

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 these poems present views on conflict in any setting. You should consider:

- *Ideas and attitudes in each poem*
- *Tone and atmosphere in each poem*
- *The effects of language and structure used.*

- Is this a strong or weak introduction? Why?

‘What Were They Like’ is a poem of protesting against the Vietnam War. This was written by Denise Levertov who was an anti war protester who expressed her frustration of the loss of Vietnamese culture and the cruelty of the Americans. Similarly, ‘Exposure’ is also a poem of exposing the harsh realities of war. Written by Wilfred Owen, he expresses his sympathy to soldiers suffering in harsh conditions throughout war.

- *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 exposes the brutality in war that is dehumanising, which is a horror to those affected by war.

Levertov explores the theme of violence by using **visceral imagery**. ‘**Sir, laughter is bitter to the burned mouth**’ reflects the destruction of war by picturing the wounds of soldiers, evoking pain and sympathy in readers. The **plosives and cacophony** in ‘bitter’ and ‘burned’ imitates the sounds of shooting bullets, reinforcing the brutality and violence in war. As people’s mouths were burned, this suggests that after war, these people are silenced as they cannot speak, which is dehumanising. The theme of people being silenced is reinforced by the last sentence ‘**It is silent now**’. This **sentence is short and caesuric**, and suggests that war leaves casualties, all of whom will never speak again. The silence after war suggests that no one in Vietnam can communicate which traditions and stories will not pass down to future generations, which leads to the loss of culture. ‘Silence’ is **juxtaposed** to ‘**echo**’, which implies that the sadness of cultural loss will be echoed in our minds.

- 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, Owen explores the brutal natural conditions in war. ‘**Merciless iced east winds that knife us**’ reflects the harsh weather conditions when fighting in war. The **sibilance** combined with **hard consonants** in this phrase creates a cutting and sharp bitter edge to elements of the ‘knife’, reinforcing the pain and risk of dying in war. The **assonance** is words such as ‘**grow**’ ‘**only**’ ‘**soaks**’ and ‘**clouds**’ create long sounds that convey extended effort required by soldiers to engage with the world beyond current environment. In each stanza, often they are **hexameters** but Owen frequently adds extra syllables or whole metrical feet, and does not use a consistent metre. This represents how snow-dazed minds struggle to stay orderly. These harsh conditions suggests the inhumane characteristics of war.

- 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 suggest that war creates harm to people who do not deserve to get hurt, presenting war as a horror to those innocent people. Levertov explores the theme of innocence of children to reflect the undeserving death and destruction they went through. The **imagery** of children as **'buds'** reflects that people celebrate new beginnings, reinforcing that people in Vietnam were not inclined to violence. This poem uses buds as a **symbol** of potential life and children, and the phrase **'no more buds'** suggests that potential life is prevented and there is no hope of new life in Vietnam. This reflects at the beginning of the poem when people would celebrate the beginning of life, this suggests that there is no more celebration in Vietnam. This creates **pathos** as readers sympathise for children who do not have the possibility of living their lives to full potential. The theme of innocence is also reinforced in the line **'most were peasants; their life was in rice and bamboo'**. **'Peasants'** suggests that they were not politically sophisticated, which means that they never asked for destruction or had any power initiating or stopping the war and are guilty of no war crimes. **'Rice and bamboo'** implies that they lived simple and humble lives, and the use of natural imagery reflects the beauty and serenity of this lost culture

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Similarly, Owen explores the duality of men in war. On battlefields, they may be soldiers, however, they also having an emotional side such as family love and unity amongst soldiers and friends, suggesting that they do not deserve to get hurt. ‘Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous’ is a list of **sibilance** that mimics a whispering effect, suggesting that soldiers are too fearful to speak. Owen explores the idea that men sacrifice in war for the **‘suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit’**, suggesting that things will not grow and flourish if men do not fight. If men do not fight and defend, children will die and **‘kind fires’** will not burn. This reinforces the bravery yet loving side of soldiers who defend their families, creating **pathos** and respect towards these soldiers from readers.

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- AO1 - has the student used quotes and given a personal response?
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Levertov uses two different tones in this poem. The first stanza is like a **tone** of a journalist asking questions and seeks to understand a lost culture. The repetition of **past tense** in ‘did’ and ‘were’ suggests the cultural loss in war cannot be recovered. In the second stanza, the expert answers the questions, yet ironically picks up the language and the perversions of wartime that are revealed in distortions of a once-revered way of life that has changed into fragmented battles and shattered cities. There is an element of uncertainty in the tone of the second stanza from words such as **‘perhaps’ and ‘maybe’**. The uncertainty suggests that once a culture is lost, there can be nothing certainly known about it.

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On the other hand, Owen chooses to express his helplessness and despair in war. Owen presents us with a picture of communal endurance and courage by the use of **collective pronouns** such as ‘us’ and ‘we’. He also questions the purpose of what they are achieving: ‘**What are we doing here?**’ ‘**Is it that we are dying?**’. This suggests his loss of faith as soldiers cannot console themselves that people care any longer about their fate. Their loss of faith in God is also shown as despair in the line ‘**For love of God seems dying**’. This could be also interpreted as man losing faith in God, but also God being a tyrannical aggressor and God has forsaken man to die.

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