

# EDUQAS POETRY LEARN SHEET

## OZYMANDIAS - the poem about the statue!

*Context:* Written in 1819, it was inspired by the discovery of part of a large statue of the Egyptian Pharaoh, Ramesses II. The Egyptian Pharaohs believed themselves to be gods in mortal form and that their legacy would last forever. Shelley was critical of the monarchy.

- The statue represents the eventual end of power that everyone must suffer, especially the proud. It is ironic that Ozymandias thought his legacy would last forever.
  - Power, like the statue, is lost to the sands, which represent time and the power of nature.
- Quotations:** "shattered visage" "sneer of cold command" "king of kings" "colossal wreck"



## THE PRELUDE (Excerpt) - the poem where a child plays out one winter evening!

*Context link:* William Wordsworth was a Romantic poet so he wrote poems about the world we live in which challenged people and the way they thought at the time. This extract is from a much larger poem, looking at the spiritual and moral development of a man growing up.

- The poem is structured to show the contrast of the fun and carefree start to the serious when the narrator becomes more aware of nature
  - The relationship between people and nature is shown as the narrator becoming aware of the scale of nature and developing an appreciation.
- Quotations:** "was a time of rapture" "wheel'd about proud" "precipices rang aloud" "of melancholy, not unnoticed"

## A Wife in London - the poem where the wife receives news her husband has died at war and then gets a letter from when he was alive!

*Context link:* It is set during the Boer war; Thomas Hardy was anti-war. Telegrams informing loved ones of any injuries or deaths would have been quicker than letters. The wife is home in London and the city is described as foggy and dull as it would have been polluted at the time.

- The poem is divided into two parts with their own titles. She gets the news he is dead and then a letter full of hope and plans for his return.
  - The poet uses visual imagery (the fog) to foreshadow the bad news and the sadness that will follow.
  - The wife's grief / the death of the soldier is used by Hardy to show how futile war is as he is killed in his prime and they had their whole lives ahead of them.
- Quotations:** "tawny vapour" "he - has fallen- in the far South Land" "fog hangs thicker" "page-full of his hoped return"



## Death of a Naturalist - the poem about how a child once loved frogspawn and nature but later finds the frogs disgusting!

*Context link:* Seamus Heaney was a poet in Ireland. He grew up in a farming community and many of his poems were about very normal and homely subjects and growing up. He uses a large number of natural images in his work.

- The story of the frogspawn and how the narrator's view changes highlights how people change their views as they grow up.
  - The poem is split into two stanzas. The first explore the enthusiasm of the child's view on nature and the second is more troubled as the nature seems more threatening and strange.
  - The poet uses lots of sensory imagery to create a strong sense of setting and help show the shift in tone.
- Quotations:** "best of all was the warm thick slobber" "nimble swimming tadpoles" "angry frogs invaded" "I sickened, turned, and ran"

## LONDON - the poem where he walks through London!

*Context link:* The poem is set during a time in England where there was poverty, child labour and a horrific war with France. Women had no rights, death rates from disease and malnutrition were high and the industrial revolution had resulted in many large oppressive factories.

- The poem explores misery in the supposed 'greatest city' in the world.
  - Blake's views are revolutionary for the time, challenging the idea that man is worth more than slavery.
  - Blake challenges the corrupt establishment in their 'palaces' and 'churches' which are marked by the blood and blackening of good people.
- Quotations:** "each chareter'd street" "marks of weakness, marks of woe" "mind-for'd manacles" "blights with plagues the Marriage hearse"

## The Manhunt - the poem about the wife trying to support her soldier husband and get to know him after war!

*Context link:* Simon Armitage created a collection of poems called 'The Not Dead' (2008) in which he examined how war affects ex-soldiers and their loved ones. This poem is based on a real couple and the issues they faced.

- The poem is written from the wife's perspective and considers the physical and psychological scarring the husband (soldier) has a result of his experiences.
  - The poet uses a series of metaphors which dehumanise the soldier. The injuries are described in a set of couplets that show how the wife is having to explore her husband slowly.
- Quotations:** "only then would he let me trace" "parachute silk of his punctured lung" "grazed heart" "unexploded mine buried deep in his mind"



## Dulce Et Decorum Est - the poem about the exhausted soldiers who face a sudden gas attack!

*Context link:* Wilfred Owen was a soldier in World War 1. He died before the end of the war but during his time he saw the full horror of conditions on the front line. He was angry about the conditions soldiers had to live with.

- The poem attacks the idea from propaganda that it would be purely noble to die for your country.
  - The poet uses imagery to depict the reality of war and uses graphic imagery to shock the reader and show the horrors faced by soldiers in WW1.
  - The last lines are aimed directly at the reader and are appeal against feeding into the patriotic lies.
- Quotations:** "coughing like hags" "drunk with fatigue" "under a green sea" "guttering, choking, drowning"



## Hawk Roosting - the poem about a hawk that thinks it is godlike and boast of its power!

*Context link:* The poet, Ted Hughes, includes a great amount of natural and historical ideas in his poems. He was Poet Laureate before he died. He insists the poem isn't about people.

- The poem is a dramatic monologue written from the point of view of the hawk and has a tone of authority. This form helps to convey the hawk's arrogance.
  - The language of the poem is full of images of violence and death and power.
- Quotations:** "top of the wood" "rehearse perfect kills" "I hold creation in my foot" "tearing off heads"



## Valentine - the poem where an onion is giving as a Valentine's Day gift to symbolise love!

*Context link:* The poem explores different forms of love. Duffy (the poet) is known for writing less traditional poems and for challenging stereotypes; she was the first female Poet Laureate.

- The poem is different to traditional love poems and is irregular and somehow disjointed; the tone is forceful at times. The poem lists the ways the onion might represent love and each idea is like an extra layer of the onion. The use of the extended metaphor makes it an honest and realistic look at love. The language towards the end is darker and shows some of the dangers of love.
- Quotations:** "not a red rose" "careful undressing of love" "blind you with tears" "cling to your knife"

**Sonnet 43 - the poem that expresses how intensely the poet loves her partner and explains the ways she loves him!**

*Context link: Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote this as part of a set of sonnets for her future husband (Robert Browning). They met later in life and eloped against her father's wishes. This was the Victorian era (1850) so emotions were usually hidden.*

-The relationship in the poem is described as deep and spiritual and as if it is a religion to her. The poem is full of hyperbole.

-The poem is set out into the octave (first 8 lines) which introduces her intense love and the sestet (remaining 6) which detail her emotions across a lifetime and how these strengthen her love.

**Quotations: "How Do I love thee?" "I love thee freely" "with my childhood's faith" "if God choose, I shall but love thee better after death"**

**Living Space - the poem about the 'slums' in Mumbai and how they are dangerous but contain life and hope!**

*Context link: Imtiaz Dharker is a poet and film maker. She has Pakistani origins and was raised in Glasgow. She now splits her time between Britain and India.*

-The poem describes a badly built building and then reveals people live there and have even hung a basket of delicate eggs outside. The eggs represent fragility but also faith (that they will survive), new life and hope for the future. The poet is not wholly negative about the conditions.  
- There is shift in the mood of the poem from the language of chaos and danger to the sense of optimism at the end.

**Quotations: "not enough straight lines" "leans dangerously" "squeezed a living space" "bright, thin walls of faith"**

**Afternoons - the poem about the mothers watching their children play and how they may feel trapped!**

*Context link: The poem is written in the 60s so the mothers are part of a more traditional society. Larkin (the poet) often explores ordinary events in people's lives.*

-The poem is observational and considers an ordinary scene and everyday objects and ideas.

-The speaker creates a sense of setting and then explores the women's lives both past and present and how they have changed and have less freedom.

Natural imagery is used to mirror the change in people's lives. The move from summer to autumn seems negative. **Quotations: "summer is fading" "setting free their children" "estateful of washing" "their beauty has thickened"**

**As Imperceptibly as Grief - the poem which compares the end of summer to the end of grief!**

*Context link: Dickinson's poetry often explores death and nature. As an adult, she lived almost completely in isolation but wrote many letters and poems.*

The poem begins by describing the end of summer and then links this to the end of grief. The end of grief creates another sadness in its own way.

The poet uses natural metaphors and the language of time to present the stages of grief. There is also light imagery to perhaps show the cycle of day and night and how this links to the inevitability of life and death.

**Quotations: "Summer lapsed away" "Twilight long begun" "harrowing grace" "into the beautiful"**

**ANSWERING THE QUESTION:**



- ✓ You will be asked two questions
- ✓ You will be given one poem to discuss for 15 marks
- ✓ Then you must choose another poem to compare it to for your second 24 mark question
- ✓ Use quotations
- ✓ Explain the effect of the writer's techniques
- ✓ Compare the poems based on their ideas, meanings and messages then consider how the language shows this too.

**To Autumn - the poem which celebrates autumn and all it brings!**  
*Context link: Keats was a Romantic poet so was interested in the relationship between people and nature. In 1820 (a year before he died) he published six odes. This is one. An ode is written in praise of something.*

-The poem personifies autumn and the narrator addresses the season directly. It describes the plentiful nature of autumn, the work that people do during harvest and then the fade into winter.

-There is lots of language that reflects excess and shows the abundance of nature produced.

-The poet has used sensory language to help show how rich the season is. There is a sense of awe around autumn and then sorrow as winter approaches.

**Quotations: "close bosom friend" "last oozings hours by hours" "soft dying day" "gathering swallows twitter"**

**Cozy Apologia - the poem where a wife reflects on her relationship as she shelters from a hurricane!**

*Context link: Dove wrote the poem about the real life Hurricane Floyd in 1999. She is an award winning African American poet and was US Poet Laureate.*

-The poem compares the speaker's partner to everyday objects and more stereotypical romantic images like the knight in shining armour; it concludes that their love is ordinary but genuine and that makes it strong.

-The use of humour, clichés and colloquial language make the poem seem personal but suggest it is not supposed to be too serious and conventional.

**Quotations: "I could pick anything and think of you" "chain mail glinting" "Big Bad Floyd" "fall short of the divine"**

**The Soldier - the poem about how much of an honour it would be to die fighting as an English soldier!**

*Context link: The poem was written the year WW1 broke out (1914). Brooke fell ill and died whilst serving in the Navy in 1915. He never fought in active combat.*

-The poem is written in sonnet form as seems as if it is a love poem to England.

-The whole thing is an extended metaphor and presents England as the mother who has shaped the soldier. The natural imagery and religious language helps present England as idyllic.

**Quotations: "for ever England" "bore, shaped, made aware" "blest by suns of home" "the eternal mind"**

**She Walks in Beauty - the poem where the speaker admires a woman's beauty and assumes she must be a good person too!**

*Context link: Byron was known as somebody who was rather scandalous and he had some infamous affairs, but this poem is more restrained. He allegedly based the poem on his cousin's wife after he saw her in a sparkling black dress at a party.*

-The poem describes the woman's various body parts and makes her seem perfect. It then focuses on how her personality must reflect her personality and therefore she must be a good person.

-The use of contrasts (particularly imagery of light and dark) makes the woman seem like the perfect balance and suggests she intrigues the speaker.

**Quotations: "cloudless climes and starry skies" "nameless grace" "so soft, so calm" "heart whose love is innocent"**

**Mametz Wood - the poem about farmers finding the remains of WW1 soldiers as they plough their fields in France!**

*Context link: The poem is inspired by a real battle in WW1 that was one of the most bloody of the conflict. Shears is Welsh and wanted to honour the Welsh soldiers who fought as many died in the battle.*

-The poem is written in 3<sup>RD</sup> person which creates a sense of detachment; it has a reflective tone and begins by focusing on the farmers and then looking back at how the soldiers may have died.

-The earth is personified as the poem also considers the lasting impact war has had on the environment.

- The language used depicts the brokenness and fragility of the soldiers and reminds us of how vulnerable they were in battle.

**Quotations: "wasted young" "blown and broken" "broken mosaic of bone" "absent tongues"**