

Literature Paper 2

Power & Conflict Poetry Anthology

comparison

Section B: 30 marks



You get given a named poem and a blank copy of it in the exam with a thematic question, then you are to compare to another poem from the anthology, from memory.

50 minutes

Extra time: 60 minutes

Poetry Essay Structure

Option 1

Poem 1

Poem 1

Poem 1

Poem 2

Poem 2

Poem 2

Option 2

Poem 1

Poem 2

Poem 1

Poem 2

Poem 1

Poem 2

Power and Conflict Poetry GOLD

<p>Morality/ moral Paralysis</p> 	<p>Soldiers may experience moral paralysis when ordered to engage in actions that directly harm or kill others. They might question the legitimacy of the war, the rules of engagement, or the morality of following orders that lead to death or casualty. The uncertainty about whether the violence they are committing is justified can create deep internal conflict. Morality – is the understanding of right and wrong / good and evil actions.</p>
<p>Patriotism / Jingoism</p> 	<p>Patriotism is love and support for your country. Jingoism is extreme, aggressive patriotism, often manifested in the form of passionate support for war or the use of military force to assert national power. It typically involves an exaggerated sense of national pride and superiority or the belief that one's country has the right to dominate others.</p>
<p>Marxist philosophy</p> 	<p>Commodification and exploitation of human life and men as cogs in the machinery of war: the process by which aspects of warfare—such as soldiers, weapons, resources, and even the suffering caused by conflict—are treated as commodities to be bought, sold, and exploited for profit.</p>
<p>Futility of war</p> 	<p>An anti-war concept that questions the point and purpose of conflict when it results in a cataclysmic waste of life. The youth of the men is also emphasised to reinforce the waste of young lives. Futility is also demonstrated through destruction, pain and suffering during times of war.</p>
<p>Cognitive distortion</p> 	<p>Negative thought patterns that twist the way we see things. They often happen when someone is struggling with anxiety or trauma. It is caused or soldiers by shellshock or PTSD.</p>
<p>Human condition</p> 	<p>An exploration of human experience –this includes suffering and trauma, the emotional, psychological and physical impact, the loss of innocence and youth in war literature, as war destroys naivety, the endurance and resilience of the soldiers at war, loss of dignity and humanity in war. It can also look at the positive aspects of humanity explored through some of the poems in the anthology</p>
<p>Dark Triad</p> 	<p>A criticism of leadership and those in positions of power such as political leaders and those who employ deliberate deception to achieve their goal. Negative leadership qualities of narcissism, psychopathy and Machiavellianism are criticised.</p>
<p>Power</p> 	<p>Exploration of the dichotomy of power and weakness in humanity. Literature explores how power is ephemeral and fleeting despite being the ultimate goal for so many. Nature will also always be more powerful than man.</p>
<p>Freud's dream theory</p> 	<p>Dreams are the reflection of our pains or desires. The subconscious mind uses dream state as a way of communicating man's deepest fears or desires.</p>
<p>Existentialism</p> 	<p>Existentialism is the search for meaning in life and the attempt to understand the purpose of one's own role and existence. There is often a struggle for meaning and a writer may explore the attempt to craft meaning through love, conflict or self-reflection.</p>
<p>Man Vs Nature</p> 	<p>A conflict where man struggles against natural forces such as weather and the environment. Nature's power reveals the transience of humanity's power which is ephemeral and fleeting</p>
<p>Sublime</p> 	<p>The sublime refers to concepts that excites thoughts and emotions beyond ordinary experience. Often associated with romanticism, greatness beyond all possibility of calculation, measurement, or imitation, often inspired by nature. Nature can be beautiful but also powerful.</p>
<p>Symbiotic connection</p> 	<p>Man and nature have can a mutually beneficial relationship where both sides support and depend on each other for survival and well-being. It creates harmony and – according to the Romantic poets, is important for imagination and individualism.</p>
<p>Othering</p> 	<p>An exploration of people who are viewed as outsiders due to societal ignorance and prejudice. 'Outsiders' are seen as a threat positioning them as vulnerable. Outsiders are often made to feel unwelcome,</p>
<p>Double consciousness</p> 	<p>An internal, psychological conflict that colonised people experience when navigating their own identity while simultaneously forced to view themselves through the lens of the dominant coloniser.</p>

Conflict of War

<p>The Charge of the Light Brigade:</p>  	<p>Imagery of the metaphor 'jaws' of Death and 'mouth' of hell – allusion to Dante's notion of Hell being concentric. This alludes to the increasing punishment and suffering of the men at the hands of poor leadership. This also personifies hell as predatory/animalistic – juxtaposed against the relentless duty of the men with 'boldly they rode.' This links the notion of fatalism as the hell welcomes them as if they are pre-determined to die. The alliterative 'do and die' semantically connects the notion of duty directly to death linking to utilitarianism – the men become commodities for death. Evokes the notion of futility of life as their sole purpose is to die for their country.</p>
<p>Exposure:</p>    	<p>Isolation and rejection by the personification of the natural world as if war is not condoned by God. 'iced east winds' and 'merciless.' Personification of 'Dawn' reinforces the idea that their mortality is out of their hands. Synecdoche/metaphor of 'all eyes are ice' – is a metaphor for the emotional numbness caused by war. Through the pathetic fallacy of the harsh conditions, Owen connects the exterior to the interior through the idea that harsh conditions disconnect the men from their own identity and cause psychological trauma – this disconnection is shown through 'drowse' 'sun-dozed' – loss of connection with reality. The universal power of war to destroy and fragment. 'Is it that we are dying?' – This question draws on existentialist idea that their purpose is lost/irrelevant – futility of war. Psychological distortion – losing grip on reality. Imagery of lightness/purity – snow – subverted – aligned with death – drawing on the notion of the loss of innocence – nature is mocking men – falling flakes represent the loss. The reference to 'child, or field, or fruit' is Eden like imagery furthering the withdrawal of the men from reality as they 'sin' as a result of their enforced military service and are cast out of God's light in punishment.</p>
<p>Bayonet Charge:</p>   	<p>The simile 'Sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest' symbolic of the way that his whole body has become a commodity for war as he is defined by war/loss of power and has become a weapon of destruction. The imagery of 'iron' evokes destruction and is a subversion – a reminder of the physical and emotional alteration of war. 'Molten' evokes the notion of being 'moulded' by war – this loss of control is similar to the 'mind-forg'd manacles' of Blake's London. The celestial imagery and alliteration 'In what cold clockwork of the stars' alludes to the severity of Fate with the implication of malice, linking to the idea of the mechanised (another link to London) nature of Destiny as it links to the inevitability of war leading to death. The imagery of the 'Hare' is symbolic of collateral damage of war and the innocence that is destroyed as part of war. It is a microcosm for each person's suffering at the hands of war. The imagery of flames and hell 'rolled like a flame' – shows how identity is lost and the depiction of its suffering and dying moment – with the semantic field of horror and agony 'crawled' 'threshing' reinforces the real terror and desolation of war.</p>
<p>Remains:</p>   	<p>Alliteration 'But I blink/and he bursts again' and onomatopoeia – Links to the psychological damage of war and the permanence of this effect despite the transience of the war itself. The metaphor 'drink and the drugs won't flush him out' evokes the idea of the actions of war being like a poison – the subversion of identity that war creates. The structural significance of the final two lines 'bloody life in my bloody hands' – repetition/metaphor – alludes to notions of guilt/sin. This links to the human condition to empathise with the taking of a life. The use of 'hands' – synecdoche – represents the way the soldier now physically embodies death through graphic and violent imagery of bloodshed – the physical manifestation of war and death.</p>

Conflict of War

  Poppies	<p>The <u>metaphor</u> 'All my words/slowly melting' links to the human condition/struggle of parental/child relationships – the departure of a son – There is a reference to liminality through 'melting' –suggesting how the mother/son lose their connection and also how his identity will be lost. The inability to express the melancholy/poignancy of that moment is captured though the liminal state of the mother between hope and grief. The final line –metaphor: 'your playground voice/catching on the wind.' Alludes to the motif of the winds of change – how war will shape her life and take his life. There is an existentialist tone as the mother's contemplation of the 'playground voice' explores the purpose of motherhood and explores the futility of releasing her son towards death.</p>
 War Photographer 	<p><u>Structural progression</u> of poem from photographer to image forming to the newspaper and finally to the reader – this creates a structural link between the photographer and the reader – showing how he connects the two together and conveys the emotional dimension of the reporting of war. The <u>metaphor</u> of 'priest preparing to intone a Mass' evokes religious imagery and the notion that the photographer has a moral/religious purpose and duty of morality to educate the world as to the horror of war. Structurally, the focus of the poem is on the personal (half-formed ghost) and the private narratives of war (he is finally alone) which juxtaposes the exposure and public nature of the photographer's duty. The <u>metaphor</u> 'all flesh is grass' evokes the idea of the transience of life and the idea of rejuvenation through reference to the cycle of life. This draws on the nature of the futility of life and the inevitability of decay and death highlighted by war. It also relates to the wider idea of existentialism – war forces us to question the meaning of life (this also links to the idea of blood 'foreign dust.')</p>
  Kamikaze: 	<p>The poet uses the connection with the natural world to 'humanise' the Kamikaze soldier – he sees 'dark shoals of fishes' and the 'green-blue translucent sea' – both <u>symbolic</u> and ostensibly evocative of vitality and innocence – setting up a <u>binary opposition</u> between life and the deaths he is potentially about to cause. The fact the shoals are 'dark' is a hint at the sinister undercurrent of life and how the soldier has been forced to align himself initially with the 'dark side' – immorality of life. The simile 'like a huge flag' signals the realisation of this and his decision to turn back. His decision to return is presented in a melancholic light – the <u>simile</u> and emphasis through <u>italics</u> of 'as though he no longer existed' evokes the disconnection he experiences at the disloyalty and perceived 'weakness' of his actions. The ostracism described links to Tissue – The simile 'to live as though/he had never returned' evokes the notion that there is a loss worse than death in the exile by his own family. The whole narrative voice of the poem is a construct shown through <u>modality</u> 'recounting' 'she thought' and 'he must have' almost fabricating a version of reality – therefore the voice of the soldier is literally 'silent' as his own narrative is never shared with the reader, all we hear is the daughter's summation. This highlights the ultimate loss of control/identity and its fragmentation.</p>

Societal Power

  London 	<p>A Political commentary – poem of protest, resistance and empowerment</p> <p>Metaphor ‘mind-forg’d manacles’ – imagery of the forge – Blake criticises the restriction of personal freedom and the impact on morality – comment on the psychological and ideological oppression experienced as a result of the mechanisation of society. Imagery of decay ‘blackn’ing church’ ‘blights with plagues’ – projects an image of London ‘after the fall’ – Blake uses imagery of corruption to present his rejection of the rationalisation of the universe through Newtonian logic – shown through how the city is ‘chartered’ and ‘forged.’ The ‘chimney sweeper’s cry’ is symbolic of the loss of innocence suffered by children/society – the onomatopoeic ‘cry’ evoking man’s distress at the fall of man.</p>
  My Last Duchess: 	<p>Commentary on gender roles in society and abuse of masculine power, toxic masculinity.</p> <p>Sexual imagery with allusion to the metaphor ‘spot of joy’ hinting at the Duke’s own masculinity being called into question through the duchess’ behaviour – The sibilance hints at the moral sin of jealousy which drives the Duke’s behaviour.</p> <p>Structural progression from ‘my’ to ‘me’ – the circular structure of the monologue evokes the finality of the duke’s control and his impenetrable rule.</p> <p>The notion of absolute control is embodied through the speaker presenting the Duchess as ‘fixed’ and ‘voiceless’ through the imagery of the painting.</p>
  Ozymandias: 	<p>Sibilance ‘the lone and level sands stretch far away’ – alliteration/sibilance evokes the sublime – the combination of fear/awe at the acknowledgement of our own mortality – the transience of power and legacy of rule – the physical sands stretching away juxtapose against the ostensible permanence of a ‘statue.’- nothing lasts forever.</p> <p>‘the decay/of that colossal wreck’ – imagery of deterioration/hyperbolic language – the nature of fate – Allusion to Boethius’ consolations of philosophy which states that the wheel of fortune ‘shews her might’ – all power will eventually diminish as the wheel turns – ultimate loss of power will prevail. Structural distance from power through ‘I met’ ‘who said’ ‘these words.’ Distances power from the former leader. Subversion of sonnet form to show reverence to a statue or leader, not a typical ‘love’ poem.</p>

Other poems to consider:

Bayonet Charge

Checkin out me history

Nature

 <p>Extract from The Prelude:</p> 	<p>Wordsworth explores the seductive yet sinister elements of the Natural World – he explores its duplicity/its tensions.</p> <p>Structural progression from ‘one summer evening’ to ‘were a trouble to my dreams’ represents Wordsworth’s spiritual growth and exemplifies the way the natural world has the power to alter us. Symbolism of the mountain ‘towered up between me and the stars’ suggests the way that the natural world has the power to alter the speaker’s fate as the mountain physically ‘disturbs’ what the stars have in store for him – allusion to the intrinsic control of the natural world through celestial imagery.</p> <p>Metaphor ‘there hung a darkness’ allusion to the sublime – the Romantic Imagination – man’s inability to comprehend what is at work within nature – a reminder of our mortality.</p>
 <p>Storm on the Island:</p> 	<p>‘Tragic chorus’ is a metaphor for the subversion of national identity caused by conflict / cacophony of the natural world and also the terrorism. The ‘chorus’ represents the embodiment of fear – explosions of terror / violence. The simile ‘spits like a tame cat/Turned savage’ Links to how the once familiar/amiable – ‘turned savage’ – becomes pinnacle of violence – how communities were torn apart / division / fractured societies.</p> <p>The final metaphor of ‘empty air’ and ‘huge nothing’ evokes the notion of a silent killer – how we are enveloped in the natural world and are yet destroyed by it/its inescapable and intrinsic power – the sublime – links to the transience and futility of the wider conflict in NI.</p>
<p>Other poems to consider:</p> <p>Ozymandias</p> <p>Kamikaze</p> <p>Exposure</p>	

Identity

  Tissue:  	<p>The <u>metaphor</u> of God through reference to ‘An architect’ – evokes notions of design and composition – link to God/religious control – the way that God too has harnessed power and control. This links to ‘the design argument’ the justification of God’s existence through the evidence of design.</p> <p>The <u>similance</u> of ‘smoothed and stroked/ turned into your skin’ evokes reverence and amazement at the craft of nature and creation of humanity. Extended references in the poem to the way that humanity has attempted to harness the natural world for power and progression – <u>Metaphor</u> of ‘Maps too’ is symbolic of the navigation of life – the way that humanity tries to understand and comprehend the world and facilitate knowledge – (link to the ‘chartered Thames’ in Blake’s <i>London</i>). The <u>religious allusion</u> to ‘the Koran’ links to the duality of sanctity of both paper and humanity. <u>Structurally</u>, the title and the end of the poem reference ‘living tissue’ symbolic of the fabric of human existence. This links to existentialist philosophy – what are we? Dharker evokes the idea that we are ‘living tissue’ – we evolve/live/die (link to ‘all flesh is grass in War Photographer) The line ‘never meant to last’ is another bleak acknowledgment of the inevitability of death - the transience/fragility/ephemeral nature of life.</p>
  The Emigree: 	<p>The Emigree: The <u>simile</u> in reference to her homeland as ‘docile as paper’ is a reference to how her home city has shaped/moulded to her memory despite the war-torn reality. This links to the human condition to seek and preserve identity in our navigation of the world. (link to Tissue). <u>Extended metaphor</u> of light imagery used to portray longing for home. With ‘sunlight-clear’ ‘impression of sunlight’ and ‘It tastes of sunlight.’ – evokes the fundamental power of identity needed for survival and vitality – The <u>metaphor</u> ‘it tastes’ links to empowerment with the use of ‘glow’ – evoking how her cultural heritage sustains her. The synaesthesia ‘taste’ is a reminder that language is a manifestation of identity, essential for survival. The reference to ‘the white streets’ is a subversion of the language of war – drawing on <u>light imagery</u> to retain the uplifting and positive power of her memory ‘glow’ reminds us how her memory of her homeland retains its value. <u>Structural shift</u> at the end to ‘they’ shows the physical and emotional disconnection and ostracism she experiences due to her cultural heritage. The <u>symbolism</u> of the ‘shadow’ is an <u>allusion</u> to the loss of power and the ‘hollow’ sentiment caused through isolation.</p>
 Checking Out Me History:  	<p>Agard presents disempowerment through ‘Bandage up me eye’ and ‘blind me’ to capture the devaluation of black history. The <u>Metaphor</u> ‘bandage’ - has connotations of the wounds of black history and its suffering – alludes to the perpetual cycle of life and human nature – if accurate History is not shared, then oppression will sustain. Agard presents the frustration of the lack of education for humanity through <u>structural significance</u>: Agard presents binary opposition between oppressors and liberators by beginning some quatrains with a different famous white figure and ending with the forgotten black historical figure emphasising the bias/significance/privilege of History. The structural progression increases with the frequency of black historical figures. Agard uses two lines to present the relationship between the two references ‘Columbus’ – explorer and ‘Cairbs and de Arawaks’ - the natives who suffered subjugation/exploitation at the hands of colonists. This structurally emphasises the binary opposition between the oppressor and oppressed and shows how ‘Columbus’ led to their deaths ‘what happen’ – <u>euphemism</u> to their deaths as a result of the desire of white men – their greed/ego/ambition. Exposing the fallacy and reductive nature of white man’s ‘curriculum’ – control over education actually permeates and alters the progression of humanity.</p>

Other poems to consider:

My Last Duchess

Kamikaze

Ozymandias



Modern Romanticist – criticising institutions and power and attempting to reinstate individuality, empowering humanity

Transience of power and life

Empowerment through individuality and identity

Subverted power



“well-used books” “paper smoothed and stroked” – religions abused to create division. Tactile imagery as a reminder of the unifying power of religion. “Koran” a reminder of shared identity

Tissue:

“Maps too. The sun shines through their borderlines” Ironic representation of man’s subverted power as nature refuses to be contained or controlled by manmade structures or borders. Repeated motif of light imagery throughout – hope and power.



“Fly our lives like paper kites” economic and financial control



Structure – the interleaving of black history with the Eurocentric curriculum highlights Agard’s ‘double consciousness’ – an internal, psychological conflict that colonised people experience when navigating their own identity while simultaneously forced to view themselves through the lens of the dominant coloniser.

“Toussaint L’Ouverture” / “cow jumped over the moon”

“Nanny de Maroon” “struggle” “freedom river” – parallels Agard’s own journey to enlightenment

Checking out
me history

Song: reminiscent of culture – stories told through song

“Dem tell me” – dichotomy of power – authoritative power of the coloniser

Speaker maintaining their accent – reclamation of power/refusal to give up their entire identity

“bandage up me eye” – injury detail suggests that declining the speaker’s identity causes harm. Wounds of black history. Denying of culture and history

Power and Conflict – Possible Exam Questions

Power of Nature

1. Compare how poets present the power of nature in *The Prelude* by William Wordsworth and one other poem from *Power and Conflict*.
2. Compare how poets present nature as overwhelming or frightening in *Storm on the Island* by Seamus Heaney and one other poem.
3. Compare how poets present nature's destructive power in *Exposure* by Wilfred Owen and one other poem.

War and Its Effects

1. Compare how poets present the reality of war in *Bayonet Charge* by Ted Hughes and one other poem.
2. Compare how poets present fear in war in *Remains* by Simon Armitage and one other poem.
3. Compare how poets present the emotional impact of conflict in *War Photographer* by Carol Ann Duffy and one other poem.
4. Compare how poets present the suffering caused by war in *Poppies* by Jane Weir and one other poem.

Power of Humans

1. Compare how poets present abuse of power in *Ozymandias* by Percy Bysshe Shelley and one other poem.
2. Compare how poets present political power in *London* by William Blake and one other poem.
3. Compare how poets present leaders and authority in *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning and one other poem.

Memory and the Past

1. Compare how poets present memories of conflict in Kamikaze by Beatrice Garland and one other poem.
2. Compare how poets present memories affecting people in Remains by Simon Armitage and one other poem.

Identity and Cultural Conflict

1. Compare how poets present conflict in identity or culture in Checking Out Me History by John Agard and one other poem.
2. Compare how poets present cultural pride and identity in Tissue by Imtiaz Dharker and one other poem.

Loss and Consequences of Conflict

1. Compare how poets present loss in Poppies by Jane Weir and one other poem.
2. Compare how poets present the consequences of conflict in Remains by Simon Armitage and one other poem.