

## English Literature – Week Beginning 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Hello,

This week you are going to look at the structure and form of 'Exposure' because you should include structure and form when analysing a poem for GCSE. There is an exam style question at the end.

Work can be completed electronically or handwritten. Then, it can be emailed to me via the email below. For the handwritten work, take a photo of the handwritten work and send it in this way.

**Do not worry if do not understand all of the questions – do what you can.**

If you have any questions about his work, or you would like to send the work, please email: [amanda.dixon@grangepark.kent.sch.uk](mailto:amanda.dixon@grangepark.kent.sch.uk).

Mrs Dixon

## Exposure by Wilfred Owen

1 Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knive  
us ...

Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent ...  
Low, drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient ...

5 Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,  
But nothing happens.

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire,  
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.  
Northward, incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,

10 Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.  
What are we doing here?

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow ...  
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.  
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army

15 Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey,  
But nothing happens.

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.  
Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow,  
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause, and renew,

20 We watch them wandering up and down the wind's  
nonchalance,  
But nothing happens.

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces -  
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare,  
25 snow-dazed,

Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,  
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.  
- Is it that we are dying?

30 Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires, glozed  
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;  
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;  
Shutters and doors, all closed: on us the doors are closed, -  
We turn back to our dying.

35 Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;  
Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.  
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;  
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,  
For love of God seems dying.

40 Tonight, His frost will fasten on this mud and us,  
Shrivelling many hands. Puckering foreheads crisp.  
The burying-party, picks and shovels in their shaking grasp,  
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,  
But nothing happens.

## Structure:

Look carefully at how the poet has structured the poem and answer the following questions:

1. Which structural features have been used throughout the poem?  
Consider lines, stanzas, enjambment, regular/irregular structure and use of enjambment.
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2. How do these features convey the mood and tone of the poem?
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## FORM

Written in the present tense and first person plural (eg our, we, us). Collective voice shows how the experience was shared by soldiers across the war.

Each stanza has a regular rhyme scheme (ABBAC), which reflects the monotonous nature of the men's experiences.

The rhyme scheme offers no comfort or satisfaction - the rhymes are jagged like the reality of the men's experiences and reflect their confusion and fading energy.

Each stanza ends with a half line, leaving a gap which mirrors the lack of activity or hope for the men.

**Extension task:**

Answer the following question:

**How does Wilfred Owen present nature in the poem 'Exposure?'**

Remember to include:

- relevant context
- structure and form
- effect on the reader
- writer's purpose