

# POETRY LAST PUSH NOTES

# Four Square Poetry Analysis:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery and Sound devices:</b></p> <p>(Figurative language is language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. When a writer uses literal language, he or she is simply stating the facts as they are.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Describing words?</li> <li>✓ Alliteration</li> <li>✓ Onomatopoeia</li> <li>✓ Metaphors</li> <li>✓ Similes</li> <li>✓ Vivid Language</li> <li>✓ Word Choice</li> <li>✓ Alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does the poet choose these words?</li> <li>• What effect do they have on the overall poem?</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone, Attitude:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Words that give the feeling and emotion that the poet wants to express.</li> <li>✓ Which words are chosen to create a mood/feeling?</li> <li>✓ Does the tone change in the poem?</li> <li>✓ Is the poem satirical, ironic, thoughtful, sad, painful, happy, celebratory, funny?</li> <li>✓ Word choice:</li> <li>✓ Connotations- emotions attached</li> <li>✓ Denotation- actual meanings of words.</li> <li>✓ Why does the writer use the tone or feeling in the poem?</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What type of poem is this? Eg. Lyric, epic, narrative, haiku, free verse, prose, ekphrasis</li> <li>• How many stanzas? Are they a particular type? Eg. Couplets, quatrains et al.</li> <li>• Other considerations: Line length, line groupings, are there metric patterns.</li> <li>• Is there rhyme? A rhyme scheme?</li> <li>• Note the unusual use of punctuation, or absence of it</li> <li>• Why does the writer use these devices or forms?</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Interpretation/Theme/Message:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the poet trying to say (message)?</li> <li>• Who or what is the poem for?</li> <li>• Is it about a historical event?</li> <li>• An important event in the life of a person (birth, death, love, mental illness, change of heart, upheaval in their life)?</li> <li>• Who is the narrator? Who is speaking and to whom? Under what circumstances is the narrator speaking?</li> <li>• What does the poem mean to you? Can you relate to the feeling or to the events in the poem? What message, or feeling do you pull from the story/words/form of the poem?</li> <li>• What themes can you identify in the poem?</li> </ul>

## REMEMBER – Christina Rossetti

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery &amp; Sound devices</b></p> <p><b>APOSTROPHE</b> – addresses the lover as if he is present.</p> <p><b>EUPHEMISMS</b> - gone away' – dies; 'silent land' – life after death. 'Silent' – mysterious/unknown 'land' reinforce idea that death is unexplored territory and permanent; 'turn to go' – die. Shows that speaker is unable to face the prospect of dying and reality (and pain) associated with it. Makes death seem less permanent.</p> <p><b>SYMBOLISM</b> - 'no more hold me by the hand' - the hand symbolises the physical relationship shared by the couple. The separation of the two hands demonstrates severance of life and ultimately their physical and emotional connection.</p> <p><b>METAPHOR:</b> 'going away' – refers to death.</p> <p><b>IRONY:</b> The title implores the listener to remember her but in the final lines, she encourages him to 'forget' and 'smile'.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone</b></p> <p><b>OCTAVE</b> – The tone is slightly more urgent than the sestet: In line 1 – the speaker gives a clear, firm instruction to her loved one – “remember me”. The poet uses repetition in line 5 and 7 to emphasise its importance. The phrase “gone away” is also repeated as well as “no more”. This repetition suggest and underlying grief at the thought of losing her life and her loved one.</p> <p><b>SESTET</b> – The speaker's attention turns away from herself and focusses instead on her loved one. She realizes that some forgetting is inevitable (Yet if...afterwards remember”) and that she would not want him to suffer feelings of guilt about this. The last 2 lines of the poem reinforce this idea. She does not want memories of her to make him miserable. The tone is therefore gentler.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Italian (Petrarchan sonnet)</li> <li>✓ 14 lines, divided into:</li> <li>✓ An octave – Addresses memories and remembering</li> <li>✓ The sestet – Focusses on the process of forgetting and moving on.</li> <li>✓ Metre/rhythm: iambic pentameter.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme &amp; Message</b></p> <p>The poem is about the importance of remembering, but also the importance of letting go of memories that cause pain. Someone who loves another will want to be remembered but will also not want those memories to cause unhappiness to the loved one. “Remember” also shows the poet's struggle to understand and come to terms with the unavoidable transition between life and death – between our physical existence and crossing over into the unknown.</p>

1. **Describe in your own words how the speaker portrays death in the poem.** (2)  
*The speaker describes death as a country far away, where there is silence and darkness. She repeats the words “gone away” to emphasise the infinite remoteness of this “silent land”. She also mentions the physical decay that death brings.*
2. **What impression are we given of the speaker's relationship with the person she is addressing in the first eight lines of the poem? Quote to support your answer.** (2)  
*They had a close and loving relationship. She mentions how they held hands, which implies affection. She also mentions how they made plans for the future and uses the words “counsel” and “pray” which suggest a caring relationship.*
3. **Discuss the effect of the repetition used in lines 1-8.** (2)  
*The repetition of “remember me” emphasises how desperately she wants to remain part of her loved one's thoughts even after she is dead. It is almost like a command to him. She repeats “gone away” and “no more” which emphasises the finality of death.*
4. **What kinds of change in attitude is introduced by the word “Yet” at the beginning of line 9?** (2)  
*The word “yet” suggests that the speaker is changing her attitude. After emphasizing how important it is to her that she should be remembered, it occurs to her that it is more important to her that her loved one should be happy. She becomes more resigned to the idea that his memories of her should eventually fade.*
5. **Do you think the last two lines of the poem provide an effective summary of the message the speaker wants to convey? Justify your answer with reference to the text.** (2)  
*Example: Yes, these two lines summarise her conclusions, that remembering her might bring sadness, whereas her loved one could not go on to have a happy life if he allows his memories of her to fade. This shows she is prepared to sacrifice her wish to be remembered in order to ensure his happiness.*

# FIRST DAY AFTER THE WAR – Mazisi Kunene

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery &amp; Sound devices</b></p> <p><b>METAPHOR</b> 'songs of a wedding party': 'songs' highlight the celebratory mood – 'wedding' supports the idea of two diverse groups becoming one – just like a couple who get married. South Africans have to create a new society.</p> <p>'soft light' – reinforces a sense of contained hope, expectation and optimism.</p> <p>'young blades of grass' – refer to the young people who have not been tainted by the horrors of Apartheid and can blossom freely post-apartheid.</p> <p>'we saw her footprints'; 'Her face emerged'; 'She woke us up' – freedom is personified as a woman / a bride whose 'wedding' is being celebrated. Her message to the hopeful confirms that freedom has become a reality</p> <p>'Mountains' and 'pathways' remind us of paths limited to people because of Apartheid – these could now be traversed by everyone irrespective of their colour.</p> <p>'Calling people...circles of the earth.' – sense of being united with the world at large.</p> <p>Reference to 'Ancestors travelling tall' – ancestors also enjoying fruits of freedom. 'tall' – they are proud of their sacrifices and subsequent achievement. 'held hands with a stranger' – reaching out to each other. 'Strangers' in own country are now forming friendships and becoming a unified nation.</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION:</b> "traveling tall" (line 18) – creates a lively rhythm that emphasises the importance of the ancestors.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone</b></p> <p>The tone is upbeat and it creates a mood of excitement and jubilation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ In the first few lines, the people hear and see the first suggestions of a new beginning, and the tone is gentle.</li> <li>✓ Then the poet picks up the pace and increases the excitement. There is a celebratory mood.</li> <li>✓ In lines 14-18 the short sentences create an emphatic tone</li> <li>✓ The last line of the poem: the tone is serious, as the poet delivers his message of the narrative.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Free verse</li> <li>✓ Enjambment (creates the sense of a story being told)</li> <li>✓ The poet uses 2 lines of dialogue (line 7 and 8) – dialogue is also used in African oral storytelling traditions.</li> <li>✓ The poem is paced like a story, with a slow beginning, building up to a climax, and ending with a concluding message.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme &amp; Message</b></p> <p>This poem is about renewal – it is a message of hope to people who have suffered and struggled, announcing a new beginning that will bring joy and peace.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Triumph over oppression</p>

- 1 **Suggest why they 'hesitated' in line 4. (2)**  
*The arrival of freedom is unexpected and they cannot believe it. It alludes to the doubt that freedom is now a reality. It might have undertones of fear that this freedom may be short-lived.*
- 2 **Account for the use of direct speech in lines 7 and 8. (2)**  
*The direct speech personifies the dawn. The gentle manner in which it wakes them is like a maternal figure waking a child in the morning. She reassures them of the reality of the freedom. The response she receives is an indication of the unity of peace and the confidence that the war has ended.*
- 3 **Refer to lines 4-5: 'Her face emerged ... a smile saying'. Discuss how the image above contributes to the mood of these lines. (3)**  
*The dawn is compared to a lady with a face, eyes and body. The image captures the reality of freedom. The dawn is being compared to something beautiful. This establishes a mood of joy and cheerfulness.*
- 4 **Comment on the significance of mentioning the 'Ancestors' in the final line of the poem. (3)**  
*In African culture, the ancestors are held in high regard as there is much faith placed in spirit worship. The seeing of the ancestors suggests that there is a spiritual well-being in the community. The ancestors are satisfied with the freedom the community has achieved. It shows that the ancestors play a very important role in the lives of the living descendants. This ensures that the new-found freedom will be guided by spiritually.*

# THE ZULU GIRL – Roy Campbell

## Imagery & Sound devices

**Stanza 1:** the soil of the fields is compared to burning coals: “hot red acres smolder” to evoke the extreme heat.

**Stanza 2: METAPHOR** (lines 5-6) – the shade of the thorn-trees is compared to a pool of water, providing a cool place for the mother to feed her baby. The shade is also described as “purpled with the blood of ticks”, which gives us an idea of the deep, dark colour of the shade in contrast to the hot, red soil in the sunshine.

**Metaphor** – the mother’s nails are compared to a predator as they “prowl” the baby’s hair (lines 7-8).

**Stanza 3: SIMILE** (line 10) – the baby is compared to a puppy.

**Simile** (lines 11-12) – the mother’s “languor” or exhausted calm flows into the baby along with the milk and is compared to a river “sighing through the reeds”.

**Stanza 4: METAPHOR** (line 13-16) – the baby’s “flesh imbibes” or drinks in the anger, pride and dignity of his tribe along with his mother’s milk. The fiery “heat” of the Zulu people’s anger contrasts with the cool of the river in the stanza 3.

**Stanza 5: SIMILE** (line 17) – compares the mother’s body to a hill “looming” above the baby, protecting him as a hill provides shelter for a village. Simultaneously her body can be seen as a dark cloud, indicating the arrival of a violent storm.

**ONOMATOPOEIA:** ‘clicks’ sound of her nails crushing the ticks – she shows no mercy in order to protect her baby. ‘sighing’ – her sighs of fatigue and discontent.

## Tone

**STANZA 1** – neutral (the poet is describing the scene. The group is working hard in the heat.)

**STANZA 2** – calm sleepiness, with an underlying threatening feeling. The positive image of the mother feeding her baby contrasts with the negative feelings suggested by some images.

**STANZA 3** – Calm and intimate. The baby feeds and the mother’s sleepy relaxation is passed to the child.

**STANZA 4** – Hidden menace and passion. The poet describes how the baby absorbs, with its mother’s milk, the knowledge of the past defeat and humiliation of the Zulu people.

**STANZA 5** – The poet describes the mother’s body rising above the baby – first with a positive tone, then an ominous mood is created by the use of the word “looms”. The poet portrays the mother’s body as a thundercloud bringing a terrible storm.

## Style/Structure/Form

- ✓ 5 stanzas of 4 lines each.
- ✓ Rhyme scheme = simple (abab, cdcd, efef etc)
- ✓ Metre = regular, most lines consist of 10 syllables.

## Theme & Message

The poem contrasts the peaceful life of the Zulu people with their dramatic history of struggle and defeat. It suggests that their pride and will to resist is still strong, and that they will rise up against their oppressors in the future.

**1. Refer to specific examples of diction to describe the atmosphere that is created in the first stanza. (2)**

*The atmosphere is harsh and unyielding. The heat is ‘smouldering’ – almost setting the earth on fire because it is so intense. The labours are ‘sweating’ in the unforgiving heat. The girl’s exhaustion is suggested when she ‘flings down her hoe’. The flies are another sign of the heat and ‘torment’ experienced by the people*

**2. What is the effect of the onomatopoeia in line 8? (2)**

*The ‘sharp electric clicks’ describe the sound created as the mother pinches the ticks between her finger nails. She is quick and ruthless in dealing with the ticks that threaten her son’s well-being.*

**3. Comment on what the speaker imagines happening as the mother feeds her young son. (3)**

*The speaker imagines that, in feeding her son, the mother also subconsciously passes on her attitudes and beliefs. Her son will become aware of the ‘languors’ (line 11) and her ‘heat’ (line 14) – her weariness and hopelessness but also her vigour and spirit. This might prompt in him the same feelings and motivate him to rise and restore his mother’s – and his tribe’s – dignity*

**4. The tone in the final stanza is both optimistic and ominous. Do you agree? Justify your response with reference to the last stanza. (3)**

*The potential of future generations’ restoring the dignity and might of the Zulu nation might be perceived as optimistic. However, the speaker suggests that this can only be achieved through a storm ‘so terrible’. This image implies that violence might be unleashed in order to bring about change this is ominous.*

# MOTHO KE MOTHO KA BATHO BABANG – Jeremy Cronin

Imagery & Sound Devices	Tone
<p><b>SYMBOLS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>THE MIRROR</b> is a symbol of freedom and communication – a portal to escape dreary conditions.</li> <li>✓ <b>THE BLACK FIRST:</b> symbol of resistance against apartheid; encouragement, motivation and resilience.</li> <li>✓ <b>THE FREE HAND:</b> a 'voice' that speaks without using sound. Hand is almost a person on its own.</li> </ul> <p><b>SIMILE:</b> 'Two fingers are extended in a vee / And wiggle like two antennae.' Antennae in animal alerts it to danger or obstacle. Wiggling fingers serve the same purpose.</p> <p><b>SYNECDOCHE:</b> 'voice from around the corner' refers to the voice of the warden who is out of sight but his question and commanding tone suggests that he is watching them closely.</p> <p><b>IRONY:</b> 'later we can speak' – the word 'speak' is ironic as they do not literally speak but communicate in different ways as demonstrated by the sign language used here.</p> <p>'the talkative one (hand)' – the hand (which is silent literally) that is mainly used for communication.</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION:</b> 'finger of his free hand'. Free' hand: hand that is not busy with a chore. Also <b>IRONIC</b> as the man is not really free. 'slow-slow rhythm of his work' – repetition of the word 'slow' and 'sl' sound, broken by the hyphen, slows down the pace of the line and demonstrates the slow pace at which the prisoner works.</p>	<p>Secretive, intimate and conversational, because the messages between the prisoners have to be conveyed in silence. The fact that the gestures are instantly understood by the speaker increases the sense of intimacy.</p> <p>We do not know the prisoner's name, and it seems that the speaker also doesn't know him personally. The speaker describes him as "a person" and a "prisoner". Their comradeship and intimacy are based on their shared belief and values, and their shared opposition to apartheid.</p>
Style/Structure/Form	Theme & Message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Free verse</li> <li>✓ Enjambment (creates flow, as if the speaker is talking to the reader).</li> <li>✓ Visual layout is <b>IMPORANT</b>. Meaning of the messages that the prisoner is communicating is placed on the right of the page, to set them apart from the speaker's description of what he sees. The warden's words to the prisoner are located in the middle of the page, emphasizing that the warden is not part of the same conversation that the two prisoners are having. The warden's direct speech &amp; the prisoner's silent messages are in italics.</li> </ul>	<p>We can only live a truly human life if we are connected to and interacting with other humans.</p> <p>It is just as important to have contact with like-minded humans (the prisoners got strength and support from their fellow prisoners, not from the warders).</p> <p>Any human endeavour, whether it is a political struggle or an everyday activity, is made easier and more meaningful by the support and encouragement of others.</p>

1. Explain how the phrase, 'down here' (line 3) highlights the difficulty the prisoners must overcome. (2)  
*The phrase emphasises how far apart the two men are/the distance between them and so the difficulty of their communicating with each other without drawing attention to this illegal activity.*
2. Why is 'My face' line 6 placed at the beginning of the line? (2)  
*The face is very important when people communicate with each other/the face represents the nature of the person/shows the person's character/the poem will establish later that the face is that of a white man and the prisoner who sees is black but this makes no difference to either men*
3. Why is the simile in line 14 particularly appropriate in this context? (3)  
*The simile suggests the tremble of fingers, focusing on the small movements made to avoid being noticed.*  
*AND An inset uses its antennae to evaluate its environment and process the stimulae it receives/it transforms the stimulae into messages. In the same way, the prisoners' fingers create a message and communicate with the other prisoner.*
4. Considering the way in which people are identified in the poem as 'prisoner' or 'warder', comment on how 'brother' (line 26) explores and important message in the poem. (3)  
*The opposition of 'prisoner' and 'warder' establishes the stark reality of the power relations in a prison. There is a simple contrast: a man is imprisoned, stripped of all choice, at the mercy of authorities, or a man is one of those authorities, having power. The word, 'brother', establishes the possibility of a different relationship; the prisoners can resist being disempowered by establishing comradeship amongst themselves/the prisoners create new bonds/a sense of family or fellow-feeling that challenges the label of 'prisoner' and gives a sense of common purpose/shared humanity/ comfort. The struggle against an evil system like apartheid unites all those who oppose it.*

# FUNERAL BLUES – WH Auden

Imagery/Figurative Language	Tone
<p><b>HYPERBOLE:</b> 'Stop all the clocks', 'cut off the telephone' – signs of respect to honour dead. Speaker wishes to stop the time: his grief is overwhelming. 'Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone' – wants normal life and others' happiness to be suspended in his hour of grief. The 'drum' and 'pianos' are musical instruments also serve as the death knell (normally bell tolls for the dead) – symbolises or announces someone's death. 'Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves': expectation of a mass mourning. He wants everyone to share his unbearable pain and loss. 'My noon, my midnight', – again the speaker reflects on the sense of oneness of the couple. Their time spent together reminds one that this time has passed, and the relationship severed by death. The loss therefore is presented as more devastating.</p> <p>'The stars are not wanted now; put out every one, "Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun, Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood; / For nothing now can ever come to any good.</p> <p>These lines highlight his utter hopelessness and depression. He is so immersed in his grief he expects the world to literally disappear for he cannot stand to face a normal life given his pain and grief</p> <p><b>METAPHOR:</b> 'He was my North, my South, my East and West' – shows the person gave the speaker direction in life.</p> <p>'My working week and my Sunday rest, – this was his life partner. They seemed to be a perfect match, sharing everything with each other. 'my talk, my song' – they were inseparable and almost one person who shared the same vision and thoughts. 'song' – reflects the happiness and joy which the person brought into his life.</p> <p><b>PERSONIFICATION:</b> 'Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead' – the death needs to be commemorated. Sound of aeroplanes remind us of actual moaning/mourning sound of mourners crying profusely</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION:</b> 'mourners'. and 'muffle' shows he is trying to stifle his tears.</p> <p><b>ONOMATOPOEIA:</b> 'moaning' – sound of muffled pain and grief.</p>	<p><b>Stanza 1</b> – Curt (the speaker issues sad instructions about setting up the signs of mourning. He is stopping everything that represents everyday life)/</p> <p><b>Stanza 2</b> – Hysterical (the speaker desires to share his loss with others, even the general public. He suggests impossible ways of marking the death of his loved one).</p> <p><b>Stanza 3</b> – Sad but calmer (the speaker describes nostalgically how his loved on meant everything to him. The stanza concludes with a moving statement in line 12 "I was wrong". This antithesis demonstrates what a shock the sudden and unexpected loss of his love has been to him).</p> <p><b>Stanza 4</b> – Near-hysterical grief (speaker describes how he wants to "put out" the stars and "dismantle the sun". This demonstrates the depth of his grief, and is supported by the bleak statement in the last line: "nothing ...good").</p>
Style/Structure/Form	Theme & Message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Elegy or a dirge</li> <li>✓ Four stanzas of four lines.</li> <li>✓ Consistent rhyme scheme (aabb, ccdd, eeff, gghh)</li> <li>✓ An elegy often has a slow pace, but in this poem the pace is fast, as if the speaker is rushing to say everything he feels, until the pace slows down towards the end.</li> </ul>	<p>The poem concerns grief and mourning for a lost loved one, and the impulse to spread the dreadful news far and wide. It demonstrates how shocking it can be to realise that love may not, in fact, last forever.</p>

1. **How is the choice of diction in line 1 used to convey the speaker's tone?** (2)  
*The words, 'Stop' and 'cut', are instructions given to bring a halt to communication with the outside world. This conveys an imperative tone as the speaker takes charge of the situation.*
2. **Explain why aeroplanes are described as 'moaning' in line 5.** (2)  
*A moaning sound will express a level of suffering. The onomatopoeia suggests that even the aeroplanes are grieving for the death. The sound is an outward display of sorrow and lamentation.*
3. **Refer to line 8: 'He was my ... East and West'. Discuss what the image suggests about the relationship between the speaker and the dead man.** (3)  
*The speaker refers to the cardinal points of a compass which is used for direction. He wishes to convey the dead man meant everything to him. Now that the man is deceased, the speaker lacks direction and feels completely lost.*
4. **Does the title of the poem capture the speaker's feelings accurately? Justify your response.** (3)  
*A funeral is a formal service held for the deceased shortly after his death. 'Blues' expresses a feeling of melancholy and sorrow. In the poem, the speaker is deeply grieved by the death of the dead man. He conveys the intensity of his heartache through the imagery which suggests how much the dead man meant to him.*

# A HARD FROST – Cecil Day Lewis

## Imagery & Sound Devices

### PERSONIFICATION:

- Line 1 – the frost “came in the night and stole my world” – frost is described as a thief
- Line 10 – “the sun looks out” – sun is compared to a person, looking out of a window, which describes the appearance of the sun on the horizon.
- Line 11-14: “mockery spring” – imitation spring cruelly gives a “raw country maid” (the landscape) this beautiful “bridal gear” (ice crystals), knowing it will not last and she will be left with nothing but “old fairings”.
- Line 17-19: The frost is “worrying” the clods of earth to break them up. The clods of earth have a strong “grip” on the seed, which the frost forces them to loosen (“unclenches”).

### METAPHOR:

- line 2: the brilliant frosty scene is described as a changeling. The implication is that this beautiful scene cannot be trusted.
- Line 7: Elm trees are described as “blossomers in crystal” serving as “stems” for the clouds of mist.
- Line 10: The light reflecting of the ice particles is compared to the “blaze” of fiery sparkle of diamonds.
- WHOLE POEM: “frost” is a metaphor, comparing the beautiful ice crystals to superficial things of this world, which may be attractive and seem like a promise of something good, but which prove to have no lasting value.

**SIMILE** – line 7-9: The mist is compared to “blind tissue whence creation formed” – this refers to the unformed, primitive matter that existed before “creation” and from which the nature grew.

## Tone

- The speaker’s tone shows his distrust of the frost and its beauty. To him it is a thief who has stolen the real world and replaced it with this ‘changeling’, which looks attractive but is too good to be true.
- He acknowledges the beauty of the frost but with a dismissive tone pointing out that it is not lasting.
- His description of the mist has an uneasy tone. It reminds him of a prehistoric substance.
- In lines 11-14 the speaker’s tone becomes disapproving as he compares the frost to a “mockery” who tricks the poor innocent “country maid” into thinking she has been given all this beauty that will disappear and leave her disappointed and upset.
- The speaker ends with a more emphatic, positive tone as he points out where the real work is being done.
- The last line of the poem has a tone of satisfaction, as the speaker says the frost “lets our future breathe”.

## Style/Structure/Form

- ✓ Free verse
- ✓ Two stanzas, 9 lines + 10 lines
- ✓ Enjambment (creates smooth flow, as if the poet is thinking aloud).

## Theme & Message

The beautiful, spring-like appearance of the frosty scene is deceptive, as it will soon melt away and the frost-damaged winter landscape will be revealed. The actual approach of spring is happening underground. In the same way, much of what we see as beautiful and worthy is actually an illusion, and the truly important things in life are often happening unseen and unappreciated.

- 1. What impression of the frost is created by the use of the word, ‘changeling’ (line 2)? (2)**  
*The frost is described as stealing the world and leaving a ‘changeling’ in its place. This would suggest that the frost is like a fairy and creates the impression that there is something magical and mysterious about it. Fairies might also be regarded as malevolent, which might suggest the deceptive and devious nature of the frost. The frost tricks people into believing that spring has arrived and is therefore, untrustworthy*
- 2. Describe the speaker’s tone in ‘Mockery spring’ (line 11) and explain why he would feel this way. (2)**  
*His tone might be described as angry/annoyed/exasperated because he feels that it is wrong of the frost to trick people into believing that spring has arrived.*
- 3. Refer to lines 7-8: ‘amorphous/as the blind tissue whence creation formed’. Discuss whether the creation reference is effective in the context of the poem. (3)**  
*The lines suggest that the forces of creation are unseen until the life they produce emerges with some definitive shape. Until such time, they are vague and ‘amorphous’. The reference effectively prepares the reader for the last five lines of the poem where the speaker presents his views on how the cycle of nature is dependent on the regeneration that occurs below the ground*
- 4. The poem is a celebration of Spring. Do you agree? Support your answer with reference to the poem. (3)**  
*The speaker celebrates the transformative power of spring. This is evident when he mentions the ‘true transformation’ that is not yet apparent on the surface of the earth. He considers the frost’s superficial beauty as being an ‘image of spring’, which implies that the beauty of spring is more authentic. He admires the fact that spring ensures the future of all life.*

# AN AFRICAN THUNDERSTORM – David Rubadiri

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery &amp; Sound devices</b></p> <p><b>STANZA 1:</b> - the images of the storm and its elements are frightening</p> <p><b>SIMILE (line 6)</b> – the clouds are compared to a “plague of locusts”. Suggests destruction.</p> <p><b>SIMILE (Line 9)</b> - Wind is compared to a “madman chasing nothing”. Emphasises the unpredictability of the wind.</p> <p><b>METAPHOR (line 8)</b> – Wind is compared to a powerful animal “tossing up things on its tail”. Reinforces the destructive power of the wind.</p> <p><b>ONOMATOPOEIA (line 2 &amp; 7)</b> – “hurrying”, “whirling” – sounds like wind rushing through the air.</p> <p><b>STANZA 2:</b> - the images reinforce the comparisons with frightening creatures and introduce a new image of the storm.</p> <p><b>PERSONIFICATION (line 10)</b> – the clouds are “pregnant”, implies the weight of the water they will release onto the land, and they “ride stately”, like royalty. In line 12 they are “gathering” like a group that has strength in numbers.</p> <p><b>SIMILE (line 13)</b> – “like dark sinister wings”. Suggests the clouds are frightening birds of prey.</p> <p><b>ONOMATOPOEIA (line 14)</b> – “whistles”</p> <p><b>STANZA 3:</b> - the storm reaches a climax and the images of chaos and destruction reflect the impact on humans.</p> <p><b>SIMILE (line 27)</b> – women’s clothes being torn off them “like tattered flags”. Image of loss and underlines the ruthlessness of the storm.</p> <p><b>METAPHOR (line 33)</b> – the storm is compared to an army (“the pelting march of the storm”) confirms the storm as a destructive force.</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION (line 18)</b> – “Toss and turn” – movement created by strong wind.</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION (line 27-28)</b> – “Flags/flying off”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone</b></p> <p>Dismay – the author is not happy; he concentrates on telling us about the damage caused by the rain and wind e.g. a plague of locusts is never a good thing, at least for the crops.</p> <p>This contrasts with the usual view of rain in African society: rain is a blessing; everything loves the approach of rain, not just children. It is good for the crops and the animals, as it increases the harvest. However, this storm causes destruction. Therefore, it is not good.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 Parts which divide the content into general &amp; specific.</li> <li>✓ Wind builds up 4 times (4 interwoven stanzas).</li> <li>✓ Irregular line length &amp; single-word lines: captures the unpredictable progress of the wind.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme &amp; Message</b></p> <p>Literal: Chaos and destruction of a storm and the helplessness of the people caught in its path.</p> <p>Metaphorical: The storm and its negative effects can stand for the British and European colonization and the destructive impact it has had on the people of Africa.</p>

- 1. How does the line arrangement in stanza 1 support the mood of the opening of the poem. (2)**  
 The short lines create urgency while the longer lines suggest speed.
- 2. By referring closely to one example of diction, describe the observer’s response to the clouds in line 13. (2)**  
*The observer is nervous/frightened/ feels vulnerable/nervous.*  
*dark: associated with threat/ominous/black ; sinister: menacing/ominous/threatening/even evil*  
*wings: connotations here of being overshadowed/surrounded/trapped by darkness/threat*
- 3. What impression is created of the babies in line 21? (3)**  
*There is an almost comical impression of desperate babies holding tightly onto their mothers’ backs as the women rush about frightened and flustered, to prepare for the potential ravages of the storm.*
- 4. Consider the last line of each stanza. Critically discuss how the use of personification in each line highlights an important aspect of the description of the storm. (3)**  
*The last lines use personification to emphasise the power of the storm.*  
*Stanza 1: the simile suggests lunatic, filled with a violent, restless, and potentially destructive energy.*  
*Stanza 2: The trees do not withstand the wind; they bow submissively, passive and unresisting.*  
*Stanza 3: the storm is like an advancing army which cannot be opposed.*

# AN AFRICAN ELEGY – Ben Okri

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery/Figurative Language</b></p> <p><b>Stanza 1 –</b>  <b>METAPHOR (lines 1-2)</b> – speaker compares Africans to “miracles...Time”. Suggests that Africans are in some way chosen by God to bear suffering, and then eventually be celebrated as “the wonders of the earth” (<b>line 5</b>). Introduces the unique perspective of dealing with life.</p> <p><b>Stanza 2 –</b>  <b>METAPHOR (line 6)</b> – describes how some things may “burn” at one point yet “turn golden” at another. Show that one’s attitude can decide the way in which one experiences something.</p> <p><b>Stanza 4 –</b>  <b>PERSONIFICATION</b> – speaker describes how the “sweet” African music “makes the air remember (<b>line 16-17</b>). He also personifies <b>Time (line 19)</b>, suggesting that Time will eventually reveal the “secret miracles” that are “at work” (<b>line 18</b>). “heard the dead singing (line 20).</p> <p><b>Stanza 6 –</b>  <b>METAPHORS:</b> “the ocean is full of songs”, “the sky is not our enemy”. Emphasises the idea of mystery, joy and surprise.  <b>PERSONIFICATION – (line 30)</b> summarises the message: Destiny is our friend.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In spite that the poem is called an “elegy” and deals with suffering of the African people, the tone of the poem is optimistic, positive and full of wonder.</li> <li>● Stanza 2 – joyful amazement</li> <li>● Stanza 3 – positive and optimistic</li> <li>● Stanza 4 – joy and mystery</li> <li>● Stanza 6 – triumph and celebration</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Free verse</li> <li>✓ No regular rhyme or metre.</li> <li>✓ Enjambment</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme &amp; Message</b></p> <p>African people’s ability to find joy and wonder in life despite their difficult circumstances, and to celebrate life’s possibilities and mysteries.</p>

**1. Why does the speaker refer to us as ‘miracles’?** **(2)**  
*Man is connected to a divine agency as we have been created by God. We have the ability to think and reason, attributing superior qualities to our existence.*

**2. Explain why ‘Time’ is personified in lines 2 and 19.** **(2)**  
*Time is given the power to reveal life’s experiences and choices. It is through time that the complexity of life is revealed and lessons are learnt from real life experiences. Irrespective of whether the experiences are positive or negative, they are necessary part of life.*

**3. Account for the speaker’s use of the word ‘golden’ (line 7) in the context of stanza 2.** **(3)**  
*‘Golden’ suggests the hope and optimism of African people despite the pain and suffering they have endured. ‘Golden’ has connotations of something precious. It might refer to the African sun – with every sunset, a new day will dawn. This captures the hope of the African people*

**4. Comment on the effectiveness of the imagery in line 30 in conveying the message of the poem: ‘Destiny is our friend’.** **(3)**  
*The personification conveys the idea that the plan God has for Africa should not be feared. Instead, life and its destiny should be embraced and appreciated. This attitude reaffirms traditional African beliefs.*

# SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED – ee cummings

Imagery/Figurative Language	Tone
<p><b>PARADOX (Line 1):</b> – ‘somewhere i have never travelled’ - experience is unknown to speaker but he is keen to embark on the ‘journey’ – words ‘gladly beyond’ demonstrate willingness / sense of adventure</p> <p><b>(Line 6):</b> ‘rendering death and forever with each breathing’: intense concept – her power of spiritual ‘life’ and ‘death’ over him.</p> <p><b>SIMILE (line 5-16)</b> ‘your slightest look easily will unclose me ... closed myself as fingers’. Speaker has built walls around himself – she breaks them down. He is compared to a flower – unusual for a man to be compared to something as fragile – again highlighting his awe and defenselessness to control his emotions.</p> <p><b>(lines 17-18)</b> ‘you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens (touching skillfully, mysteriously) her first rose’. Spring seen as a goddess whose impact is profound, almost magical. Like Spring, she ‘forces’ to ‘open’ him up to the emotions/vulnerabilities he wishes to withhold but simply cannot.</p> <p><b>(lines 10-12)</b> ‘my life will shut...this flower imagines’. Reinforces her sense of power – not destructive. The word ‘beautifully’ and ‘carefully’ imply that her influence on him whether positive or negative is part of the ‘journey’ he is being compelled to undertake.</p> <p><b>PERSONIFICATION:</b> ‘the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses/nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands’ – sees her impact as being as mysterious as the power of nature. Beautiful, life-giving, nurturing.</p> <p><b>EXTENDED METAPHOR:</b> Speaker sees lover as having the power to ‘close’ and ‘unclose’ him. ‘Unclose’ – bring out the best in him/evoke love/appreciation. ‘Close’ – restrict his emotions.</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION: (line 7)</b> - ‘petal by petal’ –reinforces her supremacy over him.</p> <p><b>(Line 15)</b> - ‘compels me with the colour of its countries’. Creates the impression that his love for her and her power over him is ceaseless and unyielding</p>	<p><b>Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tone of this poem combines bewilderment at love’s mysterious power with a joyful acceptance of his love.</li> </ul>
Style/Structure/Form	Theme & Message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The lack of capitalization, specifically in the pronoun “i,” also supports the poet’s extreme devotion to his lover.</li> <li>✓ The poem is arranged in 5 quatrains with odd punctuation.</li> <li>✓ <b>EFFECT OF ODD PUNCTUATION AND SYNTAX:</b> implies that speaker cannot express lover’s impact (on him) by using conventional grammar or vocabulary because her power over him is mysterious and inexplicable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The poet highlights the inexplicable power of love.</li> <li>• Goes hand-in-hand with his love of nature.</li> <li>• When he is describing how easy it is for his lover’s glance to open him up, if she wishes, cummings compares this process to a natural one.</li> </ul>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Refer to stanza 1. In line 1 the speaker uses the image of a journey: “somewhere i have never travelled”. What does this tell us about his experience of love? (2)</b>  <i>This tells us that he is experiencing something he has never felt before so he feels that he is on an emotional ‘journey’.</i></li> <li><b>2. What do you think the speaker means by “your...silence” (line 2)? (2)</b>  <i>The speaker feels a profound sense of peace and tranquility when he looks into the eyes of the one he loves. OR Her look has a profound effect on him, so much so that she does not need to say anything.</i></li> <li><b>3. Refer to stanza 2. Explain how the image the speaker uses of being “unclosed” by his loved one expresses the power of his feelings. (2)</b>  <i>The speaker feels that the person he loves has such power over him, because of the strength of his feelings that they can “unclose him even if he has “closed” himself.</i></li> <li><b>4. Refer to stanzas 2 and 3. The speaker uses the image of a flower in these lines. Why do you think he chooses this image. (2)</b>  <i>The use of the flower image links to the image of closing and unclosing. It symbolises the blossoming of his feelings of love. She is able to get him to open up and talk about his feelings.</i></li> <li><b>5. The speaker describes his loved one’s physical delicacy. Explain how these references contribute to our understanding of his feelings. (2)</b>  <i>The emphasis on physical weakness or delicacy emphasises that it is the speaker’s emotions that are powerful and overwhelming rather than the person he loves. He does not understand how such a physically delicate being can have so much power over him.</i></li> </ol>	

# THE GARDEN OF LOVE – William Blake

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery/Figurative Language</b></p> <p><b>The Garden of Love (line 1)</b> – Represents innocence and natural joyfulness. Also an allusion to the Garden of Eden.</p> <p><b>The “Chapel” (line 3)</b> – Represents Christianity and the Church. The poet felt that organized religion had become repressive, seeking to control people. Over the door the words “Thou shalt not” (line 6) – emphasises the Church concerns itself only with forbidding things. Graves and tombstones have replaced flowers – indicates that the Church’s focus on sin and death destroys beauty and joy of life. “Priests in black gowns” (line 11) – enforcers of the Church’s laws. Patrol the Garden like prison wardens, controlling people’s natural impulses and desires.</p> <p><b>The “green” (line 4)</b> – colour green represents life, growth and the natural world. It is the antithesis of the black-robed priests who are obsessed with death and sin. The village green (park) represents youth, innocence and joyfulness. It was also a communal space – represents freedom from control.</p> <p><b>The flowers (line 8)</b> – symbolize the happy freedom of the speaker’s youth, unburdened by restrictions or shame. He finds they have all gone, displaced by the chapel and the graves. Also present in reference to the Church’s rules as “briars” that imprison his “joys and desires”. The Church thus rejects the beauty and joyfulness of nature.</p> <p><b>ALLITERATION:</b> ‘binding with briars’ – allusion to the crucifixion. ‘Briars’ are prickly vines which remind us of the crown of thorns used to torture Jesus. Laws imposed on society are cruel, restrictive and painful. Emphasised by harsh “b” sound.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone</b></p> <p>The tone is one of dismay, disappointment and disapproval.</p> <p>The poet uses the repetition of “And” to emphasise how he notices one unpleasant change after another.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form</b></p> <p>3 stanzas of 4 lines. Each focuses on a different issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 1st- speaker’s discovery of the chapel;</li> <li>✓ 2nd- speaker’s feelings about the building but expresses hope for consolation to be found in the garden.</li> <li>✓ 3rd- speaker’s disappointment that this too has undergone drastic change.</li> </ul> <p>- End rhymes in first 2 stanzas: ABCB DEFE - Internal rhymes with ‘gowns’ and ‘rounds’; ‘briars’ and ‘desires’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme &amp; Message</b></p> <p>The poet shows how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the human imagination and desire (and sexuality per se) is oppressed in all forms especially by organised religion (i.e. the institution of the church;</li> <li>• the concept of original sin restricts freedom;</li> <li>• Christianity has been distorted by the interpreters of the faith.</li> </ul>

**1. How does the rhythm of line 2 support the speaker’s tone? (2)**

*The rhythm puts the stress on ‘saw’, ‘never’ and ‘seen’, suggesting the speaker’s shock/disappointment/disbelief in seeing what he sees now which had never before been there/the unexpected/shocking change in the garden.*

**2. Explain the irony of the Chapel’s position in the middle of the Garden of Love. (2)**

*The reader would expect the doors of the Chapel to stand open (because a Chapel is a place of Christian worship and the central tenet of Christianity is love – of God and one’s neighbour), but these doors are shut, indicating a forbidding/unfriendly/unwelcoming attitude.*

**3. Refer to stanza 2. Comment on the poet’s diction in this stanza. How does his choice of words convey his feelings at this point. (3)**

*The words “shut” and “Thou shalt not” convey the unpleasant feelings he has about what the chapel represents – a rigid and judgemental philosophy. When he speaks of the garden, on the other hand, he uses the words “Love” and “sweet flowers”, which convey his happy, positive feelings about it.*

**4. Considering the poem as a whole, what can you deduce about the person who is speaking? (3)**

*The speaker values childhood and the natural overflow of creative, optimistic spontaneous feelings (love). He opposes formal religion because religious leaders fear the expression of human needs and strong feelings, and seek to control and repress them. They impose their rules and restrictions on children and adults alike.*

# FELIX RANDAL – Gerard Manley Hopkins

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Imagery/Figurative Language</b></p> <p><b>METAPHOR:</b> ‘mould of man’ – metaphor. Felix was a man who moulded iron and shaped it to create his products. Similarly, he was shaped as strong and tough just like the metal he worked with. ‘Sickness broke him’. His illnesses destroyed his strength and health; also had to come to terms with death and preparing for the afterlife. ‘heavenlier heart’ – he had found God / acceptance of his fate.</p> <p><b>SYNCOCHE:</b> ‘My tongue had taught thee comfort’. He had been able to assuage Felix’s pain with his words.</p> <p><b>SOUND DEVICES -</b></p> <p><b>ALLITERATION:</b> ‘big-boned’; ‘hardy-handsome’: repetition of ‘b’ and ‘h’ sounds reinforce the sense of his physical strength. Unusual compound adjectives to describe the uniqueness of the individual. ‘pining’ ‘pining’ – plosive ‘p’ sound highlights his debilitating suffering and pain. ‘Fatal four disorders fleshed’- fricative ‘f’ sound echo his suffering and pain. Plosive sounds in ‘great gray drayhorse’ and ‘bright battering sandal’ remind of Felix’s strength but also how that strength has been destroyed by illness. ‘reason rambled’ – repetition of ‘r’ sound creates rattling effect (struggling to breathe) – also indication of his delirium brought upon by his illness.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>OCTAVE:</b> dispassionate, detached and matter-of-fact</li> <li>● <b>SESTET:</b> sorrow, grief, sympathetic and endearing</li> </ul> <p>The poem has a thoughtful yet conversational tone. It reminds us of how we react when we are told of someone who has died. The speaker moves from one aspect of the man’s life to another and mentions thoughtfully the comfort that friendship and faith can bring.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style/Structure/Form</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Italian (Petrarchan Sonnet)</li> <li>✓ Octave</li> <li>✓ Sestet</li> <li>✓ Traditional rhyme scheme: abba, abba, ccd, ccd.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme &amp; Message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The poem deals with the fact that even the strongest die.</li> <li>● The poem also suggests that religious faith has a healing, comforting power.</li> <li>● Finally the poem is about the bond of friendship, even love, which grows between those who care for the sick, and those who are cared for.</li> </ul>

1. **In your own words, provide a description of Felix Randal when he is healthy and when he is sick. (2)**  
*Felix was muscular, well-built and robust when he is healthy. When he becomes ill, he is reduced to a weak/frail man who loses his energetic and lively stature.*
  
2. **In line 9, ‘endears’ appears twice. Explain the significance of ‘endears’ in the relationship between the farrier and the speaker. (2)**  
*The speaker is a Roman Catholic priest. He plays a spiritual role in the life of Felix Randal. The speaker feels a sense of loss and mourning when Felix Randal dies. The compassion the speaker feels illustrates that he develops a fondness for his parishioner.*
  
3. **Why does the speaker refer to Felix Randal as a ‘child’ in line 17? (3)**  
*The speaker is a priest and a father figure to his flock. The word, ‘child’ reduces Felix Randal to a vulnerable state; his illness has been debilitating and he has become incapable of caring for himself.*
  
4. **Refer to line 5: ‘sickness broke him’. In your opinion, is the uses of the word ‘broke’ suitable in the context of the poem? Justify your response. (3)**  
*Yes. ‘Broke’ has connotations of something being taken apart/he is no longer whole. The hefty and robust body of Felix Randal has been damaged by illness. This has prevented him from functioning normally. This does not allow him to continue with his daily routine*

# VULTURES – Chinua Achebe

## Imagery/Figurative Language

**METAPHOR:** S1 - 'broken bones of a dead tree' – plosive 'd' sounds repeated. 'dead' highlights the sterility of the environment – even the tree (symbol of life) is dead.

S1 'a pebble on a stem rooted in a dump of gross feathers' – depicts the revolting and ugly physical sight of the vulture. The word 'gross' and 'dumped' reinforce the idea that the speaker is disgusted by the sight of the vultures. The words show his rejection of what they symbolise.

S3 - 'the Commandant at Belsen / Camp going home for / the day with fumes of / human roast clinging rebelliously to his hairy / nostrils'. 'fumes' of 'human roast' is a reminder that the commandant's job is to execute people. The fact that he is able to breathe and live normally while the stench of their pitiful deaths linger in his nostrils, is horrific and saddening. He has the capacity to kill cold-heartedly and indiscriminately yet it is not instinctual as it is for the vulture.

S4 - 'tenderness encapsulated in icy caverns of a cruel heart' – heart is like an icy cave yet there is warmth. 'the very germ / of that kindred love is / lodged the perpetuity of evil'. 'germ' suggests that love and hate can blossom unhindered in all of us. The word 'perpetuity' suggests that both love and evil will never die, and their co-existence will persist. Both images highlight that the speaker is perplexed by the paradox of the human condition.

**PERSONIFICATION:** 'despondent dawn' – dawn is personified as a sad person. This depressing mood is reinforced by the heavy 'd' sound repeated. 'love in other / ways so particular / will pick a corner / in that charnel-house tidy it and coil up there' - The fact that love is given human characteristics shows that humans, just like love, will initially struggle to survive with a semblance of normality, but ultimately shrivel up and die in inhumane conditions like in the Belsen camp where hatred and evil rule. Love is snuffed out and human lives are destroyed because love is absent.

## Tone

- S1 (ln 1-21) – Disgust and revulsion: the speaker describes the dreary day and the ugly vultures relaxing after a meal of rotting flesh.
- S2 (ln 22-29) – Puzzlement: the speaker marvels that love could find a place in the heart of such an ugly creature.
- S3 (ln 30-40) – Horror: The speaker contrasts the unimaginable evil that the Commandant is guilty of with his feelings of tender kindness for his children.
- S4 (ln 41-51) – Resigned and pessimistic: The speaker offers a choice of being thankful for the capacity to love or feeling 'despair' because the capacity for evil seems to co-exist with it.

## Style/Structure/Form

- ✓ Free verse
- ✓ Divided into 4 sections, indicated by indentation of lines and ellipses.
- ✓ Enjambment
- ✓ Very short lines

## Theme & Message

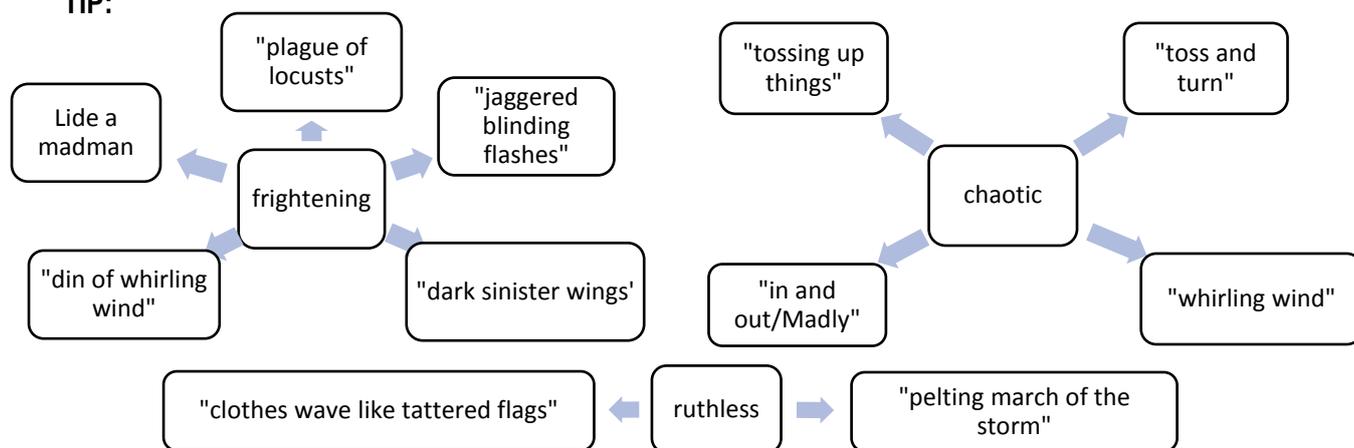
The strange co-existence of gross evil, and tender love. The paradoxical nature of human beings who have the capacity to love intensely while at the same time, commit unspeakable horrors.

1. **By referring to the diction in lines 1-6, describe the mood at the beginning of the poem.** (2)  
The words, 'greyness' and 'drizzle' create a dark and dismal mood. The weather is dull and gloomy. The alliteration of the heavy 'd' sound also adds to the miserable and grim start to the morning.
2. **Explain why the use of the word, 'Daddy' (line 39) is ironic.** (2)  
'Daddy' is a term of endearment used to show how 'normal' the Commandant's role as a father is. He is portrayed as a loving, family man which is ironic when one considers that his job entails the torture and murder of fellow human beings.
3. **Comment on the appropriateness of the title in context of the meaning of the poem.** (3)  
Vultures are associated with repugnant behaviour because they prey on the weak or sick. Despite the moment of tenderness witnessed between the pair, the vultures are regarded as unfeeling/heartless. Their cruel and evil deeds are equated to the evil committed by the Commandant who also preys on the weak and sick in the concentration camp. The vultures are a metaphor for people who commit atrocities against others.
4. **The speaker suggests that the world is not a place where hope can exist. Do you agree? Justify your response with reference to the poem.** (3)  
The last two lines of the poem might leave the reader feeling despondent and hopeless: 'perpetuity' suggests that evil is eternal and will not be eliminated. 'Evil' is the last word in the poem and will linger in the mind of the reader. The speaker acknowledges that love/tenderness does exist, but hoping that love will emerge from the depth of a monster's ('ogre') cold heart is futile. The predominance of images related to death and that focus on repugnant behaviour create a bleak and sombre mood. (3)

## POSSIBLE ESSAY QUESTIONS (250-300 words)

1. **Remember** - In "Remember", the speaker explores the opposing ideas of "remembering" and "forgetting" the dead. By close reference to the diction, imagery and tone of the poem, critically discuss the above statement.
2. **First day after the war** - Kunene's poem, "First Day after the War" is a celebratory vision of a post-apartheid future, built on renewal and a strong message about the power of the past. Critically discuss this statement and refer to the diction, imagery and tone of the poem.
3. **The Zulu Girl** - "The Zulu Girl foreshadows the future resistance of the South African people to policies of segregation and apartheid. It demonstrates Campbell's sympathy for the people of the Zulu nation, as well as his fear of them. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone, critically discuss this statement.
4. **Motho Ke Motho Ka Batho Babang** - Cronin's poem "Motho Ke Motho Ka Batho Baband" demonstrates his belief that we need the support of others, and close communication with others, in order to maintain our humanity. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone used in this poem, critically discuss this statement.
5. **Funeral Blues** - "Funeral Blues" is a powerful exploration of the devastating effects of grief and loss. By carefully examining the diction, imagery and tone of the poem, evaluate the validity of the above statement.
6. **Hard Frost** - In "A hard Frost" Day Lewis puts forward the idea that the superficial beauty that many people admire is worthless, even harmful. He believes that most of the valuable things in life are actually unseen and unacknowledged. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone, assess the validity of this statement.
7. **African Thunderstorm** - The storm in "An African Thunderstorm" is a frightening, chaotic, ruthless force. With reference to diction, imagery and tone, critically discuss this statement.

### TIP:



8. **African Elegy** - In "An African Elegy", Okri mourns the pain of Africa and celebrates its unique resilience. Discuss the validity of the statement, paying close attention to the diction, imagery and tone.
9. **Somewhere i have never travelled, gladly before** - Cummings uses words, images and grammar in a way that seems almost illogical – yet he creates a reality that is vividly evoked and extremely moving. By close examination of the diction, imagery and tone in "somewhere i have never travelled...", evaluate the validity of the statement.
10. **The Garden of love** – William Blake was very critical of the effect that the institutions of his time had on the individual. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone used in this poem, discuss how the poem reflects the truth of this statement.
11. **Felix Randal** – In "Felix Randal", Hopkins emphasises the temporary nature of human existence, and affirms the importance of religious faith. Critically discuss the statement with reference to diction, imagery and tone.
12. **Vultures** – In "Vultures", Chinua Achebe presents a chilling description of humanity's capacity for both tenderness and brutality. Discuss the validity of this statement.

## 1. Remember

In “Remember”, the speaker explores the opposing ideas of “remembering” and “forgetting” the dead. By close reference to the diction, imagery and tone of the poem, critically discuss the above statement.

### PLANNING

**INTRODUCTION:** In the poem Remember by Christina Rossetti the speaker explores the opposing ideas of ‘remembering’ and ‘forgetting’ the dead. This can be seen from the onset of the poem when the speaker starts with an instruction to her beloved which is followed by words that describe her death. The speaker uses images to describe death and life, as well as remembering and forgetting. There is also a change in tone between the octave and sestet.

- **The poem begins with an instruction from the speaker and is followed by words that describe her death.** The speaker’s opening line of the poem “Remember me” and concluding line “Better by far you should forget and smile” highlight the main theme of the poem. The speaker uses words that describe her death, such as “gone away”, “silent land”. These emphasise that death is felt as an absence. The euphemisms aim to make the absence more bearable. She uses phrases such as “hold me by the hand” to describe small pleasures of their everyday life that she wants them to remember. In the second part of the poem she realises that that these memories might cause pain and grants her lover permission to rather forget her and “smile”.
- **The speaker uses images to describe death and life, as well as remembering and forgetting.** Death is “the silent land” where she will be “gone away” and be with her loved one “no more”. The images she uses to describe their physical life together depict very simple, everyday things (“hold...hand” and “tell...planned). These are the times she wants her loved one to remember. The image of her beloved “forget[ing] and smil[ing]” is a less painful idea than the image of them “remember[ing] and be[ing] sad.”
- **There is a change in tone between the octave and sestet.** In the octave, when the speaker mentions her death and all the things that will no longer be possible the tone is sad. The instruction also comes across as commanding. The sestet however focusses on forgetting an letting go. The tone becomes more gentle and caring when the speaker grants her beloved permission to rather “forget and smile”, indicating that she has come to the conclusion that forgetting ins both necessary and good.

In conclusion, the diction, imagery and tone explore the speaker’s thoughts about remembering and forgetting. The author’s process of contemplating these contradictory ideas represent the natural stages of grief. This links to the theme of remembrance and relinquishment ending the poem on a note of acceptance.

## 2. First day after the war

Kunene’s poem, “First Day after the War” is a celebratory vision of a post-apartheid future, built on renewal and a strong message about the power of the past. Critically discuss this statement and refer to the diction, imagery and tone of the poem.

**INTRODUCTION:** This poem is a vision of what the first day after the struggle against apartheid will be like. It is a poem about celebration and joy.

- The poet chooses words that build a sense of celebration and joy by using images of a “wedding party” and a “festival”. The poet draws on the sounds of celebrations with words like “songs”, ululating, “calling”. These words help to build a mood of jubilation.
- The poet uses comparisons and juxtapositions that embody aspects of freedom, on the one hand as being nurturing and life-giving by personifying freedom as a woman and on the other hand as being strong and powerful by describing freedom as a “soft light / coiling”. The hope of a new life is evident in the images drawn from nature, such as the “young blades of grass” in line 3 and the “first fruits of the season” in line 13.
- The use of words that detail the sounds of people celebrating, such as “shouted” and “ululating” add energy and excitement to the tone of the poem. The mood is urgent (the people “shook up the old man demanding a festival” and emphatic in the short lines near the end of the poem. The tone changes in the last line when it becomes more serious: this line is a reminder that the people must look back to the past for guidance for their future.

**CONCLUSION:** In this poem the poet has built a vision of hope and celebration for freedom and peace, but has also given a strong message about the connection between a new future an the experience of the past.

3. **The Zulu Girl** - “The Zulu Girl foreshadows the future resistance of the South African people to policies of segregation and apartheid. It demonstrates Campbell’s sympathy for the people of the Zulu nation, as well as his fear of them. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone, critically discuss this statement.

**INTRODUCTION:** In this poem, the poet describes a Zulu woman feeding her baby and uses this image to suggest that the Zulu people will rise up in the future.

- The diction of the poem starts by referring to heat and the exhaustion of the field workers (“hot red acres”; “sweating gang”; “deep langours”). As the poem continues, the phrases “unquenched unsmotherable heat”, “curbed ferocity” and “so terrible and still” give an indication of anger and violence hidden beneath the exhaustion created by the heat. The heat itself could symbolize anger.
- The imager also suggests a hidden menace – the col shade is “purpled” with “blood” and the mother’s caresses “prowl” and create “sharp electric clicks”. Her baby “imbibes” the historic anger of his tribe together with his mother’s milk. Her body is simultaneously protecting (“a hill...rest” and ominous (“the first...its breast”).
- The tone of the poem is initially fairly matter-of-fact in its description of farm workers in the hot fields, and a young mother feeding her baby in the shade. It soon becomes more emotive, however, as the poet describes the anger and resentment, and desire for revenge, which the young child absorbs at his mother’s breast. The final stanza gives a disturbing hint of violence and destruction to come, as the “harvest of the suffering that has been imposed on the Zulu.

**CONCLUSION:** Campbell seems to empathise with the feelings of the Zulu nation – he speaks of their “dignity” and describes their hidden anger in almost admiring terms. The notion of an infant absorbing his inheritance, of events and emotions he has never experienced, is quite and unusual one. Added to that is the image of the mother’s body, which depict nurturing protectiveness but also symbolizes the coming revenge of the Zulu people. These two ideas couple express Campbell’s fear at what the future might bring.

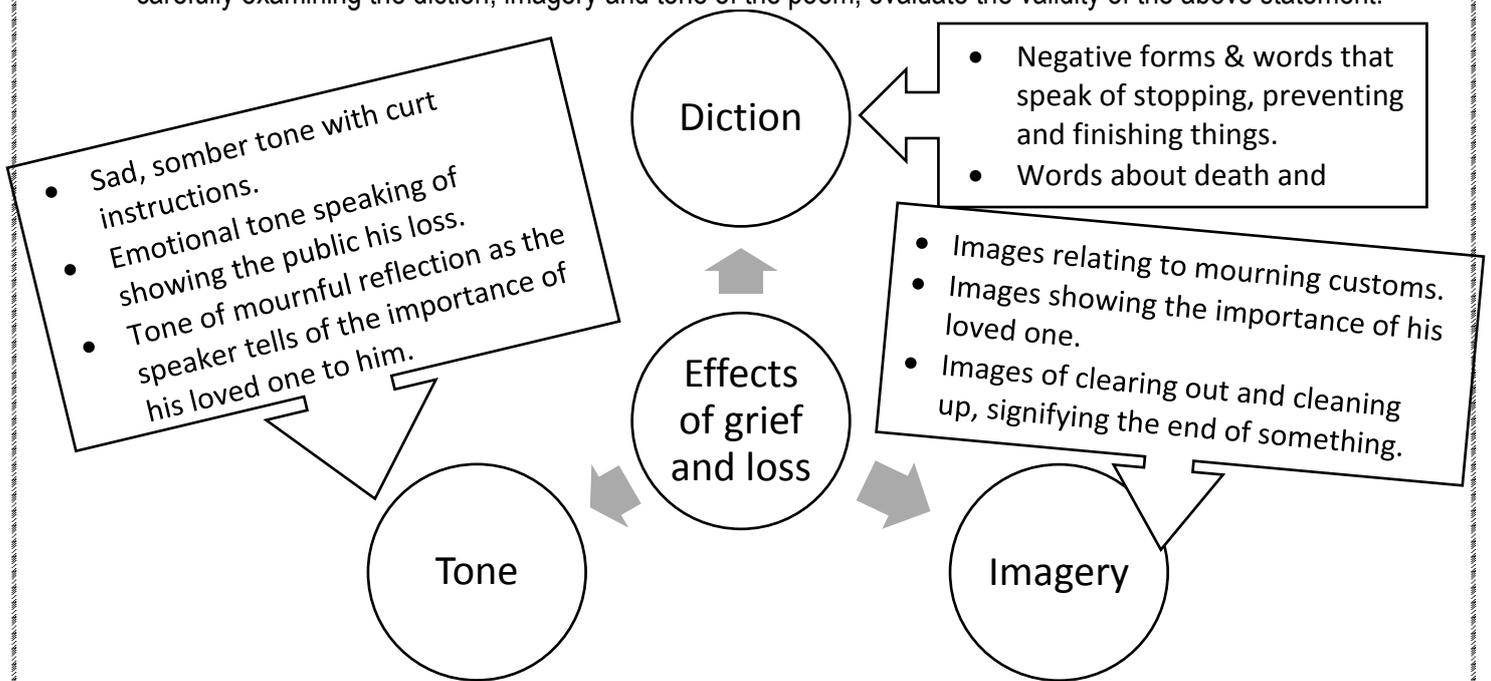
4. **Motho Ke Motho Ka Batho Babang** - Cronin’s poem “Motho Ke Motho Ka Batho Baband” demonstrates his belief that we need the support of others , and close communication with others, in order to maintain our humanity. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone used in this poem, critically discuss this statement.

**INTRODUCTION:** The poem begins with an image of complete isolation – a prisoner alone in a cell, not allowed to communicate with other prisoners. TO try and make some contact with others, he uses his mirror to see what is going on outside. The prisoner he sees in the corridor begins a silent communication with him by means of gestures.

- The speaker gives us a clear picture of the images he observes: the fingers that “bunch together” to show “An object...badge” on the “imaginary cap” of a warder”; the two fingers making a “vee” and wiggling “like two antennae” to show he is being watched; the moving “watch-hand’s arc”, to show they will speak later; and finally the clenched fist to indicate solidarity and support. All these images are understood perfectly by the speaker and in spite of his solitude he feels supported and comforted; part of a caring community.
- The diction used by the poet is simple and informal. The conversation between the two prisoners is confided to silent gestures expressing simple yet powerful ideas. Similarly, the speakers narrative uses simple words to describe what he saw (“There’s a person down there”; “He’s being watched” ; “In my mirror;/A black fist”) but this was clearly a moving and important experience for him. This suggests that closeness and communication between people does not have to be complicated – we merely have to be understood and supported.
- The tone of the poem is also informal and conversational, almost intimate. The speaker tells us every detail of what he sees so that we are drawn into the silent yet satisfying conversation, as if we are participants. He mentions the imaginary badge “Which travels...forehead” and we find ourselves watching in our imaginations.

**CONCLUSION:** The poet thus uses an informal, intimate tone and simple diction to convey a series of powerful images that show us clearly how the prisoners maintain a community that allowed them to feel that they had not been deprived of their humanity.

5. **Funeral Blues** - "Funeral Blues" is a powerful exploration of the devastating effects of grief and loss. By carefully examining the diction, imagery and tone of the poem, evaluate the validity of the above statement.



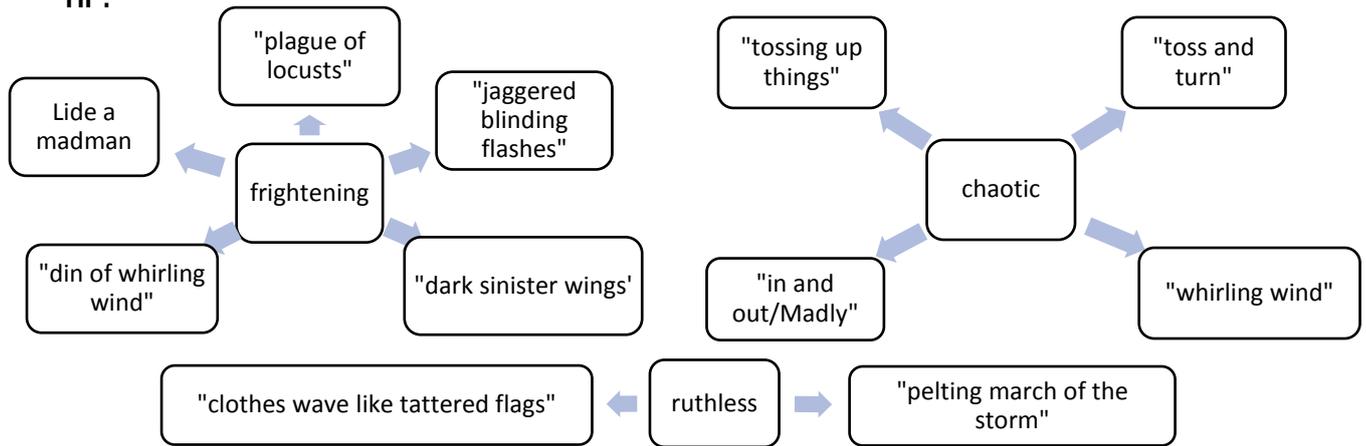
6. **A Hard Frost** - In "A hard Frost" Day Lewis puts forward the idea that the superficial beauty that many people admire is worthless, even harmful. He believes that most of the valuable things in life are actually unseen and unacknowledged. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone, assess the validity of this statement.

**PLANNING**

<p><b>Diction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Words describing beauty of frost: brilliant, crystal, blaze, diamonds, bridal gear</li> <li>• Words critical of frost: stole, changeling, precocious, amorphous, blind, mockery, death</li> <li>• Words describing the positive action of the frost: real transformation, progress, unclenches, future, breathe</li> </ul>	<p><b>Imagery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frost as a "changeling"</li> <li>• The mist as prehistoric "blind tissue"</li> <li>• frost as "Mockery spring" deceiving the "raw country maid"</li> <li>• frost "worrying" the "stiff clods" and forcing them to release their "grip" on the seeds so the future can "breathe"</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tone of contempt and disapproval for the beauty of frost</li> <li>• tone of satisfaction when describing the frost's action underground</li> </ul>
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7. **African Thunderstorm** - The storm in “An African Thunderstorm” is a frightening, chaotic, ruthless force. With reference to diction, imagery and tone, critically discuss this statement.

**TIP:**



8. **African Elegy** - In “An African Elegy”, Okri mourns the pain of Africa and celebrates its unique resilience. Discuss the validity of the statement, paying close attention to the diction, imagery and tone.

<p><b>INTRODUCTION:</b> “An African Elegy” does discuss the intense suffering experienced by the people of Africa through the ages, but it is also a joyful poem, rejoicing in their power to transcend their suffering and experience the pleasures of life.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The speaker acknowledges that Africa’s history has been a painful one. However there are many words that show how African people are still able to enjoy the pleasures of life and keep their optimism about the future, as in: “We are the miracles”; “We are precious”; “the wonders of the earth”, “golden...happy”; “sing and dream sweet”; “secret miracles”; “life is good”; “full of songs” and “Destiny is our friend...”.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The speaker uses images that describe the wonderful pleasures and beauty that can still be appreciated, even when there are difficult times, for example, “things...happy in Stanza 2; “never...warm” in Stanza 3; “It makes ...forth” and “I...singing” Stanza 4. He also makes reference to things that cannot be easily explained or clearly understood, but which he believes tell of a positive outcome, for example “We...made” and “one day...earth” in stanza 1.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The speaker’s tone is one of strength and confidence. The diction and imagery combine to create a mood of elation. “We are...made”, “We are precious”, and “wonders...earth”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CONCLUSION:</b> In spite of the speaker’s acknowledgement of African suffering, a study of the diction, imagery and tone used in the poem shows an optimistic and joyful side to African people’s experience of life.</p>

9. **Somewhere i have never travelled, gladly before** - Cummings uses words, images and grammar in a way that seems almost illogical – yet he creates a reality that is vividly evoked and extremely moving. By close examination of the diction, imagery and tone in “somewhere i have never travelled...”, evaluate the validity of the statement.

### PLANNING

Diction	Imagery	Tone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusual words in the context - "gladly...experience"; "touching...mysteriously"; "shut very beautifully"</li> <li>• Words that are made up - "unclose"</li> <li>• Words that are used "wrongly" - "you open...myself"; "each breathing"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• images of closing and unclosing; flower and nature</li> <li>• Contradictory or illogical images - "your eyes...silence"; i have closed...as fingers"; "my life...beautifully"; "the power...fragility"; the colour of...countries"; the voice...eyes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tone of wonder and reverence; willing surrender to the power of love</li> </ul>

10. **The Garden of love** – William Blake was very critical of the effect that the institutions of his time had on the individual. By close reference to diction, imagery and tone used in this poem, discuss how the poem reflects the truth of this statement.

**INTRODUCTION:** The poem describes the poet’s return to a “Garden of Love” in which he used to play. This could be an actual or mental/emotional state of mind. However we interpret it, the way the poet describes the garden and the way he describes the chapel that has replaced it are very different and clearly show his anger at and disapproval of the Christian Church of his time.

- The words chosen by the poet to describe the garden he remembers are very positive. He speaks of how he would “play on the green” and “sweet flowers”. The “joys and desires” he mentions in the last line are also associated with the garden. His description of what has been done with the garden, however, clearly shows his disapproval. He describes the “shut” gates and words “Thou shalt not” over the door; and he tells of the “graves” and “tombstones” that have replaced the flowers. The priests “in black gowns” are “binding with briars” people’s pleasure. All these words convey his distaste for the chapel that has replaced his garden.
- By using the above emotive words Blake creates a mood of nostalgia for the carefree garden of his youth, and of disgust at the petty nastiness of the Church and its ways. As he sees one horrible sight after the other the tone becomes almost despairing, as if he is trapped in a nightmare in which everything good, natural and beautiful has been destroyed by the individual in bonds of shame and guilt.

**CONCLUSION:** Blake uses several powerful images to represent very different things. The chapel and graves represent a prison-like church, locked and forbidding, which asserts its power over the individual and sucks all the joy from their lives. Death and darkness are all it can offer. The garden or “green” represent an innocent, Eden-like state in which people can enjoy the beauty of nature – their own instinctive natures and the loveliness of the natural world.

11. **Felix Randal** – In “Felix Randal”, Hopkins emphasises the temporary nature of human existence, and affirms the importance of religious faith. Critically discuss the statement with reference to diction, imagery and tone.

**INTRODUCTION:** The speaker in the poem cared for Randal during his final illness. He watched him become weaker, struggle against sickness, and finally find spiritual peace before he died.

- He repeatedly contrasts the healthy Randal and the sick man to emphasise that physical health and strength does not last forever; “big-boned... handsome” and “pining...rambled”; “Sickness...at first” and “boisterous...peers”.
- Randal’s huge physical strength was powerless against the illness – his “reason rambled” as the “fatal...disorders” took over his body; the sickness “broke him”. These images emphasise how frail our human bodies are even when we seem strong.
- Religious faith brought Randal comfort. He “mended...anointed” and gained a “heavenlier heart” when the priest offered him spiritual comfort – “our...ransom”. Line 8 brings a tone of confidence as the speaker expresses his belief that God will “rest him” and forgive him his sins.

**CONCLUSION:** The poet’s use of direction, imagery and tone does support the validity of the statement. However the speaker was not implying that the worldly life is unimportant – he expresses his personal grief at Randal’s death (“child...Randal”) and also his personal feelings of fulfilment caused by his care of Randal (“This seeing...endears”). Even though he believes in the importance of faith, he still relates to Randal in a very human and loving way.

12. **Vultures** – In “Vultures”, Chinua Achebe presents a chilling description of humanity’s capacity for both tenderness and brutality. Discuss the validity of this statement.

### PLANNING

