conflict
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Preparing for Unit 2 Section A: Conflict Poetry

You have studied 15 conflict poems from the Anthology. There will be a choice of two questions on these poems (question 5 or 6 on the exam paper). You need to answer one question, spending 45 minutes on this section.

The question will name one of the poems you have studied. You are expected to choose a second poem from the other conflict poems you have studied. Your answer will be assessed for AO1 (interpretation), AO2 (analysis) and AO3 (comparisons).

According to the mark-scheme, a top band response will show:-
 an insightful understanding of the task and the text

Does your answer actually focus on the exam question?

DO NOT SIMPLY RETELL THE STORY OF THE POEM

Close analysis of detail to support opinions
Is your analysis based on examples from the poems?

Analysis of the writer’s use of language/structure/form and its effect on the reader
Have you written in PEA paragraphs? (point, evidence, analyse)
Do you use literary terms?
Do you comment on the poets’ intentions?
Do you comment on the effect on the reader?

An evaluative selection of a range of comparative details

Do you use connectives to show the links between the two poems?
Do you draw out similarities and differences?
Have you commented on how they are linked thematically as well as linguistically or structurally? GCSE English Literature - Poetry Revision
## APPROACHING THE ESSAY

### Student Friendly Mark Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>What you have written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A*    | - Explores several interpretations or meanings in detail  
      | - Provides carefully chosen and well integrated quotes to back up ideas  
      | - Compares the poems thoughtfully and in detail, using plenty of evidence  
      | - Looks closely at how language, form and structure affect the reader with well-chosen examples  
      | - Gives detailed and imaginative ideas about themes, attitudes, attitudes and feelings  
      | - Considers the evidence to come up with conclusions about the poem |
| A     | - Gives several interpretations or meanings  
      | - Provides well-chosen quotes to support ideas  
      | - Compares the poems in detail and provides plenty of evidence  
      | - Describes how language, form and structure affect the reader, using examples |
| B     | - Thoughtful interpretation of the poems  
      | - Supports interpretations with quotes from the text  
      | - Provides some well-chosen evidence to support comparisons between the poems  
      | - Gives several examples of how language, form and structure affect the reader  
      | - Provides some evidence to support ideas about themes, attitude and feelings |
| C     | - Comments on several aspects of the poem, e.g., mood, language, feelings, and uses quotes to back comments up (PEA)  
      | - Makes several comparisons between the poems  
      | - Explains how language, from and structure affect the reader  
      | - Makes valid comments about themes, attitudes or feelings in the poems |

You will also be marked on your spelling, punctuation and grammar and on how you present your work. To get the best marks your essay should be clearly organised into well-structured paragraphs.
Improving your writing technique

Connectives for making comparisons
You need to ensure you compare the texts in focus. As you know, this basically means identifying points of similarity and contrast. You will need to draw upon the following comparison connectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity connectives</th>
<th>Contrast connectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equally</td>
<td>In contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the same way</td>
<td>However</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarly</td>
<td>Whereas (best used in the middle of a sentence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likewise</td>
<td>On the other hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just as ... also</td>
<td>Conversely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The best answers will blend the subtleties of similarity and contrast (whilst both poems highlight … in one this is achieved through a series of striking images, whereas in the other, alliteration is used to evoke … etc. etc.)

The best comparisons deal with the way poems are written and keep returning to the key words of the question.

But how do you make sure your answer is analytical?

These words and phrases encourage you to make your point analytical:

- Suggests
- implies
- gives us the impression that
- shows
- highlights
- indicates

If you want to make the same point using a different example, use

- furthers
- emphasises
- reinforces
APPROACHING THE ESSAY

Your essay needs to be easy to follow and understand!

You might ask: how can I present my work, so that it is easy to follow and understand?

The answer to that question is simple: plan your essay before you begin to write it! Although, as with most things in life, there is always more than one way to create a plan. It is up to you to find out the best method for you.

A sample plan to question 1 in the task bank

1. Compare how the consequences of a conflict are shown in Futility and one other poem. (Using Mametz Wood for comparison)

Before you start underline/highlight the key words/phrases

1. Introduction
   - Poem 1 – world war 1 poet’s comrade mortally wounded
   - Poem 2 – unearthed long forgotten remains also from WW 1 (starting to compare)

2. Language comparison
   - Poem 1 – imagery showing care and compassion – ‘kind’ (jot down useful qotes)
   - Poem 2 – imagery showing loss, futility, emptiness, fragility – ‘wasted’, ‘broken bird’s egg’

3. Form and structure comparison
   - Poem 1 – partial rhymes, similar to a sonnet, specific to general observations
   - Poem 2 – no regular rhyme scheme, short 3-line stanzas, clear statements

4. Wider issues: writer’s ideas, themes, attitudes and feelings
   - Explores futility of war through death of comrades
   - Reconnects with past through rediscovery of lost war graves

5. Summary – comparing – start off with ‘both these poems...’
# Approaching The Essay

## A sample plan for question 5 in the task bank

**Introduction:**

Viewing the world from individual or different viewpoints. Contrasting perspectives of the poems.

**Feelings and attitudes:**
- Poem 1: selfishness/self importance
- Poem 2: confusion about stranger – hostile or friendly

**Language:**
- Poem 1: powerful and confident
- Poem 2: tentative, uncertain – describes on thing in several ways –

**Structure and form:**
- Poem 1: repetition emphasises hawk’s self importance
- Poem 2: repetition emphasises their importance in the poem

**Wider issues:**
- Poem 1: no resolution because of single-mindedness
- Poem 2: openness to other p.o.v leads to resolution

**What do both writers want us to learn?**

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## A sample plan for question 19 in the task bank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poem 1 – C. of L Brigade</th>
<th>Poem 2 - Out of The Blue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes towards death</strong></td>
<td>‘Theirs not to reason why’</td>
<td>‘the white of surrender is not yet flying’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language – repetition</strong></td>
<td>‘half a league, half a league’</td>
<td>‘I am waving, waving’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes towards the character</strong></td>
<td>‘noble six hundred’</td>
<td>‘does anyone see a soul worth saving?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes towards conflict</strong></td>
<td>praises the soldiers</td>
<td>Sympathy for the victims</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You also need to remember to consider structure and form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Structure and form</strong></th>
<th>Chronological order - builds momentum and sound of horses To focus on the troops</th>
<th>Final four stanzas add urgency to focus on the desperation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
CONFLICT POETRY EXAMINER’S QUESTIONS

1. Compare how the consequences of a conflict are shown in Futility and one other poem.

2. Compare how conflict is presented in The Charge of the Light Brigade and one other poem.

3. Compare how the consequences of conflict are presented in Mametz Wood and one other poem.

4. Compare how the poets express their opinions about war in Mametz Wood and one other poem.

5. Compare how the poets present ideas about conflict from different perspectives in Hawk Roosting and one other poem.

6. Compare how attitudes to conflict are shown in The Charge of the Light Brigade and one other poem.

7. Compare how attitudes to war are presented in next to of course god america i and one other poem.

8. Compare the ideas and attitudes shown to war in The Yellow Palm and one other poem.

9. Compare how divisions in society are presented in At the Border, 1979 and one other poem.

10. Compare how individual experiences are conveyed in Poppies and one other poem.

11. Compare how feelings of helplessness are presented in Out of the Blue and one other poem.

12. Compare how patriotism is presented in next to of course god america i and one other poem.

13. Compare how individual experiences of conflict are explored in Bayonet Charge and one other poem.

14. Compare how the reality of battles is presented in Bayonet Charge and one other poem.

15. Compare how poets use natural images in Hawk Roosting and one other poem.

16. Compare how the causes of conflict are presented in next to of course god america i and one other poem.

17. Compare how the effects of conflict are presented in Out of the Blue and one other poem.

18. Compare how poets use form to effect in Belfast Confetti and one other poem.

19. Compare how conflict is presented in The Charge of the Light Brigade and one other poem.
Conflict Poems Revision Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POEM</th>
<th>WHAT THE POEM IS ABOUT</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>ATTITUDES TO CONFLICT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flag</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>John Agard</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Out of the Blue</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Simon Armitage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mametz Wood</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Owen Sheers</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Yellow Palm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Minhinnick</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Right Word</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imtiaz Dharker</td>
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<tr>
<td>At the Border, 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choman Hardi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belfast Confetti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ciaran Carson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poppies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Weir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>POEM</td>
<td>WHAT THE POEM IS ABOUT</td>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>ATTITUDES TO CONFLICT</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Futility</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Wilfred Owen</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Charge of the Light Brigade</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Alfred Tennyson</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bayonet Charge</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Ted Hughes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Falling Leaves</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Margaret Postgate Cole</em></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Come on, come back’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Stevie Smith</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>next to of course god america i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>e.e cummings</em></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawk Roosting</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ted Hughes</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Preparing for Unit 2 Section B: Unseen poetry

In this question, you have 30 minutes to read, understand and analyse an unseen poem.

Spend at least 5 minutes reading and annotating the poem, looking out for the following:

- What the poem is about
- Language features
- Structural devices
- Title
- Mood

Your answer will be assessed for AO1 (interpretation) and AO2 (analysis).

Make sure you are using poetic literary terms and writing in PEE paragraphs.
Template for approaching the unseen poetry

You may want to use this template to help plan your response to a poem. Your objective is to answer the question set with an informed personal response – interpretation supported by evidence from the poem.

<p>| Poem Title: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes and quotes for analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mood, voice and persona</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Note the mood (emotional tone).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Does this develop?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Note the voice. Is the poet writing in a particular tone of voice – e.g. ironic, humorous?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Is the poet writing as if a particular character (e.g. )?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Story and Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Does the poem tell a story? If so, what is it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If not, what is its structure?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(How does it develop in terms of ideas and form?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What themes does the poem explore through its subject and use of language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language in detail</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Interesting word choices that add to the meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sound effects</strong> – rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look closely at how these ‘musical’ aspects of the poem tie in with the others and affect meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal response</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express your own thoughts and feelings about the poem and evaluate its success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
November Night

1  The night tinkles like ice in glasses.
   Leaves are glued to the pavement with frost.
   The brown air fumes at the shop windows,
   Tries the door, and sidles past.

5  I gulp down winter raw. The heady
   Darkness swirls with tenements.
   In a brown fuzz of cottonwool
   Lamps fade up crags, die into pits.

   Frost in my lungs is harsh as leaves

10  Scraped up on paths. - I look up, there,
    A high roof sails, at the mast-head
    Fluttering a grey and ragged star.

    The world’s a bear shrugged in his den.
    It’s snug and close in the snoring night.

15  And outside like chrysanthemums
    The fog unfolds its bitter scent.

NORMAN MACCAIG

What is the speaker saying about this specific night November?

How does the poet present these feelings?
In Oak Terrace

Old and alone, she sits at nights,
Nodding before the television.
The house is quiet now. She knits,
rises to put the kettle on,

watches a cowboy’s killing, reads
the local Births and Deaths, and falls
asleep at ‘Growing stock-piles of war-heads’.
A world that threatens worse ills

fades. She dreams of life spent
in the one house: suffers again
poverty, sickness, abandonment,
a child’s death, a brother’s brain

melting to madness. Seventy years
of common trouble; the kettle sings.

At midnight she says her silly prayers,
And takes her teeth out, and collects her night-things.

TONY CONNOR

How does the speaker feel about old age?

How does the poet present the speaker’s feelings?
Names

She was Eliza for a few weeks
when she was a baby –
Eliza Lily. Soon it changed to Lil.

Later she was Miss Steward in the baker’s shop
And then ‘my love’, ‘my darling’, Mother.

Widowed at thirty, she went back to work
As Mrs Hand. Her daughter grew up,
Married and gave birth.

Now she was Nanna. ‘Everybody
Calls me Nanna,’ she would say to visitors.
And so they did – friends, tradesmen, the doctor.

In the geriatric ward
They used the patients’ Christian names.
‘Lil,’ we said, ‘or Nanna,’
But it wasn’t in her file
And for those last bewildered weeks
She was Eliza once again.

WENDY COPE

How does the speaker feel about the importance of names during a lifetime?

How does the poet present these feelings?
Impressions of a New Boy

This school is huge – I hate it!
Please take me home.
Steep stairs cut in stone,
Peeling ceiling far too high,
The Head said ‘Wait’ so I wait alone,
Alone though Mum stands here, close by.
The voice is loud – I hate it!
Please take me home.

‘Come. Sit. What is your name?’
Trembling lips. The words won’t come.
The head says ‘Speak’, but my cheeks flame,
I hear him give a quiet sigh.
The room is full – I hate it
Please take me home.

A sea of faces stare at me.
My desk is much too small.
Its wooden ridge rubs my knee,
But the Head said ‘Sit’ so though I’m tall
I know that I must try.
The yard is full – I hate it.
Please take me home.
Bodies jostle me away,
Pressing me against the wall.

Then one boy says, ‘Want to play?’
The boy says, ‘Catch’ and throws a ball
And playtime seems to fly.
This school is great - I love it.

MARIAN COLLIHOLE

How does the speaker feel about his first day at secondary school?

How does the poet present these feelings?
On The Train

1 Cradled through England between flooded fields
rocking, rocking the rails, my head-phones on,
the black box of my Walkman on the table.
Hot tea trembles in its plastic cup.

5 I'm thinking of you waking in our bed
thinking of me on the train. Too soon to phone.

The radio speaks in the suburbs, in commuter towns,
in cars unloading children at school gates,
is silenced in dark parkways down the line

10 before locks click and footprints track the frost
and trains slide out of stations in the dawn
dreaming their way towards the blazing bone-ship.

The vodaphone you are calling
may have been switched off.

15 Please call later. And calling later,
calling later their phones ring in the rubble
and in the rubble of suburban kitchens
the wolves howl into silent telephones.

I phone. No answer. Where are you now?

20 The train moves homeward through the morning
Tonight I'll be home safe, but talk to me, please.
Pick up the phone. Today I'm tolerant
of mobiles. Let them say it. I'll say it too.
Darling, I'm on the train.

How does the speaker feel on the journey home?

How does he poet present these feelings?
I've made out a will; I'm leaving myself
to the National Health. I'm sure they can use
the jellies and tubes and syrups and glues,
the web of nerves and veins, the loaf of brains,
and assortment of fillings and stitches and wounds,
blood - a gallon exactly of bilberry soup –
the chassis or cage or cathedral of bone;
but not the heart, they can leave that alone.

They can have the lot, the whole stock:
the loops and coils and sprockets and springs and rods,
the twines and cords and strands,
the face, the case, the cogs and the hands,
but not the pendulum, the ticker;
leave that where it stops or hangs.

Simon Armitage

How does the poet feel about his body?
How does the poet present these feelings?
Glossary of useful poetic terms

**Alliteration**: the repetition of the same consonant sounds at anyplace, but often at the beginning of words.  
She sells sea-shells by the sea-shore

**Assonance**: the repetition or a pattern of the same vowel sounds  
Moses supposes his toeses are roses

**Caesura**: a pause or breathing space in the middle of a line of a poem

**Couplet**: a pair of lines that are the same length and (usually) rhyme and form a complete thought

**Enjambement**: a line ending in which the sense continues, with no punctuation, into the following line or stanza

**Hyperbole**: a figure of speech in which deliberate exaggeration is used for emphasis

**Imagery**: the use of pictures, figures of speech and description to evoke ideas, feelings, objects

**Juxtaposition**: a figure of speech in which unassociated ideas, words or phrases are placed next to one another, creating an effect or surprise

**Litotes**: a figure of speech in which a positive is stated by negating its opposite  
No small victory

**Metaphor**: a figure of speech in which two things are compared, usually by saying one thing is another  
All the world’s a stage

**Onomatopoeia**: a figure of speech in which words are used to imitate sounds.  
Buzz, Hiss, Splat, Tick-Tock

**Pathetic Fallacy**: when nature is used to represent human emotion

**Personification**: a figure of speech in which non-human things are given human attributes  
The sky is crying

**Plosive sounds**: the sounds formed when the passage of air is fully blocked (p, b, d, t)

**Refrain**: a phrase, line or group of lines that is repeated throughout a poem, usually after every stanza

**Simile**: a figure of speech in which two things are compared using the word like or as

**Stanza**: two or more lines of poetry that together form one of the divisions of a poem