

Answers

Cluster 2: Power and conflict

Answers to the AQA exam-style questions are indicative only and highlight the key things that should be included in your response. You may cover other points. It's how your answer is written and how it fits with the mark scheme that will determine the quality of your answer.

Ozymandias, *Percy Bysshe Shelley*

p.10–13

p.11 Do it!



The key idea in the poem is that power is temporary.

p.11 Stretch it!



The arrogance of the inscription is ironic. It declares that all powerful people should 'despair' at their lack of power in the face of Ozymandias's greatness, whereas the monument erected to sum up his greatness is broken and scattered.

p.12 Do it!



A further theme could be political tyranny and how it will fail, for power is only temporary.

p.12 Stretch it!



'colossal wreck' is effective because it works as an image on a number of levels. It describes the statue literally: it is huge and broken. Also, as an oxymoron it creates a striking contrast: 'colossal' suggests the greatness of this vast statue. Shelley pairs this with 'wreck', suggesting it is ruined and broken, to surprise the reader.

p.13 REVIEW IT!



- 1 We are not told the gender of the traveller.
- 2 1 'mocked' as in making a copy or a trial run; 2 'mocked' as in sneered or laughed at
- 3 Just legs – having no body
- 4 'shattered', 'lifeless', 'decay', 'wreck'
- 5 'Tell that its sculptor well those passions read'
- 6 The irony contained within the reported speech allows the reader to understand the mocking tone and gives a sense of the Ozymandias's misplaced arrogance and pride.
- 7 The tone is arrogant.
- 8 The regular rhythm follows the patterns of speech until the rhythm change in 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:/Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!' signalling a declaration of his power and a change of speaker.
- 9 1 Look at my greatness as shown through this magnificent statue and 'despair' that you will never be as great.
2 Look at how this symbol of power is shattered and broken and know that your power is also temporary.
- 10 It could be argued that his legacy lives on through the power of art – both through the remnants of the statue that show the greatness of the sculptor and through Shelley's poem itself.



p.13 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present the temporary nature of power in ‘Ozymandias’ and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare ‘Ozymandias’ with ‘Storm on the Island’.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how power in ‘Ozymandias’ is portrayed as broken and scattered like the ‘colossal wreck’ the monument has become
- the different form of power in ‘Storm on the Island’ – the power of nature – which is prepared for by the islanders and which they wait to blow over
- how Shelley’s mocking tone and use of irony is shown through his language choices; how these support the central idea in the poem
- how the language Heaney uses is tough like the islanders’ lives and their houses, thus suggesting their resilience in the face of nature’s power, as they know it will pass
- how the temporary nature of power in ‘Storm on the Island’ has a personal impact on the reader; how the temporary nature of power in ‘Ozymandias’ suggests a political point.

London, William Blake

p.14–17

p.15 Do it!



For example:

- 1 ‘...each chartered street...the chartered Thames’: even the streets and the river are ‘chartered’ – privately owned.
- 2 ‘Every black’ning church appalls’: the churches (and other buildings) are ‘blackened’ by polluting factory smoke, but also Blake implies that the church is not as appalled as it should be.
- 3 ‘In every cry of every man/...every infant’s cry of fear/...every voice’: suggests a mass of people (overcrowding) who are despairing and fearful.
- 4 ‘The mind-forged manacles I hear’: the people are controlled by the callousness and greed of the powerful few to the point that they impose limits on themselves.
- 5 ‘the hapless soldier’s sigh/runs in blood down palace walls’: the king does not seem to care about the sufferings of soldiers who gave their blood for him.

p.16 Do it!



Theme	Other poem	Why?
Power	‘Storm on the Island’	Physical force: ‘huge nothing that we fear’. Perhaps Blake is suggesting that the many poor of London should not fear their rulers, but should stand up to them, as the islanders withstand the storm.
Suffering and misery	‘War Photographer’	‘spools of suffering set out in ordered rows’ as though the suffering is for someone else’s benefit, compared with the visible suffering Blake describes on London’s streets.
Injustice	‘Checking Out Me History’	Agard’s poem is about someone fighting to reassert their worth and their identity; fighting back against the injustice of history being edited and controlled according to someone else’s viewpoint. This contrasts with the people in ‘London’ being controlled by the government and the Church.

p.16 Stretch it!



This image works on both a literal and a metaphoric level. The church walls have been blackened by the industrial smoke of the factories that the poor people are forced to work in. This literal meaning supports Blake's general condemnation of the pollution and destruction caused by the Industrial Revolution. However, to 'blacken' also means – metaphorically – to shame. Clearly Blake is implying that the Church is not ashamed, but *should be* shamed by the fact that young children are being used as chimney sweeps and are leading miserable lives as a result. It is as though the Church actually does deserve its black coating of pollution as a public sign of its shame and guilt.

p.17 REVIEW IT!



- 1 They are owned – or as good as owned – by the rich and powerful members of society.
- 2 Firstly in the sense of 'notice', then in the sense of 'signs' – evidence of something, here weakness and unhappiness.
- 3 Fear
- 4 Manacles are wrist or ankle cuffs designed to keep someone a prisoner. Blake uses 'manacles' metaphorically: laws and ideas that are designed to confine a person.
- 5 Their walls are blackened by the smoke from factories, but they are blackened metaphorically too: brought into disrepute, shamed by the evils they should prevent.
- 6 Wounds, disabilities, a feeling that their sacrifices are not valued and rewarded
- 7 The babies' crying is caused by the 'curse' that is the sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) spread to them from the 'harlots' via their clients, the babies' fathers. One common result of congenital sexual diseases picked up by babies during birth is blindness.
- 8 Marriages are infected by the STDs brought home by the husband. These cause infant mortality (deaths of babies).
- 9 Eight syllables; four stresses
- 10 Perhaps Blake wanted to suggest that the whole of London had become a sort of hell for which there was no hope; perhaps he wanted the poem to convey to readers his view of the city – the reality that lies beneath London's surface.



p.17 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present suffering in 'London' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'London' with 'Poppies'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how the suffering in 'London' makes the reader react with horror and outrage for Blake's political purpose
- the different tone of suffering in 'Poppies' – private, restrained, poignant, with no political purpose; how the poem's structure supports the tone
- how the language Blake uses makes the suffering vivid and painful for the reader
- how the language choices in 'Poppies' support the more private, personal nature of the suffering
- how the generalised suffering in 'London' has a personal impact on the reader; how the personal picture of suffering in 'Poppies' suggests a public, political point.

Extract from, 'The Prelude', William Wordsworth

p.18–23

p.21 Do it!



The mood changes at line 21 'When, from behind that craggy steep till then'. It moves from an enchanting moment to a terrifying experience.

p.21 Stretch it!



The narrator changes from being at peace and as one with nature to being intimidated by it. After this experience, to the end of the poem, he continuously reflects on the power of nature and mankind's frailty in the face of it.

p.22 Do it!



For example, by:

- emphasising the size of the crag: 'growing', 'stature', 'Towered up'
- describing the crag as towering between 'me and the stars'
- using language to suggest intimidation and danger: 'grim shape', 'growing still', 'Towered'.

p.23 REVIEW IT!



- 1 Summer
- 2 Within a rocky cove, tied to a willow tree
- 3 The boat
- 4 Nature
- 5 He is proud of his rowing.
- 6 'like a swan'
- 7 'struck and struck again'/'trembling oars'/'stole my way'
- 8 Nature appears to be more powerful than humankind.
- 9 This experience affects the boy by giving him a new view of nature as intimidating and threatening; a 'darkness' falls over his thoughts and nothing seems familiar or pleasant; 'Huge and mighty forms' trouble his daytime thoughts and his night-time dreams.
- 10 The poem explores the power of nature. It shows mankind as frail when confronted by nature's power.



p.23 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present ideas about a journey in the Extract from, 'The Prelude' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare the Extract from, 'The Prelude' with 'The Emigrée'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how Wordsworth presents the boy's initial excitement about his journey
- how Rumens journeys back to her city through idealised childhood memories
- how both poets use language to evoke the physical environment: Wordsworth evoking menace and intimidation and Rumens's idealised view through light images
- how the structures of the two poems support their mood
- how Wordsworth and Rumens both use images of light and darkness and Wordsworth uses storm imagery to create the atmosphere of the journey.

My Last Duchess, Robert Browning

p.24–29

p.27 Do it!



Theme	Other poem	Explanation
Conflict	'Checking Out Me History'	The wife tried to assert her individuality by being herself in the duke's house. In 'Checking Out Me History', the narrator is determined to be rebellious and assert his own identity.
Dishonesty	'The Emigrée'	The duke is not directly honest about his first wife's fate, just as the emigrée is not honest about the country they have left behind: they insist on their <i>image</i> of that country rather than its reality.

p.29 REVIEW IT!



- 1 The fact that she is the 'last Duchess' suggests she has died, although she could just be divorced. However, 'looking as if she were alive' makes it clear that she no longer is.
- 2 Only the duke
- 3 Frà Pandolf
- 4 Cherries
- 5 'Stoop': lower and therefore humiliate himself
- 6 Because her father is known for his generosity – and because the duke makes it clear that he will only accept a large dowry.
- 7 Because she did not show him special extra attention and gratitude.
- 8 The dramatic monologue means the only story we hear is the duke's: he controls the facts of the case, allowing us to hear only his version. The even form of the poem – rhyming couplets and iambic pentameters – suits the sense of complete control that the duke exercises over all events and people he is connected with. He controls events in the same way that he controls his narrative.
- 9 They hint that he has had his wife murdered. He does not seem guilty about his crime; in fact, he implies that his action was justified.
- 10 He is a megalomaniac (power-mad). He is jealous, vain, selfish and domineering. He sees people as possessions.



p.29 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present a sense of threat in 'My Last Duchess' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'My Last Duchess' with 'Storm on the Island'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how the threat and tension threads throughout 'My Last Duchess'
- the different source and nature of threat in 'Storm on the Island' – physical, rational and explicit
- how the language and structure Browning uses makes the threat unsettling for the reader; how the structure supports a dramatic reading of the poem
- the impact on the reader of the contrasting personal 'I' and 'you' in 'My Last Duchess' and the military imagery in 'Storm on the Island'
- comparison of the overall effect of the two poems: chilling in 'My Last Duchess'; reassuring in 'Storm on the Island'.

The Charge of the Light Brigade, Alfred Lord Tennyson

p.30–35

p.33 Do it!



For example:

Factual detail – ‘Light Brigade’, ‘Cossack’, ‘Russian’, ‘six hundred’

Patriotic detail – ‘Theirs not to reason why,/Theirs but to do and die’; ‘Boldly’; ‘while/All the world wonder’d’; ‘Plunged’, ‘hero’; ‘glory’, ‘Honour’; ‘noble’

p.34 Stretch it!



For example:

- how the dactylic rhythm imitates the horses’ gallop
- the sense of relentlessness suggested by the constant metre in the lines
- how the momentum of the stanza is supported by repetition of words, sounds (alliteration)
- how the -ell rhymes lead the reader on to the dramatic last line.

p.35 Do it!



- Alliteration
- Rhyme
- Repeated word
- Repeated line or phrase

1
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.

2
‘Forward, the Light Brigade!’
Was there a man dismay’d?
Not tho’ 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.

3
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thunder’d;
Storm’d at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

4
Flash’d all their sabres bare,
Flash’d as they turn’d in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder’d:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro’ the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel’d from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sunder’d.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

5
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley’d and thunder’d;
Storm’d at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro’ the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

6
When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder’d.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

p.35 REVIEW IT!



- 1 About one and a half miles
- 2 600
- 3 He says that 'some one had blunder'd' – in other words, a commander had made a bad and avoidable mistake.
- 4 'Reel'd', 'Shatter'd', 'sunder'd'
- 5 A storm ('thunder'd', 'storm'd at'); it suggests the chaos of the circumstances that the Light Brigade rides into. The cavalymen have no control over their environment: they simply have to endure it.
- 6 A sabre, a sort of sword
- 7 An indirect reference: for example, Tennyson's 'valley of Death' deliberately reminds us of the Bible's words, 'though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil'. Tennyson's readers would have been very familiar with these words.
- 8 We don't know, but the line 'All that was left of them' hints that casualties were high.
- 9 Various ways, including:
 - its use of a galloping, dactylic rhythm that imitates the sound and rhythm of horses charging
 - repetition of words, phrases, sounds.
- 10 That the Light Brigade soldiers are brave, skilful heroes who should be honoured for their bravery, duty and self-sacrifice.



p.35 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present war in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' with 'Storm on the Island'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how Tennyson makes war sound glorious and heroic
- how Heaney makes his metaphoric war sound more about endurance and passivity than active heroism
- how both poets use language to evoke the physical reality of warfare
- how the structures of the two poems support their mood
- how Tennyson uses storm imagery to create the atmosphere of battle, while Heaney uses military imagery to convey the force of the storm.

Exposure, Wilfred Owen

p.36–41

p.39 Do it!



For example:

- the focus on the question at the start
- analysis of language in response to the theme
- contextual details to support the theme
- structural details to support the theme.

In the final stanza, **loss of humanity** is explored through the detachment shown by the 'burying party' as they arrive to collect the dead. Carrying 'picks and shovels', some remaining shreds of humanity can be seen in the understated emotion as they 'pause' over 'half-known' faces with 'shaking grasp'. However, 'their eyes are ice', revealing this to be a scene that they have lived through many times during this war. Their chilling detachment, like the cold the soldiers face, reminds us that Owen's mission was to ensure the general public understood the horrors of war. The final line, repeating 'But nothing happens' brings the poem full circle as we realise that this devastating loss of life will not change anything.

p.39 Stretch it!

Your paragraph will focus on your choice of poem, but the following paragraph explores loss within 'Poppies' by Jane Weir.

The mother's sense of loss is acute. Weir doesn't make clear the nature of this loss: has he moved away from her? Is he dead within an 'individual war' grave? However, if his voice only 'catches' on the wind, it is being blown away, out of range of her influence. Perhaps this means he is dead and all she is left with is brief sharp memories of him.

p.40 Do it!

'Exposure' has multiple meanings. You could have written about any two of the following:

- 1 having no protection from something harmful – the weather
- 2 being affected by something because of being in a particular situation or place – the war
- 3 a physical condition resulting from being outside in extreme weather without adequate protection.

p.41 REVIEW IT!

- 1 Merciless
- 2 The wind cuts through them or stabs them.
- 3 Dawn is described as 'massing' her 'melancholy army' – personified as a military leader.
- 4 Black and deadly
- 5 Owen uses the inclusive pronoun 'we' throughout the poem.
- 6 Nature 'attacks'; snow is 'deadly'; brambles cause 'twitching agonies'; the weather creeps up on them with 'stealth'.
- 7 Glazed
- 8 The men have lost their faith in God. This faith was probably the only thing that had kept them going up until this point.
- 9 The men are seen as dying because of weather, not fighting in glorious battles. They are shown as waiting for something to happen and bullets are shown to be less deadly than the cold weather.
- 10 Owen fought during World War I. He wanted to show the reality of war, not the glorious vision that had been presented to the public. He was writing about his experiences and things he had seen.

**p.41 AQA exam-style question**

Compare how poets present a sense of discomfort in 'Exposure' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'Exposure' with 'Kamikaze'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how Owen shows the physical discomfort of the battlefield
- how Garland shows the mental discomfort of the father, shunned by his community
- how both poets use language to evoke discomfort – both mental and physical
- how the structures of the two poems supports the atmosphere of physical and mental discomfort
- how Owen uses cold imagery to create the atmosphere of battle, while Garland uses sound and silence to convey the father's isolation.

Storm on the Island, Seamus Heaney

p.42–45

p.44 Do it!



Nature's role as a comforter:

- 'This wizened earth has never troubled us...'
- 'trees/Which might prove company...'
- 'Forgetting...'
- '...sea is company...'
- 'exploding comfortably'

Nature's violence:

- 'blows full/Blast'
- 'gale'
- 'pummels'
- 'exploding'
- 'flung spray hits'
- 'spits'
- 'Turned savage'
- 'wind dives/And strafes'
- 'salvo'
- 'bombarded'

p.44 Stretch it!



For example:

- the islanders are 'in tune' with nature; this is suggested by the way they adapt their lives and buildings to work with nature's storms; also by the way the language Heaney uses is tough, like their lives and their houses, thus suggesting the resilience of the islanders
- the wind through trees (and there are none of these on the island) turns into music that might have distracted the islanders from the storm's destruction, and also created a 'tragic chorus' that – by implication – would bring order and meaning to the chaos of the storm
- natural noises – such as the sea – can comfort with their familiarity.

p.45 REVIEW IT!



- 1 So that they offer little resistance to the wind, and will therefore suffer less damage.
- 2 Because the island soil is too poor to grow the crops that would be stored in stooks or stacks.
- 3 Because they are company for humans during a storm as they moan in the wind and sound like a musical chorus of human beings. The music makes the wind audible and distracts humans' attention from the damage the wind is causing.
- 4 A cat that is tame but then becomes savage when the wind gets up.
- 5 It is 'comfortable' in the literal sense that it comforts people with its familiar sound. However, Heaney creates an oxymoron by combining 'comfortably' with 'exploding'. This word reminds humans of the frightening storm to come, thus undermining the sea's value as a comforter.
- 6 A military bombardment
- 7 He uses iambic pentameter in the first six lines.
- 8 For example: 'While wind dives/And strafes...' The 'w' sound supports the sensation of wind whipping. You could also have chosen: 'rock and roof'; 'stacks/Or stooks'.
- 9 To give a thoughtful tone to his last statement; to emphasise the irony of a dangerous threat that is not solid, and is in a sense 'nothing'
- 10 Perhaps Heaney had a particular island in mind. To call it 'the' island makes it a particular place rather than an island in general, and this idea of the particular is supported by the precise details in the opening about how the houses are built.

**p.45 AQA exam-style question**

Compare how poets present violence in 'Storm on the Island' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'Storm on the Island' with 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the way Heaney conveys a sense of physical danger in 'Storm on the Island'
- how the violence in the war poem 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' is ironically less real-sounding than violence in 'Storm on the Island'
- how imagery and sound effects in 'Storm on the Island' convey the sense of force
- how 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' uses rhythm and sounds to convey action and violence
- what the endings of the two poems suggest about violence and survival, and any similarities or contrasts in what is suggested.

Bayonet Charge, Ted Hughes**p.46–49****p.47 Do it!**

We could feel pity because the hare is an innocent creature caught up in a war that has nothing to do with it. We feel disgust that the war causes such destruction.

p.47 Stretch it!

Your paragraph could contain the following idea: the hare is a complex image perhaps representing the destruction of innocence and nature by war.

p.48 Do it!

For example, you could have chosen the theme of time. Time moves at different paces in the poem – we see it racing as the soldier is running across the battlefield and we see it stop as he takes time to notice small details like the hare or the hedge. You could compare with 'Poppies' where time gradually erases the memory of the woman's son.

p.48 Do it!

Sights: khaki uniform; field of clods; green hedge; furrows; yellow hare; hare moving in a threshing circle; blue air

Sounds: rifle fire; the smack of bullets; footfalls; yelling; crackling air

p.49 REVIEW IT!



- 1 The soldier is part of the machinery of war. It is unemotional ('cold') and will not stop ('clockwork'). Stars and nations are both vast, whereas the soldier is a small part of the war machine.
- 2 'Lugged' suggests it is held clumsily and awkwardly.
- 3 A 'patriotic tear' means that the soldier was emotional as he joined up to fight in the war.
- 4 The uniform is hot and uncomfortable ('hot khaki'). The seams of the uniform rub his skin ('raw-seamed').
- 5 It is as if his patriotism has been reduced merely to sweat, i.e. the effort he has put into this battle. Perhaps it could even refer to a bullet in his chest.
- 6 The hare is writhing in pain.
- 7 This is a play on words; 'still running' suggests that it is a continuous action but also suggests that he is frozen in time – a freeze frame.
- 8 He 'almost stopped', suggesting his fear, terror and 'bewilderment'. He is insignificant on this battlefield.
- 9 Hughes wanted us to understand that there is a difference between patriotism, where war is glorious, and the reality of war, which is brutal and bewildering. In a war, a soldier is a tiny piece in the 'cold clockwork' of the vast nations that are fighting and the vastness of the 'stars', the universe.
- 10 He is driven by 'terror' not patriotism and has lost control – therefore he is explosive and dangerous. He has become a weapon, 'dynamite', dehumanised by war.



p.49 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present fear in 'Bayonet Charge' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'Bayonet Charge' with 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the way Hughes conveys a sense of terror and loss of control in 'Bayonet Charge'
- how the violence in the war poem 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' is not mentioned – only the soldiers' nobility and bravery
- how imagery and sound effects in 'Bayonet Charge' convey the sense of the battlefield and how terror chases away any patriotic idealised view of war
- how 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' uses rhythm and sounds to convey action and violence while focusing on their bravery during this reckless charge
- what the endings of the two poems suggest about terror and survival, and any similarities or contrasts in what is suggested.

Remains, *Simon Armitage*

p.50–53

p.51 Do it!



When the soldier closes his eyes he can still see – in his mind – the image of the dead looter. It suggests that the image is trapped in his head: he cannot ever hope to get rid of it.

p.51 Stretch it!



In the first half of the poem the narrator is indifferent to the looter, whether he is armed, and how he is dealt with. The soldiers treat him like an object, and the narrator's tone is full of off-hand bravado.

In the second half, signalled by 'except not really' the narrator is regretful and fearful. He gradually feels guilty, but also fearful: it's as though he is being haunted by the accusing ghost of his victim and he cannot escape the ghost whatever method he tries. Now *he* feels like the target, the victim.

p.52 Do it!



Theme	Poem	Explanation
Suffering	'London'	Compare with the misery of the Londoners – a misery that is not their fault. The violence done to them is also graphically expressed.

p.53 REVIEW IT!



- 1 At a bank
- 2 Three
- 3 Twelve ('a dozen')
- 4 The victim's guts had come out of his body.
- 5 Shock and disgust. We probably condemn the callousness of the soldier.
- 6 This is an understatement: the action is over, but the traumatic effect on the soldier's mind has only just started.
- 7 Even when he is drunk or stoned he cannot blot out the image of the dead looter. The soldier is obviously trying various ways of forgetting the incident.
- 8 He might mean literally: even when he is in another war zone, dug into the ground for protection. Alternatively this might be metaphoric 'digging in': perhaps he is 'behind enemy lines' in his head – in a hostile psychological state or 'place'. He is 'dug in' in the sense of trying to protect himself from his guilt and fear.
- 9 This is a metaphor related to the saying 'blood on your hands': in other words he feels responsible for the looter's unjustified death.
- 10 Little remains of the looter's body. 'Remains' draws attention to the brutality of the looter's death. Perhaps Armitage also means '*remains*' in its verb form: the traumatic memory of the looter's killing remains in the soldier's mind: he can never get rid of it.



p.53 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present guilt in 'Remains' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'Remains' with Extract from, 'The Prelude'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the way Hughes conveys the soldier's bravado and absence of guilt in the first half of 'Remains'
- how guilt takes over the soldier's mind in the second half of 'Remains'
- how bravado turns to guilt and fear in Extract from, 'The Prelude'
- how Extract from, 'The Prelude' presents guilt and fear as something monstrous that takes over the poet's mind, filling it with disturbing images
- similarities and differences between the narrators' responses in both poems to the trauma of their experiences.

Poppies, Jane Weir

p.54–57

p.55 Do it!



A wishbone is traditionally pulled by two people who make a wish as they pull. Perhaps the narrator is wishing for her son's safety, or for his return from the dead.

p.55 Stretch it!



Perhaps her son has only gone to school, and she is hoping to hear him playing in the playground. Perhaps she knows that he is now grown up and lost to her, and she longs for him to be a child again – secure and dependent on her and his home. However, if his voice only ‘catches’ on the wind, it is being blown away, out of range of her influence. Perhaps this means he is dead and all she is left with is brief sharp memories of him.

p.56 Do it!



Theme	Poem	Explanation
Loss/absence	‘My Last Duchess’	The Duchess has disappeared except for her image, her portrait.
Daring/heroism	Extract from, ‘The Prelude’	The narrator is full of confidence and daring when he steals the boat.

p.57 REVIEW IT!



- 1 Three days before Armistice Sunday; early in November
- 2 A (paper) poppy
- 3 To remove cat hairs from her son’s clothes
- 4 That it is gelled into spikes
- 5 She is trying to be brave and to suppress her emotions. She probably doesn’t want to embarrass or irritate her son with a display of affection for him.
- 6 ‘A song bird’. This might be metaphorical: perhaps it is her emotions she releases from the cage she has shut them up in.
- 7 Peace, love, hope
- 8 She leans against the war memorial and traces the names inscribed on it. She listens, hoping to hear her son’s voice.
- 9 Perhaps she is prompted by her fears over her son’s safety. Perhaps she is expecting to find – or knows she will find – her son’s name there and cannot bear to look.
- 10 It is spoken by a character (a mother) who has been invented by the poet, Jane Weir.



p.57 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present suffering in ‘Poppies’ and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare ‘Poppies’ with ‘London’.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the way Weir conveys the narrator’s control of her deep feelings
- how – like torn clothing – the narrator’s fears and sadness in ‘Poppies’ come to the surface
- how misery is both obvious and ignored in ‘London’
- the different sorts of imagery in the two poems showing different sorts of suffering: private (‘Poppies’) and public (‘London’)
- the two poems’ different moods and attitudes in relation to suffering caused by conflict.

War Photographer, Carol Ann Duffy

p.58–61

p.60 Do it!



The people in England will look at the photographs and their eyes will ‘prick with tears’ (notice that they do not cry fully), and then they get on with their very comfortable lives – ‘baths’, ‘pre-lunch beers’. This detail links to the theme of distance and detachment.

p.60 Stretch it!



A Sunday supplement is a free glossy magazine within a Sunday newspaper. Often it may contain lifestyle or travel articles. Duffy includes this detail to show the contrast between the lives of the people in the war zone and the people in England. Suffering is being consumed as entertainment and as a culture we are becoming indifferent to that suffering. This detail links to the theme of distance and detachment.

p.61 REVIEW IT!



- 1 The photographs contained on the reels of film show images of people's death and suffering.
- 2 'All flesh is grass'.
- 3 The photographer is returning to the task in hand. It is what he is paid to do.
- 4 Five or six
- 5 This has a double meaning: it literally describes how the image begins to appear on the processing paper; metaphorically it refers to the suffering of the people in the war zone.
- 6 When he was working in the war zone, he had a job to do so he was calm and professional. Thinking back over the horrors, and seeing the images, is more emotional for him.
- 7 Literally one hundred black and white photographs. Also, when we see things in 'black and white', it means that we see things truthfully and clearly. Here, in these many photographs, the 'agonies' – the suffering – is seen clearly.
- 8 They are emotional about the content of the photographs, but notice that they do not cry fully – or react in any other way.
- 9 The internal rhyme is surprising so emphasises its impact. The trite nature of it means that we see the superficial reactions of the people in England – they do not care.
- 10 Conflict within the war zone; conflict between the photographer's feelings that he has a job to do and his feelings once he returns home; conflict between the 'hundreds of images' that are reduced to 'five or six' selected by the editor; conflict between using suffering as something to be consumed by our society.



p.61 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present attitudes towards conflict in 'War Photographer' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'War Photographer' with 'Kamikaze'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the different attitudes towards conflict in 'War Photographer': his attitude is that conflict is his 'job' to be used as something to be consumed by our society
- the different sorts of attitudes towards conflict in 'Kamikaze': the conflict within the pilot and the social and family friction created by his decision to return
- how Duffy makes us feel about the photographer and his work and the way Garland makes us feel about the external reactions to the pilot's decision
- comparing how each poet presents the conflict between personal attitudes and external attitudes towards conflict.

Tissue, *Imtiaz Dharker (b.1954)*

p.62–67

p.65 Do it!



For example:

- introducing the theme
- using quotations to reinforce their ideas
- explaining the impact of this theme on the reader.

The poem explores the power of family history within a life that 'was never meant to last'. Dharker shows us that, even within our temporary lives, our power comes from the connections we make in our lives, through the 'names and histories' written into 'well-used books'. The reader understands Dharker's message, that these histories, even coming from everyday 'fine slips', are more powerful than any 'capitals or monoliths' that we build. Instead, it is our skin, our 'living tissue', that is both fragile and powerful.

p.66 Do it!



- 1 'Paper that lets the light/shine through'
- 2 'where a hand/has written in the names and histories,/who was born to whom'
- 3 'Raise a structure/never meant to last/of paper smoothed and stroked/and thinned to be transparent'
- 4 'living tissue'

p.67 REVIEW IT!



- 1 The 'light' shines 'through'.
- 2 It's a reddish brown colour – usually seen in old photographs.
- 3 Books, maps, receipts from grocery shops, credit card bills
- 4 Grocery receipts
- 5 They are well-loved and read often.
- 6 An architect
- 7 Paper holds more wisdom than bricks.
- 8 All of us – everyone
- 9 Dharker says that money 'might fly our lives like paper kites', therefore controlling our lives.
- 10 The key here is the phrase 'living tissue'. Dharker uses the play on words to show the links between the power of our personal histories that we can record on paper and our personal history that is contained in our 'living tissue' – our skin – and our DNA.



p.67 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present the fragile nature of power in 'Tissue' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'Tissue' with 'Ozymandias'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- how our society shows its power through its buildings and cities but these are fragile and are nothing in comparison with what is important in our lives
- how the power in 'Ozymandias' is portrayed as fragile: broken and scattered like the 'colossal wreck' the monument has become
- how the fragile nature of paper is celebrated in 'Tissue' as it shows its power to record and chart our histories – positive and affirming
- how Shelley's mocking tone and use of irony is shown through his language choices; how these support the central idea in the poem that power is fragile and temporary
- how the fragile nature of power in 'Tissue' has a personal impact on the reader; how the fragile nature of power in 'Ozymandias' suggests a political point.

The Emigrée, Carol Rumens

p.68–71

p.69 Do it!



The narrator's memory of the city is from a child's point of view – an idealised memory. The darkness and threat of the reality from an adult's point of view can be seen in the final stanza.

p.70 Do it!



'docile' means to be calm and biddable; 'paper' can be seen to represent innocence. The city is personified as an innocent, gentle creature. The image links to the fairy-tale opening and the child's view of the city.

p.70 Stretch it!



This image links to 'Checking Out Me History'. Both of these poems link identity with language and personal history.

p.71 Stretch it!



For example: three repetitions of 'of sunlight', 'My city'; an 'enchanted' setting ('white streets of that city', 'graceful slopes/glow'; magical elements ('My city takes me dancing...'); teaching a lesson that is important to the culture it (they) came from; a clearly defined problem ('I left it as a child'); clearly defined good and bad characters (the city from childhood memories versus the state/city of the present).

p.71 REVIEW IT!



- 1 A person who has left their country to live in another, usually for political reasons
- 2 We are not told the country.
- 3 Each stanza ends with an image of sunlight.
- 4 White
- 5 A fairy tale
- 6 The new political regime
- 7 'docile as paper'
- 8 In the final stanza there are images of dark forces that 'accuse', 'circle', and 'mutter death'.
- 9 The frontiers are described as rising between the narrator and the city as they 'close like waves'.
- 10 'My city' is the city of her childhood memory – it is idealised and full of sunlight. 'The city' is the reality of the place through her adult eyes. It is dark and threatening.



p.71 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present the power of place in 'The Emigrée' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'The Emigrée' with 'London'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- in 'The Emigrée', the narrator recalls the place from memory – presenting an idealised picture
- in 'London' we see the place as we journey through the streets with the narrator
- contrast between the two poems of positive images in 'The Emigrée', 'sunlight' and 'white streets' compared with the negative of 'London', 'woe', 'black'ning' and 'blood'
- contrast of innocence and corruption in 'London', and conflict and nostalgia in 'The Emigrée'.

Checking Out Me History, John Agard

p.72–77

p.75 Do it!



Theme	Poem	Explanation
Inequality	'London'	The ordinary Londoners are mentally trapped: their 'mind-forged manacles' mean they have to accept their enslavement.
Rebellion	'Tissue'	The poet hopes people will confront the power structures that dominate them – the 'capitals and monoliths'.

p.76 Do it!



For example:

- fairy tales and rhymes to make official culture seem a bit silly (trivial)
- the structure of the fifth and eighth stanzas whose lines begin, 'Dem', 'and', 'Dem', 'but'. This suggests the dull predictability of official (white) culture.

p.76 Stretch it!



You could include these points:

- repetition of words and phrases gives the narrative confidence and makes the narrator sound accusing
- repetition confirms that the narrator's attitude is not softening during the poem
- the rhythm (supported by rhyme) in many stanzas makes the narrator sound scornful and challenging
- the word 'but' in the penultimate line sounds decisive and rebellious and introduces the claim that he will depend on himself in future.

p.77 REVIEW IT!



- 1 They tell me about
- 2 His true identity
- 3 The history that is particularly significant to the Caribbean region
- 4 Napoleon's French battalion
- 5 Haiti
- 6 Two of the lines referred to by the narrator are from the nursery rhyme, 'Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle'.
- 7 The Commander of the British navy at the Battle of Trafalgar
- 8 Jamaica
- 9 For example: 'go', 'no', 'snow' in the penultimate stanza. This repetition emphasises Mary Seacole's strength in overcoming resistance to her decision to nurse the troops in the Crimean War.
- 10 He's going to find out about the history of Black Caribbeans and gain a fuller sense of his own history and identity. He will get a fuller sense of who he is.

**p.77 AQA exam-style question**

Compare how poets present attitudes to inequality in 'Checking Out Me History' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare 'Checking Out Me History' with 'My Last Duchess'.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the complaint Agard's narrator has against the way history presents the past in a prejudiced way, valuing the contribution of some groups of people more than others
- how the narrator's scornful, resentful attitude is suggested through language and form
- how the duke comes across to the reader in 'My Last Duchess' – controlling, selfish; how he uses his power
- how the dramatic monologue form dramatises injustice in each poem
- the two narrators' different moods and attitudes in relation to the rights of others.

Kamikaze, Beatrice Garland**p.78–83****p.81 Do it!**

For example:

- he suddenly valued the beauty of life above dying for his country
- fondly remembering his father and his childhood made him want to carry on being a father to his own children
- he thought that a kamikaze mission was a bad way to die.

p.81 Stretch it!

Here are some points you might consider:

- the distance Garland puts between the narrator (a grandchild) and the pilot
- the beauty of the life that the pilot would have thrown away
- the fact that the children's rejection of the pilot was 'learned' and not natural
- the sympathy implied for the pilot in the final two lines.

p.82 Do it!

For example:

Stanza	Topic
4	Warm memory of waiting on the shore
5	Their father's catch, including the dangerous tuna
6	Ostracised on his return
7	Rejected by his children/what he learned

p.83 Stretch it!

The answers are, of course, up to you, but you need to consider whether Garland's methods do create a distance between the reader and the pilot, and what she might be trying to achieve through that method.

p.83 REVIEW IT!



- 1 Sunrise
- 2 He was on a suicide mission.
- 3 Fishing boats
- 4 Shoals of silver-bellied fish
- 5 His brother
- 6 It suggests that the boys are impressed by the delicacy of the prawns, especially in contrast to the more robust nature of the rest of the catch – the ‘cloud-marked mackerel’ and the ‘black crabs’. ‘Feathery’ makes the reader think of the boys holding their breath in wonder at the prawns, and this prepares the reader for the boys’ view of the whitebait as treasure (‘loose silver’).
- 7 Probably he was ignored and rejected as a punishment for being a coward and/or for letting his country down. Perhaps they are ashamed of him and do not want to be seen as associated with him.
- 8 That he was awed by it. It seemed very special, powerful, strong, frightening. The tuna in his memory seems almost symbolic. Perhaps he associates it with his later decision not to carry through his suicide mission.
- 9 That there are worse things than dying: actual death can be better than social death.
- 10 Perhaps we sympathise with the pilot, who lost more by turning back than he would have by dying. Or perhaps we sympathise with him because he made the right decision: dying was pointless and wrong if it meant giving up the beauty and happiness that the world offers. Perhaps we should sympathise with the children who were natural and accepting but who were forced to reject the father they loved.



p.83 AQA exam-style question

Compare how poets present ideas about conflict in ‘Kamikaze’ and in one other poem from Power and conflict.

You might choose to compare ‘Kamikaze’ with ‘Exposure’.

Some main points you might develop in your answer:

- the different sorts of conflict in ‘Kamikaze’: the conflict within the pilot, and the social and family friction created by his decision to return
- how Garland makes us feel about the pilot’s decision
- the different sorts of conflict in ‘Exposure’
- how the soldiers in ‘Exposure’ are also torn between duty and their longing for home: their understanding of what their duty is costing them
- comparing how each poet presents this conflict between duty and personal desire.

Essentials

p.84–85

p.84 Do it!



Plain, colloquial language: ‘Remains’, ‘Poppies’, ‘War Photographer’, ‘Checking Out Me History’

References to nature: ‘Ozymandias’, Extract from, ‘The Prelude’, ‘Exposure’, ‘Storm on the Island’, ‘Bayonet Charge’, ‘Poppies’

The creation of vivid and detailed visual images: ‘Ozymandias’, ‘London’, ‘My Last Duchess’, ‘The Charge of the Light Brigade’, ‘Remains’, ‘Bayonet Charge’, ‘Tissue’, ‘Kamikaze’, ‘The Emigrée’

Doing well in your AQA exam

p.86–93

p.86 Do it!



You will find a sample question at the end of the section on each of the fifteen poems in the cluster. When you prepare the question make sure you use the method shown on page 86.

- Underline and very briefly explain to yourself the key words.
- Choose and write down one poem you will compare with the named poem. (You could write down two or three poems if they occur to you, and choose the one poem after you have re-read the named poem.)

p.90 Do it!



The student refers to the question and begins immediately to answer it using the word '*control*' from the question. The second poem chosen is referred to. Understanding of the poets' methods is shown through an overview of their approach to separation and distance.

p.93 REVIEW IT!



- 1 40 minutes
- 2 Section A: Your modern prose or play text, for example, *An Inspector Calls*, *Blood Brothers*, *Lord of the Flies*, and Section C: Unseen Poetry.
- 3 10 minutes
- 4 You need to be certain what the question is asking you.
- 5 You can use indirect quotations: you can paraphrase what the quotation is about; briefly mention what a narrator says or does; briefly mention an event in the poem.
- 6 30 marks
- 7 You could advise them that it's better to know all of the poems well as that question might not be relevant to the question and the named poem on their exam paper.
- 8 True, but a good introduction and conclusion can be very helpful.
- 9 For example: Compare how poets present regret in 'Remains' and in one other poem from Power and conflict.
- 10 For example: 'Remains' compared with 'My Last Duchess':
 - 1 regret as painful and never-ending as presented in 'Remains'
 - 2 regret presented as fake in 'My Last Duchess'
 - 3 use of language to show the loss of control caused by regret in 'Remains'; use of language to show threat and control in 'My Last Duchess'
 - 4 how memories from the past are re-created/re-imagined by characters in both poems to reveal their levels of regret
 - 5 how both poems show that the regret or lack of it can help us understand people around us.