

## Examiner Session

### Unseen Poetry

Poem: Brown and Agile Child (Page 9 in the Poetry Live booklet)

Question: How does the poet present the child in the poem, and the speaker's feelings about him?

Examiner advice:

- Read through the poem twice
- Look at the start and end of the poems
- Don't write about parts of the poem you don't understand – write about the parts that you 'get'
- When reading the poem the second time, just look for what the question is asking for
- Page 11 in the booklet – have a read of the three example responses and examiner's commentary to see what marks they scored. NB – these are only part of the response.

### Comparison of Unseen

Page 13 of the booklet

Poem: My Shadow

Question: Compare how the poets present children

Examiner advice:

- Read over the example responses. These are the actual length of responses.
- Compare **how** .... – you should be comparing the devices/structure
- Write about **methods** not meanings.
- Consider the 'mood' of the poem and how it is created
- It may be only worth 8marks, but that is enough marks to bridge a grade boundary

## Poets

### Carol Ann Duffy

War Photographer

- Based on her friend Don McCullen
  - o He felt he could make a difference by bearing witness to such things
  - o It was a risky and dangerous work as he travelled with the soldiers
  - o He was shot and seriously injured on several occasions
  - o Don didn't like it when his photographs were next to adverts/supermodels in the Sunday newspapers – he felt his work should stand alone. Guilt crept in to his vocation
- In each verse, she moves through what he's doing.
- Uses the idea of a priest but swaps the wine/bread for the photographs and images
- Duffy felt that Don McCullen was an extraordinary man, but it wasn't until 10 years after meeting him that she wrote the poem. Duffy shared that poems don't have been as immediate as journalism, she likened them to a 'splinter' that worked its way to the surface.
- The poem is a way of encapsulating the things that he told her and tried to capture him. She wants to portray emotions of sympathy for the way his photos were published.

- “solutions slop in trays” Duffy explored the word ‘solutions’ has a dual meaning by the way of ‘answers’ and the liquid used.

## **Simon Armitage**

### Remains

- A response to being told that we live in ‘peace time’ (post WW2), but actually the UK has ‘exported’ those conflicts or they’re off the radar.
- Simon felt it a duty to discuss war and conflict.
- War poets were the ‘bloggers’ of the day and were countering the news reports of the day.
- Based on a soldier, Rob from West Bromwich interviewed for his documentary ‘The Not Dead’
- Rob told Simon that he didn’t mind killing the opposition, but it was the ‘blood shadow’ that he couldn’t get out of his brain. He hadn’t thought about the enemy having a life until he had watched the soldier bleed out on the street.
- Remains – double meaning: what ‘remains’ in your mind after the event, but also the ‘remains’ (entrails)
- Many sections are verbatim from what Rob the soldier told him – he felt it important to reflect this in the poem
- Rob described how he felt he saw the bullet pass through the man’s body and saw daylight on the other side, whilst it is not technically possible, Rob felt that was what happened and Armitage wanted to capture this and honour it.
- Has considered himself a pacifist previously, however he explained that if you expect people to go and fight for a cause, then you have a duty to support those people (soldiers) particularly when they come back damaged. Armitage felt that the soldiers has been let down and not cared for. He felt pity for the soldiers.
- Simon referenced Wilfred Owen’s quote regarding ‘pity’ – he felt pity for these soldiers when interviewing them.

## **Imtiaz Dharker**

### Tissue

- Idea came after finding a photograph with her father’s notes on the back
- She felt that the ‘scraps of paper that we throwaway really tell the story of our lives’ and are worth more than large monument. E.g. how we spend our days/minutes (links to receipts etc.)
- Tissue is a metaphor for not throwing away human tissue. This links to the last line. She felt that people shouldn’t be disposed of in the war. Human tissue is fragile.

## **John Agard**

### Checking Out Me History

- Agard explored the location of Guyana and influence of neighbouring countries and language. It is a country influenced by the Caribbean, but also a British colony. He explained ‘shadism’ whereby people were grouped and labelled by the colour of their skin. Agard explains how he was labelled a ‘red man’.

- Agard is grateful for his education, but he was taught by Irish Jesuit which seemed a contrast to the rest of the Caribbean students in his class.
- Agard describes how he enjoyed listening to the radio and hearing the cricket matches but also reading classic British authors like Enid Blyton, which is what developed his vocabulary. Language 'seeped' into him in many different ways. Agard was also influenced by the calypso songs he heard in the market as well as other mainstream artists.
- Touissant L'Overture – rode his horse in such a way that it created gaps between the enemy.
- Nanny deMaroon – a runaway slave woman who led an army of slaves against the British, she became a national heroine of Jamaica. (Comparisons can be made with Boudica)