



...boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

'lone and level sands stretch far away' – What does this emphasise about Ozymandias' legacy?

What sound techniques are used in these lines? Why are they used?

Why is this important as the last line?

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command

Why is the image of a human face significant?

Which is the most important word from each line? Justify your choices.

Line one:

Line two:



How do these lines link to the themes of power & conflict?

Ozymandias, Percy Bysshe Shelley

Identify the imperative verb. Why do you think this is used? What does it tell us about Ozymandias?

Why has Shelley focused on the abuse of power by a ruler?

The poem is framed as a story told by 'a traveller from an antique land' – why has Shelley done this? What does it emphasise about the ruler, Ozymandias?

Compare the line to what we know about Ozymandias now. How has it changed? Why?

'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'

Why is the word 'antique' important?

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said:





The mind-forged manacles I hear:

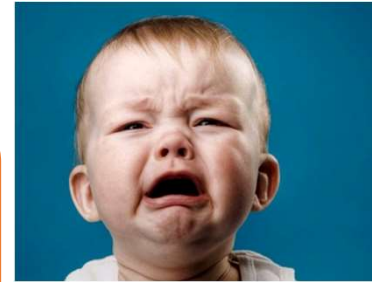
What does Blake mean by 'mind-forged manacles'?

What is he trying to say about the people of London?

Why does Blake focus on the senses?

How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,

What are the juxtaposing images here? Why are they significant?



Can you consider an alternative interpretation?

London, William Blake

There is a use of first person throughout the poem – why is this important?

Why is the image of the Thames running through the city significant as a symbol of power & conflict?

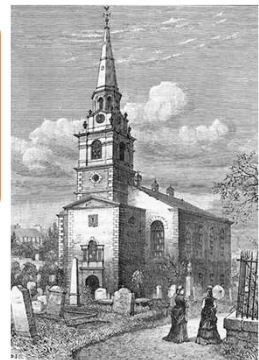
What is Blake suggesting about the church as an institution?

What does the line 'runs in blood down palace walls' refer to?

Links to power/conflict?

I wander through each chartered street,
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,

Every black'ning church appalls,
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls.





What image is being created here? Positive or negative?

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree

Earlier in the poem, it is suggested that 'her' is nature personified. Why would Wordsworth personify nature? (You could make a link to context here)

Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light.

There is a repetition of the 'l' sound – why has Wordsworth done this? What is the effect on the reader?



Is there a positive or negative scene created?

Extract from, The Prelude, William Wordsworth

Identify the verb in the line(s). What are the connotations? What atmosphere is created?

The adverb 'lustily' means powerful or strong. How does this compare to the image of the 'silent lake'? Why do you think Wordsworth has done this?

There is a juxtaposition between sibilance & plosive sounds. Highlight this in the quotation box. Why do you think Wordsworth did this?

How does this link to power & conflict?



...lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,

I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own





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

Why is the possessive pronoun 'my' significant?

'looking as if she were alive.' is an example of caesura.
Thinking about the use of caesura & the language used – why is this important?

Link to power / conflict?

...'Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat'...

What is being suggested here?

How can you link this to power & conflict?



My Last Duchess, Robert Browning

The use of punctuation separates the phrases into short sections.
What is the effect of this?

Why is the use of the personal pronoun 'I' important here? How can you link it to ideas of power?

...This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together.

There is an emphasise on material objects in the poem.
Why do you think Browning has done this? What does it tell us about the Duke?

'taming a sea-horse' – why is this image significant?

...Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!



The Charge of the Light Brigade, Alfred Lord Tennyson



Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death

What does the rhythm resemble? Why?

The image of 'the valley of death' is repeated throughout the poem. Why do you think this is?

The 'jaws of Death' and 'mouth of Hell' are repeated again towards the end of the poem. Why do you think there is a symmetry in the poem? What is Tennyson trying to tell/show us?



Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell,

Why are 'Death' and 'Hell' personified?

Why is Tennyson saying we should remember the soldiers?

Rode the six hundred. (x3)
Not the six hundred.
Left of six hundred.
Noble six hundred!

These phrases are the final line of each stanza. Why is this structurally important?

Who are the Light Brigade? What historical event is he referring to?

The phrase slightly changes throughout the poem. Why is this?

Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!



Exposure, Wilfred Owen



The poem opens with the collective pronoun 'our'. Why do you think this is?

Why is the weather personified? What does it tell us about war?

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knive us...

Highlight where Owen has used sibilance in the lines. Why do you think he has done this?

What does the poetic voice the 'real dangers' are of being at war?

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

Owen uses assonance in this phrase. Highlight where the long 'o' sounds are used. Why do you think he has done this?

How does this link to ideas of power & conflict? Think symbolically as well.

We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.

Shutters and doors, all closed: on us the doors are closed, -
We turn back to our dying.

There is caesura used in the first line. Why do you think Owen has created this 'division' between the two lines? Think symbolically!

What does this suggest about the impact of conflict on both soldier and the people at home?





We are prepared: we build our houses squat,

The poem opens with this line. Why do you think they need to be prepared?

Contrast this to the last line. Why is this significant?

You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs

Heaney uses the oxymoron 'exploding comfortably' – why does he do this? What is the effect on the reader?



Can you offer an alternative interpretation or think symbolically?

Storm on the Island, Seamus Heaney

Heaney uses a simile to describe the water spray. Why does he use the domestic image of a cat?

Heaney uses monosyllabic words and breaks up the lines with caesura. Why do you think he does this?

What is it that they fear? Consider the context of the poem.

This is the final line of the poem. Why is this important?

...when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage.

Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.





Suddenly he awoke and was running – raw
In raw-seamed hot khaki, his sweat heavy,

The poem opens with this line. Why does Ted Hughes throw you into the action straight away?

The 'h' sound is repeated (highlight where this is) – what do you think it replicates & why?

'Raw' is repeated twice – why do you think this might be?

Bullets smacking the belly out of the air

Highlight the onomatopoeic word. Why do you think this has been used?

The air has been personified. What is the effect of this?



Bayonet Charge, Ted Hughes

What is a threshing circle? Why has this image been used?

The erratic movements of the hare are described in these lines. Why do you think Hughes chose this image?

Highlight the onomatopoeic words. Why do you think that these have been used? Can you offer an alternative interpretation too?

What does 'his terror's touchy dynamite' refer to?



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.

Dropped like luxuries in a yelling alarm
To get out of that blue crackling air
His terror's touchy dynamite.





...tackle looters raiding a bank.
And one of them legs it up the road,
probably armed, possibly not.

Highlight the colloquial language used by Armitage. Why do you think he uses this in the first stanza?

There is some doubt introduced in the final line – why is this important?

I see every round as it rips through his life –
I see broad daylight on the other side.

There is a repetition of the phrase 'I see'. Why is the first person narrative significant here?

Highlight the violent imagery. Why has Armitage used these words?

Why is the picture painted so vividly for us?



Remains, Simon Armitage

Why is the speaker still thinking about the event?

Why is the speaker turning to drink and drugs?
Can you bring in some context here?

The repetition of 'bloody' in this line is important and possibly carries two different meanings. Why is this?

In this line, the personal possessive pronoun 'my' is used. Why do you think this has changed?



Dream, and he's torn apart by a dozen rounds.
And the drink and the drugs won't flush him out.

his bloody life in my bloody hands



Poppies, Jane Weir

...Before you left,
I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals,
spasms of paper red...

The red poppy is a symbol of remembrance for those who have died at war. Why do you think Weir opens with this image?

The word 'spasms' is quite violent.
Why is this significant?

Sellotape bandaged around my hand,

Why has the speaker put sellotape around her hand?

Why is this juxtaposed with the verb 'bandaged'? How could it be symbolic?

Why is there an emphasis on
textiles & tactile imagery?

There are images of domesticity juxtaposed with
battle imagery. Why do you think this is?

Why is the reference to a playground significant?

Why does Weir use alliteration in these final lines?

...my stomach busy
making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without a winter
coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

I listened, hoping to hear
your playground voice catching on the wind.





In his darkroom he is finally alone
with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.

There is a paradox between the chaos and the suffering
being reduced to ordered rows. What is the purpose of
this?

Why does Duffy use sibilance here?

He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays
beneath his hands, which did not tremble then
though seem to now.

Why do his hands tremble now? What has changed?

'He has a job to do.' is monosyllabic. Why has Duffy chosen to do
this?



War Photographer, Carol Ann Duffy

'a half-formed ghost' – why is
this line important?

There is a focus on one person/family. Why has this
changed the tone of the poem?

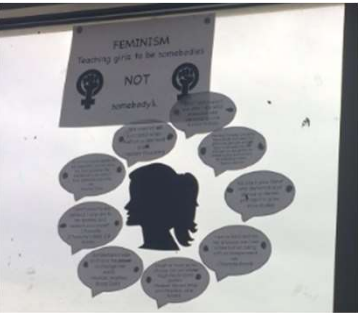
Something is happening. A stranger's features
faintly start to twist before his eyes,
a half-formed ghost.

What does this suggest about the public who see these images?

There is an internal rhyme between 'tears' and
'beers' – why has Duffy done this?

...The reader's eyeballs prick
with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers.





Light illuminates rather than hides. How can you link this to the idea of identity?

Paper that lets the light shine through, this is what could alter things.

What could 'paper' be symbolic of?

Alternative interpretation?

Tissue, Imtiaz Dharker

pages smoothed and stroked and turned transparent with attention.

Dharker uses gentle verbs and repetition of the word 'and' – why do you think this is?



Why has the poet used enjambment and an end stop in these lines?

How does this relate to ideas of power & conflict?

Why is the image of a paper kite significant? What does it tell us about identity?

and what was paid by credit card might fly our lives like paper kites.

This is the final line in the poem – it comes after the different types of 'tissue' have been mentioned. Why is this significant?

turned into your skin.





It may be at war, it may be sick with tyrants,
but I am branded by an impression of sunlight.

There is a juxtaposition between language of light and conflict. Why do you think this may be?

Why does Rumens use the verb 'branded'?

...the graceful slopes
glow even clearer as time rolls its tanks
and the frontiers rise between us, close like waves.

What are the connotations of tanks vs. waves? Why do you think the poet has put these two images together?



How can you link these ideas to power & conflict?

The Emigrée, Carol Rumens

'banned by the state' – how can you relate this to ideas of power & conflict?

Synaesthesia is the mixing of the senses. Highlight where this has been used. Why do you think Rumens has done this?

BANNED

It may by now be a lie, banned by the state
but I can't get it off my tongue. It tastes of sunlight.

What is the significance of the pronouns used in this quotation?

Why has Rumens used repeated imagery of light/darkness?

My city takes me dancing through the city
of walls. They accuse me of absence, they circle me.
They accuse me of being dark in their free city.



Checking Out Me History, John Agard



Bandage up me eye with me own history
Blind me to me own identity

This is an extended metaphor used throughout the poem. Why do you think this is?

Phonetic spellings are used to reflect the accent of the speaker. Why do you think this is important?

Why has Agard used images of fire, water and nature?



Why does this make her an important figure?

*fire-woman struggle
hopeful stream
to freedom river*

Why is Toussaint L'Overture a significant historical figure?
Why do you think Agard included him?



*Toussaint de beacon
of de Haitian Revolution*

How can you link this to the poet's message?

Why does the speaker have to 'check out' his own history? Why hasn't he been taught?

What effect does this have on his identity?

But now I checking out me own history
I carving out me identity





full of powerful incantations
and enough fuel for a one-way
journey into history

What does the speaker mean by saying 'a one-way journey into history'?

What could the 'powerful incantations' relate to?

the dark shoals of fishes
flashing silver as their bellies
swivelled towards the sun



Why is the imagery of nature so important here?

How does the beautiful image of nature contrast to the act that is being carried out?

Kamikaze, Beatrice Garland

Why does the mother ignore the father?



How does this relate to the long-lasting effects of conflict? How does the power dynamic change here?

And though he came back
my mother never spoke again
in his presence, nor did she meet his eyes

Which is more noble? To be a Kamikaze pilot or to be an objector? What do you think the poet is trying to say?

How is the reader supposed to feel when reading this final line? Who has our sympathy?

And sometimes, she said, he must have wondered
which had been the better way to die.

