

**Year 11**

**Literature Paper 2:**

**Unseen Poetry**

**Name:**

**English Teacher:**

**Room:**

**What is Unseen Petry?**

Unseen Poetry is a portion of your AQA Literature Paper 2 exam (Macbeth and Unseen Poetry).

You are required to look at a total of two poems that you have never studied or seen before. The test here is to see whether or not you can apply your analytical and writing skills to another text, outside of what you have studied in class.

**The Process**

1. You will be given a poem and a question about it concerning the **main theme or concept**. You must be able to read, understand and analyse the poem in relation to that question. You then write an answer for **24 marks**.
2. You will then be given a **second poem** that relates to the first by a **theme or concept**. You will then be given a question that asks you to compare both of these poems in relation to that theme or concept. You will need to read, understand and answer that question for **8 marks**.



**Assessment Objectives:**

**AO1: Explore big ideas** – make a clear point and thesis at the beginning of your essay that you return to throughout your essay. Think OWLS - what is your overall idea and the writer’s message? What feelings are presented in the poem?

**AO1: Range of inferences** – use a range of quotations. You need to cover more than 2 and should think OWLS – have you got a quotation on structure and a quotation on language?

**AO2: Language analysis** – zoom in on key words, explain their definitions and what they mean/suggest. You should look at more than just one in a quotation and offer alternative ideas!

**AO2: Identification of methods –** identify techniques and word classes. Start with what the word class is, then explore higher level methods.

**How to approach the exam question for the first poem:**

**STEP 1:** Read the question.

**STEP 2:** Read the title.

**STEP 3:** Read the poem, underlining key words/phrases that could help answer the question.  Look for at least three things you can talk about.

**STEP 4:** Before you begin writing, decide the overall ideas in the poem and the writer’s message.

**STEP 5:** Begin to annotate the poem on the side, considering the language and structural choices made by the poet to express their overall intended meaning. Look at the form – how is the poem organised on the page?

**STEP 6:** Make a quick and clear plan on a 2-strand response to the question following the OWLS paragraph structure.

**O -** Overall meaning of the poem

**W -** Writers intended message (atmosphere/tone set)

**L -** Language devices that support this

**S -** Structural device that support this

**Strategy:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Subject** | **Sentence Starters** | **Questions to ask yourself** |
| **Introduction/****Thesis** | **O – Overall ideas** | *In the poem ‘\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’, the poet presents/conveys/illustrates…* | What is the focus of the poem? What ideas do you understand? Who is the speaker? Why are they speaking? |
| **W – Writer’s message** | *The poet’s wants the reader to understand…**The reader thinks/feels…* | How do you feel reading the poem? What is the tone – is it positive or negative? What are the specific emotions you feel? Why do you think the writer wants you to think and feel this way? |
| **Paragraph 1** | **L – Language** | *The writer uses the language technique/word class \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because…* *The key word “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” denotes… This suggests/connotes…* | Are there any powerful words? What do they make you think? Why does the writer use specific word choices?  |
| **Paragraph 2** | **S - Structure** | *The writer structures the poem in regular/irregular stanzas because…* *The writer uses (enjambment, a volta, rhyme, anaphora, etc.) because…* | How does the poem look on the page? Is it regular/irregular? Why? Does it rhyme? Is there a pattern? Does it use enjambment? Is the pace slow or fast?  |

**Challenge:** to challenge yourself, always look for more methods and alternative meanings/double connotations. You can introduce a second idea for a word or phrase with ‘Alternatively, …’

**LANGUAGE TERMINOLOGY:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **POETIC TECHNIQUE**  | **EXPLANATION AND EXAMPLE**  |
| **Simile**  | A comparison using like or as, e.g. Her eyes were as blue as the sea / The boys ran like a cheetah   |
| **Personification**  | Giving something human characteristics, e.g. The tree cried out in pain as it fell   |
| **Alliteration**  | The same letter at the start of a few words, e.g. The cute cat was curled on the cold mat.   |
| **Onomatopoeia**  | A word that sounds like the noise, e.g. bang, pop, whizz, sizzle   |
| **Sibilance**  | The letter ‘s’ at the start of words or within words repeatedly in a poem , e.g. Sensible men wished they had washed yesterday   |
| **Hyperbole**  | Exaggeration, e.g. The whole world had exploded   |
| **Sensory language**   | Descriptive language that refers to the senses, e.g. It will not say: I can see or I can smell so look carefully   |
| **Metaphor**  | Saying one thing is something else, e.g. My brother IS a pig  Metal birds flew across the sky. (Really talking about planes but calling them birds)   |
| **Colour imagery**  | The use of words for colour – think about the connotations of those colours, e.g. scarlet.  |
| **Pathetic**  | When the weather reflects the mood, e.g. The boy cried as the rain fell from the sky. |
| **Assonance**   | The same vowel sound is repeated, e.g. G**o** and m**ow** the grass   |
| **Consonance**  | The repetition of consonants in a few words eg the girl gurgled and gulped   |
| **Colloquial language**  |  Slang or less formal, e.g. mate |
| **Dialect**   | Terms used by people in a certain area, e.g. Bairn in Scotland for children   |
| **Juxtaposition**  | Two opposites brought together , e.g. cold and hot |
| **Oxymoron**   | Two opposites brought together that don’t make sense, e.g. cold heat/bitter sweet   |
| **Plosives**  | Harsh sounding letters : p/t/k/b/d/g, e.g. brutal blow |

**Sophisticated Vocabulary for Essays:**

**Means:** denotes indicates represents

**Suggests:** connotes reveals elucidates illuminates demonstrates implies conveys

**Highlights**:emphasises stresses underlines accentuates symbolises

**Main features of FORM:**

**The form of a poem is how it is organised and the perspective from which it is written (e.g. first/third person). Think about who the poetic voice/speaker is and what feelings/message they are communicating.**

**Sonnet** - A fourteen line poem, traditionally on the topic of love.

**Free verse** - When a poem has no rhyme scheme or pattern.

**Epic** – a long poem, typically one derived from ancient oral tradition, narrating the deeds and adventures of heroic or legendary figures or the past history of a nation.

**Ode** - An ode is typically written to praise a person, event or thing (you could write an ode to your pet or favourite food!) and they are usually quite short in length.

**Elegy** - They are usually written about a loved one who has passed away, but can also be written about a group of people, too.

**Ballad** - Ballads have a set form; they are typically four lines (quatrain) and have a rhyme scheme of ABAB or ABCB. However, this form is looser than others.

**Stanza** - a set amount of lines in poetry grouped together by their length, meter or rhyme scheme. You should look for whether these are IRREGULAR or REGULAR. Does this reflect anything in the poem?

**STRUCTURE TERMINOLOGY**

When looking at structure, you should always consider any changes or developments throughout the poem.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **POETIC TECHNIQUE**  | **EXPLANATION AND EXAMPLE**   |
| Rhyme  | Similar sounds in two or more words.  |
| Rhyming couplet  | When two words at the end of two lines rhyme to complete a thought or idea.  |
| Enjambment  | When the line runs onto the next one without punctuation.  |
| Perspective of the voice | The perspective from which the poem is written is important, e.g. first/second/third – what for how this may change. You can call the ‘narrator’ the speaker and the narrative voice.  |
| Syllables  | One vowel sound forming part of a word  |
| Anaphora   | Anaphora is the repetition of the first word or clause of consecutive sentences.  |
| Refrain   | Refrain in poetry is a repeated part of a poem that appears either at the end of a stanza or between two stanzas.  |
| Cacophony   | Cacophony refers to a combination of harsh, chaotic, and/or discordant (unharmonious) sounds. This is often achieved through repetition of harsh consonant sounds like ‘k’, ‘g’, ‘p’ ‘t’, ‘ch’, and ‘sh’.  |
| Chiasmus   | Chiasmus is when the structure of one clause is reversed in the following clause.  |
| Dramatic monologue  | When the speaker addresses the audiences directly.  |
| Caesura  | A big break in the middle of a line.  |
| Volta   | The point of turn or shift of mood in the poem.  |

**Mother, any distance by Simon Armitage**

Mother, any distance greater than a single span​
requires a second pair of hands.​
You come to help me measure windows, pelmets, doors,​
the acres of the walls, the prairies of the floors.​
​
You at the zero-end, me with the spool of tape, recording​
length, reporting metres, centimetres back to base, then leaving​
up the stairs, the line still feeding out, unreeling​
years between us. Anchor. Kite.​
​
I space-walk through the empty bedrooms, climb​
the ladder to the loft, to breaking point, where something​
has to give;​
two floors below your fingertips still pinch​
the last one-hundredth of an inch...I reach​
towards a hatch that opens on an endless sky​
to fall or fly.​

​

**How does the poet present love between a parent and child?**

**Model Example:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Overall ideas****Writer’s message** | In the poem ‘Mother, any distance’, Simon Armitage presents the love between a parent and child as one that is both supportive and stable, yet also restrictive to the child. As the poem progresses, the speaker’s feelings of both uncertainty and joy by the thought of moving from home is expressed through images of freedom to show the poet’s message that this relationship, despite the distance, must transform and change. |
| **Language**What is your idea/focus?How is the poet presenting this (methods)?Why is this effective (reader’s feelings and thoughts)?Pssst, if a structural comment naturally supports your point, don’t be afraid to include this alongside your language analysis! | Firstly, Armitage conveys the speaker’s desire for freedom through the image of a “hatch that opens on an endless sky”. The verb “opens” positively reinforces how leaving home will give the speaker new opportunities, leading to an “endless sky”. The adjective “endless” and metaphor of the “sky” denote limitless possibilities and physical space, again reasserting his excitement for the future, without the restrictions of his mother. Similar to these images, the “hatch” suggests the idea that new pathways are opened, yet alternatively the reader can understand this is a pun on the verb, referring to the birth of a bird. At a bird’s birth, they must make the fearless first flight from their nest, again emphasising the uncertainty underlining the speaker’s future. In spite of this, the poet structurally ends the poem with a full stop to bring finality to this physical space between the mother and son. By ending on the verb “fly”, the poem ends positively, suggesting that the speaker must try to find their own way in life. |
| **Structure and Form**What is your idea/focus?How is the poet presenting this (methods)?Why is this effective (reader’s feelings and thoughts)?Pssst, don’t forget to comment on form! | Furthermore, the poet continues to make structural choices to show the restrictions that the speaker feels his mother imposes on him. The form itself is written loosely in sonnet form, which significantly expresses the son’s love for his mother through its traditional subject focus. However, it unconventionally ends with an extra line, rejecting the typical fourteen-line stanza. This rejection of convention perhaps shows the speaker’s rejection of his mother’s stifling love in favour of freedom. Throughout the poem, the enjambment further reflects how he is read to move on as the pace quickens without pauses. The short one word sentences of “Anchor. Kite.” juxtapose with long complex lines. This perhaps shows how, although the mother brings stability, she holds him back. By using a caesura, the poet shows how he is unable to move forward. Overall, this results in the speaker reasserting the title as “any distance” will not change the love he has for his mother, but it will enable him to grow from childhood. |

**Resistance by Simon Armitage**

It’s war again: a family
   carries its family out of a pranged house
      under a burning thatch.

The next scene smacks
   of archive newsreel: platforms and trains
      (never again, never again),

toddlers passed
   over heads and shoulders, lifetimes stowed
      in luggage racks.

It’s war again: unmistakable smoke
   on the near horizon mistaken
      for thick fog. Fingers crossed.

An old blue tractor
   tows an armoured tank
      into no-man’s land.

It’s the ceasefire hour: godspeed the columns
   of winter coats and fur-lined hoods,
      the high-wire walk

over buckled bridges
   managing cases and bags,
      balancing west and east – godspeed.

It’s war again: the woman in black
   gives sunflower seeds to the soldier, insists
      his marrow will nourish

the national flower. In dreams
   let bullets be birds, let cluster bombs
      burst into flocks.

False news is news
   with the pity
      edited out. It’s war again:

an air-raid siren can’t fully mute
   the cathedral bells –
      let’s call that hope.

**In the poem ‘Resistance’, how does the poet present ideas about w**

**Out, Out- by Robert Frost**

The buzz saw snarled and rattled in the yard

And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,

Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.

And from there those that lifted eyes could count

Five mountain ranges one behind the other

Under the sunset far into Vermont.

And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled,

As it ran light, or had to bear a load.

And nothing happened: day was all but done.

Call it a day, I wish they might have said

To please the boy by giving him the half hour

That a boy counts so much when saved from work.

His sister stood beside him in her apron

To tell them ‘Supper.’ At the word, the saw,

As if to prove saws knew what supper meant,

Leaped out at the boy’s hand, or seemed to leap—

He must have given the hand. However it was,

Neither refused the meeting. But the hand!

The boy’s first outcry was a rueful laugh,

As he swung toward them holding up the hand

Half in appeal, but half as if to keep

The life from spilling. Then the boy saw all—

Since he was old enough to know, big boy

Doing a man’s work, though a child at heart—

He saw all spoiled. ‘Don’t let him cut my hand off—

The doctor, when he comes. Don’t let him, sister!’

So. But the hand was gone already.

The doctor put him in the dark of ether.

He lay and puffed his lips out with his breath.

And then—the watcher at his pulse took fright.

No one believed. They listened at his heart.

Little—less—nothing!—and that ended it.

No more to build on there. And they, since they

Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

**In ‘Out, Out’, how does the poet present ideas about death?**

**Suicide in the Trenches by Siegfried Sassoon**

I knew a simple soldier boy
Who grinned at life in empty joy,
Slept soundly through the lonesome dark,
And whistled early with the lark.

In winter trenches, cowed and glum,
With crumps and lice and lack of rum,
He put a bullet through his brain.
No one spoke of him again.

You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.

**In ‘Suicide in the Trenches’, how does the poet present ideas about war?**

**The Soldier by Rupert Brooke**

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there’s some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England’s, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts of England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

**In ‘The Soldier’, how does the poet present the experience of a soldier?**

**The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost**

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,

And sorry I could not travel both

And be one traveler, long I stood

And looked down one as far as I could

To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,

And having perhaps the better claim,

Because it was grassy and wanted wear;

Though as for that the passing there

Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay

In leaves no step had trodden black.

Oh, I kept the first for another day!

Yet knowing how way leads on to way,

I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

**In ‘The Road Not Taken,’ how does the poet present ideas about the importance of making decisions?**

**Before You Were Mine by Carol Ann Duffy**

I’m ten years away from the corner you laugh on

with your pals, Maggie McGeeney and Jean Duff.

The three of you bend from the waist, holding

each other, or your knees, and shriek at the pavement.

Your polka-dot dress blows round your legs. Marilyn.

I’m not here yet. The thought of me doesn’t occur

in the ballroom with the thousand eyes, the fizzy, movie tomorrows

the right walk home could bring. I knew you would dance

like that. Before you were mine, your Ma stands at the close

with a hiding for the late one. You reckon it’s worth it.

The decade ahead of my loud, possessive yell was the best one, eh?

I remember my hands in those high-heeled red shoes, relics,

and now your ghost clatters toward me over George Square

till I see you, clear as scent, under the tree,

with its lights, and whose small bites on your neck, sweetheart?

Cha cha cha! You’d teach me the steps on the way home from Mass,

stamping stars from the wrong pavement. Even then

I wanted the bold girl winking in Portobello, somewhere

in Scotland, before I was born. That glamorous love lasts

where you sparkle and waltz and laugh before you were mine.

**In ‘Before You Were Mine’, how does the poet present the speaker’s feelings towards growing up?**

**Follower by Seamus Heaney**

My father worked with a horse-plough,

His shoulders globed like a full sail strung

Between the shafts and the furrow.

The horses strained at his clicking tongue.

An expert. He would set the wing

And fit the bright steel-pointed sock.

The sod rolled over without breaking.

At the headrig, with a single pluck

Of reins, the sweating team turned round

And back into the land. His eye

Narrowed and angled at the ground,

Mapping the furrow exactly.

I stumbled in his hobnailed wake,

Fell sometimes on the polished sod;

Sometimes he rode me on his back

Dipping and rising to his plod.

I wanted to grow up and plough,

To close one eye, stiffen my arm.

All I ever did was follow

In his broad shadow round the farm.

I was a nuisance, tripping, falling,

Yapping always. But today

It is my father who keeps stumbling

Behind me, and will not go away

**In ‘Follower’, how does the poet present speaker’s feelings towards their father?**

**In the Bleak Midwinter by Christina Rossetti**

In the bleak mid-winter

   Frosty wind made moan,

Earth stood hard as iron,

   Water like a stone;

Snow had fallen, snow on snow,

   Snow on snow,

In the bleak mid-winter

   Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him

   Nor earth sustain;

Heaven and earth shall flee away

   When He comes to reign:

In the bleak midwinter

   A stable-place sufficed

The Lord God Almighty

   Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim

   Worship night and day,

A breastful of milk

   And a mangerful of hay;

Enough for Him, whom angels

   Fall down before,

The ox and ass and camel

   Which adore.

Angels and archangels

   May have gathered there,

Cherubim and seraphim

   Thronged the air;

But only His mother

   In her maiden bliss

Worshipped the Beloved

   With a kiss.

What can I give Him,

   Poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd

   I would bring a lamb,

If I were a Wise Man

   I would do my part,—

Yet what I can I give Him,

   Give my heart.

**In the poem ‘In the Bleak Midwinter’, how does the poet feelings towards gifts?**

**Money, O! by W. H. Davies**

When I had money, money, O!
I knew no joy till I went poor;
For many a false man as a friend
Came knocking all day at my door.

Then felt I like a child that holds
A trumpet that he must not blow
Because a man is dead; I dared
Not speak to let this false world know.

Much have I thought of life, and seen
How poor men's hearts are ever light;
And how their wives do hum like bees
About their work from morn till night.

So, when I hear these poor ones laugh,
And see the rich ones coldly frown
Poor men, think I, need not go up
So much as rich men should come down.

When I had money, money, O!
My many friends proved all untrue;
But now I have no money, O!
My friends are real, though very few.

**In the poem ‘Money, O!’ how does the poet present ideas about money?**

**Velocity of Money by Allen Ginsberg**

I’m delighted by the velocity of money as it whistles through the windows

of Lower East Side

Delighted by skyscrapers rising the old grungy apartments falling on

84th Street

Delighted by inflation that drives me out on the street

After all what good’s the family farm, why eat turkey by thousands every

Thanksgiving?

Why not have Star Wars? Why have the same old America?!?

George Washington wasn’t good enough! Tom Paine pain in the neck,

Whitman what a jerk!

I’m delighted by double digit interest rates in the Capitalist world

I always was a communist, now we’ll win

an usury makes the walls thinner, books thicker & dumber

Usury makes my poetry more valuable

my manuscripts worth their weight in useless gold —

Now everybody’s atheist like me, nothing’s sacred

buy and sell your grandmother, eat up old age homes,

Peddle babies on the street, pretty boys for sale on Times Square —

You can shoot heroin, I can sniff cocaine,

macho men can fite on the Nicaraguan border and get paid with paper!

The velocity’s what counts as the National Debt gets higher

Everybody running after the rising dollar

Crowds of joggers down broadway past City Hall on the way to the Fed

Nobody reads Dostoyevsky books so they’ll have to give a passing ear

to my fragmented ravings in between President’s speeches

Nothing’s happening but the collapse of the Economy

so I can go back to sleep till the landlord wins his eviction suit in court.

**In the poem ‘Velocity of Money’, how does the poet present the modern world?**