Extract From The Prelude

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon’s utmost boundary; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon’s bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
The boat is a metaphor of man’s influence,
still anchored by the tree representing nature.
Loosening the chain and pushing from shore represents the poet as mankind moving to stand on its own two feet.

Wordsworth creates an idyllic and peaceful scene with peaceful language.

The mood changed with the craggy ridge and horizons boundary represents nature, stopping the progress of the poet.

The term ‘elfin pinnace’ could be translated as ‘fairy boat’, a metaphor for the now heated mood of the poet.

Elves were often viewed as sexual and lustful.

The simile reminds us that anything man tries to produce is merely imitating nature which does it better.

The Horizon marks the shift in tone. The language becomes darker and dangerous.
The mountain, is personified and nature shown as aggressive.
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Tower'd up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

William Wordsworth

Use of ‘trembling’ connotes the fear and vulnerability of the poet, he is shown like a wounded animal, hiding away.

Meadows, usually peaceful and joyful and contrasted to the ‘grave and serious mood’.

The darkness represents his change to a darker mood at the end of the journey.

The words all carry a dark and sinister tone. He is reflecting on the conflict in his mind of the peaceful side of nature and the harsh extremes.

The poem changes from Euphony (pleasant sounding words) to a Cacophony (harsh and rough sounding words.)
William Wordsworth was a romantic poet, and wrote 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, it looks at the spiritual and moral development of a man growing up.

The poem shows the spiritual growth of the poet, how he comes to terms with who he is, and his place in nature and the world. Wordsworth was inspired by memories of events and visits to different places, explaining how they affected him.

This extract describes how Wordsworth went out in a boat on a lake at night. He was alone and a mountain peak loomed over him; its presence had a great effect and for days afterwards he was troubled by the experience.

There is a sense of conflict between man and nature where nature is eventually shown to be more powerful in the end. The setting is of a journey in a boat. The journey represents a spiritual journey and it becomes more rough and hostile along the way. At first, nature is shown at peace with the poet, later it gets darker. As he tries to reach the horizon it becomes harsh, putting man back in his place.

Nature: humanity is part of nature and sometimes we can be made to feel very small and insignificant by the natural world.

Loneliness: Wordsworth is often on his own throughout The Prelude and this is important to him. He can think more clearly and is more affected by events and places as a result.

The night: the poem seems to suggest that you can sometimes experience feelings and events more clearly at night, perhaps due to loneliness.

This section is 44 lines in blank verse (no real structure). It a consistent pace.

As the poem progresses the journey the poet is on becomes rougher and words like 'and' are repeated to give it a breathless pace and feel.

There are no stanzas: the writing is continuous though there is plenty of punctuation to help us read it.

This extract is a complete story in itself. It starts with "One summer evening..." and finishes with the effects on his mind of the boat trip: "a trouble to my dreams".

The Prelude is conversational, as if Wordsworth is sat next to us, telling us the story himself. The poet uses "and"s throughout to give the verse a breathless quality.

Wordsworth effectively describes the night-time atmosphere with his choice of images.

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

But gentle moonlight becomes darkness as the poet-narrator's state of mind becomes troubled by the end of the extract:

...o'er my thoughts There hung a darkness, call it solitude Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes Remained, no pleasant images of trees, Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;

This is imagery that could be associated with nightmares or even horror.

Personification is also used by Wordsworth: he refers to the boat as "her" and the mountain peak comes alive and chases him.
Charge of the Light Brigade

I
Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II
"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Someone had blundered.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

III
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

League is about 3 miles, shows how far they have on their journey.

Valley of Death is a biblical reference to show the horror of what they now face. Suggests hell.

Repetition to build the tension and drag out the charge.

Repetition of ‘theirs’ and ‘six hundred’ objectifies them as a symbol rather than just men. Also helps tone becomes more solemn to show impending doom.

Cannon link to war and conflict, demonstrate how the odds are against them. Repetition to show scale of guns against them.

‘Boldly’ contrast with the scale of odds against them, emphasises futility.

Personifies death, used to exaggerate the futility and bravery of soldiers that they are going to die, but do so boldly.
Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered.
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell.
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!
Alfred Lord Tennyson

Sabres: swords, the flash is the sun shining off the metal but also a metaphor for the glory they showed in their bravery which, like a flash, is short.

Exaggerate (hyperbole) the scale of the mistake.

Cossack and Russian, the enemy. Here the poet is showing how the enemy were not the equal of the British, however there were more of them.

Changes the tone by inserting the word 'not' implies the six hundred have mostly died.

Repetition from before, now they are running away.

Glorify the poet make the men more like symbols of bravery than real men.

Mirrors the third stanza to emphasise the bravery and loss.

Rhetorical question. The poet does not seem sad that these men died but rather is more concerned with their glory.

The imperative, ordering people to give their respect when many questioned the charge.

The poet is showing how the soldiers themselves should be honoured, even if the decision to charge may have been wrong.
Context/Main Ideas

Alfred, Lord Tennyson was one of the most important poets of the Victorian period. The Crimean War took place between 1853 and 1856, with Imperial Russia on one side and an alliance including Britain and France on the other.

The poem glorifies the Brigade, celebrating the sacrifice they made for the country.

In the poem there is a balance between the realistic depiction of the violence experienced by the soldiers and the glory of dying for one's country.

The poem presents the soldiers as a unit rather than as individuals, reinforcing the view of how honourable it is to be a part of an army with a common purpose.

The poem is written by Tennyson at a great distance from the events depicted in the poem. This gives the poem a distant quality, although perhaps closely reflects the feelings of the people reading newspaper reports in Britain.

Feelings/Attitudes

Tennyson's poem communicates a disgust at the treatment of the men of the Light Brigade: "Someone had blundered" in the decision to attack.

It presents the view that taking orders and serving one's country is honourable: "Theirs was not to reason why, / Theirs was but to do and die".

The poem ends with a command to the reader to remember the men and "Honour the charge they made!" Tennyson reminds the reader throughout the poem of the tremendous difficulties faced by those at war.

Structure/Shape of the poem

The poem is very regular in its structure, with several examples of repetition. The Charge of the Light Brigade is a narrative poem, with each of the stanzas progressing the story of the attack.

These dangers are presented as being unavoidable, with death inevitable: "Into the jaws of Death, / Into the mouth of Hell"

The final two lines of the first three stanzas act as a refrain, almost like a chorus, reminding the reader of the danger faced by "the six hundred".

Tennyson's use of alliteration creates a more visceral effect, that is, it helps to create a realistic and powerful description. "Storm'd at with shot and shell" is one example in which the 's' sounds reflect the viciousness of the attack faced by the Light Brigade.

Tennyson uses a rhetorical question at the beginning of the final stanza: "When can their glory fade?" The answer to this question is clear: their glory should not fade, as their sacrifice is symbolic of all those who sacrifice their lives for the country.

Poetic Devices

The rhythm of the opening lines creates a relentless beat reflecting the riding of the Light Brigade into battle on horseback.

Tennyson's heavy use of repetition in the poem is perhaps intended to communicate the relentlessness of the charge, and of the dangers faced by the Brigade: "Cannon to the right of them, / Cannon to the left of them, / Cannon in front of them"
Exposure

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

Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent...

Low drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient...

Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,
But nothing happens.

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire.
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.
Northward incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,
Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.
What are we doing here?

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow...
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of gray,
But nothing happens.

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.
Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow,
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause and renew,
We watch them wandering up and down the wind’s nonchalance,
But nothing happens.
Pale flakes with lingering stealth come feeling for our faces -
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare, snow-dazed,
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.
Is it that we are dying?

Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires glozed
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;
Shutters and doors all closed: on us the doors are closed -
We turn back to our dying.

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn:
Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.
For God’s invincible spring our love is made afraid:
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here: therefore were born,
For love of God seems dying.

To-night, His frost will fasten on this mud and us,
Shrivelling many hands and puckering foreheads crisp.
The burying-party, picks and shovels in their shaking grasp,
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,
But nothing happens.

Wilfred Owen

Man is animalised, likened to scared animals, rabbits in holes. Showing that before nature man is just an animal.
Rhetorical Question shows the confusion of soldiers.
Conditions are so bad they can no longer tell what is normal anymore.
Metaphor: frozen blood described as jewels, poet sees men’s lives as valuable and ultimately wasted.

Men feel abandoned and lose faith in God “our love is made afraid”. Contrasts/juxtaposes the battlefield with garden of Eden. Tone is one of betrayal and despair.

Use of scattered punctuation slows the pace, we can imagine the soldier finally succumbing to exposure and dying.

Metaphor: ice as in cold and dead but also dead and empty, without soul.

Repetition final line emphasises the process doesn’t end, the soldiers are frozen in time and hell
Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) is one of the most famous English poets to emerge from the First World War. War broke out in 1914 and he joined the army the following year, aged 18. Before long he had to return to England to get treatment for shell-shock (what today we would call Post-traumatic Stress Disorder - severe anxiety brought on by a stressful situation like war). He was sent to a hospital in Edinburgh and there he met the already well-known poet and writer Siegfried Sassoon. Owen returned to the trenches a year later and wrote some of his best-known poems. He was also decorated for his courage in battle, before being killed on 4th November 1918, just a week before peace was declared and the war finally ended.

The war itself was often criticised because of a huge loss of life for very little gain. During the Somme over 60,000 British soldiers died in one day. Owen's poems were often angry that the soldiers were in muddy dangerous trenches while the generals behind the lines were living in comfort. Owen's poems tried to show the truth of conditions to people back home. He was not against fighting, but was angry about the conditions soldiers had to live with in order to do so.

The poem itself is based on war and so links to conflict. The poem itself is about the weather and conditions of living in the trenches rather than any fighting. It is more a poem about the conflict between man and nature. This is extremely relevant because man has created machines that can launch explosive shells for miles and destroy the landscape, and yet, nature can still do more harm than any of it.

The poem is structured as a series of eight stanzas of five lines. The last line of each stanza is noticeably shorter and indented which emphasises its importance. Many of these short lines are either rhetorical questions or the repetition of the phrase 'But nothing happens'. Both have the effect of emphasising the pointlessness of what is going on.

The first four lines of each stanza follow the rhyming pattern of abba. This regularity emphasises the unchanging nature of life in the trenches.

Man v Nature: Written about soldiers in a trench we expect to see a large amount of military language, however most of this is used to describe and personify the weather as if it were an army attacking them. The poem ends with the fear of tonight and the people who will lose lives and how none of this will change anything. Within the poem it is the weather that is represented as merciless and triumphant.

A particularly effective example of alliteration comes in the fourth stanza with the repetition of the letters 's', 'f' and 'w':

*Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence...*

The repeated use of the 's' sound reminds the reader of the bullets which are whizzing past the ears of the soldiers. As the lines follow one another so, gradually, the 's' sounds fade away; just as the hail of bullets would do.

*The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow...*

*We only know war lasts, rain soaks*

A clear example of assonance can be found in the third stanza where the sound of a long 'o' in the words 'soak', 'know' and 'grow' emphasises the slow tedious wait for something to occur. This same long 'o' sound occurs again in the sixth stanza.
Storm on the Island

We are prepared: we build our houses squat,
Sink walls in rock and roof them with good slate.
The wizened earth had never troubled us
With hay, so as you can see, there are no stacks
Or stooks that can be lost. Nor are there trees
Which might prove company when it blows full
Blast: you know what I mean - leaves and branches
Can raise a chorus in a gale
So that you can listen to the thing you fear
Forgetting that it pummels your house too.
But there are no trees, no natural shelter.
You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs
But no: when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage. We just sit tight while wind dives
And strafes invisibly. Space is a salvo.
We are bombarded by the empty air.
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

Seamus Heaney

The language is rough and rural, giving the speaker a more agricultural tone.

The poet describes the earth almost like an old friend. Personifying it like an old wrinkled man.

The poet has a slightly ironic tone saying that because the ground has not been very arable they don't have to worry about looking after any crops or trees blowing over.

The poet talks about nature with the same language as if it were a neighbour.

Aside gives a very personal conversational tone.

Personified the weather, suggesting it is singing.

Direct address using the word 'you' and talking about fear creates a friendly intimacy with the speaker.

Violent language suggests the power of the weather as dominant over man.

Oxymoron, exploding is quite a violent term contrasting with comfortably. The poet is suggesting that because the violence is far off you feel more secure.

Simile -the poet uses a very familiar image to describe something that is powerful and majestic, this undermines the strength of the weather, suggesting it is only scary if we choose to let it.

Military metaphors salvo, strafe, bombardment relate to air attacks. The poet is drawing comparisons with the wind and human aircraft, suggesting that they are only what we make them.

Oxymoron the poet suggests that our fear is a paradox, there is nothing to fear or that we fear the nothingness of the invisible wind.
**Context/Main Ideas**

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. He uses a large number of agricultural and natural images in his work as metaphors for human nature.

The poem is set around a story of a small isolated cottage near the sea in a storm and the exposure to the elements. The poem describes the experience of being in a cliff-top cottage on an island off the coast of Ireland during a storm. Heaney describes the bare ground, the sea and the wind. The people in the cottage are extremely isolated and can do nothing against the powerful and violent weather.

**Feelings/Attitudes**

The poem looks at the conflict between nature and man and people’s fear of the weather. However the poet also points out that the fears are really rather small in the grand scheme. There is also a hint of war and conflict in the way the weather is described with “bombardment” and “salvo”.

By the end of the poem Heaney admits being afraid: "it is a huge nothing that we fear". Perhaps this suggests that the ultimate power of the storm is that it is an unknown quantity. No one knows what the wind will do and what each storm will bring.

**Storm on the Island**

Seamus Heaney

**Structure/Shape of the poem**

The poem is in blank verse with 19 lines. There are 5 feet (10 syllables) in each line. The verses are unrhymed and it gives it a very conversational tone. This is added to by the use of asides ‘you know what I mean’.

The poem is in present tense to suggest the storm is occurring at the time. The poem uses a great deal of enjambment to help add to the conversational tone.

**Poetic Devices**

The poem is written in the present tense. This creates a sense of drama and also reinforces the idea that storms happen all the time.

We do not know who is in the cottage with Heaney. He is certainly not alone because he refers to We throughout, but he chooses not to provide us with more details. The wind and waves are the 'characters' in the poem.

The poem begins in a confident tone - "We are prepared". Heaney seems to have a 'grit your teeth' attitude! Storms are obviously expected because buildings are designed to be "squat" especially to withstand them.

Heaney speaks in a friendly tone to draw us in. He uses common conversational tags - "as you see", "you know what I mean", "You might think" - to involve us, and reminds us of our own lives: "the thing you fear", "your house" as he talking to the reader specifically, or to people in general? Do you find that this emphasises how isolated he is on the island?

Many lines are not end stopped but run on from one to another. This is called enjambment. "when it blows full / Blast" which conveys the impression of a gust of wind suddenly 'blasting' in at the start of the line. "a tame cat / Turned savage", where the surprise of finding "Turned savage" at the beginning of the line enacts the shock of the cat’s sudden change in temperament.
Bayonet Charge

Suddenly he awoke and was running - raw
In raw-seamed hot khaki, his sweat heavy,
Stumbling across a field of clods towards a green hedge
That dazzled with rifle fire, hearing
Bullets smacking the belly out of the air -
He lugged a rifle numb as a smashed arm;
The patriotic tear that had brimmed in his eye
Sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest,

In bewilderment then he almost stopped -
In what cold clockwork of the stars and the nations
Was he the hand pointing that second? He was running
Like a man who has jumped up in the dark and runs
Listening between his footfalls for the reason
Of his still running, and his foot hung like
Statuary in mid-stride. Then the shot-sliced furrows

Threw up a yellow hare that rolled like a flame
And crawled in a threshing circle, its mouth wide
Open silent, its eyes standing out.

He plunged past with his bayonet toward the green hedge,
King, honour, human dignity, etcetera
Dropped like luxuries in a yelling alarm
To get out of that blue crackling air
His terror's touchy dynamite.

Ted Hughes

Alliteration of R and H sounds gives sense of hard work heavy breathing.
Contrast between warzone and the 'green hedge' which is quite a peaceful rural image.

Enjambment adds to the chaos of the battlefield.
Personified bullets and body parts with 'belly' and 'smashed arm' blurs the line between weapon and man.
Juxtaposed ideas of patriotic tear, with 'sweating like molten iron' which further dehumanises the soldier and likens him more to a tank or machine.
Clockwork, a metaphor for his actions as being more like a clockwork machine than human.
Rhetorical Question, marks the change of pace, it is as if this is happening in slow motion or the soldier has stopped as he thinks on what he has become.
Enjambment, over four verses implies he has suddenly come to some realisation and this both seems to drag on but also all happen at once.

Metaphor, is it a real hare? Maybe a coward?
Yellow is the colour of fear and hares are prey. Natural and frightened image juxtaposed with his own machine like nature. Possible that the hare is another soldier shot and scared, trying to escape. Dehumanised.

'plunged' implies diving in too deep or cannot return. He has made his decision to carry on and there is no turning back.
Listing of the key motivations for war emphasises that here and now they are second to the rush of battle.
Atmospheric description, similar to 'the air was electric', the word 'crackling' gives an element of danger to the verse.
Metaphor and Consonance of T sounds emphasises adrenaline rush and almost animal like reactions (Think of a cat that is prepared to fight or flee).
Context/Main Ideas

Ted Hughes (1930-1998) was born in Yorkshire and grew up in the countryside. After serving in the RAF for two years, he won a scholarship to Cambridge University where he studied Archaeology and Anthropology. The themes of the countryside, human history and mythology therefore already deeply influenced his imagination by the time he started writing poetry.

The poem is about a nameless soldier going over the top in the trenches. Soldiers would have bayonets attached to the end of their rifles and would use them to stab enemy soldiers. The nameless soldier in the poem seems to become more a weapon than a man, rushing toward the enemy. It is not clear at the end whether he dies but there is definitely a change in him. His actions are very raw and primal, much like an animal.

Feelings/Attitudes

The poem clearly is set around conflict in that it is a soldier rushing out of the trenches on the attack. In the poem the soldier is almost more machine or animal than human and this is reflected in the power themed words used to describe him.

There are parts of this poem which make us think more of a hunt or animals than humanity. The charge to the ‘green hedge’ seems to be more the action of an animal bolting in a field rather than soldiers charging a trench.

This poem tries to step inside the body and mind of a soldier carrying out one of the most terrifying acts of this or any war: charging straight into rifle fire with the aim of killing enemy soldiers face-to-face. In doing so, Hughes dramatises the struggle between a man’s thoughts and actions.

At the start of the poem the soldier is instinctively obeying orders. In stanza two he has moments of clarity when he thinks about what he is doing and time seems to stop still.

In the end, all high moral justifications such as king and country, have become meaningless. He himself becomes a form of human bomb, not a person but a weapon of war.

Structure/Shape of the poem

The poem is written in three stanzas. All three are filled with words and images, which could suggest the thick mud appropriate for a poem whose main theme is about a man running across a muddy field carrying a heavy gun.

The length of the lines varies a lot. Hughes uses long and short lines to suggest the quick and slow progress of the soldier.

The first stanza is all about action and running. The soldier is awake and running within six words of the opening line. The flow, however, is broken by the use of dashes “-“ This breaks up the flow of the poem and shows how the soldier is waking up to what is happening and slowly starting to think.

The second stanza therefore happens in a kind of slow-motion

The second half of line 15 breaks this spell and he knows he has to rush, without thinking, towards his death in the final stanza.

Poetic Devices

There is the frantic action of battle and the thick difficulty of the mud. In the middle of all this, there is the sudden fear and clear thoughts of the soldier. These feelings are presented in images you can see as well as images you can hear.

Sound- Hughes uses a dense repetition of words and sounds right from the beginning. For example, in stanza one he uses the repeated ‘h’ sound that expresses the soldier’s heavy breathing.

Imagery-The rich descriptions contrast with where the soldier is heading a simple, almost childish description line 3.

Another form of contrast is between the imagery of war and the imagery of nature. Throughout the poem we have a background of farming and the natural world: line 3 and 16. The hare, however, becomes an image of death.

Similes like those found in line 8 and bring a sense of hell to the battlefield.
Remains  Simon Armitage

On another occasion, we got sent out
to tackle looters raiding a bank.

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

Well myself and somebody else and somebody else
are all of the same mind,
so all three of us open fire.

Three of a kind all letting fly, and I swear

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

So we've hit this looter a dozen times
and he's there on the ground, sort of inside out,
pain itself, the image of agony.

One of my mates goes by
and tosses his guts back into his body.
Then he's carted off in the back of a lorry.

End of story, except not really.

His blood-shadow stays on the street, and out on patrol
I walk right over it week after week.
Then I'm home on leave. But I blink

and he bursts again through the doors of the bank.

Sleep, and he's probably armed, and possibly not.

Dream, and he's torn apart by a dozen rounds.

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

he's here in my head when I close my eyes,
dug in behind enemy lines,
not left for dead in some distant, sun-stunned, sand-smothered land
or six-feet-under in desert sand,

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

Anecdotal language, matter of fact tone, suggests this is one of many events.

Colloquialism, slang 'legs it'=run off. Used to give realistic tone to the voice of the speaker.

Aside 'possibly not' undermines severity of the statement.

Analogy, soldiers described as cards in Poker, a game of luck. Emphasis that everything about this was just chance.

Graphic Hyperbole used to demonstrate the lack of glory or honour in this killing, it is not pretty but still very matter of fact.

Dehumanised 'looter' 'sort of inside out' makes the victim appear more of an object.

Colloquialism, 'mate' almost makes this appear like a night out with the lads, like a social event.

The nature of what is happening, a violent killing is juxtaposed to the relaxed way he talks about the event.

Metaphor for the memory of the man and events. Blood connotes death, shadow connoting lingering memory.

Repetition from the start to show that this is the thought replaying in his mind and he is racked with guilt. He now feels powerless.

Cliché 'flush' common term to get rid of something unwanted, this is no longer a matter of war but everyday life.

Analogy, describes the memory like a hostile soldier in his mind, where he cannot get him.

Sibilance: gives the impression of a sinister dream/nightmare like state.

Pun, bitter/dark humour bloody meaning covered in blood but also an expression of anger/hate.
Simon Armitage's poetry is known for its colloquial style, strong rhythms and voice. He often uses the monologue form in his poetry to create immediate and moving characters. His delivery is deadpan and sometimes darkly humorous.

The poem is written from the perspective of a soldier stationed in Iraq or Afghanistan (or any warzone really). They are on patrol and fire on some bank robbers. One of the looters appeared to possibly have a gun so they open fire. The rest of the poem is looking at the fact the soldier cannot leave the memory behind and carries this dead man with him in his mind.

Post traumatic stress and mental illness is very common in soldiers who struggle to come to terms with some part of their duty, normally a horrific memory of killing or being in danger which gives them nightmares and panic attacks as well as depression and sometimes suicidal tendencies.

Remains Simon Armitage

Remains is formed of eight stanzas. The first seven stanzas are in largely unrhymed quatrains. The final stanza consists of only two lines and therefore stands out, emphasising the fact the speaker cannot rid himself of the memory of the killing.

The title may refer to the remains of the dead man, the remains of the memory that haunts the speaker and to what remains are left of his own life now that he is riddled with guilt.

The poem is written as a monologue, from the point of view of the speaker. The poem has the feel of fast-paced natural speech. There is no regular rhythmic pattern and there are examples of enjambment, sometimes between stanzas, which adds to the sense of someone telling their story fairly naturally.

The first four stanzas describe the shooting while the second half of the poem describes the after-effects of this action on the speaker.

The language of the poem is anecdotal, which, along with the pace and rhythm, gives the sense the speaker is directly telling us his story. Slang such as 'mates' and colloquial language (such as 'legs it') is used throughout. The speaker shifts from past tense in the first two lines, to present tense for the rest of the poem which adds immediacy to the narrative.

The imagery is graphic and brutal in its depiction of the killing. The bullets ‘rip’ the man’s body and after they have killed him and he is ‘sort of inside out’. The poet does not spare the reader the details of the shooting, especially when he writes about how the speaker’s mate ‘tosses his guts back into his body’. This conveys the disturbance and trauma that the soldier carries with him long after he has returned home.

The poem ends with the image of his ‘bloody hands’, which reminds us of Lady Macbeth’s struggles to remove the spot of blood that represents her guilt.
Poppies

Three days before Armistice Sunday and poppies had already been placed on individual war graves. Before you left, I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals, spasms of paper red, disrupting a blockade of yellow bias binding around your blazer.

Sellotape bandaged around my hand, I rounded up as many white cat hairs as I could, smoothed down your shirt’s upturned collar, steeled the softening of my face. I wanted to graze my nose across the tip of your nose, play at being Eskimos like we did when you were little. I resisted the impulse to run my fingers through the gelled blackthorns of your hair. All my words flattened, rolled, turned into felt,

The poppy has symbolic links to violence, death and memory. It is quite foreboding in this poem.

Pronouns “I” and “Your” used to emphasises the intimacy and closely of the speaker and subject.

Blockade Military reference to blocking, perhaps of emotion. Alliteration also used with bias, binding, blunder emphasise bustle, mothering over her son.

Familiar noun/military metaphor The reference to sellotape is quite a familiar homely image, ‘bandaged’ can be used to imply wound or injury/harm.

Sibilance, The words ‘steeled, shirt, softening’ etc. gives a calm tone to the scene described in the poem.

The personal anecdote creates a sense of intimacy and human realism in the speakers voice. Contrasted with the military side of her son.

Metaphor, a reference to the shortened hair stubble required in the military and how aggressive it makes her son appear to her.

Power of three, reflects the way the mother is tongue tied and doesn't know what to say, she is proud of her son but also doesn't want him to go.
slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked with you, to the front door, threw it open, the world overflowing like a treasure chest. A split second and you were away, intoxicated.

After you’d gone I went into your bedroom, released a song bird from its cage. Later a single dove flew from the pear tree, and this is where it has led me, skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

On reaching the top of the hill I traced the inscriptions on the war memorial, leaned against it like a wishbone. The dove pulled freely against the sky, an ornamental stitch. I listened, hoping to hear your playground voice catching on the wind.

Jane Weir

Symbolic, idea of throwing the door open and setting her son free. The door represents her own acceptance of his choice.

Simile, suggests how attractive the world appears to her son and also her aspiration for him to have opportunities.

Metaphor, connotes that he is like a beautiful caged creature and needs to be set free. Implies that she understands this includes free to make mistakes and be harmed.

Vague Pronoun, contains double meaning, this as in the location but also the situation, suggests that ‘this’ is her son’s death, she cannot bear to speak the words. Implies pain.

Listing, implies the awkward feeling of the mother, trying to distract herself from grief.

Caesura, breaking down the verses, implies the choking back tears.
**Context/Main Ideas**

Jane Weir, born in 1963, grew up in Italy and Northern England, with an English mother and an Italian father.

The poem looks at a mother of a son who has grown up and gone to war. The poem contains many clues that this is a more modern conflict, however the poem ends at the memorial, suggesting the son died at war or has at least not yet returned home and is now missed by the mother who fears the worst.

The poem is based very heavily around the idea of Poppies as memorials and therefore the idea of memory. The poem flashes back to key moments of the life of the mother and son.

The poem is set in the present day but reaches right back to the beginning of the Poppy Day tradition.

**Feelings/Attitudes**

When Poppies was written, British soldiers were still dying in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The poem contains a range of emotions. There is genuine sadness but also pride.

The poem is about the nature of grief. The mother is speaking directly to her son but a son who shifts in time. There is:

- The son leaving home for school on his own for the first time.
- The son who has just been killed.
- Beneath the surface the son dying violently in a field hospital in Afghanistan.

It is as if all these different versions of her son fixed exist together inside her. When the poem reaches a moment in the present (line 26) she is vulnerable, without protection. The final lines then go back to the past tense "I traced...".

It is as if the present holds too much pain and her memories can only be expressed if distanced in imagery held safely in the past.

**Structure/Shape of the poem**

The poem appears to have a strong, regular sense of form. There are four clear stanzas.

On closer inspection, however, we can see a great deal of movement within this outwardly regular form. 19 lines out of 35 have breaks in the middle of the lines - marked by commas or more strongly by full-stops. These breaks are called caesuras.

This careful variation in form suggests the inner emotion of a narrator who is trying to remain calm and composed but is breaking with sadness inside.

The biggest movement in the poem, however, is in the narrative structure – how the story is told. The time sequence keeps changing along with her emotions. It goes from "Three days before" (line 1) to "Before you left" (line 3) to "After you’d gone" (line 23) to "later" (line 25) and the present in "this is where it has led me" on line 26. It ends with her suspended, on the hill, between the present and the past.

**Poetic Devices**

Sound: the sounds of the poem are restrained. Rhyme would seem inappropriately lively.

Language: The colour and texture of the poppies is expressed through powerful language in the first stanza. The detailed description of the blazer is emphasised through alliteration on "bias binding... blazer". We feel the closeness between mother and child the moment she kneels to pin the poppy to the lapel. In words such as "spasms", "disrupting" and "blockade" however, she may be also recalling the violence of his death.

Imagery: This sense of her blocking out the memory of his violent death with a sweeter, purer memory is sustained in the second stanza: "Sellotape bandaged around my hand". This image carries echoes of battlefield injury as well as cleaning the cat hairs off the blazer. The contrast between the death in battle and the domestic happiness (the boy has been cuddling his cat) is powerful.

Metaphor and symbolism: In the third stanza, the language becomes metaphorical and symbolic. The door to the house is the door to the world. The song-bird is a metaphor for the mother setting the child free. This then changes into the dove, the symbol of peace - but here the peace the son has found is only the peace of death.
Tissue

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

Paper thinned by age or touching, the kind you find in well-used books, the back of the Koran, where a hand has written in the names and histories, who was born to whom, the height and weight, who died where and how, on which sepia date, pages smoothed and stroked and turned transparent with attention.

If buildings were paper, I might feel their drift, see how easily they fall away on a sigh, a shift in the direction of the wind.

Maps too. The sun shines through their borderlines, the marks that rivers make, roads, railtracks, mountainfolds,

Metaphor/Double meaning Tissue both as paper but also living tissue and skin.

Enjambment, creates on-going monologue tone.

Symbolic, suggest hope, positive tone.

Tactile, language, suggests a very familiar concept.

Koran, symbolic of culture and religion and also emphasising a major conflict in modern society and the perceived war on Islam.

Emphasis on ‘history’ as central to the theme., emphasis that this has been handed down.

Sepia meaning faded or yellowed with age. Suggestion of handed down.

Tactile verbs suggest this is not so much a religious book but a treasured heirloom and connection to family.

Metaphor a paper structure would drift, but also ‘drift’ as in purpose, what they stand for. What they are for.

Transient verbs, reflect movement and change. Personified with ‘sigh’. Suggests it is a good thing that they are could be changeable. They adjust ‘with the wind’ winds of change.

Listing, encompasses the man and nature made aspects of the world and how the ‘sun shines’ representing hope and how transparent these things become rather than the permanent object we see them to be.
Fine slips from grocery shops that say how much was sold and what was paid by credit card might fly our lives like paper kites.

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

Imtiaz Dharker

Metaphor the familiar and everyday image of groceries represent larger scale socio economics. Our reliance on money and material wealth.

Flying Kites connotes a childlike innocence and ease. Suggesting perhaps that if we changed our approach to material ownership we would regain that childhood peace of mind.

Symbolic not just of someone who designs buildings but also anyone who makes anything. Metaphor for us all.

Enjambment, and semantics of written script listed here gives a tone of excitement and exploration.

Pathetic fallacy, gives the hopeful aspect to the message of the poem through the reuse of light and shining.

Personify, pride given a form, suggestion that we, or society as a whole is this ‘pride’.

Biblical reference, suggestive of the bigger picture and a sense of spiritual fulfilment. Suggests that we could be building things that improve our life, not hold us back.

Metaphor, for people or society.

Ominous, can be an allusion to the horrors of war and terrorism.

Repetition from stanza 3, reminding us of the tactile intimacy of the book but now on a larger scale.

Direct address, suggesting that instead of being at conflict with the world around us we create a sense of ownership and shared identity.
Tissue
Imtiaz Dharker

Context/Main Ideas

Imtiaz Dharker 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. She draws on her multi-cultural experience in her work.

The poem is written from the point of view of someone today looking out at the conflict and troubles of the modern world; destruction, war and politics, money and wealth as well as issues like terrorism and identity. The poem remarks how nothing is meant to last, that it would be better not to hold too tightly to that and instead we should be willing to let go and pass things on in their time to be remade.

In short, that the world would be better if it shared more qualities with ‘tissue’.

Feelings/Attitudes

The speaker in this poem uses tissue paper as an extended metaphor for life. She considers how paper can ‘alter things’ and refers to the paper of religious books, in particular 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. These examples demonstrate how important but also how fragile paper is.

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. There is also a sense of the fragility of human life, and the fact that not everything can last.

The poem looks at conflict in terms of destruction and politics particularly, it hints that we make our own conflict by holding on too tight to power and control and actually the need to relax and remember we are all human.

Structure/Shape of the poem

Tissue is mainly constructed in unrhymed, irregular quatrains. This form can be seen to represent the irregularity of life and the flimsy nature of the tissue paper the poem refers to.

The poem consists of ten stanzas. The first nine stanzas are each four lines long. The final stanza, however, is one line in length, drawing our attention to it. Separating out this line emphasises the connection between paper and skin, showing the significance of human life.

The poem lacks regular rhyme and its rhythm is unsteady, as if to mirror the fluttering of tissue paper. The poet uses enjambment, running meaning between lines and across stanza breaks. This adds to the flowing, delicate nature - both of paper and of the human lives the poet compares the tissue to.

Poetic Devices

The speaker emphasises the delicacy of the paper by using adjectives throughout the poem.

The paper is described as ‘fine’, ‘thin’ and ‘transparent’. The effect of light is also emphasised with ‘luminous’, ‘daylight’ and the way the ‘sun shines through’.

References to the thin paper used by architects, shopkeepers and bookbinders are made to connect the practical uses of paper. These images provide an extended metaphor for human skin and life.
The Emigree

There once was a country... I left it as a child
but my memory of it is sunlight-clear
for it seems I never saw it in that November
which, I am told, comes to the mildest city.
The worst news I receive of it cannot break
my original view, the bright, filled paperweight.
It may be at war, it may be sick with tyrants,
but I am branded by an impression of sunlight.

The white streets of that city, the graceful slopes
glow even clearer as time rolls its tanks
and the frontiers rise between us, close like waves.
That child's vocabulary I carried here
like a hollow doll, opens and spills a grammar.
Soon I shall have every coloured molecule of it.
It may by now be a lie, banned by the state
but I can't get it off my tongue. It tastes of sunlight.
I have no passport, there's no way back at all
but my city comes to me in its own white plane.
It lies down in front of me, docile as paper;
I comb its hair and love its shining eyes.
My city takes me dancing through the city
of walls. They accuse me of absence, they circle me.
They accuse me of being dark in their free city.
My city hides behind me. They mutter death,
and my shadow falls as evidence of sunlight.

Carol Rumens
Context/Main Ideas
Carol Rumens was born in South London and is described as having a 'fascination with elsewhere'. This fascination is clear in The Émigrée, which deals with a land and a city which for the speaker is permanently 'elsewhere'.

A displaced person pictures the country and the city where he or she was born. Neither the city nor the country is ever named. It is as if Rumens wants her poem to be relevant to as many people who have left their homelands as possible.

Emigrants are people who have left the country of their birth to settle elsewhere in the world. The spelling of the word Rumens chooses - émigré suggests the speaker of the poem is a woman.

The exact location of the city is unclear and precise details of it are sparse. Perhaps it only ever really existed in the émigrée’s imagination.

Feelings/Attitudes
Rumens suggests the city and country may now be war-torn, or under the control of a dictatorial government that has banned the language the speaker once knew. Despite this, nothing shakes the light-filled impression of a perfect place that the émigrée's childhood memories have left. This shows the power that places can have, even over people who have left them long ago and who have never revisited since. Though there is a clear sense of fondness for the place, there is also a more threatening tone in the poem, suggesting perhaps that the relationship with the past and with this place is not necessarily positive for the speaker.

Structure/Shape of the poem
The poem presents itself as a first-person account of an émigrée's relationship with her homeland.

The poem is composed of three stanzas. The first two stanzas are eight lines each and the last stanza has nine lines. The extra line perhaps suggests the speaker just can’t let go of the memories and just doesn’t want the poem to end?

The poem does not use rhyme, but there is a suggestion of a rhythmic pattern of five stresses to the line - although this pattern never fully establishes itself as a regular rhythm. Perhaps this reflects the speaker’s state of mind, which though positive in many ways is also uneasy, unsettled and complex.

Poetic Devices
The language appears to be natural but this apparent plainness hides a large amount of figurative language:

Rumens uses metaphors: memories include 'the bright, filled paperweight'; the city's brutal tyrant rulers are a sickness; the speaker is 'branded' by sunlight; time 'rolls its tanks' and every word of a grammar is a 'coloured molecule'. The whole city is an extended metaphor, a symbol of the lost childhood to which no adult can return.

Rumens also uses similes in 'frontiers rise between us, close like waves' and 'That child's vocabulary I carried here/ like a hollow doll'. This suggests the way in which the speaker is shaping her memories and making up her own narrative about her relationship with her homeland.

The city is personified and Rumens perhaps makes a play on words when she describes it flying to her 'in its own white plane'. As well as an aeroplane, a secondary meaning of 'plane' as something flat and level, may suggest a sheet of white paper. The poet may be teasingly suggesting that her city exists only in her poem and is an imaginary place.
Checking Out Me History      John Agard

Dem tell me
Dem tell me
Wha dem want to tell me
Bandage up me eye with me own history
Blind me to me own identity
Dem tell me bout 1066 and all dat
dem tell me bout Dick Whittington and he cat
But Toussaint L’Ouverture
no dem never tell me bout dat

Toussaint
a slave
with vision
lick back
Napoleon
battalion
and first Black
Republic born
Toussaint de thorn
to de French
Toussaint de beacon
of de Haitian Revolution

Dem tell me bout de man who discover de balloon
and de cow who jump over de moon
Dem tell me bout de dish ran away with de spoon
but dem never tell me bout Nanny de maroon

Repetition, suggests constant barrage of learning by rote without insight.

Restrictive verbs, create idea that the version of events given to them is harmful.

Mixing, fact and fiction in order to create sense of confusion.

Pronoun, ‘dem’ to represent a faceless body, general dislike of authority.

Short verse and irregular rhyme creates an almost drum beat. This can reflect the Caribbean traditions of music and verbal passing on of stories.

The stanza also looks at a conflict orientated character indicated by words such as ‘battalion’, ‘thorn’ and ‘revolution’.

Juxtaposed myth v reality to indicate in part that fact or fiction, they all have the same relevance to the speaker because they do not reflect their culture or heritage.

Rhyme helps build the sense of rhythm and pace, in part as if the poet is getting riled up the further he goes.
Nanny
see-far woman
of mountain dream
fire-woman struggle
hopeful stream
to freedom river

Dem tell me bout Lord Nelson and Waterloo
but dem never tell me bout Shaka de great Zulu
Dem tell me bout Columbus and 1492
but what happen to de Caribs and de Arawaks too
Dem tell me bout Florence Nightingale and she lamp
and how Robin Hood used to camp
Dem tell me bout ole King Cole was a merry ole soul
but dem never tell me bout Mary Seacole

From Jamaica
she travel far
to the Crimean War
she volunteer to go
and even when de British said no
she still brave the Russian snow
a healing star
among the wounded
a yellow sunrise
to the dying

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

Natural imagery suggests the power of this figure and also the very different ways we look at figures, perhaps suggesting a cultural emphasises with environment we lack in our own history.

Contrast famous white ethnic figures with ethnic minority contemporaries. Emphasises the one sided nature of our education, draws in conflict.

Inaccurate terms being used in order to emphasise the lack of interest in the history ‘dem’ tell the poet.

Natural imagery metaphors ‘healing star’ to create an almost mythological character. Reinforces the idea of oral rote learning and passing down of history and culture.

The way these historical characters are described is also more vivid and passionate.

Repetition of ‘dem’ also a monosyllabic pronoun, almost a drum beat.. Highlights the conflict between ‘dem’ and ‘I’.

Violent metaphor. Expresses the resistance and need to create something which cannot be removed/ wont fade.
Context/Main Ideas

John Agard was born in British Guiana (now called Guyana) in the Caribbean, in 1949. He moved to the UK in the late 1970s and is well known for powerful and fun performances of his work.

He uses non-standard phonetic spelling (written as a word sounds) to represent his own accent, and writes about what it is like being black to challenge racist attitudes, especially those which are unthinking.

Feelings/Attitudes

What kind of tone does the poem have? Like the structure, the tone also divides into two. The "Dem tell me" sections have an accusatory, rebellious tone to them, created by repetition and short lines at the beginning. Whereas the sections on Toussaint L’Overture, Nanny de Maroon and Mary Seacole are celebratory in tone, emphasised by images of nature and using epic (out of the ordinary) vocabulary - words like "vision", "see-far" and "star".

It is a poem that challenges us to consider the meaning of history, how we come to know about the past and accept versions of history. The poet might be provoking us to "check out" our own histories, particularly if they include periods or important figures not taught in schools.

Structure/Shape of the poem

Checking Out Me History alternates between two structures, marked by two different fonts. The first uses the repeated phrase "Dem tell me" to indicate the white version of history, mostly written in rhyming couplets, triplets or quatrains. Interspersed are the stories of three black historical figures: Toussaint L’Overture, Nanny de Maroon and Mary Seacole, told using abbreviated syntax with words missed out, shorter lines and an irregular rhyme scheme.

Poetic Devices

Sound: Agard uses variations in spelling to suggest Caribbean dialect, especially replacing ‘th’ with ‘d’. This stresses the importance of carving out his "own identity".

There is repetition - particularly of "Dem tell me" - throughout the poem, creating a sense of rhythm.

In the "Dem tell me" sections the poet refers to nursery rhyme characters and other non-historical people, like Robin Hood or the cow who jumped over the moon. There’s a suggestion that the version of history taught to the poet is not exactly accurate even before you consider that black people have been completely left out.

The sections on individual black historical figures contain stronger imagery, with use of nature metaphors to powerful effect. Toussaint L’Overture is a "thorn" and a "beacon". Nanny de Maroon is linked with a mountain, fire and rivers. Mary Seacole is described in dramatic imagery as a "healing star" and a "yellow sunrise" to the patients she treats.

All three are associated with light - "beacon", "fire-woman" and "star" - suggesting that they play metaphorical roles, illuminating the poet’s true historical identity.
Kamikaze

Her father embarked at sunrise with a flask of water, a samurai sword in the cockpit, a shaven head full of powerful incantations and enough fuel for a one-way journey into history but half way there, she thought, recounting it later to her children, he must have looked far down at the little fishing boats, strung out like bunting on a green-blue translucent sea and beneath them, arcing in swathes like a huge flag waved first one way then the other in a figure of eight, the dark shoals of fishes flashing silver as their bellies swivelled towards the sun and remembered how he and his brothers waiting on the shore built cairns of pearl-grey pebbles to see whose withstood longest the turbulent inrush of breakers, bringing their father’s boat safe

Imagery, Japan was also known as the land of the rising sun, linking the character to his culture and duty. Listing, creates a sense of intimacy with the pilot of simplicity which juxtaposes the metaphorical ‘journey into history’ of his flight.

Aside, used to give a sense of individualism to this nameless pilot and relaxed tone to the piece, contrasts the conflict of the context.

Simile, emphasises the attractive temptation of the life below him. Contrasts with his ‘journey into history’, symbolises his inner conflict.

Symbolic Figure of 8 ∞ the infinity symbol, repetitive cycle and feeling trapped by his destiny.

The fish represent the aircraft, the ‘flash of silver’ metaphor for their honour and glory.

The fish represent the pilots and his fate is linked with theirs, eventually they will be caught.

Symbolic of death and remembrance.

Futility - people, like the sand, will eventually succumb to fate/nature, but he seeks to hang on for as long as he can, but what is the point? Represents inner turmoil and conflict, questioning the strength to defy fate and the pressure on him to do his duty.
- yes, grandfather's boat - safe
to the shore, salt-sodden, awash
with cloud-marked mackerel,
black crabs, feathery prawns,
the loose silver of whitebait and once
a tuna, the dark prince, muscular, dangerous.

And though he came back
my mother never spoke again
in his presence, nor did she meet his eyes
and the neighbours too, they treated him
as though he no longer existed,
only we children still chattered and laughed

till gradually we too learned
to be silent, to live as though
he had never returned, that this
was no longer the father we loved.
And sometimes, she said, he must have wondered
which had been the better way to die.

Beatrice Garland

Aside changes font to suggest the daughter, speaking to the children, emphasise individual/personal account of history, at odds with our views of these nameless pilots.

Sibilance shows the ocean wave sounds.
Symbolic of the tide, which like him, returns.

Listing of the catch on the boat connotes the childhood joys and innocence which are darkened by the events of the pilot's life. The inclusion of the tuna and the metaphor forebodes the darker end to the poem. The fish represent people like the pilot, they are caught in the net of mankind but even without it they are stuck in their same old patterns, emphasises futility.

Pronoun leaves him nameless as though ashamed or difficult to name him.

Aside undermines the enormity of the event with matter of fact tone.

Learned implies the behaviour is not natural and was forced upon her, that she now realises and regrets this.

Punctuation used the dramatically emphasise the 'loved' and created empathy.

Highlights conflict, emphasises that he died in the eyes of his family. There is a tone of regret and sympathy at his situation, he had no way out.
The poem is set around the events of a kamikaze pilot flying to war and then turning back before it was too late. Kamikaze pilots were expected to use up all their weapons and fly into their targets as a final act of destruction. It was considered a great honour in Japan to die for your country. The pilot in this poem returns home and is rejected by his family forever after, his own wife refusing to speak to him.

The real conflict is between the rules of a society in Japanese culture, and the will to survive and return to a family. There appears to be no right answer and the pilot dies, one way or another, in the eyes of his family, if not in body.

The poem is written both from a narrator and the daughter of the pilot. The narrator explains the events, almost translating the story, while the speaker gives a first person account of how they excluded her father.

The poet questions at the end which death would have been better, to die as a kamikaze pilot young or to grow old with a fami-

Kamikaze Beatrice Garland

Kamikaze is a narrative poem, summarising another conversation or an overheard story told by someone else. Sections of the poem are presented in italics where the storyteller speaks directly for herself.

The poem does not rhyme and has no regular rhythmic pattern. This style, together with the regular stanza structure, allows the story to be told simply, letting the tragedy and emotion shine through.

One feature of the poem's structure is that it is composed of only three sentences and contains only three full-stops, perhaps reflecting the idea of a story being told orally. We are given a lot of detail, allowing us to imagine more exactly the circumstances of the pilot’s difficult decision.

Each change in speaker and each shift in time has an unsettling effect on the reader and perhaps expresses the turbulent feelings of the daughter.

The language Garland chooses appears to be natural and every day. However this apparent ordinariness conceals some effective literary devices which invites the reader to think about what the pilot may have seen from his plane. It adds to the power of that moment, but also shows the daughter has thought about the same scene, time and time again.

An individual metaphor appears: 'a tuna, the dark prince' and the image of 'the loose silver of whitebait' suggests a comparison with coins, or possibly sunken treasure. The impression on the reader is of the great wealth of the sea.

Garland makes great use of sense impressions, include sight (colour and light/shade - eg 'green-blue translucent', 'dark shoals') and of taste (the 'salt-sodden' boat).

The second sentence marks a shift in time and in speaker. The reader is presented with information directly from the daughter. Until this point, her story was re-told in third-person narrative, creating a distancing effect. Now, the reader is suddenly brought close to someone with a direct interest in the story.

The new sentence contains another surprise. The reader learns the kamikaze pilot abandoned his mission and turned back.

The final sentence is only three lines and reverts back to third person. It adds another twist, emphasising the fact that the pilot may have thought he would’ve been better off if he had died in the suicide mission.