

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

The Poetry of War and Peace

2018 English Olympiad Study Guide

For all candidates writing the English Olympiad in 2018



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**The Executive Committee of the English Olympiad are
grateful for the support provided by**

DE BEERS
GROUP OF COMPANIES

We Will Remember Them

2018 English Olympiad Study Guide

Focused on the poetry of war and peace including pre- and post-20th century poetry, poetry from the Cold War, and South African Struggle Poetry.

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Candidate

In my introduction to the Anthology I quoted Francis Bacon for the important fact that ‘writing makes an exact man.’ What that means is that in order to do really well in the English Olympiad, you must sharpen your writing skills and the only way to do that is to practise daily. I recommend writing 500 words a day above and beyond homework, on topics that interest you.

Just as muscle memory is built by repetition, so writing is honed by repeated practice. Always try to ‘up’ your game: if you like using colloquialisms, try to do without them; think of a fresh way of saying something instead of using tired old idiomatic expressions; if you usually contract when you write, discipline yourself not to contract at all. You will surprise yourself.

Many teachers and candidates mentioned that they would like to see a greater link between the first two sections of the examination paper and the language section. Dr Malcolm Venter has put together a smart little package on propaganda which you will find towards the back of this Study Guide under Section C. You can be sure that this year we will try to cross pollinate the Creative/Transactional section with transactional applications that will satisfy this request.

Hopefully, there will be something in the examination for everybody, and for those of you who enjoy writing poetry and are good at it, there may be something for you in Section B. Do remember that Section B is both Transactional and Creative and you must display skills specific to the question you have chosen, so choose wisely.

A word about Section A: This section acknowledges the needs of the tertiary institution. The universities must see candidates emerging who already know how to write an academic essay. Although some universities have moved towards encouraging a candidate’s authentic voice by allowing the use of first person, it is still considered good practice to write in the third person. Kindly use P.E.E. [Note 1] and Paragraph [Note 2]. Poetry is always discussed in the present tense, and contractions and colloquial idiom is frowned upon, so in Section A show off your very best academic skills.

Please note that this year excessive length will be penalized. It was Benjamin Franklin who said “I did not have time to write a short letter,

so I wrote a long one instead..." (Sometimes attributed to Winston Churchill). You have been given enough time to write a rough draft, which you do not need to hand in. We will ask your teacher invigilators to make sure that no notes of any kind are brought into the exam room. Do not try to prepare anything in advance. Pre-prepared commentary comes across as unoriginal; often a duplication of the thoughts and ideas of others. Your own spontaneous response is what the markers are looking for.

Use the time wisely; edit and present a piece no longer than 2½ pages if you have a large hand writing, and 2 pages if your hand writing is small. There is plenty of time. You have three hours plus discretionary reading time.

A last word on essay writing in Section A: We have decided not to specify the kind of essay answer we would like to receive. This has been decided upon as a way of avoiding the pedantry surrounding the definition of 'Argumentative' versus 'Discursive' Essay. You can choose what kind of essay the question requires. I have my own analogy to illustrate the distinction between the two: think of the 'Argumentative Essay' as a Debate, and the 'Discursive Essay' as a Speech, remembering of course that a speech must outline a proposed topic and must make

[NOTE 1] P.E.E. To write a good P.E.E. paragraph it is important to understand what is required:

1. Say something about the question. This is your **POINT**.
2. Lead **EVIDENCE**. This is textual reference /quotation. It is important to make the quotation a part of the sentence. Do not "dangle" a quotation in the middle of your paragraph.
3. **EXPLICATE (EXPLAIN)**. Whatever quotation you have used will need to be explained, or the relevance illustrated. Voilà: P.E.E. paragraph. (Remember, that unless the quotation you have chosen is self-explanatory, it is not a good idea to end with a quotation. Never assume your reader knows what you mean; explain everything as though you were making your ideas clear to a person of lower intelligence. (Remember, to 'assume' makes an 'ass' of 'u' and 'me'.)

a point, or points. This distinction may seem random but it may serve you well in deciding what kind of answer the question requires. We will expect your response to be presented in an Academic style, irrespective of your choice of approach.

There is a range of questions in the study guide, all intended to open up discussion on the poems, but these questions are not the kind of questions you will answer in the examination. At least half a dozen Section A essay-type questions have been included so that you can get a feel of the questions. These have been clearly labelled, so look out for them. For greater insight, do go to the website (www.saenglisholympiad.org.za) where you will find past exam papers that date back many years.

The poetry has been divided into different categories that equate roughly to a period in history including pre-20th century poems in Part 1; early 20th century poetry divided into war poetry and post war poetry from World War I in Part 2; poems from World War II and the post war period in Part 3. Part 5 includes some fun poems that seem to be obsessed with bombs, while the last section, Part 7, is made up of South African Poetry of the Struggle and beyond. Most of the FAL examinable poetry comes from this section.

There are also snippets from the lyrics of songs from various eras to add further texture to your studies. These can be found in parts 4, 6 & 8.

[NOTE 2] Paragraphing:

1. Short paragraphs that make a single point are good.
 2. The rule is, if you talk about a different point, you start a new paragraph.
 3. If you refer to a different time, place, person: begin a new paragraph.
 4. When discussing poetry, reference to any of these are discussed in separate paragraphs: voice/speaker; tone/mood; intention; figures of speech; devices; rhyme/rhythm; structure; theme/content; diction/words; imagery.
-

FYI here is the quotation and an explanation of Francis Bacon’s point, which I used in order to illustrate a point in the introduction to the anthology.

“If a Man write little, he hath need of a good memory.” Bacon understood that writing helps a person remember complex patterns of thought because writing tends to imprint on the mind what a person writes. More important is that Bacon was aware that because writing must be precise to be understood, the act of putting pen to paper forces the writer to think clearly about the subject. Bacon captures a universal truth about writing and exactness: if a person cannot write clearly about a subject, he cannot think clearly about that subject ... and that is why Bacon links writing with being clear-thinking or precise.

Here are a few practical suggestions for preparation: Get yourself some sticky labels, make sure which poems will be examined and clearly mark them for ready reference. Spend the December holidays reading ALL the poems. YouTube provides excellent resources that will bring material to life.

The rules of the examination are outlined in point 7. The Examination on page 14 of this guide. Please read and note these points carefully. We suggest the use of highlighters and sticky labels to pick out themes and quotations that seem interesting or that might yield points. If you want to write a really impressive Section A answer, the trick is to organise your material.

If you have tutorials, go prepared. Read the poem that will be discussed and have some points written down. Do not be afraid to voice opinion, even if you think you might be ‘stretching’. The only way you can test your opinions is by hearing those of others.

We cannot stress enjoyment enough. If you have ideas and you do share them, you will enjoy yourself, so I leave you with the words of Mr John Keating, of *Dead Poets’ Society*, “that the powerful play goes on and you may contribute a verse. What will your verse be...”?

Carpe diem

Anne Peltason, *Examiner*

Key to examinable poems:

HL: Home Language

FAL: First Additional Language

NEP: Not for Exam Purposes

Note that no direct questions will be asked in the exam on an NEP poem or lyric, however, candidates may use NEP material in their answers.

**Words delivered by the late Robin Williams as
Mr John Keating in *Dead Poets' Society*:**

We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for. To quote from Whitman, "O me! O life!... of the questions of these recurring; of the endless trains of the faithless, of cities fill'd with the foolish...what good amid these, O me, O life? Answer. That you are here—that life exists, and identity, that the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse. *That the powerful play goes on*, and you may contribute a verse. What will your verse be?"

1. THE AIMS AND APPROACH OF THE ENGLISH OLYMPIAD

The English Olympiad aims to enrich young people through the study of English, while at the same time encouraging learners to explore the English Language and its literature beyond the scope of the school curriculum requirements. By providing learners with an opportunity to work on the basis of self-study and self-motivation, the English Olympiad encourages learners to:

- Take responsibility for their own learning;
- Be empowered in the rigours of Academic Writing;
- Think critically and creatively;
- See the relevance of what they study - to themselves and to the world around them;
- Question their assumptions and explore alternative ways of thinking and experiencing the world in which they live;
- Express those experiences in critically and creatively written responses to the English Olympiad exam questions; and
- Substantiate their opinions with close reference to the texts prescribed for the Olympiad.

2. DATE OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination will be written on **Tuesday, 6 March 2018** in your school.

Schools may start the examination at any time between 11h00 and 14h00 on the examination day, provided the candidates are allowed 3 hours to write. The date of the examination is determined by the time needed to process the results, so that the top 15 candidates can be invited to attend the Grahamstown National Schools Festival in July.

Please note that no requests for an alternative date will be considered.

3. RESULTS

An alphabetical list of the Top 100 candidates will be announced on

the English Olympiad website: <http://www.saenglisholympiad.org.za/> during June 2018. The Top 15 winners will be invited to attend the National Schools Festival free of charge in Grahamstown in July 2018. The rank order of the Top 100 will be announced during the official De Beers English Olympiad prize-giving held during the National Schools Festival. The Top 100 Rank Order will be posted on the Olympiad website immediately after the July award ceremony, and a copy will also be posted to schools with their candidates' certificates during the third term of 2018.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 Classification

Each candidate will receive a general classification of his/her script. It is too expensive and impractical to provide detailed evaluations for each candidate.

Scripts are classified according to the following categories:

- Top 100 = Exceptional contribution
- Gold = 80% +
- Silver = 70%-79%
- Bronze = 60%-69%
- Merit = 50%-59%
- Participation = 40%-49%
- Unclassified = less than 40%. Did not complete the paper / insufficient comment

Certificate Categories

Gold

In Section A, B and C the markers will require candidates to write with **academic skill**. This means that the writing will be formal, avoiding colloquialisms (this includes most idiomatic expressions and all contractions) and slang. The diction, particularly, or choice of words, will set this candidate apart and will show that the candidate has read fairly widely and is not only comfortable

with word selection, but has an aptitude for choosing the best and most appropriate word for the task. A candidate able to do this will write economically. He or she will also display a sense of having engaged with the text on many levels; will be able to quote liberally, appropriately and correctly.

Silver

This is a very competent candidate and if you receive a Silver award you can be justly proud of yourself. It means you can write academically, appropriately; you rarely lapse into colloquialisms and you never use slang. Your vocabulary will be good. You will have prepared for the exam thoroughly. You write 'perfect P.E.E. (Point, Evidence, Explain), paragraphs. You know what you want to say and you say it. You are more than competent and you will probably go on to do brilliantly in your chosen field at tertiary level.

Bronze

This candidate is very competent and has prepared for the exam thoroughly. The candidate might slip up occasionally, allowing the odd colloquialism or slang expression into his or her writing. This candidate would probably do brilliantly once he or she has been given the time to thoroughly edit his or her work. It is all about presentation skills at university and these can be learned. You, too, can be proud of yourself.

Merit

The content of your work shows that you have engaged with the text in a real way. You might enjoy reading and know what you want to say but have not yet acquired the skills to put your ideas across. Your writing may be a bit undisciplined at times, and the odd non-sentence, cliché or slang expression may creep into your writing.

Participation

You certainly have a point of view but sometimes it is hidden in rote-learned phrases. Instead of responding sincerely and honestly

to the text, you may be insecure and rely on things you have learned or written down elsewhere. Your writing may lack discipline in colloquial usage and slang and you may not recognise when you are using clichés.

Unclassified

Unclassified candidates usually know when they will not receive a certificate. The commonest reason lies in panic. These candidates cannot settle on a question, they often re-start and oftener do not attempt a section. You cannot be classified unless you attempt all required questions; even a part answer counts.

Unclassified means you have earned less than 40%. This rarely happens in marking, as most candidates who sign up for the English Olympiad have shown proficiency in English writing.

4.2 Detailed Assessments

Provision has been made for a limited number of candidates to apply for comment on their scripts. Application should be made in writing when your school sends through their entries and payment to the Olympiad Officer. **Each detailed assessment costs R150.00 over and above the actual entry fee. A maximum of 2 detailed assessments per school is allowed.** The assessment will be sent to the candidate via his/her school after the results have been released.

Note: *The Olympiad is not an examination focused simply on results.*

4.3 Examiners' Evaluation

Candidates are assessed in two broad areas:

Content

Coherence	logical structuring of answers
Relevance	how the answer relates to the question
Insight	whether the answer shows maturity and understanding

Substantiation	whether statements and arguments are supported by wide textual reference
Creativity	originality and freshness of thought (“spark”)
Critical Thinking	whether the responses reflect the critical awareness associated with academic writing

Style and Language

Accuracy	grammar, punctuation, spelling and paragraphing (importantly: whether or not these detract from the response)
Style	conciseness; appropriate register for format of question

5. PRIZES AND AWARDS

Each candidate (unless ‘Unclassified’) will receive an English Olympiad certificate which shows the classification of their script.

In 2018 the -

Top 3 candidates will receive the following substantial cash prizes, broadening their opportunities for possible further study or travel:

- **1st Prize: R33 000**
- **2nd Prize: R30 000**
- **3rd Prize: R27 000**

Top 15 Home Language exam candidates will be invited to attend the **National Schools Festival in July in Grahamstown** free of charge.

Candidates placed in the **Top 10 First Additional Language exam** and **4th – 20th in the Home Language exam** receive book and/or cash prizes.

The **Top 42 Home Language** candidates and the **Top 8 First Additional Language** candidates will be offered **free tuition scholarships for their first-year of any course of study at Rhodes University** immediately

upon successful completion of their matriculation examination, subject to their meeting the University's entry requirements.

6. THE SYLLABUS

6.1 The theme

The **THEME** of the Olympiad is “War and Peace”, and it is based on the anthology entitled *We Will Remember Them* which focuses on the poetry of war and peace including pre- and post-20th century poetry, poetry from the Cold War eras, and South African struggle poetry.

7. THE EXAMINATION

7.1 Rules

On 6 March 2018 (the day of the exam), candidates should observe the following examination rules which your invigilators will be required to enforce:

You may bring the following into the examination venue:

- Pens, pencils, rulers, erasers
- Your copy of the anthology *We Will Remember Them*
- Your dictionary

NB: You are only allowed to underline and highlight and place sticky labels/PostIt markers on the text already printed in the anthology or in your dictionary. You must not make any other notes or annotations of any kind in the anthology, or in the dictionary that you take into the examination venue. If the school cannot supply you with a dictionary, bring along your own.

You may not bring this Study Guide into the examination venue.

You must not bring any other papers, documents, cell phones or digital retrieval devices into the exam venue.

7.2 Exam paper

The examination will require you to answer **one question from Section A (50 marks), one question from Section B (20 marks) and ALL questions from Section C (30 marks).**

Sections A & B make up the **LITERATURE SECTION** of the 2018 exam. In section A you will be required to write an academic literary essay. In Section B you will be required to write a creative and/or transactional piece. **Section C** is the **LANGUAGE SECTION**. In section C you must answer all the questions.

Section A is an essay section (50 marks). The recommended length of your essay is 400-450 words. The kinds of questions you may typically expect in Section A are to be found dispersed through the Study Guide and are distinguishable by text in CAPITAL LETTERS. Look out for them. Here is one such example which you will find again later:

The poem, *Naming of Parts*, makes it seem that war, combat and violence is not man's natural state after all. Write an essay supporting this view and illustrating your view with evidence from *Naming of Parts* and *my sweet old etcetera*.

Section B is a creative and/or transactional writing piece (20 marks). The recommended length is about 200 words. The kinds of questions you may typically expect in Section B are: letters, poems, email, dialogue, diary entry, review for example. We will be looking for concise, insightful, substantiated and logical answers, written in lucid (clear), correct and appropriate Language. Here is one example of a Section B question, but take care to watch out for more examples interspersed throughout the Study Guide.

Write a dialogue discussion between Owen and Sassoon about the poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth*.

Section C Language (30 marks)

The focus here is on the use of Propaganda in writing and speaking. Be aware of possible links with Section B. In your writing, demonstrate language in action.

LITERATURE GUIDE

Section A - Literary Essay

Section B - Creative and/or transactional writing

Looking back over the 19th Century and earlier, and forward to the present age, peace has always been a welcome respite from war, and conflict is ever a reality somewhere on earth. Even during periods of peace, poets, as the seers of their age, remain aware of the ugliness lurking beyond their immediate reality.

Besides the first excerpt from Henry V, the poems included span the 19th, 20th and 21st Centuries, and while the focus of poets might be on more tender emotions: domestic and intimate, war is undeniably lurking in the subtext of all the poetry included in this anthology.

PART 1: PRE 20TH CENTURY

PART 1.1 WAR: PRE 20TH CENTURY

1. Henry V Before the Battle of Agincourt

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (HL & FAL)

Comment

Shakespeare wrote several plays about the history of England. These are known as the “histories”. Nearly all of them are designed to glorify the then Queen (Elizabeth I) and the English people. In this speech the king, Henry V, is rallying his troops for battle. They have crossed the channel, invaded France and are at a place called Agincourt where a battle against the French is about to take place. Henry begins his speech in reaction to cousin, Westmorland’s apprehension about the small number of English soldiers under their command and his wish that they had with them just “ten thousand” men who back in England were not working.



Saint Crispin's Day: 25th October.
The Martyrdom of Saints Crispin and Crispinian by Aert van den Bossche, 1494, 98 × 190 cm. National Museum, Warsaw

Henry (or Harry as he calls himself in the speech) dismisses their small numbers and goes on to use plenty of rhetorical and propagandistic devices such as saying that the Lord is on their side and contrasting the honour and glory due to those that fight with the shame of those who do not. He exploits that fact that the battle will take place on St Crispin’s Day by saying that each year on this day those who survive will be praised and they will boast by showing off their battle scars.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
6	enow	Enough – we have sufficient numbers of soldiers to “do our country loss” if we die
10	covetous for gold	greedy for gold and wealth
14	covet honour	want/yearn for honour
17- 19	I would ... best hope.	I would win as much honour as possible and do not want to share it with one more man i.e. we are small in number but we will then each share maximum honour as it will be divided amongst a small number.
26	Feast of Crispian	Crispin and Crispinian (see line 43) were Christian twins that were martyred and honoured as saints.
48	be he ne'er so vile	This is a puzzling phrase, but the gist of lines 46 to 49 seems to be that Henry is calling on all who fight to rise above their lowly station, or position, and through fighting become a brother to, and gentleman like, the king.

Contextual Questions

1. It could be argued that this speech is an example of propaganda. Read Section C on argument, persuasion and propaganda at the back of this Study Guide and then consider the following questions.
 - 1.1 Read the first five lines of Henry’s speech (“What’s he ... of honour”) and identify a
 - 1.1.1 rhetorical question
 - 1.1.2 balanced syntactic structure

- 1.2 What is the effect of these devices?
2. Henry uses contrast to persuade his men to fight. What is he contrasting in
 - 2.1 lines 10 to 15 (“By Jove ... soul alive”)?
 - 2.2 lines 20 to 29 (“Rather proclaim ... of Crispian.”)
3. The lines 35 to 37 (“Old men forget ... that day”) roughly translate into modern English as “Old men are forgetful, but he will forget everything except, with elaborations, the feats he did that day”. Explain what linguistic and rhetorical techniques Shakespeare has used to make the original so much better than this modern translation.
4. Like most rousing speeches this one builds up to a climax at the end. Write a paragraph of about ten lines in which you analyse how Shakespeare has achieved this. Concentrate on lines 42 to the end (“This story ... Saint Crispin’s day”).

2. The Destruction of Sennacherib

GEORGE LORD BYRON (HL)

Comment

The poem describes an Old Testament story (2 Kings 18-19) in which Sennacherib the king of Assyria attacked Jerusalem with a mighty army. The Israelite king Hezekiah prayed to God and asked him to save Jerusalem. During the night the Lord sent an angel to incapacitate the sleeping Assyrian soldiers and in the morning most of them were dead. Sennacherib was defeated and returned to Ashur, a major city in Assyria.

Note how Byron has written the poem in strict rhyme and rhythm possibly to reflect the discipline and power of the marching army of Assyrians.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
2	cohorts	regiments/groups of soldiers numbering about 500 each
4	deep Galilee	a sea north of Jerusalem
22	Baal	an idol or false god
23	Gentiles	those who are not Jews – here it refers to the Assyrians

Questions

1. The meter is dominantly anapaestic tetrameter:

u u / u u / u u / u u /
The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,

See if you can mark out the meter in the next three lines. They will follow a similar pattern to the one above.

2. What might this regular rhythm echo?
 - 2.1 Explain how Byron has used parallel structures and antithesis in the second stanza.
 - 2.2 What is its effect?

3. The Charge of the Light Brigade

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON (HL)

Comment

Tennyson wrote this poem while he was poet laureate of the United Kingdom. The poem records the military disaster that occurred in the early 1850s when an order was given for a lightly armed cavalry of 600 men to charge down a narrow ravine to fight the Russians who were armed with cannon and guns. Very few of the British survived. The



The last time a light horse regiment was used in a battle charge was on the 31st October 1917, when 800 Australian Mounted infantry of the 4th Light Horse charged down upon Beersheba. Some historians have referred to the action as the last cavalry charge of modern times; it was not. The Australian Light Horse was disbanded in World War II and was last used in 1942. Strictly speaking, the Light Horse regiments were mounted infantry, not cavalry. The last Cavalry Charge was probably far earlier, historically.

event was recorded in newspapers where the phrase “Someone has blundered” was used.

The poem should be read in conjunction with the one written by Kipling about 40 years later entitled “The Last of the Light Brigade”.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
Title	Light Brigade	a subdivision of the army who were lightly armed and without rifles
1	Half a league	about three kilometres
12	blundered	to have made a silly or insignificant mistake
27	sabres	curved swords carried by cavalry soldiers
29	Sabring	slashing at the gunners with their sabres
32	battery-smoke	smoke caused by a battery or group of guns or cannon
34	Cossack	a member of a Russian unit famous for their military skills

Questions

1. What is the effect of the direct speech included in the first two stanzas?
2. Why has Tennyson included the phrase “valley of Death” (line 16)?
3. The poem is written in a highly emotive style. How has Tennyson achieved this?
4. Discuss whether the poem could be classed as propaganda.
5. If it is propaganda does it also have literary merit? Why?

4. The Last of the Light Brigade

RUDYARD KIPLING (NEP)

Kipling wrote this poem some forty years after Tennyson wrote “The Charge of the Light Brigade”. He wrote it in the hope of persuading the British public to donate money to help those few heroic men who had survived the battle and were now financially strapped.

Kipling has used a bitter tone and is scathing of the British authorities and the public for neglecting these men. It is unusual for someone of this time to be so critical.

Questions

1. How does Kipling depict the survivors?
2. Study the final stanza and discuss how he has used contrast to make his point.

5. Drummer Hodge

THOMAS HARDY (NEP)

Hardy, writing about the South African War, sympathetically records the death and unceremonious burial of a lesser soldier, a drummer boy, far from his home, in a poignant poem entitled *Drummer Hodge*. This was a simple young man, a non-entity as the name might suggest, and yet the poem is given stature and tragedy by the sincerity of Hardy's emotions.

PART 1.2 PEACE: PRE 20TH CENTURY

6. In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'

THOMAS HARDY (HL)

Comment

In 1916 Hardy was asked to write this poem for a newspaper during the time of World War I. In it he tries to remind the readers that despite the then present pain of war there remained another more enduring world of pastoral idyll.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
1	Harrowing clods	ploughing the earth
6	couch-grass	long grass
9	wight	poor young man
11	annals	records - often given yearly
16	Ere	before

Contextual Questions

1. The title comes from the Bible: Jeremiah, 61:20 in which Jeremiah prophesied that the Lord would “break in pieces the nations” that were opposed to Him and to peace.

Why might this title have been a good one at the time of the poem’s publication?

2. Why do you think Hardy chose to include the images of the farmer ploughing his fields and the two young lovers in this poem?

7. When the Leaders Speak of Peace

BERTOLD BRECHT (NEP)

Comment

Brecht was born in Germany and later moved away when it was clear that Hitler and the Nazi regime was intent on war. He lived in the USA for many years, but returned to Germany after World War 2. He had strong communist leanings and wrote many plays that had a major influence on the cultural life of the West.

Contextual Questions

1. Brecht uses contrast in these poems. Explain what is being contrasted.
2. What is the tone that emanates from his poetry?

PART 2 WORLD WAR 1

Background and Comments

1914 -1918 – Afterwards WWI was referred to as “THE GREAT WAR” but at the time it was sold to the general population as an ideal: “The war to end all wars”. This catchy phrase was carried down through history, although there was nothing great about World War I, nor did it put an end to war. Instead, what is remembered by those who survived was the horror of trench warfare, mustard gas and above all, misinformation. The phrase “War to end all war” began as an ideal and became a sardonic parry by those speaking out against the war.

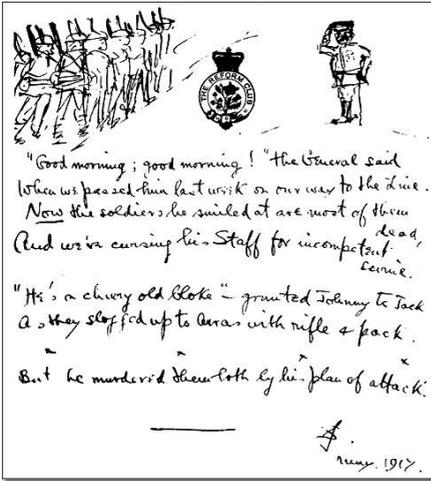
“Listen up” says Haruki Murukami, “– there is no war to end all wars.”

- KAFKA ON THE SHORE

The central motif of all the poetry of Wilfred Owen, who emerges as one of the greatest poets of World War I, is immortalised in his words from a poem, *Strange Meeting*: “*the pity of war, the pity war distilled*”. These words become his manifesto, the central theme of his poetry and his personal battle-cry.

All soldiers ever learned from trench warfare was sacrifice, betrayal, disillusionment, debility and death. They learned too late that their idealism and sacrifice was taken lightly by the War Office responsible for wasting human life.

Here is a sample of the kind of poem Siegfried Sassoon might have written down in his pocket book while resting between offensives. These kinds of sentiments prompted him to write his letter of protest. The Poem is entitled: *The General*:



"Good Morning; good morning!" the General said
When we passed him last week on our way to the line.
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of them dead,
And we're cursing his Staff for incompetent swine.

"He's a cheery old bloke" – grunted Johnny to Jack
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.
x x x
But he murdered them both by his plan of attack.

Note: Other versions give "But he did for them both ..." which is a lot more colloquial.

Common to Owen's theme is an understanding shared by those initiated into trench warfare; among them were Siegfried Sassoon, survivor, and Wilfred Owen, obit 1917. Together these poets form the core of the poetry of World War I included in this anthology.

In July 1917 Sassoon made a written statement about his objection to the war and gave it to his commanding officer. The authorities immediately committed him to Craiglockhart hospital in Scotland for mental assessment, hoping for a diagnosis of temporary insanity. Sassoon was diagnosed as having experienced a nervous breakdown. Had he not been a respected officer and a published poet, it is probable

that he would have been imprisoned or even shot for cowardice.

His declaration was read before the House of Commons:

A Soldier's Declaration

I am making this statement as an act of wilful defiance of military authority, because I believe that the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it.

I am a soldier, convinced that I am acting on behalf of soldiers. I believe that this war, upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest. I believe that the purposes for which I and my fellow soldiers entered upon this war should have been so clearly stated as to have made it impossible to change them, and that, had this been done, the objects which actuated us would now be attainable by negotiation.

I have seen and endured the suffering of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust.

I am not protesting against the conduct of the war, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed.

On behalf of those who are suffering now I make this protest against the deception which is being practised on them; also I believe that I may help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority of those at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not share, and which they have not sufficient imagination to realize.

S. Sassoon, July 1917

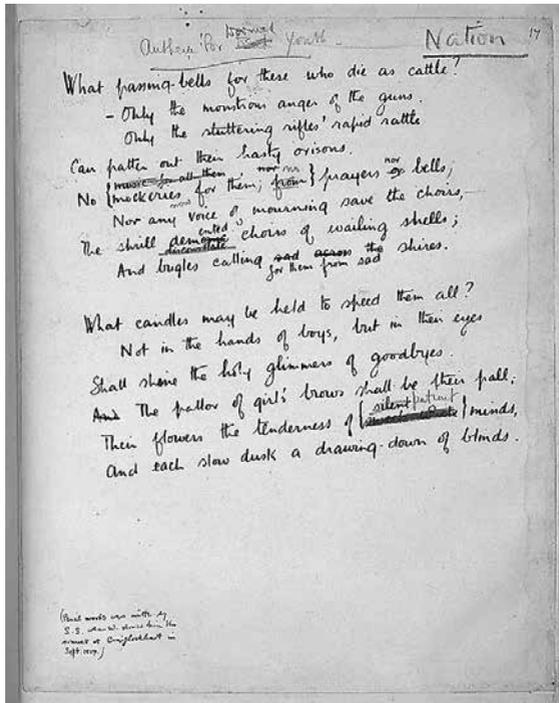
The War Office authorities were afraid that because Sassoon was a public figure, his words might have a negative effect on other soldiers. They needed an excuse to give him a desk job where he would not have contact with the fighting men. The War Office feared that he might

SHELL SHOCK: This term came into use in World War 1 and it is what we today would call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). At the time it might even have been labelled as cowardice.

18 British soldiers were shot for cowardice, and 7 for running away. It is likely these men were suffering from PTSD.

incite soldiers to refuse to fight. What if potential new recruits refused to sign up to take “the King’s shilling” (a soldier’s wage)? What if the High Command had no more regiments to sacrifice in their many planned offensives?

While receiving treatment at Craiglockhart War Hospital in Scotland Sassoon met Wilfred Owen. Owen had also been sent to Craiglockhart to recuperate from a nervous breakdown. While in hospital Owen formed a strong friendship with Sassoon – some biographers suggest



a gay relationship. It is true that Owen, in letters to Sassoon, declared love, but for our purposes it is important to see that Wilfred Owen admired and respected Siegfried Sassoon and saw him as a mentor.

While in Scotland, Owen showed Sassoon some rough work on *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. Here you can see some edits in Sassoon's own hand, appended to Owen's now famous sonnet, suggesting that he make the title *Anthem for Doomed Youth* and not *Anthem for Dead Youth*. It is unimaginable that the poem's title be *Anthem for Dead Youth*, and most people would agree that "patient" is an infinitely better choice of word than "silent" when describing 'minds'.

Questions (HL & FAL)

1. After reading Sassoon's Declaration, conclude by stating the central theme, or idea that runs through the letter.
2. Show evidence from Sassoon's War and Peace time poetry that bears out this theme.
3. What evidence is there in Sassoon's letter to the House of Commons/War Office that his view was representative of Officers who had seen active service as opposed to soldiers of the rank and file, or of conscientious objectors? (HL)
4. What is particularly poignant about Sassoon not giving his rank or first name in signing off his letter? (HL)
5. What alternative course of action is Sassoon suggesting to the War Office?
6. What was the War Office doing that was so abominable to Sassoon? Can you find evidence to support your answer in his poetry? (HL)

PART 2.1 WAR: WORLD WAR 1

8. *The Soldier*

RUPERT BROOKE (HL & FAL)

Comment

The War Office and propaganda machine encouraged the sentiments expressed in the poetry of Rupert Brooke. He makes the supreme sacrifice sound noble and worthwhile, and for a while it was the glory and romance of war that encouraged young men to sign up.

Questions

1. Compare and contrast this sonnet with the next one, *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. The sentiments contained in each are very different.
2. Do you think Rupert Brooke had seen active service when he wrote this poem? Had he survived would he have changed his views? Or are there people who are born and die patriots, believing every bit of propaganda? Does this make Brooke a fundamentalist?
3. Pick out examples of propaganda from the poem and discuss each. (The War Office loved Brooke; he was their spokesman.)

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
10	A pulse in the eternal mind	Pantheist belief in being part of the circle of life and returning to it.

9. Anthem for Doomed Youth

WILFRED OWEN (HL & FAL)

Comment

You have been introduced to Wilfred Owen in the background to World War I. Here was a promising poet, cut off in the flower of youth. Who knows what he might have accomplished had he lived a long, full life. The most interesting observation is how he struggled with his words, wrestling them onto the page. His poetry is probably among the few good things to come out of the war.

Questions (HL & FAL)

1. Consider the discussion that might have taken place between Sassoon and Owen about Owen's poem. Think about the changes Sassoon suggests. Why does he say "monstrous" would be a better choice of word than "solemn"? Why does he suggest changing "our" guns to "the" guns? Does it really make a huge difference in terms of the message of the poem? (HL)
2. HL & FAL TYPICAL SECTION B QUESTION: Write a dialogue discussion between Owen and Sassoon about the poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth*.
3. Discuss the diction of the first four lines. How does Owen capture the atmosphere of the battlefield with his diction?
4. Discuss the poignancy of the real 'anthem' expressed in the last two lines of the poem.
5. What kind of funeral could a fighting man expect to have? Give some detail as gathered from the poem.

10. *Dulce et decorum est*

WILFRED OWEN (HL)

Comment

The title *Dulce et decorum est* is a Latin phrase, meaning that it is sweet (dulce) and appropriate/meet (decorum) to die for one's country. Owen meant the phrase to be ironic, scathing, sarcastic. He paints a vivid picture of men coming back from an encounter with mustard or chlorine gas, a terrible substance that attacks the mucus membranes of the body, destroying the tissue of the lungs, blinding soldiers and creating huge blisters on the skin. Victims literally drowned in their own blood.

The poem was first addressed to Miss Jessie Pope who wrote poems about the glory of war. When Owen uses the pronoun 'you' he originally meant Miss Pope. Later 'you' became all-embracing of the war machine that kept soldiers in the fray (i.e. in the fight).

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
16	guttering	a ragged, spluttering cough
23	cud	regurgitated food, brought up for chewing on again

Questions

1. Explain as clearly as you can what "the old lie" is.
2. Who is responsible for these soldiers' lives and what should they be doing about them?
3. Comment on the structure of the poem, saying how rhyme subtly enhances the message.
4. Comment on the capitalization of "GAS!"

5. Pick out some of the effective imagery and comment on the effectiveness of the device employed.
6. Where were the soldiers going?
7. Show how diction carefully conveys the speaker's attitude to the soldiers in the last four lines.
8. What tone is evident in the speaker's comment that those who believe and perpetuate the old lie do so with "high zest"?

11. *In Flanders Fields*

JOHN MCCRAE (NEP)

Comment

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was a Canadian doctor and poet. He served as a surgeon in Belgium and died of pneumonia in 1918. His poem, *In Flanders Fields* became a famous war memorial poem.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
Title	Flanders fields	the poppy fields of Belgium where most of the combat took place in World War 1

Question

What gives a poem like *In Flanders Fields* its power? Can it be compared to other memorial poems? Make a list of all the poems you consider to be memorial poems and say what they have in common. Try to be specific.

PART 2.2 PEACE: AFTER WORLD WAR 1

12. On Passing the New Menin Gate

SIEGFRIED SASSOON (HL & FAL)

Comment

On passing the New Menin Gate, in Belgium, Siegfried Sassoon, in the Italian sonnet of the same name, looks upon the millions of names inscribed on a memorial he justly calls “a heap of stone” and asks whether “this pomp” is sufficient payment for the sacrifice of so many young men, cut off in the prime of life. It is a fair question, and perhaps one you would like to look at in your discussions.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
4	conscripted	forced to join the army; forced to fight; not by choice.
5	Salient	The conspicuous; obvious; central; focal (The adjective has been used as a noun.)
11	immolation	offer for sacrifice by burning ; burnt offering
14	sepulchre	small room or monument usually of stone

Questions

1. Sassoon’s tone is virulent and scathing in this poem. What has given him reason to be? What examples of diction support this statement about the tone of the poem?
2. Pick out and comment on a few examples of alliteration and say why these add particular power to the message of the poem.

3. Salient, Gateway and Dead are all capitalized. Can you think of a reason for this?
4. TYPICAL ESSAY-TYPE QUESTION SECTION A: Compare Sassoon's diction with that of Mzi Mahola in *In Memoriam Fallen Patriots* and comment on the differences and similarities employed in the choice of certain words.

13. At the Cenotaph

SIEGFRIED SASSOON (NEP)

A cenotaph is an empty tomb or a monument erected in honour of a person or group of people whose remains are elsewhere. It can also be the initial tomb for a person who has since been reinterred elsewhere. Although the vast majority of cenotaphs honour individuals, many noted cenotaphs are instead dedicated to the memories of groups of individuals, such as the lost soldiers of a country or of an empire.

The English word "cenotaph" derives from the Greek: κενotάφιον kenotaphion (κενός kenos, meaning "empty", and τάφος taphos, "tomb")

Cenotaphs were common in the ancient world, with many built in Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and across Northern Europe (in the shape of Neolithic barrows).

The cenotaph in Whitehall, London - designed in 1919 by Sir Edwin Lutyens - influenced the design of many other war memorials in Britain and in the British sectors of the Western Front, as well as those in other Commonwealth nations.

From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cenotaph>

14. For the Fallen

LAWRENCE BINYON (HL & FAL)

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
5	trill	high-pitched rolling sound, probably of a tenor drum like a kettledrum
5	august	respected, grand, austere
6	immortal spheres	the moon, stars, cosmos
12	faces to the foe	the soldiers died facing their enemies so it would mean they were not cowards, they died bravely.
22	well-spring	this would mean that it overflowed; the feeling would well up inside like water from an underground spring would fill up a well so much that it would overflow.

Comment

Although the poem was written in 1914 and has since been used as a tribute to the fallen, irrespective of country or time, Lawrence Binyon was already too old for active service in World War I.

Questions

1. The fourth stanza of this poem that appears on the title page of the anthology ("*They shall not grow old ...*"), is so often quoted. Why do you think this is so?
2. Comment on the traditional structure of the poem. Do the rhymed quatrains make the poem more or less memorable?

3. Do you find the sentiment expressed in the poem too grandiose, or too like the propaganda of pride and sacrifice put out by the War Office, or is the feeling sufficiently heartfelt? (In other words, had Wilfred Owen been alive to read this poem, would he have approved? He certainly would have hated Rupert Brooke's *The Soldier*.)
4. EXEMPLAR ESSAY-TYPE QUESTION FOR SECTION A: Although strictly a War Poem, (Binyon wrote it in 1914) it has been placed with the poems remembering the war. Is it a more appropriate poem for Remembrance Day than Siegfried Sassoon's *On Passing the New Menin Gate*? Give reasons why sentimental propaganda might find greater acceptance among widows and bereaved family members than bitter, hard-hitting criticism of the war.

15. my sweet old etcetera

e e cummings (HL)

Comment

e e cummings is responsible for some of the most beautiful and intimate love poetry of the 20th Century. In this poem, while reminiscing about home during his time spent in the military, the poet once again succeeds in capturing the details of intimate domestic moments in much the same way as a painter like Bonnard would capture the details of a woman bathing.

Everyone has an 'aunt lucy' who will go on and on ad nauseam about a topic she (or he) thinks she knows everything about. In the poem 'aunt lucy' is real and convincing.

Sister Isobel knitted socks for the troops. This is something everyone did during the war. It was a way of making people feel as though they were really doing something to help. Cummings' observation shows how people take things too far, like knitting 'fleaproof earmuffs etcetera'.

Questions

1. Of course his mother did not hope he would die. Why does cummings include this talk about dying by his parent?
2. Where was the speaker while his parents were discussing the war and his part in it?
3. The speaker suggests that while everyone else is talking and thinking about the war, he is lying in the mud thinking about something else entirely. What exactly is he thinking about? Do you think what he is thinking about is common to most young men in battle?
4. What does his father mean by saying it was 'a privilege' and 'if only he could'? What is stopping him from doing what he believes he should be doing?

For Discussion

All the poetry of e e cummings is marked by its extraordinary arrangement, and the creative use of punctuation. How does the arrangement and punctuation of the poem enhance cummings' message?

PART 3 WORLD WAR 2

PART 3.1 WAR: WORLD WAR 2

16. High Flight

JOHN GILLESPIE MAGEE (HL)

Comment

John Gillespie Magee Jr. joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and received his wings in June 1941 as a Spitfire pilot. He wrote his beautiful sonnet a few months before his death in a mid-air collision less than six months after qualifying as a pilot. He was 19 at the time.

I received an understanding of the particular emotional impact of taking off into the wide skies from my own father, Captain Geoffrey Harold Wates, also a Spitfire pilot, who well knew and described to me the strange coming together of disconnection and euphoria experienced by all airman who chose to 'brave the windswept heights'. Their war was not a war of man-to-man combat experienced by the men of the infantry - it was, or at least seemed to be, a lot more noble.

Questions

1. Does the use of the first person add to or detract from the power of the poem? Discuss.
2. Whom is the speaker addressing in the poem? How important is the listener or reader to the speaker? Discuss.
3. Pick out and comment on the use of double epithets (adjectives created by joining two words using a hyphen).
4. Explain the poet's use of personification or pathetic fallacy in the first four lines of the poem.

5. What is the tone of the first four lines of the poem?
6. Describe the speaker's feeling in the last line of the poem.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
13	Sanctity	sacred nature of something, its inviolability; blessedness, spirituality

17. Naming of Parts

HENRY REED (HL)

Comment

Soldiers were sent to boot camp before going into combat. In this poem, Henry Reed records the boring jargon of learning how to use your rifle and compares the actions to the activity in the natural world which ineluctably draws his attention from his boring old rifle and his boring sergeant telling them in his boring voice the function of each boring part.

The poem must have been written in spring as there is enough activity amongst the bees and the flowers to suggest the season of spring.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
4	Japonica	a Japanese flower like the Camellia, fragile, delicate; the term Japonica also refers to all things from Japan

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
5	Coral	a marine creature that thrives in colonies and attaches to a reef. Corals are the main contributors to coral reefs that form in the shallow parts of tropical oceans. Their calciferous exoskeletons appear plant-like, and in a range of colour from orangey-pink to deep red

Questions

1. Consider the jargon that has to do with cleaning, assembling and firing a rifle: lower and upper swing swivel, piling swivel, cocking piece, safety catch, bolt, breach. Which of these words make the speaker think about something other than the task in hand? Does he have to stretch his imagination or is his mind drawn naturally to the outside world? Comment.
2. TYPICAL ESSAY QUESTION: The poem makes it seem that war, combat and violence is not man's natural state after all. Write an essay supporting this view and illustrating with evidence from *Naming of Parts* and *my sweet old etcetera*.
3. Discuss ambiguity in the poem, citing examples. Talk about the sexual innuendo contained in some of the imagery.
4. State what you think the poet's reason was for writing this poem.

18. Pieta

GUY BUTLER (HL & FAL)

Comment

Butler was an officer in the South African forces during World War 2. He was amongst those South Africans who fought in Italy against the forces of Mussolini who sided with the Nazi regime. Italy is generally

considered the birthplace of the European Renaissance and the country is filled with stunning works of art including paintings, sculptures and architecture. Amongst these works of art are pietas such as those by Michelangelo.

This poem is written in the form of a sonnet. As you know a sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines usually divided by argument into an octet and a sestet. The octet often puts forward a description of a set of questions, while the sestet addresses this description or answers the questions.

Questions

1. Look up the word “pieta” and explain its meaning.
2. In the octet Butler describes a young mother “at bay”.
 - 2.1 Why does he use this phrase?
 - 2.2 How are the soldiers depicted?
3. How, in the sestet, does Butler address the picture he paints in the octet?

19. Karoo Town

GUY BUTLER (NEP)

Comment

In 1939 South Africa was part of the British Empire and when World War 2 broke out there was a call for South Africans to volunteer to join the Allied forces and fight against Hitler. In this poem Butler describes how, in a remote Karoo town, the young men, he included, have to make the momentous decision as to whether or not to join up and leave their homes and families to fight a war in Europe.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
2	agate	semiprecious stone with bands of colour round it
14	integrates	combines so they become one
20	magnesium	a metal that burn with a bright white light
35	crystallizing	hardening
39	imperative	commanding
40	ricochet	to strike a surface and bounce off to another surface

Contextual Questions

1. Describe in one sentence what Butler describes in the first three stanzas.
2. Why is stanza 4 a turning point in the poem?
3. Explain the meaning of
 - 3.1 Europe asserts
 - 3.2 Her infallible remote control.
4. Why does Butler refer to 'Death in the desert'?
5. Line 47 contains the verb 'can (not) shake'. What is the subject of this verb?
6. Who or what can it not shake?

Activity

Have a debate or forum discussion in which half the group tries to persuade the young people of the Karoo town to join up and fight and the other half tries to persuade them not to.

OR

BOTH THESE QUESTIONS ARE EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT FIND IN SECTION B.

Write a short (150 words) emotive speech in which you try to persuade the young people to join up or not. Make use of some of the techniques of rhetoric and propaganda.

OR

Write a balanced and reasoned newspaper editorial in which you give both or one side of the argument about whether or not young South Africans should join up and fight in World War 2.

PART 3.2 PEACE: AND THE BOYS COME HOME

20. *The Great War*

VERNON SCANNELL (NEP)

Comment

That WWI was known as “The Great War” is mentioned elsewhere in this guide. In this poem, Vernon Scannell refers to some of the most famous battles of WWI and some of the popular songs of the time. It is interesting to note that Scannell saw active service in WW2, but it is WWI that captures his imagination. He is not the only poet to focus on WWI. Read the poems of Roger McGough and Brian Patten and you will see a similar pattern.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
12	rosettes	a rosette is a rose-shaped decoration pinned to the breasts of winners, or worn by members of political parties to identify them by colour; it means rose-shaped, and is reminiscent of the poppy that would blossom red on a soldier's chest when shot in the heart.
22	conscript	a person who is called to serve his or her country, but does not have a choice; a person who has enlisted compulsorily
25	bandoliers	belts worn across the chest to carry extra cartridges; also part of ceremonial dress
27	duckboards	slatted, wooden walkways constructed so the walker would not have to trudge through mud. Duckboards were used to stop the soldiers from getting trench foot
29-30	<i>A long, long, trail, The Rose of No Man's Land, Home Fires, Tipperary</i>	These are all words from popular World War 1 songs or the title of World War 1 songs.
34	Passchendaele, Bapaume, Loos, Mons	are all famous World War 1 battles where a great loss of life was suffered.
44	sepia	a brownish colour. In context the colour sepia might suggest the past/old photographs which fade to sepia.

21. Rhythms

MARGARET GOUGH (HL)

Comment

Margaret Gough is known for her insight. Her poetry is intelligent and quietly powerful.

Questions

1. Discuss the way theme and structure are cleverly linked in the poem.
2. Discuss the interesting change of tone in the last stanza.
3. Discuss the narrative structure of the poem; discuss where the discourse is leading.
4. Discuss the diction in the final stanza.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
12	Charleston	a modern dance of the twenties; energetic, frenetic; danced by the 'flappers'. View https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJC21zzkwoE for how to dance the Charleston.
	Jitterbugging	a very high-energy dance, quite daring and reckless, danced by couples in the thirties, forties and fifties. If you want to see how it is done check YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sz57fKCw5Hs

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
	toyi-toyi	a Southern African, high-stepping war dance, used at protests and rallies, like a march; the crowd surges along together; each individual moves independently of the others, yet at the same time synchronized https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQkWMekXeQ

22. The Conscript

MARGARET GOUGH (NEP)

Comment

This closely observed free verse poem is reminiscent of Emily Dickenson in the way a simple intimate observation carries a complex message.

Questions

1. The person observed by the speaker is well known to her. How can you tell?
2. The speaker is saddened by the change that has come over her subject with the passing of time. What has caused this change to take place?
3. What is the lesson that the subject of the poem has learned?
4. How do we know that the speaker approves the removal of a spider rather than killing it?
5. How does the title fit the poem?

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
title	Conscript	a person who is called to serve his or her country, but does not have a choice; a person who has enlisted compulsorily

PART 4 SONG SNIPPETS FROM WORLD WAR I AND II

Comment

The songs the soldiers sang in World War I are redolent of themes that are sentimental, cheering, sometimes ironic, and almost always sung to a marching tune. In their songs the soldiers remember home, they dream of sweethearts, a girl waiting for them at home, of places they associate with home. They make light of the dark times and bravely sing words of cheerful stoicism.

The songs are often gay and uplifting, which is ironic considering what the men experienced in the trenches. Candidates might look at some of the YouTube clips available.

23. Pack up your troubles

G AND F POWELL 1915 (NEP)

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
3	Lucifer	a match
3	fag	a cigarette

24. Keep the Home Fires Burning

IVOR NOVELLO 1914 (NEP)

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
title	Home fires	is a concept similar to the American association with 'apple pie'. Home fires is mentioned in Vernon Scannell's poem. It is a nostalgic cliché that provided troops with something to hope for as well as something to defend. Home fires suggest warmth, welcome and the comforts of home. It was an encouragement to wives and mothers to be ready to welcome their boys home.

Workshop Question

Discuss the extent to which the songs of war time support the propagandist's view.

25. The White Cliffs of Dover

VERA LYNN 1942 (NEP)

Comment

The sweetheart of the troops during World War 2 was Vera Lynn, later Dame Vera Lynn, who recently released an album, at age 100, a birthday she celebrated in March 2017.

Her rendition of *The White Cliffs of Dover* was popular long after World War 2 ended and continued to fill the hearts of English patriots with a warm nostalgic glow. The cliffs of Dover would have been the first sight

of England for all those soldiers rescued from the beaches of Dunkirk.

Discussion Question

An interesting topic to discuss as you progress through the anthology is: Fatherland vs. Motherland. Is there a difference in the connotations associated with each? Which nations speak of a Fatherland and which prefer to refer to a Motherland? Does this prove anything at all? Are there instances where both terms are used with regard to the country of birth?

PART 5 THE COLD WAR

"I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." - **Albert Einstein**

Comment

The Cold War saw an uneasy peace in Europe and further afield. Peace was maintained by treaties and constant vigilance. It is called The Cold War because although antagonists had agreed to control the development and use of their armaments, the race was on to own the greatest stockpile of nuclear weapons. Many felt strongly enough to protest the use of Nuclear Armaments. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) watched the borders. Einstein's words come from his sincere belief that the Nuclear Arms Race would kill the planet. The poets included in this section seem to agree.

26. Shalom Bomb

BERNARD KOPS (HL)

Comment

Shalom Bomb is a playful poem with an underlying ominous message.

A little later, in England, The Mersey Poets emerged as a voice commenting on The Cold War. In your anthology, these include Brian Patten and Roger McGough.

There are those who say that The Mersey Sound poetry of McGough, Patten and Henri would not have been noticed had it not been for the combined impetus of the famous four Liverpudlians: George, John, Paul and Ringo who made up the band The Beatles.

The Mersey Poets are playful and at the same time serious. It finds links with other underground poets like the Beat in America, paves the way for performance poetry, and indirectly, slam poetry.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
title	Shalom	the Hebrew word meaning Peace, used also as a greeting, either 'hello' or 'goodbye'.
33	One-man band	in the past a one-man band would walk the streets with his accordion, cymbals and mouthorgan accompanied by a little monkey who would carry a cup for passers-by to fill with spare change.
36	Om Mane Padme	Tibetan Buddhist mantra (prayer) for compassion
36	Tiddly [Om] Pom	"Tiddly Pom" is part of a refrain sung by Pooh Bear in one of his 'hums' signifying contentment - 'Om' has been added for fun and to connect the line with the Buddhist mantra.

Questions

1. What is the poet's intention?
2. Comment on the tone of the poem.

27. *Icarus Allsorts*

ROGER MCGOUGH (HL)

Comment

Roger McGough's *Icarus Allsorts* shows the poet's focus on nuclear war, the Pentagon, the environmentalist protestors, among other issues that made life in Western Europe seem so tenuous.

Questions

1. What is the purpose of the ironic and imaginary newspaper report that tags the poem, Icarus Allsorts?
2. Look up the story of Icarus and discuss the play on words in the title of the poem.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
15	“House”	an abbreviated way of saying The Bingo Hall
18	Raus	German, roughly translated means “Away from here”; often an order to move away quickly, “Get out!”
34	Toadstool	an allusion to the ‘mushroom’ cloud – but toadstools are poisonous.
45	CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
50	Vermont	a sparsely populated rural area in the United States

28. A Square Dance

ROGER MCGOUGH (HL)

Comment

In *A Square Dance* McGough shows that he is aware of the horrors of World War I trench warfare, its historical and geographical setting, and he is aware of words like ‘Hun’ for German, always used pejoratively. [Look up the word pejorative if you do not already know what it means.]

A Square Dance is particularly interesting. The reason for this is that the Mersey Poets were a product of the Sixties. [You may wish to listen to the Mersey Sound of the early Beatles on YouTube]. Their world view included the spectre of nuclear disaster; theirs was the age of teenage rebellion, pin ball wizards, the Beatles, the electric guitar, long hair and psychedelic drugs. You would be correct in assuming that they would write about love, and they did, or about the need for nuclear disarmament, which they did too.

Another interesting point about *A Square Dance* is the fact that it is written in rhyming couplets. The use of rhyming couplets in the past (the times of legend) was reserved for long, narrative verse about legends like Odysseus. The verse was grand and eloquent; the rhyme scheme was known as the **Heroic Couplet**, used extensively by Homer in the Iliad. Hundreds and hundreds (and hundreds) of years later, in the 18th Century, the couplet was used by Alexander Pope for the purpose of **Satire**, from then onwards referred to as **Mock Heroic**.

NOTE: Today the **MOCK-HEROIC COUPLET** is best used for satire because otherwise a rhyming couplet tends to make verse lightweight and silly. All you need do is refer to Roald Dahl's *Revolting Rhymes* OR Dr Seuss, and you will see.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
1	Flanders fields	the poppy fields of Belgium where most of the combat took place in World War 1
8	"Over the top"	the expression literally means to go over the top of the trench and run towards the enemies' trench, bayonets fixed, to engage in mortal hand to hand combat.

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
10	Mustard gas	a particularly nasty chemical that when released attacked the mucous membranes of eyes and lungs.
10	Quadrille	an 18 th Century dance explained in the picture and caption below
15	'dos-y-does'	a movement in the Square Dance
26	Hun	a rude name for Germans
28	Victor Sylvester	famous for his dance moves
29	Mortars	Short range, explosive shells that would be fired into the air, would travel in an arc and drop on the target.

The **SQUARE DANCE** is a dance designed for 4 couples, facing each other. The dance originated in Europe (France) and England and could be called a folk dance. It is like the quadrille, popular in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Pictured is an 18th Century representation of a quadrille. This kind of dance formed the basis of American square dancing.



Do si do is a corruption of a French word which means to turn your back on your partner. There are a number of different ways this word is spelled but the commonest are *do-si-do* and *dosado*.

Workshop Questions

1. A definition of satire is: the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other

topical issues. Some synonyms are: parody, burlesque, caricature, lampoon, skit, take-off, squib, travesty.

Discuss how any or all of these descriptors could be used to comment on Roger McGough's *A Square Dance*.

2. The question you should ask is: Why would a poet, whose attention is firmly focused on the problems of the Sixties, The Cold War, dominated by the fear of World War 3 and possible nuclear annihilation, concentrate his attention on another war so much earlier in history?

29. *Sleep Now*

BRIAN PATTEN (NEP)

Comment

The poem is a tribute to the memory of Wilfred Owen, whom the speaker invites to sleep now, perhaps suggesting that Owen would have been wandering around purgatory, unable to find rest because the things that troubled him were not resolved. As a tribute to Wilfred Owen the poem shows how conscious the young people of the sixties were about War and the poets who railed against war.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
16	Flack	a military defense used against aircraft; flack is shot into the air to deter aircraft from flying over cities.

PART 6 SONG SNIPPETS FROM THE VIETNAM AND COLD WAR ERA

30. *Where have all the flowers gone?*

PETE SEEGER (NEP)

Where have all the flowers gone is a protest song of the Vietnam War.

The song first came out in 1962, seven years before the Woodstock Music and Arts Festival in August 1969. It became associated with protests against the Vietnam War and may have inspired the themes and ideas explored by many Woodstock artists.

31. *Russians*

STING AND PETE SMITH (NEP)

In this song by Sting, the lyrics capture the sentiments of those living in Western Europe during the Cold War. One of the functions of NATO was to provide manpower to keep watch on Soviet nuclear activity on the other side of the iron curtain.

32. *19*

PAUL HARDCASTLE, WILLIAM COUTOURIE, JAMES MCCORD (NEP)

Paul Hardcastle's *19* refers to the average age of the soldiers who died in the Vietnam War.

PART 7 WAR AND PEACE IN SOUTH AFRICA: POETRY OF THE STRUGGLE

33. On Exhaustion over a Lack of Understanding

AMEERA CONRAD (NEP)

Questions

1. Look at the title of the poem. What is the cause of the “Lack of Understanding”?
2. Refer to lines three to six.
 - 2.1 Who is the poet referring to in these lines?
 - 2.2 What does this show about each group?
3. Look at lines twelve and thirteen. Why does the trauma of the past still haunt people today?
4. Refer to the last two lines. Is there irony in these lines?
5. The title of the Olympiad anthology is: “We will remember them.” How does this poem fit with this title?

34. Fire Works

croc E mooses (FAL)

Comment

croc E mooses is quite a character. You can find this poem set to guitar strumming, and performed by the poet, on YouTube. There is also an interesting interview by *SLP* in which he talks about his poetry and

creative process. The interview was published on February 24, 2016 by slipnet.co.za. One can also download his other works on mp3 for free.

Questions

1. Look at the title. The word “Works” can be used as a noun or a verb. Explain both meanings within the context of the poem.
2. What do the words “bubbling” and “boiling” suggest about the situation the poet has written about?
3. Refer to line fourteen. What is a “treelike” revolution?

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
1	Scatterlings	A person with no fixed home; a wanderer
3	Frenemies	A portmanteau of friend and enemies
28	Let’s huff let’s puff	A reference to the story “The Three Little Pigs”
29	babylon	A major city of ancient Mesopotamia founded in 2300 BC

35. Heritage Day (24/09/00)

ROSHILA NAIR (HL & FAL)

Questions

1. Look at the title.
 - 1.1 Why do South Africans celebrate Heritage Day?
 - 1.2 After studying the poem, say, with reason, whether or not the

title is fitting.

2. Look at the first two lines.
 - 2.1 What irony is held in these lines considering the title?
 - 2.2 Contrast the first line with the last four lines of this poem.
 - 2.3 What message is the poet trying to convey?
3. Write down words in lines three to seven which indicate that things are not quite what they should be.
4. Comment on the irony in line ten. (Hint: look at the title.)
5. Look at lines eleven and twelve.
 - 5.1 What does the bronze statue commemorate?
 - 5.2 Both the statue and the national holiday involve South Africa's past, but in different ways. Discuss.
 - 5.3 You may want to look up the fall of the Rhodes statue in 2015 and the subsequent defacement of other historical statues around South Africa during that time.
6. Look at lines thirteen and fourteen.
 - 6.1 Do you think that it is fitting to mention a "Muslim woman selling Chinese food"?
 - 6.2 Can you think of positive and negative messages that the poet is trying to convey with these lines?
7. Look at the last four lines.
 - 7.1 These lines contain a very painful story. Explain why the story is so painful.
 - 7.2 These lines bring up the question: is the struggle really (ever) over? What is your opinion?
8. Is it important to remember the past? You may want to draw two columns and come up with points for and against remembering the past.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
title	Heritage Day	A public holiday celebrated on 24 September
4	Dysfunctional	Not operating properly

36. an unforgiving poem

ROSHILA NAIR (NEP)

Questions

1. Look at the title. Look up the meaning of the word “unforgiving”.
2. Refer to lines four to seven. Line seven sums up that the old woman’s pain is still real even though her son was murdered “many years ago”. Look at these lines in the context of the theme: “we will remember them” and discuss both the importance of remembering and forgetting.
3. Look at the last two lines. What does the poet suggest about words and emotion?

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
2	epics	A long poetic composition usually catered upon a hero
5	recoil	A movement backwards, usually from some force or impact
12	barricade	Barrier, fence, obstruction

37. War Triptych: Silence, Glory, Love

GABEBA BADEROON (NEP)

Comment

For extra information, look up Baderoon’s highly insightful interview at <http://www.sentinelpoetry.org.uk/1205/interview.htm> which is in the *Sentinel Poetry (Online)*, the 37th 3rd Anniversary Issue, 2005.

Questions

- I. Refer to the whole first section of “War Triptych”.
 - I.1 Explain the scene set in this section.
 - I.2 How would you describe the mother’s state of mind? Write down words or phrases that support your statement.
2. Look at the second stanza. How does Mr Karim react to the news of his son?
3. Refer to the last section. Why would they tell their “stories of war like stories of love”?
4. Think of this poem in the context of the far-reaching effects of war. Can you come up with ways in which war affects people, places, the economy and so on?

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
6	Washer of bodies	In Muslim culture it is common practice to wash the body of a deceased person. It is also common to have professional body washers
II.	(heading) Intifada	The Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
19	Solace	Comfort or consolation in a time of great distress

38. Remember

DON MATTERA (HL & FAL)

Questions

1. Refer to the title. The poet has used one word in his title. What does this suggest about the poem?
2. Look at the first line. What does this line suggest about the poet's belief?
3. Refer to lines four to nine.
 - 3.1 Describe the poet's desire held within these lines.
 - 3.2 Is the poet's vision realistic? Why or why not?
4. Describe what the poet means in lines ten to twelve.
5. Refer to the last stanza.
 - 5.1 Which words suggest that unrest has been happening over a long period of time?
 - 5.2 When, does the poet say, will his soul rest?
6. What is the tone of this poem?

39. In Memoriam Fallen Patriots

MZI MAHOLA (HL & FAL)

Comment

The words of this poem appear on a memorial erected in New Brighton to commemorate those comrades who died in the course of the struggle.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
27	New Brighton Station	a stop on the line between Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage where protesters fell, shot by the police; in his autobiographical novel, Mahola remembers being pursued by special branch policemen in New Brighton.
31	Maduna Street	Mentioned in the Truth Commission: Human Right' Violations Hearings if you would like to do further research. There was an SADF presence, hippo and helicopter; people were fired upon for about an hour and many were killed.
32	Northern Areas	a part of Port Elizabeth where there is a lot of violence.
37	Sanlam Building	Steve Biko met his death at the hands of police in room 619 of the Sanlam Building in Port Elizabeth.
39	Nkomati	an accord that marked a milestone in the movement towards democracy. However many died horribly, necklaced for suspected support of the enemy.

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
40	St George's Strand	an Apartheid beach in Port Elizabeth, reserved for the use of black people.
41	Post Chalmers	is an outlying police station near Cradock where activists were detained and tortured by the Special Branch.

Questions

1. Why does the poet mention all these places?
2. Is this poem an appropriate memorial to the fallen in the struggle for freedom? Discuss.
3. TYPICAL ESSAY QUESTION: Compare Mzi Mahola's poem with Lawrence Binyon's *For the Fallen*, and Siegfried Sassoon's *On Passing the New Menin Gate*. Discuss the similarities in intention and content.

40. Where are they?

MZI MAHOLA (NEP)

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
	Amabutho	a proud youthful army of men and women, originally Ndebele, steeped in culture and having a strong moral code; the poet asks where these people have gone and suggests that they are needed now.
	Canaan	the Promised Land. The land of 'milk and honey' promised to the Israelites in the Old Testament.

Question

Discuss Mzi Mahola's reasons for writing this poem. To whom is he addressing his question and why?

41. Everything has changed (except graves)

MZI MAHOLA (NEP)

Comment

In this poem the speaker tells a story of a return visit to his old school in Lushington, where the poet spent his boyhood. During the latter part of the struggle for freedom and democracy many schools were vandalised or completely destroyed.

Questions

1. Besides his old school, where else does the speaker go in Lushington, and what does he see there? Do his observations accurately reflect the issues of race and culture mentioned in the poem?
2. Comment on the speaker's attitude to change.

42. Battle songs of the King Tshaka

TRADITIONAL (HL & FAL)

Comment

Shaka Zulu's army is still considered one of the strongest armies of all time. For enrichment you may want to do some research on Shaka Zulu's army, tactics and other traditional war songs.

Questions

1. Why do armies have battle songs?
2. Refer to the first stanza.
 - 2.1 What is the tone of the first stanza?
 - 2.2 What does this stanza indicate about the Zulu warriors?
3. Look at the second stanza. How would you describe the army as a whole?
4. Refer to the third stanza. This stanza speaks of vigilante activity as Qolwane is accused of lying and hating his fellow men. The army has set out to seek vengeance for his actions. Do you agree with vigilante activity in today's times?
5. Look at the last stanza. This stanza continues to name Qolwane's crimes. What effect, do you think, does this have on the soldiers?
6. Do you think that this is a good war song? Give a reason for your answer.

43. Lament for a Warrior

TRADITIONAL SOTHO (HL & FAL)

Comment

A traditional Sotho dirge. For enrichment you may want to look up traditional Sotho funeral rites.

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
last line	Weatherbeaten	Damaged or worn by exposure to the weather

Questions

1. Look at the title.
 - 1.1 Look up the word “lament”. What are its synonyms? What are its connotations?
 - 1.2 Why has the word “warrior” been used instead of “soldier”?
2. Refer to the first stanza.
 - 2.1 How does the sister of the deceased feel about her brother’s death?
 - 2.2 Are her feelings justified?
 - 2.3 The brother is referred to as “mother’s son” and “our child”. What does this suggest about the sister’s view of her brother?
 - 2.4 The last two lines contain a sad wish. Explain what it is.
3. Look at the second stanza.
 - 3.1 Do you think that there is beauty in the lament of the sister and a chorus of women?
 - 3.2 Lines seven to ten contain a hope for the brother’s soul. What is it?
 - 3.3 Which line indicates that the brother is not the only one to have died?
 - 3.4 Refer to the last three lines. Why are the women doubly sad?
 - 3.5 Discuss the effectiveness of image of the “earth’s womb”.

44. Leader Remember

GCINA MHLOPHE (HL & FAL)

Questions

1. The poet addresses the “Leader”. In all likelihood, who is the Leader?
2. Refer to the first stanza.

- 2.1 Which line indicates that the Leader is selfless?
 - 2.2 Line five makes reference to the childhood game “Hide and Seek”. What statement is the poet making about the “oppressor man” and his interaction with the Leader?
 - 2.3 The poet refers to the Leader getting caught and being thrown in jail. What does this suggest about his capture?
 - 2.4 Write down two words which indicate the malevolence of the “oppressor man”.
3. Refer to the second stanza.
- 3.1 Mhlophe has written about the Leader’s spirit. Draw up a list of the qualities of his spirit.
 - 3.2 Write down two lines which describe the conditions in the prison.
 - 3.3 After rereading this stanza, describe how the poet feels about the Leader.
4. Look at the third stanza.
- 4.1 This stanza changes scenes to the heart of Africa. Why, do you think, did the poet do this?
 - 4.2 This stanza contains “the timeless message of all freedom fighters”. To which other poems in this anthology does this message apply?
5. Refer to the fourth stanza.
- 5.1 This stanza speaks of the Leader’s release from prison. Make a list of the emotions that the Leader experiences.
 - 5.2 Explain the simile in lines forty and forty-one: “The joy that washed over you / Like bucketfuls of honey”. Why is this simile effective?
 - 5.3 Which three lines indicate regret and disappointment? Why is this disappointment present?
 - 5.4 The last four lines of this stanza reflect what Nelson Mandela once said: “It always seems impossible until it’s done.” Refer to your knowledge or look up everything Mandela had to do to achieve his “mammoth task”.

6. Look at stanza five.
 - 6.1 Lines fifty-one to fifty-four speak of the hardships that people had to endure. Explain the painful irony that the poet reveals: “In the land of plenty” (line fifty-five).
 - 6.2 Look at line sixty. What historical “crossroad” did South Africa face in the early nineties?
 - 6.3 Make a list of obstacles mentioned in this stanza that the Leader has to face to achieve his dream.

7. Refer to the last stanza.
 - 7.1 The poet wishes that the Leader will be blessed with all the best qualities. Make a list of these qualities.
 - 7.2 The last line delivers a chilling message which is echoed throughout the anthology. Do you agree that the fight is never over?
 - 7.3 Are we fighting anything today as teenagers, South Africans, Global Citizens?

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
18	immeasurable	Too large, extensive or extreme to measure
46	mammoth	Huge
75	Equatorial	At or near the equator

45. A Brighter Dawn for African Women

GCINA MHLOPHE (NEP)

Questions

- I. Look at the title. Why is this poem specifically about “African Women”?

2. Refer to the first stanza.
 - 2.1 The poet mentions all the hardships that African women had to endure.
 - 2.2 Which of these hardships are still a burden to women in Africa today?
3. Refer to stanza two. The word “but” often indicates a change in tone or topic. The poet mentions the admirable qualities of African women despite their hardships. Make a list of these qualities that are mentioned in this stanza.
4. Look at the last stanza. In this stanza, African women are praised for being nurturers and unsung heroes. List all the positive actions of these women.

46. a young man's thoughts before june the 16th

FHAZEL JOHENNESSE (HL & FAL)

Comment

What do you know about June 16th?

Discuss what you know in your workshops and then think what your feelings would be if you were the young man thinking about the next day on the eve of June 16th 1976. Here are some words that might describe the feelings of the young man writing this poem: Introspective, searching, depressed, fearful, having a sense of foreboding.

Questions

1. Why would the poet write this poem? What was the poet's age at the time? Is it likely that he might have experienced the 1976 Soweto protest first hand? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Discuss the evidence you can find to suggest that the speaker believed he might die the next day. Comment on your findings
3. The motif of colour is used evocatively. Discuss the last line for all its symbolic suggestions.
4. TYPICAL ESSAY QUESTION: Compare the last two lines of *a young man's thoughts before june 16th* and *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. Discuss the poignancy of the "loxion": setting of this poem and compare it to the funereal setting suggested in *Anthem for Doomed Youth*.

NOTE 1: Loxion (*pron.* \lock-shion\) township slang meaning 'the township' from the English word 'location'

47. Ofay-Watcher Looks Back

MONGANE WALLY SEROTE (NEP)

Comment

"Ofay" is a derogatory term for a white person and dates back to the 19th Century, US.

Questions

1. Is it possible to determine who the speaker is in this poem? Is the watcher a black person watching what white people do and say? Is the watcher a racist white person looking back over the apartheid period? Discuss the evidence that helps the reader to identify the persona.
2. The tone seems coldly objective, but is it possible for a Black poet of this period to be detached?

Glossary

Line	Word/Phrase	Description
	Ofay	sometimes spelled 'offay' is pig latin for foe (enemy). What the speaker does is remove the first consonant, place it after the rest of the word and add -ay. Thus "Meet at ten in town" would be "Eetmay atay entay in-ay owntay". It is also likely that the poet intended a pun on the French expression, <i>au fait</i> , sometimes incorrectly spelled ofay by those not <i>au fait</i> with the French. <i>Au fait</i> means to be familiar with something.

PART 8 SONG SNIPPETS FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S STRUGGLE ERA

Comment

ALL SONG SNIPPETS ARE NOT FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES (NEP). The extracts from song lyrics that appear in this section of the anthology touch on a variety of human experiences: faith and the belief that a higher being can influence the outcome; the effects of conflict on women and children and consequently, domestic life; distance and separation with the sea appearing as a common element; the return of loved ones or the consequence of a grave for those who do not; loneliness, isolation and confinement; conflict and prejudice.

Workshop Questions & Activities

1. Do you think that the South African struggle for democracy has been uniquely different from the other wars and conflicts covered in this anthology?
 - 1.1 Outline what you think are some of the common elements
 - 1.2 Outline what you think makes the South African struggle unique
 - 1.3 Draw examples for your responses from some of the poems you have read or studied in the anthology.
2. Pick one or two songs and find the full lyrics and tunes on the internet and YouTube. Sing and dance to them with your study group, family or friends to bring them to life and to add texture to your studies.
3. How has your reading of the various parts of this anthology affected the way you think about struggles for freedom, war and peace?

LANGUAGE GUIDE

Section C: The Language of Propaganda

One of the weapons of war is **propaganda**.

What is propaganda?

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines propaganda as ‘an association or scheme for propagating a doctrine or practice’, and the word takes its origin from the Latin *propagare* which means the gardener’s practice of pinning the fresh shoots of a plant into the earth in order to reproduce new plants which will later take on a life of their own. Therefore one implication of the term when it was first used in the sociological sense by the Roman Catholic Church was that the spread of ideas brought about in this way is not one that would take place of itself, but rather a cultivated or artificial generation.

In the year 1633, Pope Urban VIII established the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, otherwise known as ‘The Congregation of Propaganda’ or simply ‘The Propaganda’, a committee of cardinals which had, and still has, the charge of foreign missions of the Church. Naturally this was regarded as a beneficent process which by preaching and example attempted to lead the ‘heathen’ from darkness into light and it was an artificial or cultivated one only in the sense that, without outside intervention, ‘these people’, would never have learnt about Christianity.

Within the 20th Century, however, the popular image of propaganda has undergone radical changes and the word has come to acquire overtones implying a process which is frequently sinister, lying and based on the deliberate attempt on the part of an individual or group to manipulate, often by concealed or underhand means, the minds of others for their own ulterior ends. Superficially, this change can be dated from the official use of propaganda as a weapon in the total warfare of modern times, beginning with the First World War, when

lies, political subterfuge, and atrocity stories were unscrupulously used to influence the final result.

Today we are far more aware of the real aims and methods of propaganda. For example, we now realise that the propagandist is not always doing anything as clear-cut as attempting to spread a specific doctrine or practice; for quite often, as in war propaganda, he is merely trying to arouse strong emotions of hatred or approval for or against another group from motives of expediency, strategy, or plain greed. Furthermore, the method of the propagandist, whether his aim is to spread a definite doctrine or to arouse emotions, is irrational and emotive: the propagandist does not engage in genuine argument because his answers are determined in advance; he sets about subtly playing on the emotions so that his readers/listeners will accept his doctrine or feel the emotions he wishes them to feel. (Adapted from JAC Brown: *Techniques of Persuasion* 1963)

To digest the above, we suggest you do the following:

1. Make a numbered point-form summary of the first three paragraphs. Your summary should clearly show the shifts in the meaning of the word 'propaganda'
2. By using the information in paragraph 3, clearly define the modern meaning of the word in your own words. Include in your definition both the *aims* and the *methods* of modern propaganda.

It is not always easy to differentiate between ordinary persuasive speech and propaganda – and argument, for that sake. The following table gives a useful guide:

Argument, Persuasion, or Propaganda?

	Argument	Persuasion	Propaganda
Goal	Discovering the 'truth'	Promote an opinion on a particular position that is rooted in truth	Offer 'political advertising' for a particular position that may distort the truth or include false information
General Technique	Offers good reasoning and evidence to persuade an audience to accept a 'truth'	Uses personal, emotional or moral appeal to convince an audience to adopt a particular point of view	Relies on emotions and values to persuade an audience to accept a particular position
Methods	<p>Considers other perspectives on the issue</p> <p>Offers facts that support the reasons (in other words, provides evidence</p>	<p>May consider other perspectives on the issue</p> <p>Blends facts and emotions to make its case, relying often on opinion</p>	<p>Focuses on its own message, without considering other positions</p> <p>Relies on biases and assumptions and may distort or alter evidence to make the case</p>

(Adapted from: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson829/Argument-Propaganda.pdf : may be reproduced for educational purposes)

TEST YOURSELF! Which of the following would you label as argument, persuasion or propaganda? Why?

- A: Alcohol is a killer!
- B: Alcohol may be enjoyable, but it affects the health of the user because of its impact on the liver.
- C: Don't drink alcohol. It has a terrible effect on the liver, which is very bad for your health.

At times, though, it is not always easy to distinguish between persuasion and propaganda. In the end, it often boils down to regarding 'our' people as using persuasive speech and 'their' people as propagandists. So if one looks at people such as Hitler, Churchill and Mandela, those who support them regard them as great orators; those who oppose them see them as propagandists.

General techniques of propaganda

Some of the general techniques mentioned by JAC Brown and others are as follows:

1. THE USE OF STEREOTYPES

It is a natural tendency to 'type' people, and in time this picture may become a fixed impression almost impervious to real experience. A stereotype can be defined as 'a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing'. Typical stereotypes include women, black people, capitalists, communists: in each case, the members of the group are viewed not as unique individuals but in terms of a set of general characteristics. Linked to this is the use of labels to describe these people.

2. PINPOINTING THE ENEMY

It is helpful if the propagandist can put forth a message which is not only *for* something, but also *against* some real or imagined enemy who is supposedly frustrating the will of his audience. Hitler's targeting of Jews is a classic example. Who or what is blamed for problems in South Africa at present?

3. SELECTION / SLANTING

The propagandist, out of a mass of complex facts, selects only those that are suitable for his/her purpose and ignores those that don't. Facts are deliberately selected and distorted to depict the best picture of the membership group and the worst picture of the opposition group.

4. PRESENTING OPINIONS AS FACTS

The propagandist will make bold assertions as if they are facts but are in fact opinions.

5. APPEALS TO THE EMOTIONS

As Brown indicates above, propaganda appeals to the emotions rather than relying on reasoning.

6. USE OF EUPHEMISM

Euphemism (*eu* + *pheme* = good speech, in Greek) is defined as 'an inoffensive or indirect expression that is substituted for one that is considered offensive or too harsh.' It can serve positive purposes, but it is also used to obscure meaning. George Orwell (author of *1984* and *Animal Farm*, which contain excellent examples of propaganda) believed that political propaganda in defence of the indefensible sets out to blur meaning rather than to express clear thoughts. 'Thus,' he says, 'political language has to consist of largely euphemism, question-begging and sheer vagueness.'

7. DISINFORMATION

Propagandists mix the truth, half-truths and blatant lies so skilfully that the target audience cannot identify lies or half-truths. Disinformation starts off containing elements of truth, but half-truths and lies take over gradually. Today lies are called 'alternative facts' or 'fake news'.

8. REPETITION

The propagandist is confident that, if he/she repeats a statement often enough, it will in time come to be accepted as the truth.

9. SLOGANS

Related to repetition is the use of slogans which are often chanted

over and over. A group adopts certain slogans. At mass meetings these are repeated often as a sign of commitment to the policies of the group. The interesting thing is that, when the slogans are uttered, rational thinking gives way to blind adherence. Think of some current slogans in the South African context.

Linguistic aspects

1. USING 'SNARL WORDS' AND 'PURR WORDS'

Words have two types of meaning – denotation (roughly speaking, the dictionary meaning) and connotation (the feelings or 'connotations' which the word conveys in addition to its dictionary meaning). Connotations may be neutral, positive or negative.

As the names imply, 'snarl' words are words with unfavourable connotations and 'purr' words are words with favourable connotations. In persuasive language and propaganda, the speaker uses snarl words for the enemy or that which he wishes to attack and purr words for his own people or that which he wishes to defend. Can you think of some snarl words and purr words?

2. USE OF METAPHOR

This is often used to dramatise, to demonise and to evoke emotive reactions.

3. USING STRIKING SENTENCE STRUCTURES

This includes the following:

- Short sentences
- Balanced syntactic structures
- Repeated structures
- Rhetorical questions
- Repetition of sentence structures

TEST YOURSELF!

1. The following are all statements of fact. Rewrite them so that they express an opinion. For example: *Toby weighs 95 kilograms.* – *Toby is fat.*

A: The politician bought a car for R1m.

Section C: Language Section

- B:** The temperature today was 43C.
- C:** The mountain is over 40 000 metres high.
- D:** He was travelling at 150 kph.

2. Compare the following two versions of the same issue:
 - A:** Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no more than they can carry.
 - B:** The government has engaged in a transfer of population.

What propaganda technique do we see at play in **B**?

3. Read the following speech by Winston Churchill (13 May 1940) and list as many snarl words and purr words as you can find:

You ask, what is our policy? I will say: It is to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us; to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark and lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: victory; victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival. Let that be realized; no survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages, that mankind will move forward towards its goal. But I take up my task with buoyancy and hope. I feel sure that our cause will not be suffered to fail among men. At this time I feel entitled to claim the aid of all, and I say, "Come then, let us go forward together with our united strength."

4. Find examples of (a) rhetorical questions; (b) balanced syntactic structures; (c) repetition in Churchill's speech in 3 above.

5. Below is a copy of a speech delivered at a public meeting. Show how the speaker uses many of the typical techniques of propaganda in his speech:

My dear fellow-smokers

One of the most appalling examples of selfishness I have had the misfortune to witness in the past few years is that of the non-smoker. There is, to my mind, no greater bigot than this man or woman who self-righteously calls upon the authorities to ban smoking in every conceivable nook and cranny.

First it was our cinemas, then it was the aeroplanes and it is our restaurants and heavens-knows-what next! Has it ever occurred to these little tyrants that they are in fact calling for a restriction of the freedom of other individuals? Has it ever occurred to these petty despots that they are indulging in a selfishness of the highest order?

They argue, of course, that smoking damages people's lungs. What about my grandfather? He lived to the age of 90 and smoked from the age of twelve.

My smoking friends, we must unite to fight this onslaught on our civil liberty. Let us therefore brace ourselves against this needless tyranny so that all the inhabitants of this country may march into the future with the assurance that they will continue to enjoy the rights to which they are legally and, indeed, morally entitled. Let us proceed bearing the banner: 'Bigots must fall!'

POST SCRIPT

It might be interesting to research, as I did, the names and dates of wars throughout the ages. In the years after 1945 to the present day there has been no time that the world has been at peace.

You might also like to view some movies to give you a sense of a combat situation. I recommend the first 20 minutes of *Saving Private Ryan* which shows the Normandy landings, and the movie *Dunkirk*, quite recently on the movie circuit, that captures the brutality and the nobility of war in a very poignant way.

My personal recommended reading list of books I enjoyed while compiling the anthology and study guide are: *Regeneration* by Pat Barker; *Goodbye to All That* by Robert Graves; *Ordinary Heroes* (a 'whodunit' style novel) by Scott Turow; *A Higher Call* by Adam Makos with Larry Alexander; an account on the internet of J.D. Salinger's experiences in the liberation of Death Camps in Germany; and numerous anthologies of poetry.

We were sad not to include more than a song snippet from the Vietnam War Era, but when you consider how many other wars were left out you will realise that Vietnam was a drop in the ocean.

In closing, it gives me pleasure to mention gratefully, co-examiners Dr Malcolm Venter and Ms Yvette Morgan, also Academic Co-ordinator, Dr Di Ayliff, who contributed so generously to this study guide, and Ms Louisa Clayton whose remarkable compiling and editing skills have proven invaluable in bringing out this Study Guide and Anthology. Louisa is truly our *sine qua non*.

Please refer to the Website for suggested answers to the questions. Do remember that these answers are not the last word in wisdom; the questions are there to stimulate discussion.

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2018 English Olympiad Study Guide

A practical guide to the anthology
We Will Remember Them,
an exploration of local and
international poetry on
war and peace.

