

AO2: Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant terminology where appropriate.

AO1: Read, understand and respond to texts: maintain a critical style; develop an informed personal response; use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.

Level 6 (18–20 marks)

Sustained critical style in an informed personal response to both text and task

- Detailed and sensitive analysis of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2)
- Consistently effective use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)

Sustains a coherent critical style in an informed personal response to the text showing consistently perceptive understanding (AO1)

- Textual references and quotations are precise, pertinent and skilfully interwoven (AO1)
- Achieves a sustained, interwoven comparison of texts

Level 5 (15–17 marks)

Convincing critical style in a well-developed personal response to both text and task

- Thoughtful examination of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2)
- Good use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
- Maintains a convincing critical style in a well-developed personal response to the text showing some insightful understanding (AO1)
- Textual references and quotations are well-selected and fully integrated (AO1)
- Achieves a sustained comparison of texts

Level 4 (11–14 marks)

Credible critical style in a detailed personal response to both text and task

- Some analytical comments on writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2)
- Competent use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
- Demonstrates some critical style in a detailed personal response to the text showing clear understanding (AO1)
- Relevant textual references and quotations are selected to support the response (AO1)
- Develops some key points of comparison between texts

Level 3 (7–10 marks)

A reasonably developed personal response to both text and task

- Reasonable explanation of writer's use of language, form and structure to create meanings and effects (AO2)
- Some use of relevant subject terminology (AO2)
- Develops a reasonably detailed personal response to the text showing understanding (AO1)
- Uses some relevant textual references and quotations to support the response (AO1)
- Makes some explicit, relevant comparisons between texts

Level 2 (4–6 marks)

A straightforward personal response to both text and task

- Simple comments on writer's use of language, form or structure (AO2)
- Limited use of subject terminology (AO2)
- Begins to develop a straightforward personal response to the text showing some understanding (AO1)
- Gives some relevant support from the text (AO1)
- Some identification of key links between texts

Level 1 (1–3 marks)

A basic response to both text and task

- A little awareness of language, form or structure (AO2)
- Very little use of subject terminology (AO2)
- Makes a few relevant comments about the text (AO1)
- Makes limited references to the text (AO1)
- Limited, if any, attempt to make obvious links between texts

Compare how *Vergissmeinnicht* and *Bayonet Charge* present soldiers.

You should consider:

- ideas and attitudes in each poem
- tone and atmosphere in each poem
- the effects of the language and structure used.

[20]

- Is this a strong or weak introduction? Why?

'Vergissmeinnicht' is told from a soldier who revisits the site of a battle 'three weeks' after he fought there to find the body of an enemy soldier. The persona is initially 'content' to see his enemy dead and rotting, but the discovery of a photograph of 'his girl' makes him realise that this man was simultaneously a 'killer' and a 'lover'. It is the hate and anger that fuels war that has 'done the lover mortal hurt' by forcing him to become a fighter and damaged the lives of his loved ones who have lost him. Similarly, 'Bayonet Charge' is told from a soldier set in the midst of action as soldiers attempt a bayonet charge during battle. The persona begins to question his role in the conflict as soldiers work mechanically and unemotionally like 'cold clockwork'.

- *Has the student written a strong point?*
- *AO1 - has the student used quotes and given a personal response?*
- *AO2 - has the student analysed language, form and/or structure and discussed the effects?*

Both poems explore the theme of fragility of soldiers through the use of visceral imagery.

In 'Vergissmeinnicht', the fragility of the soldier is shown through the simile 'burst stomach like a cave'. The simile 'like a cave' illustrates the huge extent of the injury, implying the excruciating pain the soldier has gone through in war and the permanent injuries soldiers endure that cannot be recovered. The plosive in the verb 'burst' reflects the graphic and abrupt death of the soldier. Furthermore, the metaphor 'paper eye' suggests that humans are vulnerable and easily crushed in the battlefield, just as easy as crushing paper.

- Has the student written a strong point?
- AO1 - has the student used quotes and given a personal response?
- AO2 - has the student analysed language, form and/or structure and discussed the effects?

Similarly, in 'Bayonet Charge', the fragility of the soldier is shown through the violent imagery of 'bullets smacking the belly out of the air'. The 'bullets' are personified as they are 'smacking' the soldiers. The word 'smacking' is sharp and onomatopoeic and connotes child punishment. However, this is ironic as these soldiers in war are doing anything but childlike. We would normally expect air being pushed out of the lungs or stomach when they are being hit, yet Hughes inverts what the reader might expect, so that the 'belly' is pushed 'out of the air'. It seems that the fear the soldiers experience upturns everything, as if the world is inverted and normal order is destroyed.

- Has the student written a strong point?
- AO1 - has the student used quotes and given a personal response?
- AO2 - has the student analysed language, form and/or structure and discussed the effects?

Both poems explore the theme of desensitising characteristic of soldiers.

In 'Vergissmeinnicht', the persona's dispassionate attitude towards the enemy reflects that war takes away soldiers' human ability to sympathise in war. The persona sees his enemy 'almost with content, abased' reflects a sense of euphoria that is reflected by the enjambment between content and abased. The pause suggests that the persona is sadistically admiring the view of the corpse, reinforcing the dehumanising characteristics soldiers' take with them after war.

Similarly, the persona dismisses the presence of the enemy as 'green hedge that dazzled with rifle fire'. Here, the enemy is dehumanised and unseen, making them more frightening and unpredictable. Furthermore, the soldier is the only person described in the poem, and his comrades are not mentioned. In a battlefield, there would normally be full of people, but the sense of isolation suggests that the soldiers do not find their comrades relevant and are fighting for his own survival. Hence, this shows that war takes away soldiers' ability to sympathise.

- Has the student written a strong point?
- AO1 - has the student used quotes and given a personal response?
- AO2 - has the student analysed language, form and/or structure and discussed the effects?

Both poems present soldiers in inhumane conditions in war.

In 'Vergissmeinnicht', battlefields are portrayed as demonic through the sinister and eerie atmosphere. The first stanza creates an eerie atmosphere through the repetition of 'gone', as this emphasises the huge loss in war such as mankind, which makes it lifeless and empty. The assonance in 'gone' creates an ominous tone that reflects the sinister atmosphere after war. Furthermore, the metaphor 'nightmare ground' illustrates the carnage of this event that is indelibly printed in the persona's mind, just like horrifying nightmares. The irregular rhyme scheme also evokes a sense of discomfort as it changes throughout the poem, never keeping the same rhyme scheme for more than two stanzas. This symbolises the disoriented and chaotic conditions soldiers live in trenches and the unnatural effects of war.

Similarly, the inhumane conditions that soldiers face is portrayed through their discomfort in war. The poem opens using in media res: 'Suddenly he awoke and was running', giving a startling opening and a feeling of action and danger. The dashes are used to break up the flow of sentences, which the enjambment reflects the chaotic atmosphere of war, and the constant bombardment of emotional and physical torture the soldier suffers. Furthermore, the pain soldiers endure is shown through the simile 'sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest'. 'Molten iron' is extremely hot which would burn and destroy a human, suggesting the extreme pain of running and of grief. His 'patriotic tear' fallen down to the chest symbolises his grief of loss of patriotism, as his former love to his country is converted to physical agony.

- Has the student written a strong point?
- AO1 - has the student used quotes and given a personal response?
- AO2 - has the student analysed language, form and/or structure and discussed the effects?

The soldiers in both poems suffer from an internal conflict and expresses a sense of despair.

In 'Vergissmeinnicht', the speaker's internal conflict comes from exploring the duality of man, the private and public personas. The internal conflict begins from the change of tone reflected from the connective 'but'. The duality of man is explored through the juxtaposition between 'lover' and 'killer', yet most people will understand his identity as a lover but not killer. This is shown by the fact that the word 'killer' has a guttural sound that is harsher than the word lover.

In 'Bayonet Charge', the soldier's internal conflict comes from questioning his role in war. He describes his role as a soldier like a 'cold clockwork' that works mechanically and unemotionally. The question 'Was he the hand pointing that second?' illustrates his realisation that he is like a cog in the machine that is exploited by much larger and powerful forces. Furthermore, the persona undermines the usual rhetoric of war 'King, honour, human dignity' with a dismissive 'etcetera'. This shows that these beliefs are self-indulgent and irrelevant when it comes to surviving in war, and these concepts are hollow and meaningless in brutal realities of war. This suggest that only those not involved in fighting can continue to believe in these grand ideals, while soldiers suffer and die as cattle in war.

- *Use the criteria to level this response.*
- *How many marks would you give it out of 20?*
- *How could you improve the response?*