

Oxford Revise | AQA GCSE English Literature: Power and Conflict Poetry Anthology | Answer

Mark Scheme

Behind each exam question is a set of assessment objectives (AOs). The examiner will use these AOs to help mark your answer. If you answer the question accurately, you will automatically cover all the AOs.

Level	Marks	Explanation
1	0–5	<i>A simple response</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 – occasional focus on the question, simple points made • AO2 – little engagement with ideas, little engagement with methods • AO3 – some misunderstandings • AO4 – phrasing might be unclear
2	6–10	<i>A relevant response</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 – question focus generally secure, relevant if underdeveloped ideas • AO2 – some engagement with ideas, basic grasp of methods • AO3 – generally competent understanding • AO4 – phrasing mainly clear
3	11–15	<i>An explained response</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 – focus on the question secure, points are explained using examples and explanation • AO2 – some engagement with ideas, sound grasp of methods • AO3 – competent understanding • AO4 – phrasing mainly clear
4	16–20	<i>A clear response</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 – focus on the question secure, points are clear and developed • AO2 – clear engagement with ideas, clear grasp of methods • AO3 – clear and secure understanding • AO4 – clear phrasing
5	21–25	<i>A thoughtful response</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 – focus on the question secure, points are clear and developed with insight • AO2 – clear and thoughtful engagement with ideas, clear grasp of methods • AO3 – clear and secure understanding with useful details • AO4 – clear phrasing

6	26–30	<p><i>A conceptual response</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 – focus on the question secure, points explore ideas at a high level • AO2 – perceptive engagement with ideas, perceptive grasp of methods • AO3 – insightful understanding with useful details • AO4 – clear/fluent phrasing
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2 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley

AO1

- Any valid points about the effects of power, such as arrogance, and belief in lasting dominance in 'Ozymandias'.
- An exploration of power and oppression, for example, in 'London' or 'My Last Duchess'.
- A comparison of the downfall from power in 'Ozymandias' with other poems such as 'London' or 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Comparisons of different forms of power, for example, political power in 'Ozymandias' and natural power in 'Storm on the Island'.
- An exploration of ideas about personal control and manipulation in 'My Last Duchess' compared with the idea of ruined legacy in 'Ozymandias'.

AO2

- Use of persona: first-person in 'Ozymandias' compared with the omniscient voice in 'London'.
- Language of decay in 'Ozymandias' (for example 'colossal wreck') compared with oppression in 'London'.
- Imagery: the 'shattered visage' in 'Ozymandias' compared with the fear of nature in 'Storm on the Island'.
- The sonnet form in 'Ozymandias' and its message of decay compared with the rigid quatrains in 'London'.
- Structural control in 'Ozymandias' (including the variety of voices and volta) compared with the dramatic monologue in 'My Last Duchess'.

AO3

- Ideas about the corrupting influence of power: 'Ozymandias' and 'London' critique authority.
- Points about hubris and fleeting legacy in 'Ozymandias' compared with institutional power in 'London'.
- Moral questions about leadership in 'Ozymandias' and 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Romantic critique of hubris in 'Ozymandias' and a social critique of repression in 'London' during the Industrial Revolution.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley and 'My Last Duchess' by Robert Browning explore the effects of power on individuals, and the fragility of that power. While Shelley presents power as fleeting and ultimately insignificant in the grand scheme of time, Browning portrays power as something that corrupts and isolates those who possess it, with a focus on controlling others.

In 'Ozymandias', Shelley presents the power of rulers as transient and subject to the forces of time. The poem begins with a traveller recounting the remains of a statue: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone / Stand in the desert.' The description of the statue's fragmented state immediately suggests that Ozymandias' once-great power has crumbled. Shelley's choice of the word 'trunkless' highlights the incompleteness of the statue, symbolising the inevitable decay of human achievements. Despite the king's self-proclaimed power, his legacy has been reduced to ruins. This reflects Shelley's idea of human power: that nature and time are more powerful than any human being.

Shelley further critiques Ozymandias' arrogance through the inscription on the statue's pedestal: 'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: / Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!' The irony here is that Ozymandias' 'works' no longer exist, and the only thing that remains is a broken statue surrounded by endless desert. Shelley's use of the imperative 'Look' conveys the king's command to others, reinforcing his belief in his own greatness. However, the surrounding desolation undermines his authority, suggesting that even the most powerful figures are ultimately insignificant in the face of time. This contrast between Ozymandias' perception of his power and the reality of his forgotten legacy exemplifies Shelley's criticism of tyrannical rulers who believe they can defy the forces of time and nature.

The form of the poem also reinforces this message. Written as a sonnet, 'Ozymandias' follows the traditional form associated with love and admiration but subverts these expectations by focusing on a fallen ruler. The poem's loose structure and irregular rhyme scheme reflect the disintegration of Ozymandias' power. The volta occurs with the description of the 'boundless and bare' sands, symbolising the endless passage of time and the futility of human pride. This subtle shift emphasises the fleeting nature of power and how easily it can be erased.

In contrast, Browning's 'My Last Duchess' presents power as something that corrupts those who wield it, particularly in the form of personal control over others. The Duke, the speaker of the poem, reveals his desire for dominance over his deceased wife, as demonstrated by his description of her portrait: 'That's my last Duchess painted on the wall, / Looking as if she were alive.' The word 'my' immediately establishes the Duke's belief that he owns the Duchess, even after her death. His desire for control is further highlighted by the fact that the portrait is hidden behind a curtain that only he can draw. This image symbolises the Duke's power to control how others view the Duchess, reducing her to an object for his personal gratification.

Browning uses a dramatic monologue to give readers insight into the Duke's character and the effects of power on him. The Duke's speech reveals his arrogance and entitlement, particularly when he describes the Duchess' behaviour as unacceptable: 'She had / A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad.' His frustration with her joy in life and ability to appreciate others shows his desire to control her emotions and interactions. The Duke's command over language mirrors his control over the people in his life, especially his wife. His calm, measured tone contrasts with the underlying violence of his words, particularly when he chillingly states, 'I gave commands; / Then all smiles stopped together.' This euphemism for murder reflects the ultimate consequence of the Duke's power: the ability to end a life without remorse.

Browning also uses enjambment to convey the Duke's lack of moral boundaries. The flow of his speech is continuous, reflecting his belief that he can act without interruption or consequence. His monologue is punctuated by moments of control, such as when he shifts the conversation back to the portrait of the Duchess, reinforcing his desire to dominate both the conversation and his late wife's memory. This control is contrasted with the Duke's underlying insecurity, which drives him to exert power over others to maintain his fragile sense of superiority.

Ultimately, both poets highlight the transient and destructive nature of power, but while Shelley focuses on the inevitable decline of all empires, Browning presents the more personal consequences of power: the isolation and corruption of the individual.

3 'London' by William Blake

AO1

- Any valid ideas about the portrayal of power in 'London' as an oppressive force, controlling and restricting the lives of ordinary people.
- Ideas about the effects of political and institutional power (Church, monarchy) in 'London' compared with other poems such as 'Ozymandias' or 'My Last Duchess'.
- Points about the destructive effects of power in 'London' compared with the downfall of power in 'Ozymandias'.
- Comparison of how poets present nature's power differently, for example, in 'Storm on the Island' or 'The Prelude'.
- Ideas about how personal and social powerlessness is conveyed in 'London' compared with poems such as 'Remains' or 'Exposure'.

AO2

- Blake's use of repetition (such as 'Every black'ning church') to emphasise oppression in 'London'.
- The contrast between violent and controlling imagery in 'London' ('mind-forged manacles') and decaying imagery in 'Ozymandias'.
- The use of sensory imagery in 'London' (sounds of cries, 'Marks of weakness') compared with the grandeur of the imagery in 'Ozymandias'.
- A comparison of the use of rigid quatrains in 'London', to reflect control and oppression, with the structure of 'My Last Duchess' as a dramatic monologue.
- Ideas about how the regular rhyme scheme in 'London' represents the inescapability of power.

AO3

- Any valid exploration of the political/social critique in 'London', targeting institutional powers.
- Critique of the oppressive leadership and corruption in 'London' compared with 'Ozymandias'.
- Ideas about the effect of the Industrial Revolution in 'London' compared with the Romantic critique of hubris in 'Ozymandias'.
- Commentary on how social responsibility and leadership are portrayed in both 'London' and 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Similar ideas about exploitation and the effects of war/power in poems such as 'Remains' or 'Exposure'.

4 Extract from 'The Prelude' by William Wordsworth

AO1

- Any valid ideas on how the writer of 'The Prelude' presents nature's power as overwhelming and awe-inspiring.
- An exploration of personal powerlessness in the face of nature in 'The Prelude' compared with political power in 'Ozymandias' or 'London'.
- A comparison of nature's power in 'The Prelude' with other poems such as 'Storm on the Island' or 'Tissue'.
- An explanation of how the writer conveys the idea of the sublime in 'The Prelude': nature as both beautiful and terrifying.
- Exploration of the idea of inner conflict and human insignificance in 'The Prelude' compared with 'Exposure' or 'Storm on the Island'.

AO2

- Wordsworth's use of imagery in 'The Prelude' (for example, 'huge peak, black and huge') to show nature's dominance.
- Contrast the grandeur of nature in 'The Prelude' with the imagery of decay in 'Ozymandias'.
- Ideas about the use of perspective: first-person reflection in 'The Prelude' compared with the narrative voice in 'Ozymandias' or 'London'.
- Structural elements: blank verse in 'The Prelude' to reflect the ongoing flow of nature, compared with the rigid quatrains of 'London' or the sonnet form of 'Ozymandias'.
- Ideas about the use of metaphor in 'The Prelude' (nature as a towering force) compared with the metaphor of power in 'Ozymandias' (grand statues and buildings).

AO3

- Romantic ideas in 'The Prelude': power of nature over man compared with human arrogance in 'Ozymandias'.
- Critique of human control and power in 'The Prelude' and 'Ozymandias'.
- Ideas about the context of personal reflection and spiritual growth in 'The Prelude' compared to societal or political criticism in 'London'.
- Exploration of fear and awe in the face of natural power in 'The Prelude'.
- Comparison of the fear of war's power in 'Exposure' or nature's power in 'Storm on the Island'.
- Ideas about humankind's vulnerability in both 'The Prelude' and other poems such as 'Exposure'.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both Extract from 'The Prelude' by William Wordsworth and 'Storm on the Island' by Seamus Heaney explore the power of nature and its impact on humans. While Wordsworth reflects on the overwhelming and sublime forces of nature that humble his speaker, Heaney focuses on the violent, unpredictable aspects of nature, which show how insignificant human efforts are against its immense power.

In Extract from 'The Prelude', Wordsworth presents nature's power as sublime and awe-inspiring, transforming the speaker's perception of the world. The poem begins with a sense of youthful confidence as the speaker describes his actions: 'It was an act of stealth / And troubled pleasure.' Wordsworth uses oxymoron to suggest the mix of excitement and guilt in his act of taking a boat, foreshadowing the humbling experience that nature will impose on him. The phrase 'troubled pleasure' also hints at the poet's recognition that his seemingly innocent actions will lead to an important revelation about the power of nature.

The turning point in the poem occurs when the speaker notices the looming presence of a mountain: 'The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge.' The repetition of 'huge' emphasises the enormity of the mountain, and the shift from the earlier, serene descriptions of the natural world to this darker, more intimidating image highlights nature's sublime power. The mountain is personified as it 'Upreared its head,' suggesting an almost conscious, threatening force. Wordsworth's use of simple, stark language underscores the speaker's sudden fear and awe, conveying nature's capacity to dominate humanity.

The structure of the poem also reflects the growing tension as the speaker's perception of nature changes. Wordsworth employs enjambment, reflecting the overwhelming flow of the speaker's thoughts as he processes his experience. The increasing length of the sentences and the lack of pauses convey the speaker's growing sense of panic as he becomes aware of nature's immense, uncontrollable power. By the end of the extract, the speaker's previous confidence is replaced with a sense of his insignificance and vulnerability, as nature forces him to confront his own limitations.

Similarly, Heaney's 'Storm on the Island' explores the formidable power of nature, though Heaney focuses more on the destructive and unpredictable aspects of natural forces. The poem opens with a confident tone: 'We are prepared: we build our houses squat.' The short, declarative sentences and practical language convey a sense of human resilience in the face of nature's challenges. However, this confidence is soon undermined as the poem progresses and the storm becomes an unstoppable force. Heaney uses military imagery to depict the storm as a violent adversary: 'the flung spray hits / The very windows, spits like a tame cat / Turned savage.' The simile of the cat 'Turned savage' captures the sudden, unpredictable change in nature's behaviour, reinforcing the idea that humans cannot fully control or predict its power.

The poem's structure, written in a single stanza of blank verse, mirrors the storm's relentless onslaught. There is no respite for the speaker, just as there is no pause in the storm's fury. Heaney's use of enjambment and fragmented phrasing, such as 'when it blows full / Blast,' creates a sense of chaos and disruption, reflecting the uncontrollable force of the wind. The lack of rhyme scheme also contributes to the unpredictability of the storm, further emphasising the powerlessness of humans in the face of nature's might.

Heaney also presents the storm as something both invisible and overwhelming. The speaker comments that, 'there are no trees, no natural shelter.' This barrenness highlights human vulnerability, as there is

no defence against the storm's power. The paradox in the poem's final line – 'it is a huge nothing that we fear' – encapsulates the idea that nature's power lies not only in what is physically seen but also in its unseen, intangible forces, such as the wind, that humans cannot escape. Ultimately, Heaney suggests that nature's power is not just physical but also psychological, instilling fear and a sense of helplessness in those who face it.

Both Extract from 'The Prelude' and 'Storm on the Island' present the power of nature as overwhelming and humbling, although they approach this idea from different angles. In 'The Prelude', Wordsworth's focus is on nature as a force that inspires awe and leads to a deeper understanding of human limitations. In contrast, Heaney's 'Storm on the Island' explores the violent and chaotic power of nature, focusing on its destructive potential. Both poems ultimately highlight humanity's vulnerability to nature's power; however, while Wordsworth sees this power as awe-inspiring and transformative, Heaney presents it as something far more violent and terrifying.

5 'My Last Duchess' by Robert Browning

AO1

- Ideas about how 'My Last Duchess' presents power and control in personal relationships through manipulation and dominance.
- Exploration of political power and control in other poems, such as 'Ozymandias' or 'London'.
- Comparison of the Duke's obsessive control in 'My Last Duchess' with the prideful tyranny in 'Ozymandias'.
- Ideas about psychological control in 'My Last Duchess' compared with ideas of societal control in 'London'.
- The poems' exploration of the consequences of unchecked power, whether personal or political.

AO2

- Use of dramatic monologue in 'My Last Duchess' to reveal the Duke's controlling nature.
- Use of possessive language in 'My Last Duchess' ('my object') compared with the language of decay and ruin in 'Ozymandias'.
- Structural control in 'My Last Duchess': enjambment contrasts with rigid iambic pentameter to show control slipping.
- Imagery: the Duke's desire to control his wife compared with the decayed statue in 'Ozymandias' as a symbol of failed power.
- Contrast of first-person monologue in 'My Last Duchess' with omniscient narrative in 'London'.

AO3

- Exploration of Renaissance ideas of patriarchy and control in 'My Last Duchess' compared with Romantic criticism of political arrogance in 'Ozymandias'.
- Critique of the abuse of personal power and control in 'My Last Duchess' compared with the corruptive power in 'London'.
- Ideas about male dominance and the abusive treatment of women in 'My Last Duchess'.
- Exploration of the theme of power's inevitable decline, such as 'Ozymandias', compared with the Duke's need to immortalise his wife's image in 'My Last Duchess'.
- Reflection on social hierarchies in 'My Last Duchess' compared with the critique of institutional power in 'London'.

6 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

AO1

- Ideas about how 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' presents conflict as noble but also disastrous, focusing on duty and sacrifice.
- Exploration of conflict's futility in other poems, such as 'Exposure' or 'Bayonet Charge'.
- Comparison of heroic yet tragic imagery in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' with the physical and mental suffering in 'Exposure'.
- Poems' exploration of different experiences of war: glory in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' compared with agony and suffering in 'Exposure'.
- Contrast between collective heroism in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and personal trauma in 'Remains' or 'Bayonet Charge'.

AO2

- Use of repetition in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' ('Rode the six hundred') to emphasise bravery and the inevitability of death.
- Violent imagery in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' ('Storm'd at with shot and shell') compared with the bleak, cold imagery in 'Exposure'.
- Rhythm and metre in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' to reflect the forward momentum and relentless charge compared with the slow, lingering suffering in 'Exposure'.
- Use of language to glorify war in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' ('Noble six hundred!') compared with the harsh realism in 'Bayonet Charge'.
- Contrast of fast-paced action in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' with the monotonous, freezing atmosphere in 'Exposure'.

AO3

- Ideas about how 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' reflects Victorian ideas of honour, patriotism, and duty in warfare.
- Criticism of leadership in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' ('Some one had blunder'd') compared with the critique of war's pointlessness in 'Exposure'.
- Ideas about how 'Exposure' reflects the grim reality of the First World War compared to the heroic but futile depiction of conflict in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Exploration of the idea of sacrifice in poems: such as the noble sacrifice in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' compared with the senseless loss in 'Exposure' or 'Bayonet Charge'.
- Ideas about the dehumanising effects of war in 'Remains' compared with the glorification of bravery in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' by Alfred Lord Tennyson and 'Bayonet Charge' by Ted Hughes explore the brutality and chaos of war, but while Tennyson focuses on the heroic and sacrificial nature of soldiers in conflict, Hughes presents a more visceral, personal experience of fear and confusion.

In 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', Tennyson presents the conflict of war as both heroic and tragic, focusing on the bravery of the soldiers who followed orders despite knowing the dangers they faced. The poem commemorates the doomed charge of the Light Brigade during the Crimean War, and Tennyson uses vivid imagery to highlight both the glory and the futility of their actions. The repetition of 'Half a league, half a league, / Half a league onward' in the opening lines creates a relentless rhythm that mirrors the soldiers' advance into battle. This rhythmic momentum reflects the inevitability of their charge, as they move 'Into the valley of Death,' a phrase that suggests both the soldiers' courage and the fatal consequences of their mission. The personification of 'Death' adds a sense of finality to the conflict, emphasising the soldiers' sacrifice.

Tennyson also glorifies the soldiers through his use of language that portrays them as noble and honourable, despite the tactical error that led to their deaths. The refrain 'Theirs not to reason why, / Theirs but to do and die' reinforces the idea that the soldiers followed orders without question, accepting their fate with stoic bravery. This unquestioning loyalty is presented as the ultimate form of heroism. Tennyson's use of the imperative, 'Honour the charge they made!' in the closing stanza encourages readers to remember the soldiers' sacrifice, elevating their actions to the level of national pride.

In contrast, Hughes' 'Bayonet Charge' presents a more personal depiction of conflict, focusing on the inner turmoil of a soldier caught in the midst of battle. The poem opens *in medias res*, with, 'Suddenly he awoke and was running,' immediately plunging the reader into the chaos and confusion of war. Unlike Tennyson's depiction of heroism, Hughes presents the soldier's experience as one of fear and disorientation. The use of enjambment throughout the poem mirrors the soldier's frantic movements, while the irregular line lengths reflect the unpredictability and confusion of battle. This fragmented structure contrasts sharply with the more structured rhythm of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', highlighting the disordered nature of the soldier's emotions in 'Bayonet Charge'.

Hughes' use of imagery emphasises the physical and emotional impact of war. The soldier is described as, 'Stumbling across a field of clods towards a green hedge,' an image that suggests both the physical difficulty of his movements and the futility of his actions. The word 'stumbling' connotes vulnerability and lack of control, reinforcing the soldier's helplessness. Additionally, Hughes uses vivid similes to convey the soldier's emotional turmoil in the line 'Sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest.' This image suggests that the ideals that once motivated the soldier have become a heavy, painful burden, weighing him down and eroding his sense of purpose. In contrast to Tennyson's depiction of soldiers as heroic, Hughes presents the soldier's internal conflict as one of fear and doubt, questioning the value of patriotism in the face of overwhelming violence.

The final stanza of 'Bayonet Charge' leaves the reader with a bleak portrayal of conflict. The metaphor of 'His terror's touchy dynamite' suggests the soldier is on the verge of losing control, driven purely by instinct and fear. This contrasts with Tennyson's portrayal of soldiers as disciplined and noble in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'; rather, Hughes' poem suggests that war strips individuals of their humanity and leaves them consumed by terror.

Ultimately, both poets highlight the brutality of war, but where Tennyson sees conflict as an opportunity for heroism, Hughes portrays it as a destructive force that overwhelms and dehumanises those fighting within it.

7 'Exposure' by Wilfred Owen

AO1

- Any valid ideas about how 'Exposure' presents the effects of war as physically and mentally draining, focusing on soldiers' suffering in harsh conditions.
- Comparison of the emotional impact of war in 'Exposure' with other poems such as 'Bayonet Charge' or 'Remains', which focus on personal trauma.
- Poems' exploration of the idea of war's futility: 'Exposure' emphasises the pointlessness of waiting and suffering.
- Contrast the presentation of war's prolonged agony in 'Exposure' with the intense, short-lived action of 'Bayonet Charge' or 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Exploration of collective suffering in 'Exposure' compared to individual experience in 'Remains' or 'Bayonet Charge'.

AO2

- Use of personification in 'Exposure' ('merciless iced east winds') to convey the harshness of the environment as a weapon of war.
- Comparison of violent, immediate personification in 'Bayonet Charge' ('Bullets smacking the belly out of the air') with the slow, relentless suffering in 'Exposure'.
- Repetition in 'Exposure' ('But nothing happens') to emphasise the monotony and futility of war compared with the frantic energy in 'Bayonet Charge'.
- The use of rhetorical questions in 'Exposure' ('What are we doing here?') compared with more direct action in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' or 'Bayonet Charge'.
- Use of structure: 'Exposure' uses ellipses and caesura to show the fragmentation of thought compared with the fast-paced momentum in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

AO3

- Ideas about how 'Exposure' reflects the grim reality of trench warfare during the First World War, focusing on the dehumanising effects of weather and prolonged suffering.
- Comparison of how war is glorified or critiqued: 'Exposure' critiques the futility of war, while 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' emphasises honour and duty.
- Ideas about how 'Exposure' focuses on the psychological effects of war contrasting with the physical action in 'Bayonet Charge' or 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Ideas about the poems' presentation of war as destructive, with 'Exposure' highlighting the destructive power of nature as well as war itself.
- Reflection on the loss of faith and hope in 'Exposure', compared to the immediate horror and confusion in 'Bayonet Charge'.

8 'Storm on the island' by Seamus Heaney

AO1

- Any valid ideas about how 'Storm on the Island' presents the power of nature as uncontrollable and overwhelming, with the islanders feeling vulnerable.
- Comparison of natural power in 'Storm on the Island' with political power in 'Ozymandias' or 'London'.
- Ideas about how the poems explore the vulnerability of humans in the face of larger forces, whether nature or political control.
- Contrast between nature's destructive power in 'Storm on the Island' and the decayed power of the ruler in 'Ozymandias'.
- Exploration of conflict between humans and nature in 'Storm on the Island', compared to internal conflict in 'Kamikaze' or 'Remains'.

AO2

- Use of violent imagery in 'Storm on the Island' ('bombarded') to emphasise nature's raw power.
- Comparison of natural imagery in 'Storm on the Island' with the decayed, physical imagery in 'Ozymandias' ('colossal wreck').
- Use of enjambment in 'Storm on the Island' to create a sense of uncontrollable force, compared with the rigid structure in 'Ozymandias' or 'London' to reflect political power.
- The contrast of casual, conversational tone in 'Storm on the Island' with the lofty tone in 'Ozymandias'.
- Nature as an unpredictable force in 'Storm on the Island' compared to human arrogance in 'Ozymandias' or 'London'.

AO3

- Ideas about how 'Storm on the Island' reflects people's insignificance and powerlessness in the face of nature's might.
- Comparison of power dynamics: 'Storm on the Island' shows nature's dominance, while 'Ozymandias' or 'London' explore the decay of human power.
- Romantic or political critique in both poems: 'Storm on the Island' highlights nature's indifference, while 'Ozymandias' critiques the arrogance of rulers.
- Reflection on the durability and transience of power: nature's enduring power in 'Storm on the Island' compared with human power's inevitable decline in 'Ozymandias'.
- Ideas about control: people's attempts to resist nature in 'Storm on the Island' compared with societal oppression in 'London'.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both 'Storm on the Island' by Seamus Heaney and 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley explore the theme of power, but each poem approaches this theme from different perspectives. In 'Storm on the Island', Heaney presents the uncontrollable and destructive power of nature, showing how human efforts are ultimately insignificant against such forces. In contrast, 'Ozymandias' portrays the fleeting nature of political power, emphasising how even the most powerful rulers are reduced to nothing by time.

In 'Storm on the Island', Heaney focuses on the overwhelming power of nature, highlighting humanity's vulnerability in the face of such uncontrollable forces. The poem opens with a confident tone: 'We are prepared: we build our houses squat.' The simple, declarative statement suggests that humans have made attempts to defend themselves against the natural world, but that their confidence is gradually undermined as the storm approaches. Heaney uses military imagery to convey the violence of the storm, describing the wind as it 'pummels' the island and comparing the force of nature to a military assault: 'strafes' and 'salvo'. The word 'pummels' suggests relentless, brutal attacks, emphasising the unstoppable power of the storm. Heaney's metaphor of the 'tragic chorus' evokes a sense of despair, showing that nature's power is something that humans cannot fully defend against.

Heaney also uses the structure of the poem to reflect the storm's unyielding power. Written in a single stanza with no breaks, the poem reflects the continuous, relentless force of the storm. The enjambment between lines reflects the way the storm flows without pause, mirroring the uncontrollable, uncontainable nature of the wind and rain. The lack of rhyme scheme further reinforces the storm's unpredictability and chaos.

In contrast, Shelley's 'Ozymandias' explores the impermanence of human power, showing how even the mightiest rulers are ultimately defeated by time and nature. The once-grand statue of the king Ozymandias is now reduced to 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone,' with the shattered 'colossal wreck' lying in 'boundless and bare' sands. The imagery of the broken statue symbolises the decay of Ozymandias' power, as the ruler's once-great empire has been eroded by time. Shelley's use of 'trunkless' highlights the incompleteness of the statue, suggesting that no matter how powerful a ruler might seem, time will eventually render their achievements meaningless.

Shelley further critiques the arrogance of political power through the inscription on the statue's pedestal: 'Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!' Shelley uses this irony to highlight the futility of human pride and ambition. The desert's vast, desolate landscape reinforces the insignificance of Ozymandias' achievements, as the 'boundless' sands stretch endlessly, dwarfing the remnants of his rule. The juxtaposition of the king's grand proclamation and the reality of his ruined statue emphasises the fragility of human power when confronted with the forces of nature and time.

Returning to 'Storm on the Island', Heaney's portrayal of power differs in that he emphasises the omnipresence of nature's dominance. The poem's use of direct address, with phrases such as 'you know what I mean', creates an intimate tone, suggesting that the experience of being overpowered by nature is something that is universally understood. The islanders' attempts to 'build our houses squat' imply that while humans can try to defend themselves, nature's power is always greater. Heaney uses violent imagery to convey this imbalance of power, describing how the 'Exploding' sea 'spits like a tame cat / Turned savage.' The simile of the cat 'Turned savage' reflects the unpredictable nature of the storm, reinforcing the idea that nature's power cannot be tamed or controlled, despite human efforts to prepare for it.

In 'Ozymandias', Shelley similarly portrays nature's ultimate supremacy, though his focus is on time as a natural force. The vast desert setting symbolises the power of time to erase human achievements. The 'lone and level sands' that stretch around the ruined statue are a powerful image of nature's ability to reclaim everything, reducing Ozymandias' mighty empire to dust. Shelley's sonnet form, traditionally associated with love and admiration, is subverted to focus on decay and destruction, highlighting the inevitable decline of all human power. This structural choice reinforces the poem's message that even the most powerful rulers cannot escape the effects of time and nature.

Both 'Storm on the Island' and 'Ozymandias' explore the theme of power, but while Heaney focuses on the raw, immediate power of nature, Shelley reflects on the slow, inevitable erosion of human power over time.

9 'Bayonet Charge' by Ted Hughes

AO1

- Ideas about how 'Bayonet Charge' presents war as chaotic and dehumanising, focusing on the soldier's fear and confusion.
- Possible comparisons between the immediate, personal experience of war in 'Bayonet Charge' with the collective suffering in 'Exposure' or the glorified action in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Ideas about how the poems explore war's physical and emotional toll: the soldier's inner conflict in 'Bayonet Charge' compared with physical and mental suffering in 'Exposure'.
- Consideration of how war's futility is presented centrally in both 'Bayonet Charge' and 'Exposure', with soldiers questioning the purpose of their actions.
- Exploration of sudden, intense action in 'Bayonet Charge' compared with the prolonged agony of war in 'Exposure' or 'Remains'.

AO2

- Hughes uses of violent imagery in 'Bayonet Charge' ('Bullets smacking the belly out of the air') to convey the brutality of war.
- Contrast between the frantic movement in 'Bayonet Charge' and the stillness and suffering in 'Exposure'.
- Use of enjambment and caesura in 'Bayonet Charge' reflect the soldier's disjointed thoughts and panic.
- Use of nature imagery in 'Bayonet Charge' ('yellow hare') to symbolise innocence lost compared with the harsh, hostile natural imagery in 'Exposure'.
- Hughes' use of similes ('Dropped like luxuries') to convey the soldier's disillusionment, compared with the glorified imagery in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

AO3

- Points about how 'Bayonet Charge' reflects the dehumanising effect of war, focusing on the soldier's disconnection from his actions.
- Comparisons of the critique of war's chaos and futility in 'Bayonet Charge' with focus on honour and sacrifice in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Comparisons between the presentation of the psychological effect of war in 'Exposure' and 'Bayonet Charge', with 'Exposure' focusing on prolonged suffering.
- Points about the context of the First World War in both 'Bayonet Charge' and 'Exposure', and how the poems provide a stark contrast to earlier ideas of military glory and patriotism in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.
- Ideas about how the poems consider the disillusionment of war, such as the focus on the immediate terror of battle in 'Bayonet Charge' and the emphasis on ongoing despair in 'Exposure'.

10 'Remains' by Simon Armitage

AO1

- Ideas about how 'Remains' presents the psychological trauma of war, focusing on the soldier's guilt and mental scars.
- Possible comparison with the focus on physical suffering and mental anguish in 'Exposure' or 'Bayonet Charge'.
- Ideas focused on how different poems explore the long-term effects of conflict: for example, 'Remains' examines post-traumatic stress, while 'Exposure' focuses on the ongoing mental strain during war.
- Possible comparison of how conflict is presented as internal and personal in 'Remains', whereas the collective suffering of soldiers is presented in 'Exposure'.
- Exploration of how conflict blurs moral boundaries in 'Remains' compared with the unquestioning duty in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

AO2

- Use of colloquial language and a conversational tone in 'Remains' to reflect the ordinary soldier's trauma and his struggle to process the events.
- Violent imagery in 'Remains' ('rips through his life') compared with the more prolonged suffering conveyed through nature's imagery in 'Exposure' ('merciless iced east winds').
- 'Remains' uses repetition ('probably armed, possibly not' in lines 4 and 22) to convey guilt, while 'Exposure' uses repetition to emphasise monotony and hopelessness ('But nothing happens').
- Enjambment and the fragmented structure of 'Remains' reflect the soldier's disjointed memories and inner conflict.
- Comparison between the first-person narrative in 'Remains' and the detached, third-person perspective in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', highlighting different responses to conflict.

AO3

- 'Remains' reflects the psychological impact of modern warfare, and the lack of closure soldiers often experience.
- Comparison of the lasting mental effects of conflict in 'Remains' with the emotional desensitisation seen in 'Bayonet Charge'.
- Poets' critique of the glorification of war: 'Remains' and 'Kamikaze' focus on the personal cost of conflict.
- The context of modern conflicts in 'Remains' compared with the historical setting of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', showing how attitudes to war and its effects have evolved.
- Exploration of moral responsibility and the haunting memories of conflict in 'Remains' compared with the physical toll in 'Exposure'.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

In 'Remains' by Simon Armitage and 'Exposure' by Wilfred Owen, both poets explore the psychological and physical effects of conflict on individuals. Armitage focuses on the trauma and guilt of a soldier after an individual violent act, while Owen presents the devastating and collective suffering of soldiers enduring the harsh reality of war.

In 'Remains', Armitage explores the devastating psychological impact of conflict on a soldier who is unable to escape the memory of a violent incident. The poet uses a casual, conversational tone as the speaker recounts the moment when he and fellow soldiers 'open fire' on a looter, a man 'probably armed, possibly not'. The repetition of 'probably armed, possibly not' in lines 4 and 22 reflects the soldier's uncertainty and inner conflict, suggesting that he is tormented by the ambiguity of the situation. This repeated phrase becomes a haunting refrain throughout the poem, symbolising the soldier's inability to reconcile his actions with his conscience.

Armitage uses graphic imagery to illustrate the physical violence of the incident and its psychological consequences. The description of the looter's body as 'sort of inside out', and the vivid image of his 'guts' spilling onto the ground, emphasise the violent reality of war. The brutal language evokes a sense of horror, not only for the reader but also for the speaker, who is deeply affected by the sight and memory. The colloquial tone of 'sort of' contrasts with the gruesome imagery, highlighting the speaker's attempt to downplay the event, though it clearly leaves a lasting emotional scar.

The poem's structure mirrors the soldier's fractured mental state. The use of enjambment between lines and stanzas reflects the disjointed nature of the speaker's thoughts as he struggles to process his trauma. In the second to final stanza, the phrase, 'he's here in my head' reveals that the soldier's memories of the killing have followed him home, continuing to haunt him long after the conflict ended. The poem beginning and ending with a reference to the soldier's memories of the event helps to emphasise the permanence of the psychological damage caused by war.

Similarly, Owen's poem 'Exposure' explores the devastating effects of conflict, but it focuses on the collective suffering of soldiers subjected to the merciless conditions of war. The refrain, 'But nothing happens', highlights the futility and monotony of the soldiers' suffering. The repetition captures both the boredom of trench warfare and the psychological toll of waiting for an inevitable, yet distant, death. Owen uses sibilance in phrases such as 'merciless iced east winds that knife us' to create a harsh auditory effect, mirroring the physical pain inflicted by the cold and nature's unrelenting hostility. Here, nature is presented as a more powerful enemy than the opposing army, emphasising the soldiers' vulnerability.

Owen uses vivid imagery to convey the physical and emotional toll of conflict. For example, the description of soldiers hearing 'a dull rumour of some other war' portrays their detachment from the world beyond the trenches, as if they exist in a forgotten space where their suffering goes unnoticed. The imagery of 'Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces' personifies the snow as a sinister force, heightening the sense of nature's antagonism. This relentless assault by the elements leaves the soldiers physically weakened and emotionally resigned, as they are stripped of hope and humanity.

The poem's structure further reinforces the soldiers' plight. The use of half-rhyme, such as 'knife us' and 'nervous', creates an unsettling, incomplete sound that mirrors the soldiers' discomfort and the lack of resolution in their suffering. Additionally, the poem's cyclical structure, with its recurring refrain, reflects

the endless, unchanging nature of the soldiers' torment. Like 'Remains', 'Exposure' lacks a sense of closure, underscoring the lasting impact of conflict.

Both 'Remains' and 'Exposure' explore the profound effects of conflict on individuals, though they approach the subject differently. In 'Remains', Armitage focuses on the personal, psychological impact of a specific event, while Owen presents a broader, collective experience of suffering. Both poets use imagery to highlight the lingering effects of conflict; Armitage's 'blood-shadow' symbolises the permanent mark of guilt, while Owen's 'Pale flakes' embody the relentless, inescapable assault of nature. In both cases, the imagery conveys how conflict leaves a lasting impression on those who endure it.

However, while 'Remains' delves into the personal, internalised effects of conflict, focusing on guilt and psychological scars, 'Exposure' emphasises the external, physical suffering caused by war and the indifference of nature. Armitage highlights how conflict can leave soldiers grappling with guilt and struggling to reintegrate into civilian life, whereas Owen portrays soldiers as passive victims of both war and the environment, stripped of agency and humanity.

11 'Poppies' by Jane Weir

AO1

- Any valid ideas about how 'Poppies' presents the emotional impact of war on those left behind, focusing on a mother's grief and anxiety.
- Possible comparison with 'War Photographer', which explores emotional detachment and the psychological effects of witnessing war.
- Both 'Poppies' and 'War Photographer' explore the lasting effects of war: 'Poppies' shows a personal loss and trauma, while 'War Photographer' focuses on the toll of documenting conflict.
- Ideas about the contrast between personal, intimate suffering in 'Poppies' and the broader societal impact of war in 'London' or 'Exposure'.
- Exploration of memory and loss in 'Poppies', compared with guilt and trauma in 'Remains'.

AO2

- Use of rich, tactile imagery in 'Poppies' ('spasms of paper red') to reflect the mother's emotional turmoil and vivid memories.
- Comparison of cosy and domestic visual imagery in 'Poppies' – going to school, playing Eskimos, a 'wishbone' – with the harsh, more brutal imagery in 'War Photographer' ('A hundred agonies' and 'spools of suffering').
- The fragmented structure of 'Poppies' and the use of enjambment reflect the mother's emotional instability, while the regular structure and rhyme pattern in 'War Photographer' reflects the detachment and control the speaker is striving to maintain.
- Use of first-person narrative in 'Poppies' to convey personal grief compared with the third-person narrative in 'War Photographer' to create emotional distance.
- In 'Poppies', the symbolism of the poppies as a representation of both remembrance and loss, contrasted with the haunting photographs in 'War Photographer'.

AO3

- Any valid points about how 'Poppies' explores the impact of war on those at home, showing how war affects both families and communities.
- Comparison of how 'War Photographer' critiques the way war is consumed by the public, focusing on the emotional detachment of those far from conflict.
- Poets' critique of the unseen emotional effects of war: 'Poppies' focuses on the personal cost, while 'War Photographer' critiques the public's desensitisation.
- Ideas about how 'Poppies' reflects on the historical and symbolic significance of the poppy in representing remembrance and grief.
- Points about how the exploration of trauma in 'Poppies' compares with the ethical responsibility of documenting war in 'War Photographer'.

12 'War photographer' by Carol Ann Duffy

AO1

- Ideas about how 'War Photographer' presents conflict through the lens of the photographer, focusing on the emotional detachment required to document suffering.
- Possible comparison of 'War Photographer' with 'Poppies': both poems focus on the effects of conflict on people one-step removed from it – a photographer and a relative of a soldier.
- Possible comparison of 'War Photographer' with 'Remains': both poems reflect on the lasting psychological effects of conflict; 'War Photographer' on those who observe it and 'Remains' on those who participate in it.
- Ideas about how 'War Photographer' critiques society's indifference to distant conflicts, compared with the way in which 'Poppies' shows how even distant conflicts affect relatives at home.
- Possible exploration of the morality of witnessing and documenting war in 'War Photographer' compared with the morality of participation in war in 'Remains'.

AO2

- Contrasting imagery is used within 'War Photographer' ('fields which don't explode beneath the feet') to emphasise the difference between war zones and safe, domestic settings.
- Comparison of the violent imagery in 'War Photographer' ('A hundred agonies') with wistful, tender memories of a mother, remembering her son's childhood in 'Poppies'.
- Use of regular structure and rhyme in 'War Photographer' to create a sense of order amidst the chaos of war, compared to the free verse of 'Poppies', reflecting the speaker's meandering thoughts.
- Contrast between the impersonal third-person perspective in 'War Photographer' and the first-person narrative in 'Remains', highlighting different relationships with conflict.
- Symbolism in 'War Photographer' ('spools of suffering') to represent the emotional weight of documenting war, compared with the poppy symbol in 'Poppies', reminding society of loss, grief, and the sacrifice of others.

AO3

- 'War Photographer' critiques the commercialisation of war and the emotional detachment of viewers who consume war images through the media.
- Comparison of the ethical dilemma in 'War Photographer' of documenting conflict with the exploration of the moral cost of participating in war in 'Remains'.
- Poets' exploration of the long-term psychological effects of conflict: 'War Photographer' on observers and 'Poppies' on soldiers' relatives.
- Reflection on the dehumanising effects of war: 'War Photographer' shows how conflict desensitises both the photographer and the public, while 'Remains' focuses on the internal conflict of a soldier haunted by his actions.

- 'War Photographer' reflects on the public's detachment from the reality of conflict, while 'Exposure' presents the grim reality experienced by soldiers in war.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both 'War Photographer' by Carol Ann Duffy and 'Poppies' by Jane Weir explore the emotional and psychological effects of conflict, focusing on how war impacts individuals who are removed from the battlefield but still deeply affected by its consequences. While Duffy examines the emotional detachment and guilt of a war photographer, Weir presents a mother's grief and loss as she prepares to send her son to war.

In 'War Photographer', Duffy presents the inner conflict of a photographer who documents the horrors of war yet feels helpless to change the reality of those suffering. The darkroom, where he is described as 'finally alone', becomes a place of reflection, where the photographer can confront the traumatic images he has captured. Duffy's use of religious imagery to convey the seriousness of the photographer's task, comparing him to a priest preparing for a 'Mass', suggests that the photographer sees his work as a kind of ritual or duty in an almost sacred way. However, the weight of this responsibility takes an emotional toll on him.

Duffy also highlights the detachment the photographer feels from both the conflict zones and his safe, domestic life back home. The line 'he stares impassively at where / he earns his living and they do not care' reinforces this emotional divide. The word 'impassively' reflects the photographer's attempt to remain detached, yet this detachment might also suggest that his experiences have numbed him. Additionally, the contrast between 'he earns his living' and 'they do not care' criticises the superficial attitudes of the public, who consume his harrowing images without truly engaging with or caring about their deeper implications.

Duffy uses stark, contrasting imagery to present the juxtapositions of the photographer's world. The 'fields which don't explode beneath the feet / of running children' contrasts the safety of the photographer's home with the danger and chaos of the war zones he documents. This highlights the disconnection between those who witness war from a distance and those who live through it. The poem's structure, with its ordered stanzas and rigid rhyme scheme, mirrors the photographer's attempt to impose order on the chaotic and violent images he captures. However, the violent images that haunt him reflect the chaos and lasting emotional impact of the photographer's work.

In 'Poppies', Weir presents a more personal, emotional response to conflict, focusing on the experience of a mother who is affected by war through her son. The poem captures the mother's inner conflict as she prepares to say goodbye to her son, who is leaving for war. The use of domestic, family imagery, such as 'I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals, / spasms of paper red,' contrasts the ordinary act of preparing her son for the day with the symbolism of the poppy, a symbol of remembrance and loss. The contrast between the normality of family life and the looming threat of war reflects the mother's inner turmoil as she tries to come to terms with her son's leaving.

Weir also emphasises the physical and emotional connection between the mother and her son. The description of them, 'play[ing] at / being Eskimos like we did when / you were little' evokes a tender, nostalgic moment, highlighting the deep bond between them. This memory is contrasted with the mother's present grief, as she describes how she 'resisted the impulse / to run my fingers through the

gelled / blackthorns of your hair.' The word 'resisted' reflects the mother's conflict, as she struggles to let go of her son, knowing that he is stepping into danger.

The poem's free verse structure, with its irregular line lengths and lack of consistent rhyme scheme, reflects the mother's fragmented thoughts and emotions, mirroring the unpredictability and chaos of her inner conflict as she tries to deal with the separation from and loss of her son.

'Poppies' focuses on a mother's enduring grief and the ongoing emotional conflict caused by war. Weir uses imagery of textiles and fabric, such as 'Sellotape bandaged around my hand', to symbolise the mother's attempts to hold her emotions together, yet these everyday images have undertones of violence, as the word 'bandaged' evokes pain and injury. The poem's conversational tone, with its use of direct address ('I listened, hoping to hear / your playground voice'), gives the impression of a monologue, as the mother reflects on her memories of her son while grappling with the loss and uncertainty caused by war. The mother's internal conflict is evident in the tension between her desire to protect her son and her need to let him go, a conflict that remains unresolved by the end of the poem. Also unresolved is the fate of her son, and whether he has died because of the unnamed conflict alluded to in the poem.

Both 'Poppies' and 'War Photographer' highlight the emotional and psychological effects of conflict, focusing on how war damages even those who are far away from its physical effects.

13 'Tissue' by Imtiaz Dharker

AO1

- Any valid ideas about how 'Tissue' presents the fragility and impermanence of human power, using paper as a symbol for human constructs.
- Possible comparison with 'London', 'Storm on the Island', Extract from 'The Prelude', or 'Ozymandias', the latter exploring the temporary nature of political and personal power through the decaying statue.
- Both 'Tissue' and 'Ozymandias' suggest that power, whether in physical structures ('Tissue') or rulers ('Ozymandias'), is ultimately fleeting and fragile.
- Ideas about how 'Tissue' reflects on how power can be both creative and destructive, while 'Ozymandias' focuses on the arrogance and downfall of those in power.
- Exploration of the idea that natural power, such as time or nature, is greater than human power in 'Tissue', Extract from 'The Prelude', 'Storm on the Island', or 'Ozymandias'.

AO2

- Use of delicate imagery of paper ('Paper that lets the light / shine through') is used in 'Tissue' to symbolise the fragility of human power. Possible comparison with 'a huge peak' in Extract from 'The Prelude', which symbolises the power of nature.
- Comparison of the metaphor of tissue paper in 'Tissue' with the metaphor of the decaying statue in 'Ozymandias' ('colossal wreck').
- The poets' use of enjambment in 'Tissue' and 'Ozymandias' to reflect the flowing, uncontrollable nature of power and its transience.
- Contrast between the soft, gentle tone of 'Tissue' and the more formal, grandiose tone of 'Ozymandias' to convey different attitudes towards power.
- Use of symbolism in 'Tissue' ('Maps too' representing borders and control) compared with the crumbling monument in 'Ozymandias' representing failed power.

AO3

- 'Tissue' critiques the artificiality of human power structures, suggesting they are fragile and easily dismantled.
- Comparison with 'Ozymandias' or 'Storm on the Island' or Extract from 'The Prelude', which also critique the arrogance of those who believe in their own invincibility.
- The idea that the passage of time undermines all human power, with 'Tissue' focusing on the fragility of life and 'Ozymandias' showing the inevitable decay of monuments to power.
- Reflection on the transience of human constructs in 'Tissue', compared to the fall of political empires in 'Ozymandias' and the supremacy of nature in 'Storm on the Island'.
- Ideas about how 'Tissue' presents a more philosophical and reflective view of power, while 'Ozymandias' offers a direct critique of historical figures who abuse their power.

14 'The Emigrée' by Carol Rumens

AO1

- Any valid ideas about how 'The Emigrée' presents conflict through the emotional tension between the speaker's idealised memories of their homeland and the reality of political unrest.
- Possible comparison of 'The Emigrée' with 'Kamikaze', in which personal conflict between duty and desire also leads to emotional tension and isolation.
- Poets' exploration of internal conflict, such as in 'The Emigrée' between nostalgia and harsh realities, and 'Kamikaze' between personal choice and societal expectations.
- Ideas about how 'The Emigrée' suggests the emotional and psychological toll of being displaced by conflict, while 'War Photographer' shows the emotional detachment necessary to cope with witnessing conflict.
- Possible exploration of identity and belonging in 'The Emigrée', as the speaker is torn between the beauty of their memories and the war-torn present, compared with the collective suffering in 'London' or 'Exposure'.

AO2

- Use of light and colour imagery ('sunlight-clear') in 'The Emigrée' to reflect the speaker's idealised view of their homeland, in contrast to the dark reality of conflict.
- Comparison between the use of light and colour imagery in 'The Emigrée' with the violent imagery in 'War Photographer' or 'Exposure', where conflict is shown through stark, brutal visuals.
- Use of structure in 'The Emigrée' (free verse, enjambment) to reflect the fluidity of memory and the speaker's emotional conflict.
- Contrast between the personal, first-person perspective in 'The Emigrée' and the detached, third-person narrative in 'War Photographer' or 'London'.
- Symbolism in 'The Emigrée' ('the bright, filled paperweight') to represent the speaker's preserved memories compared with the decaying symbolism of political power in 'Ozymandias'.

AO3

- Any valid points about the emotional impact of conflict and exile, exploring themes of displacement, loss, and memory.
- Comparison of 'The Emigrée' with 'Kamikaze', which also explores personal conflict, focusing on the consequences of rejecting societal expectations.
- Poets' critique of the effects of conflict; for example, 'The Emigrée' shows how conflict can sever ties with one's homeland, while 'London' exposes societal oppression caused by political conflict.
- Reflection on how conflict distorts perceptions: 'The Emigrée' presents an idealised memory in contrast to the harsh reality of political conflict, while 'War Photographer' reflects on the emotional disconnection required to cope with documenting suffering.
- Ideas about how 'The Emigrée' and 'London' explore how places are affected by conflict, with 'The Emigrée' focusing on personal displacement and 'London' focusing on societal decay.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both 'The Emigrée' by Carol Rumens and 'Kamikaze' by Beatrice Garland explore the impact of conflict on individual identity and memory. In 'The Emigrée', Rumens presents conflict through the lens of exile, focusing on the tension between personal memory and political realities. In 'Kamikaze', Garland examines the inner conflict of a soldier torn between duty and the desire for life.

In 'The Emigrée', Rumens presents conflict through the speaker's nostalgia for a homeland that she has been forced to leave. Despite the 'tyrants' that now govern the country, the speaker's memories are vivid and idealised. Rumens uses imagery of light and purity to convey the speaker's emotional attachment to her homeland: 'the bright, filled paperweight' and 'sunlight-clear' describe how her memories of the place remain untouched by the political turmoil. The use of light as a symbol of hope and purity juxtaposes the darker reality of the current state of the country, highlighting the speaker's inner conflict as she tries to hold on to her personal nostalgia despite the current reality.

The poem's structure also reflects the emotional impact of the conflict on the speaker. The lack of a consistent rhyme scheme and the use of enjambment throughout 'The Emigrée' suggest a sense of fluidity, mirroring the speaker's shifting feelings about her homeland. The repeated references to 'sunlight' at the end of each stanza emphasise the persistence of the speaker's idealised memories, despite the passage of time and the reality of conflict. This repetition suggests that the speaker's emotional attachment to her homeland cannot be diminished, even though she is aware of the political instability that now governs the place. The conflict between memory and reality creates an emotional tension that permeates the poem, as the speaker struggles to hold onto her childhood memories and sense of safety.

Similarly, in 'Kamikaze', Garland explores conflict from a personal perspective, focusing on the internal struggle of a Japanese pilot who decides to turn back from his suicide mission. The poem examines the tension between duty and personal desire, as the pilot faces the expectation of dying for his country versus his instinct for self-preservation. Garland uses powerful imagery of nature to convey the beauty of life that ultimately causes the pilot to abandon his mission. The description of 'the little fishing boats / strung out like bunting' evokes a sense of celebration and life, in contrast to the death the pilot is expected to embrace. The natural imagery of 'shoals of fishes / flashing silver' and the 'salt-sodden' sea serves as a reminder of the richness of life, reinforcing the pilot's inner conflict as he chooses life over death.

The structure of 'Kamikaze' reflects the pilot's journey from conflict to resolution. Garland begins with a narrative voice that recounts the story from a distance, before shifting to the perspective of the pilot's daughter, who reflects on the consequences of her father's decision. The use of free verse and enjambment creates a sense of fluidity, reflecting the flow of the pilot's thoughts as he contemplates his choice. The poem's ending, where the daughter reflects on how her father 'must have wondered / which had been the better way to die,' highlights the long-lasting emotional conflict caused by his decision. Though the pilot chose life, he is condemned to a symbolic and social death, as his family and community reject him for failing to fulfil his duty.

Returning to 'The Emigrée', Rumens explores the psychological effects of conflict by focusing on the speaker's sense of exile. The speaker's nostalgia for her homeland is tinged with sadness, as she knows that she can never return to the place as she remembers it. Rumens uses the metaphor of a 'paperweight' to suggest that the speaker's memories are frozen in time, unchangeable despite the political turmoil that has transformed her homeland. The conflict between the speaker's memories and

the present reality is further emphasised through the description of the city as ‘sick with tyrants’, a stark contrast to the ‘sunlight’ that represents her idealised vision. This tension between memory and reality creates an emotional conflict for the speaker, as she is forced to confront the fact that her homeland no longer exists as she remembers it.

In contrast, ‘Kamikaze’ presents conflict as a choice between personal values and societal expectations. The pilot’s decision to turn back from his mission reflects the internal conflict between his duty to his country and his desire to live. However, the pilot’s return home leads to a different kind of conflict, as he is ostracised by his family and community for failing to complete his mission. The use of the daughter’s perspective (‘she thought’), highlights the generational impact of conflict and the distance between her and her father, as the pilot’s decision continues to affect his family long after the war ended.

Both ‘The Emigrée’ and ‘Kamikaze’ explore the emotional impact of conflict on individuals, but they approach it from different perspectives. Both poems emphasise the lasting emotional scars left by conflict, showing how it affects individuals long after the physical violence has ended.

15 'Checking Out Me History' by John Agard

AO1

- Ideas about how 'Checking Out Me History' presents power as something that can control and manipulate identity through the selective teaching of history.
- Possible comparison of 'Checking Out Me History' with 'London' or 'Ozymandias', where power is shown to oppress and control people's lives through societal structures and political systems.
- Poets' critique of those in power; for example, 'Checking Out Me History' challenges the colonial powers that shape historical narratives, while 'London' exposes the corrupting influence of political power on society.
- Ideas about how 'Checking Out Me History' explores the reclaiming of personal and cultural identity, whereas 'Ozymandias' shows the decay of once-mighty political power.
- Exploration of how power is enforced through language and education in 'Checking Out Me History', compared with the use of force in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

AO2

- The poet uses a mix of Creole and standard English in 'Checking Out Me History' to assert cultural identity and challenge the dominance of one version of history.
- Contrast between the personal, rebellious tone in 'Checking Out Me History' and the more sombre, critical tone in 'London'.
- Use of structural elements, such as italicised stanzas and non-standard punctuation, in 'Checking Out Me History' to emphasise the speaker's rejection of imposed historical narratives.
- Poets' use of imagery to critique power; for example, 'Checking Out Me History' contrasts historical figures such as 'Toussaint L'Ouverture' with legendary characters such as 'Dick Whittington,' while 'Ozymandias' uses the imagery of the crumbling statue to symbolise the decay of tyrannical power.
- Use of repetition in 'Checking Out Me History' ('Dem tell me') to highlight the speaker's frustration with being taught a skewed version of history.

AO3

- Ideas about how 'Checking Out Me History' reflects on the power of colonialism to shape cultural identity and historical narratives, critiquing the erasure of non-European histories.
- Comparison with 'London', which critiques the institutional power structures (such as the Church and monarchy) that control and oppress people.
- Poets' presentation of power as corruptive: 'Checking Out Me History' critiques the power of education to shape identity, while 'Ozymandias' reflects on the arrogance and decay of political power.
- 'Checking Out Me History' explores how reclaiming knowledge can be an act of resistance, whereas 'London' shows the inescapability of oppression in a corrupt society.

- Both 'Checking Out Me History' and 'Ozymandias' reflect on the legacy of power: 'Checking Out Me History' seeks to challenge historical power structures, while 'Ozymandias' shows that power is ultimately ephemeral.

Example answer

The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.

Both 'Checking Out Me History' by John Agard and 'London' by William Blake explore ideas about power by challenging the structures of authority that control and suppress individuals. Agard critiques the power of colonial education and its erasure of Black history, while Blake condemns the political, social, and religious institutions that oppress the people of London.

In 'Checking Out Me History', Agard critiques the power of colonial education, which controls historical narratives and excludes the history of Black and Caribbean figures. From the outset, Agard's use of non-standard English, such as 'Dem tell me', highlights his rejection of the authoritative voice that has shaped his education. By using Caribbean dialect, Agard asserts his identity and resists the dominant, colonial perspective. His deliberate choice of language contrasts with the Eurocentric history he was taught, presenting his own voice as a form of empowerment against the system.

Agard uses juxtaposition to highlight the imbalance of power in historical education. He juxtaposes trivial figures from British nursery rhymes, such as 'de cow who jump over de moon' and 'ole King Cole,' with significant Black historical figures such as 'Toussaint L'Ouverture', 'Shaka', and 'Mary Seacole'. The trivialisation of British history emphasises how colonial education diminishes the importance of Black figures, reinforcing an unequal power dynamic. In contrast, Agard's portrayal of Black figures is heroic and significant, as seen in the metaphor of Seacole being '*a healing star / among the wounded*', symbolising hope and strength. Through these comparisons, Agard exposes the power structures that have controlled and erased his cultural history.

The poem's structure further reflects Agard's challenge to power. The irregular rhyme scheme and enjambment suggest a breaking away from traditional poetic forms, mirroring Agard's rejection of imposed structures. The italicised sections, which celebrate Black historical figures, stand in contrast to the non-italicised stanzas that represent the colonial voice. This structural shift between the voices symbolises the tension between the dominant colonial power and the suppressed Black history that Agard seeks to reclaim.

Similarly, in 'London', Blake explores the power of institutions that control and oppress the people. The poem paints a bleak picture of the city, where every individual is marked by 'the mind-forged manacles' of social, political, and religious oppression. Blake's use of metaphor in 'mind-forged manacles' suggests that the people's suffering is not only physical but also psychological, as they are trapped by the ideas and ideologies imposed upon them by those in power. This highlights the overwhelming influence of these authoritative structures on the individual's ability to think freely.

Blake also uses repetition to emphasise the pervasive nature of this power. The repetition of 'every' in 'In every cry of every Man, / In every infant's cry of fear' emphasises that no one is free from the control of the institutions that dominate the city. This repetition underscores the universality of oppression, highlighting how power is used to control not just the actions of individuals but their very existence, from childhood to adulthood. Blake's criticism of the Church and the monarchy is evident in his references to 'the black'ning church' and 'the hapless soldier's sigh / Runs in blood down palace walls'. These images suggest that the Church, an institution that should represent moral authority, has become

corrupt, and the monarchy, which should protect the people, is responsible for their suffering. The imagery of blood running down palace walls symbolises the direct link between the power of the ruling class and the violence inflicted on the people. Blake's use of vivid, violent imagery – such as 'the youthful harlot's curse' and 'blights with plagues the marriage hearse' – creates a sense of decay and corruption, reinforcing the idea that power is being misused to harm, rather than protect, the people.

Both Agard and Blake critique the ways in which power is wielded to control and oppress individuals, but they focus on different institutions. Agard challenges the colonial education system that has erased Black history and imposed a Eurocentric narrative, using contrasts in language and structure to assert his cultural identity and resist this oppression. In contrast, Blake condemns political, religious, and social institutions, using repetition and vivid imagery to highlight the universal suffering of the people in London under the weight of oppressive systems.

16 'Kamikaze' by Beatrice Garland

AO1

- Ideas about how 'Kamikaze' presents the emotional impact of difficult experiences, focusing on the conflict between personal desires and societal expectations.
- Possible comparison of 'Kamikaze' with 'War Photographer' or 'Remains', the latter exploring the psychological trauma experienced by soldiers after participating in violence and conflict.
- Poets' depiction of the lasting effects of difficult experiences on identity and relationships: for example, the alienation of the pilot in 'Kamikaze' and the haunting memories of a soldier in 'Remains'.
- Comparison of how 'Kamikaze' explores the idea of choice and the consequences of defying societal norms, whereas 'Exposure' highlights the physical and emotional toll of war on soldiers.
- Exploration of familial and societal rejection in 'Kamikaze', compared with 'The Emigrée', or with the guilt and emotional burden in 'Remains'.

AO2

- Use of imagery of the natural world in 'Kamikaze' ('the dark shoals of fishes') to symbolise beauty and life, contrasting with the starkness of war and the pilot's internal struggle.
- Comparison of the vivid, violent imagery in 'Remains' (the 'blood-shadow' memories) with the more serene yet poignant imagery in 'Kamikaze'.
- Use of structure in 'Kamikaze' (shifts between the past and present) to reflect the pilot's emotional turmoil and fragmented identity.
- Contrast between the mix of third- and first-person narrative in 'Kamikaze', which allows for an intimate portrayal of personal conflict, and the more detached narrative voice in 'War Photographer'.
- Use of enjambment in 'Kamikaze' to convey the flow of thoughts and memories, compared to the abrupt and jarring lines in 'Remains' that reflect trauma.

AO3

- Ideas about how 'Kamikaze' reflects on the societal pressures and expectations placed on individuals, showing how difficult experiences can lead to alienation and loss of identity.
- Comparison of 'Kamikaze' with 'Remains', which highlights the long-term psychological effects of conflict and the moral implications of violence on soldiers.
- Poets' exploration of the emotional scars left by difficult experiences: 'Kamikaze' emphasises the pilot's internal conflict, while 'Remains' and 'War Photographer' focus on guilt and post-traumatic stress.
- 'Kamikaze' illustrates the struggle between individual choice and societal expectations, while 'Remains' and 'War Photographer' critique the impact of war on personal morality and conscience.

- Any valid points about how difficult experiences profoundly affect personal identity and relationships, highlighting themes of loss, trauma, and memory.