- **Pride comes before a fall.** Ozymandias' boasts about his own greatness seem very hollow now.
- **The power of art and words.** The only thing that does last is part of the statue and the powerful words on the inscription

Poems that can be linked

My Last Duchess

Tissue

PEAL Table: Cluster 6, Extract from *Tissue* and *Ozymandias*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
Tissue	The author of Tissue has used an extended metaphor to highlight how different forms of power can be.	All of the references to paper through the poem, such as 'fine slips' and 'luminous scripts'.	Paper acts as a metaphor for life and the way we live it. It shows how paper can be so fragile yet be enormously powerful when it is used to convey information.	These poets both highlight power in these poems: the effects it can have on people and how power can last.
Ozymandias	The author of Ozymandias, however, has used repetition to show how power can cause arrogance.	'king of kings'	The repetition of 'kings' shows how arrogant Ozymandias was, yet when compared to the crumbling ruins of his statue, the poet undermines him and shows that he did not last forever as he thought he would.	
Tissue	Imtiaz Dharker has created enjambment to comment on time	'see how easily / they fall away on a sigh'	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.	Both poets use structural techniques to reveal how changeable power and influence can be over time
Ozymandias	Percy Bysshe Shelley, on the other hand, has used a caesura	'Nothing beside remains.'	The caesura highlights to the reader how Ozymandias is no longer known and feared, despite his arrogance. The clear and blunt language perhaps also reveals how the narrator is unsympathetic towards the now long-gone ruler.	
Tissue	The author of tissue has used a simile to comment on power	'might fly our lives like paper kites'	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 authors of both of these poems show the lack of control we have over the power of time
Ozymandias	Whereas the author of Ozymandias has used alliteration	'boundless and bare / The lone and level sands stretch far away.'	Alliteration is used three times in this quote, drawing attention to the words that show the ruin and destruction of time, and how even the mightiest of civilisations will eventually be forgotten and decay into dust.	

Title: Checking Out Me History by John Agard

The poem in a nutshell....



In this poem, the speaker is talking about his identity and how it links to his knowledge of history. He was taught British History at school but not about his Caribbean roots. He lists famous figures from history and questions why he has no knowledge of those from other cultures who did great things.

In the poem he mentions men and women from other cultures who should be remembered and celebrated and he concludes by saying he is going to create his own identity based on his heritage.

Context

- John Agard was born in Guyana, a Caribbean country in South America, but he moved to Britain in 1977.
- His poetry often examines cultures and identities and this poem was published in 2007.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'Dem tell me'	Repetition and phonetic spelling of his Caribbean accent	The repetition of 'Dem' emphasises the separation the speaker feels between the British education system and himself. The use of the phonetic spelling supports this as it creates a sense of the speaker's voice and suggests he feels pride in his heritage and background.
'Bandage up me eye with me own history Blind me to me own identity'	Imagery metaphors	The use of the word 'bandage' here is ironic as bandages are associated with healing but here, it has been used to prevent him from seeing his own history and identity. It makes the attempt to prevent him from seeing his identity seem deliberate. The fact he is then 'blinded' emphasises this and suggests a long lasting effect.
Dem tell me about Lord Nelson and Waterloo, but dem never tell me about Shaka de great zulu'	Contrasts British historical figures with those from other cultures	The contrasts between the historical figures emphasises the differences between them. The British figures are glossed over quickly whereas those from other cultures are explored in more detail, showing the poet feels they deserve more respect.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

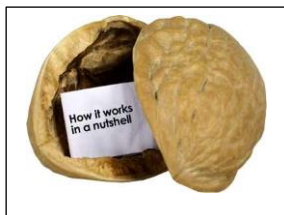
- The poet feels angry about the limited version of history he has been taught.
- The poet explores the power of humans over others.
- The poem explores conflict within the speaker's identity,

Poems that can be linked

- ✓ *My Last Duchess* (The abuse of power and the power of identity)
- ✓ *London* (the anger of the poet)
- ✓ *Tissue* (The conflict of identity)

Title: My Last Duchess by Robert Browning

The poem in a nutshell....



In this **dramatic monologue** the speaker, The Duke, proudly points out a portrait of the **Duchess to a visitor. The Duke was angered by her behaviour which made him jealous.** He says she was too friendly towards others and that her flirtatious behaviour was disrespectful towards him and his family name,

He hints that he took steps to have her murdered.

The guest and the Duke walk away from the painting and we learn that the visitor has come to arrange the Duke's next marriage.

Context

- Robert Browning was born in England but lived in Italy for many years. He was fascinated by the Italian Renaissance (14th – 16th Centuries) when arts flourished.
- My Last Duchess was published in 1842.

3 Key Quotes

Quote	Method	What effect is created?
'There's my last Duchess painted on the wall, Looking as if she were alive. I call'	Rhyming couplets	The Speaker uses rhyming couplets throughout the poem. The Duke is seen as a very controlling character and the use of rhyming couplets reflects this structure and sense of control he has.
'That spot of joy'	repetition	The speaker refers to the fact the Duchess blushes twice in the poem. This use of repetition shows how much it bothers him that she seems to be flirting and getting attention from other men. It also objectifies her as a woman and shows that he feels she is his possession.
'I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together'	euphemism	This seems to tell us that the Duke ordered his wife's murder. The use of language here is cold and clinical showing his lack of emotion and reinforces that he sees her as a possession rather than the fact he loves her.

Aspects of Power or Conflict

- The speaker craves absolute control and power over everyone
- The Duke abuses his power by having his wife killed

Poems that can be linked

- ✓ *Checking Out Me History (the abuse of power and the power of identity)*
- ✓ *Ozymandias (compare the fact the Duke craves power with the dead king's attitudes and desires)*

PEAL Table: Cluster 7, *Checking out me History* and *My Last Duchess*

	Point (AO1)	Evidence (AO1)	Analysis (AO2)	Link (AO3)
Checking Out Me History	The poems are both written in the first person. Checking Out Me History uses phonetic spelling of the Caribbean dialect.	‘Dem tell me’	The use of the Caribbean dialect and repetition of ‘Dem tell me’ emphasises how the speaker feels powerless and emphasises the fact he is separate to the ‘dem’ who do not understand him or his culture.	Both poems use of the first person allows the poets to show the speaker’s feelings about power. In Checking out me history, he feels he has no power and in My last Duchess, he has all the power.
My Last Duchess	My last Duchess is also in the first person but the writer uses rhyming couplets.	‘There’s my last Duchess painted on the wall, Looking as if she were alive. I call’	By using rhyming couplets the poet reflects the speakers desire to have power and control.	
My Last Duchess	Browning uses repetition in the poem	‘That spot of joy’	The spot represents a blush on his wife’s cheek and by repeating it, Browning shows how displeased the Duke is with it. He feels he has lost his power over her.	In My last Duchess the Duke feels that he has lost power over his wife when she flirts with other men. In a similar way, Agard has had no power over who he learns about in history at school, so was powerless.
Checking Out Me History	Agard uses contrasts in his poem	Dem tell me about Lord Nelson and Waterloo, but dem never tell me about Shaka de great zulu’	By contrasting the British figures with the Caribbean figures, and by including less detail about the British figures, Agard is demonstrating how the Caribbean figures are just as worthy of recognition, and in his eyes, more so.	
Checking Out Me History	In Checking out me History, Agard uses imagery and metaphors.	Bandage up me eye with me own history Blind me to me own identity’	The word bandage is associated with healing injuries so it is ironic that here, the bandage has been used to create a handicap for the speaker and make him ‘blind’	In Checking out me History, Agard had little power as a child and was prevented from learning about his culture and therefore had little power. In contrast, the Duke shows how because of his money and status, he has power, which he uses in the extreme.
My Last Duchess	My last Duchess includes a euphemism	‘I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together’	The reader is left to interpret what this means and there is a strong suggestion that the Duke organises for the Duchess to be killed. It is cold and clinical language.	