Rewarding Learning

General Certificate of Secondary Education
2022

English Literature

Unit 2

The Study of Drama and Poetry

GEL21

[GEL21]
WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE, MORNING

TIME

2 hours.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklets provided.
Answer **two** questions.
Answer **one** question from each section.
Write your answer to Section A in the Drama Answer Booklet.
Write your answer to Section B in the Poetry Answer Booklet.
Spend 1 hour on Section A and 1 hour on Section B.
You should have with you an unannotated copy of your Drama text and an unannotated copy of your Poetry Anthology.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 80.
All questions in Section A and Section B carry equal marks, i.e. 40 marks for each question.
Quality of written communication will be assessed in all responses.

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Section A – Drama

Answer **one** question from this section.

1 O'Casey: *Juno and The Paycock*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways O'Casey **presents** the behaviour of Jerry and Bentham, show how far you agree that they are **disrespectful** towards Mary.

(b) Look again at the extract from Act 3 beginning on page 133 with Boyle's words, "More throuble in our native land, is it?" and ending on page 136 with the words, "the Will's a wash-out!"

With reference to the ways O'Casey **presents** Boyle in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show how far you agree that he **fails** in his duties.

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2 Priestley: *An Inspector Calls*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways Priestley **presents** Mr Birling, show how far you agree that he is **uncaring** towards others.

(b) Look again at the extract from Act 3 beginning on page 52 with Eric's words, "Yes. And that's when it happened." and ending at the bottom of page 54 with Mrs Birling's word, "Sheila!"

With reference to the ways Priestley **presents** members of the Birling family in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show how far you agree that the Birling family is **honest**.

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3 **Friel:** *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways Friel **presents** Madge, show how far you agree that Madge is **strong-minded**.

(b) Look again at the extract from Episode II, near the top of page 71 with the words, "The boys… They weren't always like this" and ending on page 73 with the words, "And that was that night".

(For those using the version which was reset in 2000, the extract begins in the middle of page 58 and ends towards the top of page 61.)

With reference to the ways Friel **presents** Gar and the boys in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show how far you agree that Gar and the boys **cannot** accept reality.

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4 Russell: *Blood Brothers*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways Russell **presents** Mickey and Edward, show how far you agree that the failure of their friendship is due to **class differences**.

(b) Look again at the extract beginning in the middle of page 7 with Mrs Lyons' words: "Twins? You're expecting twins?" and ending on page 9 with the stage direction: *Mrs Lyons gives her a half-smile and a shrug, perhaps slightly embarrassed at what she has revealed.*

(For those using the red-backed edition, the extract begins in the middle of page 11 and ends on page 13.)

With reference to the ways Russell **presents** Mrs Lyons in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show how far you agree that Mrs Lyons is **dislikeable**.

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5 Sherriff: *Journey's End*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways Sherriff **presents** Trotter, show how far you agree that Trotter is **someone to admire**.

(b) Look again at the extract from Act 1 beginning towards the middle of page 19 in the Samuel French edition with Trotter's words, "Good. I don't fancy crawling about on my belly..." and ending on page 21 with Stanhope's words: "They're going to take an equal chance – together.''

(For those using the Penguin edition, the extract begins on page 28 and ends on page 29.)

With reference to the ways Sherriff **presents** life in the trenches in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show that there are **differing reactions** to life in the trenches.

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6 **Stephens:** *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways Stephens **presents** honesty, show how far you agree that Ed and Judy are **honest**.

(b) Look again at the extract on page 89 beginning with the words: "Would you like an iced lolly?" and ending on page 91 with the stage direction, *Eventually he calms*.

With reference to the ways Stephens **presents** Christopher in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show how far you agree that Christopher **struggles** with relationships.

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7 Wilder: *Our Town*

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Drama Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) With reference to the ways Wilder **presents** Dr Gibbs, show how far you agree that Dr Gibbs is **caring**.

(b) Look again at the extract from Act Two beginning on page 70 with the stage direction: *The choir starts singing 'Love Divine, All Love Excelling'* and ending at the end of Act Two.

(For those using the edition re-issued in 2017, the extract begins at the top of page 48 and ends at the end of Act Two.)

With reference to the ways Wilder **presents** attitudes to marriage in the extract and elsewhere in the play, show that there are **differing** attitudes to marriage.

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Section B – Poetry

Answer **one** question from this section.

8 Anthology One: IDENTITY

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Poetry Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) Look again at *Kid* by Simon Armitage which deals with the theme of growing up, and at one other poem from the IDENTITY anthology which also deals with the theme of growing up.

With close reference to the ways each poet uses language, compare and contrast what the speakers in the poems say about **growing up**. You should include relevant contextual material.

(b) Look again at *Prayer Before Birth* by Louis MacNeice which deals with the theme of facing danger, and at one other poem from the IDENTITY anthology which also deals with the theme of facing danger.

With close reference to the ways each poet uses language, compare and contrast what the speakers in the poems say about **facing danger**. You should include relevant contextual material.

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9 Anthology Two: RELATIONSHIPS

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Poetry Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) Look again at *To His Coy Mistress* by Andrew Marvell which deals with the theme of desire, and at one other poem from the RELATIONSHIPS anthology which also deals with the theme of desire.

With close reference to the ways each poet uses language, compare and contrast what the speakers in the poems say about **desire**. You should include relevant contextual material.

(b) Look again at *When You Are Old* by W B Yeats which deals with the theme of regret, and at one other poem from the RELATIONSHIPS anthology which also deals with the theme of regret.

With close reference to the ways each poet uses language, compare and contrast what the speakers in the poems say about **regret**. You should include relevant contextual material.

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10 Anthology Three: CONFLICT

Answer **either (a) or (b)**

Use the Poetry Answer Booklet for your answer.

(a) Look again at *The Man He Killed* by Thomas Hardy which deals with the realities of conflict, and at one other poem from the CONFLICT anthology which also deals with the realities of conflict.

With close reference to the ways each poet uses language, compare and contrast what the speakers in the poems say about the **realities** of conflict. You should include relevant contextual material.

(b) Look again at *What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why (Sonnet XLIII)* by Edna St Vincent Millay which deals with the theme of remembering the past, and at one other poem from the CONFLICT anthology which also deals with the theme of remembering the past.

With close reference to the ways each poet uses language, compare and contrast what the speakers in the poems say about **remembering the past**. You should include relevant contextual material.

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTION PAPER

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Surname	StemUp Model Solution
Answer booklet	Write the question number in the left-hand margin at the start of each answer.

Question number

1a

I largely agree that Jerry and Bentham are disrespectful towards Mary, although O'Casey presents their disrespect in very different ways. Bentham's is cold and absent: he simply vanishes and leaves her to face the consequences alone. Jerry's is loud and present: he crowds her, grabs her and finally judges her. Yet O'Casey complicates both portraits with moments of apparent respect, and I think his real point is that neither man, the educated snob or the self-proclaimed champion of the workers, can see Mary as an equal human being rather than as something to win or discard.

Jerry's first scene with Mary in Act One establishes a pattern of pressure rather than respect. His opening, "The bitther word agen, Mary", is reproachful, as though her coolness is a wrong done to him, and his plea "Don't be so hard on a fella, Mary" turns the conversation back onto his own feelings. Mary's reply, "You won't allow me to be friendly with you", is revealing because the verb "allow" shows that she experiences his love as a kind of control. O'Casey then makes this control physical. When she tries to leave, the stage direction states that Jerry "bars the way", and he catches her arm until she cries "You're hurtin' me arm!" and "Let me go, let me go!" The repetition makes her desperation audible to the audience, and the action of blocking a doorway is a powerful visual image of a man who will not accept a woman's decision. His sarcastic "you've clicked with someone else, me lady!" is the most disrespectful line of all: the mock title "me lady" sneers at her ambition to better herself, implying she has ideas above her station.

However, O'Casey does not make Jerry a simple villain. His proposal rests on a genuine offer of security, as he tells her that the wage from his new post means

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"You an' I could live nice an' cosily on that", and he seems to want to lift her out of the tenement poverty that the play shows to be so crushing. His extravagant wish to kiss her "little, tiny, white hand" may sound ridiculous, but it suggests that he idealises her. Nevertheless, idealising a woman is not the same as respecting her, and the clumsy romantic language actually shows that Jerry loves an image rather than the real, independent Mary who is out on strike on principle.

Bentham's disrespect is presented largely through absence, which makes it subtler but arguably more damaging. In Act Two he appears polite and refined, and there is one moment where he seems considerate: when Johnny is terrified about the votive light, Bentham offers "It's all right, Mary, I'll go", sparing her a frightening task. Yet O'Casey surrounds him with signs of vanity, from his talk of Theosophy to his superior manner in the Boyles' crowded room, and the audience may already sense that he looks down on the family. By Act Three he has gone to England without explanation. Mary's flat line "Not even a line, mother" is delivered with brutal brevity, and the stage direction describing her "look of dejection, mingled with uncertain anxiety" makes her pain visible. When she tries to explain his desertion, O'Casey fractures her syntax: "I imagine....he thought....we weren't...good enough for him". The pauses enact the humiliation of a young woman forcing herself to admit that she was judged and rejected because of her class. Bentham's carelessness also extends to the will he drafted so vaguely that the inheritance collapses, so his failure towards Mary is part of a wider pattern of self-regard.

Mary's own words show how deeply she had trusted him: "Because I love him with all my heart and soul, mother". The intensity of this declaration magnifies the betrayal. Juno's response is full of compassion, but it also condemns Bentham, as she foresees that Mary will have "maybe forty years to face an' handle, an' every wan of them'll be tainted with a bitther memory". The long, heavy rhythm of the

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sentence makes the years feel endless, and the word "tainted" suggests a stain that Mary did nothing to deserve. Even Boyle, hardly a model of respect himself, calls Bentham a "scoundrel", which shows how unacceptable his behaviour is.

O'Casey then brings Jerry back in Act Three, and this structural choice is crucial. Jerry returns apparently to renew his offer, which briefly suggests genuine devotion. But as soon as he learns of the pregnancy, his respect evaporates: "My God, Mary, have you fallen as low as that?" The metaphor of falling reduces Mary to a moral failure, and his embarrassed correction, "I didn't mean it that way, Mary", only confirms that he did. His final half-promise, "if I can do anything for you.....Mary.....I will", is broken by so many pauses that it sounds hollow. Mary's verdict is devastating: "your humanity is just as narrow as the humanity of others". For a man who preaches the brotherhood of workers, this is the sharpest irony in the play, since his politics of equality do not extend to a wronged woman.

Overall, I agree strongly that both men are disrespectful towards Mary. Bentham treats her as disposable, Jerry treats her as a prize and then as damaged goods, and O'Casey uses stage directions, broken dialogue and the structure of Act Three to expose both. Significantly, it is the women who offer real respect at the end, when Juno assures Mary that her child will have "two mothers". By contrasting this with the failures of Jerry and Bentham, O'Casey suggests that the men who claim to be educated or principled are the ones who most let Mary down.

1b

I agree almost entirely that Boyle fails in his duties, as a husband, as a father and as a provider. O'Casey presents him as a man who is skilled at performing responsibility, through bluster, threats and grand promises, but who retreats from it whenever it becomes real. The extract from Act Three is the moment where all

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his failures collide, because the news of Mary's pregnancy and the truth about the will arrive together, and Boyle meets both by thinking only of himself.

The extract opens with Boyle's mock-heroic "More throuble in our native land, is it?", which treats his wife's obvious distress as another tiresome item of news. When he asks whether there is anything wrong with Mary, a candidate might see a flicker of concern, but O'Casey undercuts it immediately with the stage direction "Peevishly" and the exclamation "A gradle wrong with her!" The adverb tells the actor to sound irritated rather than worried, so his first reaction is annoyance at being disturbed. His sarcastic rhetorical question, "How ud I know", followed by "I wasn't there, was I?", dismisses Juno's anxiety and shows how little he knows about his daughter's life. Once he learns the truth, Boyle's language becomes obsessively self-centred. O'Casey loads his lines with first-person pronouns: "Oh, isn't this a nice thing to come on top o' me, an' the state I'm in!", "A pretty show I'll be" and "Amn't I afther goin' through enough". Mary's ruin is presented by Boyle as an attack on his own dignity and comfort. His only plan is punishment, and his repeated questions, "Where is she? Where is she till I tell her off?", focus on finding her to shout at her rather than to help her. The threat that "when I'm done with her she'll be a sorry girl!" is chilling when spoken about a frightened, pregnant daughter. He also refuses to accept any blame, turning on Mary's education instead: "Her readin's afther bringin' her to a nice pass". Earlier he had dismissed her books as "thrash", so the irony is that he blames her for seeking the very guidance he never gave.

Juno is the voice of judgement in the scene, and her sarcasm is an indictment: "an' your fatherly care never throubled the poor girl". The phrase "fatherly care" is pointedly ironic because the audience has seen none. Boyle's reply simply repeats her words back with added hostility, "Ay, she'll leave this place, an' quick too!",

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and this echo shows a man who is incapable of compromise. He even belittles his wife with the simile "You're talkin' like a two-year-oul', woman", where the impersonal noun "woman" strips Juno of the respect she has earned by holding the family together. His passionate insistence that Bentham "he'll have to marry her" sounds honourable, but it is about saving face, and O'Casey has him boast elsewhere that he will follow Bentham and "make him do her justice", a promise the audience knows he will never keep.

The climax of the extract is the revelation that "the Will's a wash-out!" The exclamatory delivery gives Juno no softening; he simply drops the news on a woman who is already shocked. Structurally, O'Casey has Boyle conceal this for some time, so his failure as a husband is also one of honesty. The audience now realises that he has let the family run up debts, on the gramophone, the new furniture and his new suit, while knowing the money would never come. Juno's later accusation, "An' you let us run into debt", exposes the true scale of his deception.

Elsewhere in the play, this failure is shown to be a long-standing habit rather than a sudden collapse. In Act One, Boyle avoids work by inventing pains, and the stage direction "Suddenly catching his thigh" whenever a job is mentioned is comic, but it also shows the dishonesty at the heart of his character. He spends his days with Joxer Daly, complaining that his wife is "always grousin", while Juno is the one who works to keep them fed. His solemn promise, "Juno, I'm done with Joxer", is broken almost as soon as it is spoken, which makes his vows meaningless. His treatment of Johnny is perhaps worst of all: when his son is tormented by guilt and fear, Boyle brushes it aside with "it's all nonsense", and at the end he is out drinking when Johnny is taken away to be shot.

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To be fair, O'Casey allows some moments that complicate the picture. Boyle does protect Mary from Jerry's rough behaviour in Act One with "This is nice goins on in front of her father!", he fondly recalls that Juno was named because everything important in their marriage happened in June, and when he believes he is rich he wants his family to share in the good fortune. These moments show that he is capable of warmth when it costs him nothing. However, they make his failures more damning, because they show he knows what a husband and father should be.

The final scene confirms my judgement. While Juno leaves with Mary to build a new life, Boyle stumbles in drunk with Joxer, muttering that the world is in a state of "chassis". His slurred, broken speech is a perfect image of a man who has chosen oblivion over duty. O'Casey's title points to his vanity: like a peacock, Boyle struts and displays but does nothing useful. In the end, it is Juno who fulfils every duty Boyle abandons, so I agree that he fails completely, and that O'Casey uses him to show how male self-importance leaves women to carry the real burden.

2a

I strongly agree that Priestley presents Mr Birling as uncaring towards others, both towards the working people he employs and, more surprisingly, towards his own children. Birling's care is selective: he can be protective of his wife and daughter when the family's status is threatened, but his concern is always bound up with reputation and profit. Priestley uses him as the clearest mouthpiece for selfish capitalism, so that the audience learns to distrust everything he values.

From the opening of Act One, Priestley shows that Birling's priorities are financial rather than emotional. At Sheila's engagement dinner, a moment that should be about his daughter's happiness, he turns to Gerald and talks business: "Your father and I have been friendly rivals in business for some time now". He does offer a

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toast, "So here's wishing the pair of you", which might suggest affection, but he quickly moves on to his hopes that Crofts and Birling will one day merge, and even hints that he may be in line for a knighthood. Sheila's engagement is presented as a business partnership. His long speeches to the young men, describing himself as a "hard-headed, practical man of business" and insisting that "a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own", reveal a philosophy that is uncaring by design. Priestley undermines these speeches with dramatic irony, as Birling confidently declares the Titanic "unsinkable" and dismisses talk of war, so the audience in 1945 knows he is wrong about everything. If he is wrong about the ship, the implication is that he is wrong about society too.

His treatment of Eva Smith is the most direct evidence of his lack of care. When the Inspector describes her agonising death, Birling responds with the bland phrase "Horrid business", which is the language of mild inconvenience rather than grief. He calls her a "wretched" girl, and he explains that he sacked her for leading a strike for a small rise in wages because "it's my duty to keep labour costs down". The noun "duty" is telling: Birling believes his moral obligation is to profit, not to people. He also says that she "had a lot to say", as if her courage in speaking up for others were her crime. His repeated insistence that he "can't accept any responsibility" shows that he refuses to see any connection between his decisions and her suffering.

What is especially striking is how uncaring Birling is towards his own children. Priestley uses stage directions to show his tone hardening whenever Eric or Sheila disagree with him. When Eric suggests that Eva's demand was reasonable, Birling responds "rather angrily" with "Unless you brighten your ideas, you'll never be in a position to let anybody stay". When Sheila is distressed by Gerald's affair, Birling begins to excuse him, "Now, Sheila, I'm not defending him. But you must

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understand that a lot of young men", showing more sympathy for male conduct than for his daughter's hurt. His imperatives, "Be quiet, Sheila!" and "Any more of that and you leave this room", silence his children rather than listening to them.

This becomes most extreme in Act Three after Eric's confession. Birling calls his son "You damned fool" and threatens him with "either stop shouting or get out". His main concern is the stolen money and the scandal, not Eric's guilt or the dead girl and her unborn child. He even says that he must cover the matter up as soon as possible, and when Eric says "You're not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble", Birling only responds angrily, "Don't talk to me like that". Priestley gives Eric the most damning line about Birling in the play, and Birling's angry reply proves Eric right, because he refuses to reflect on it at all.

There are, however, moments where Birling appears to care. He protests against the way his daughter, "a young unmarried girl, is being dragged into this", and he rebukes the Inspector for upsetting Sheila. He defends his wife angrily when the Inspector doubts her, and he softens, "Gentler", when he asks her to step aside during Eric's confession. Yet in each case Birling is protecting the family's respectability as much as its members' feelings. His protectiveness is that of a man guarding his property and position rather than showing genuine compassion.

The ending confirms that Birling has learned nothing. When Gerald suggests the Inspector may not be real, Birling is overjoyed and mocks the children: "the famous younger generation", who, he scoffs, "can't even take a joke". He tells Sheila to cheer up, saying it is "All over now", as though a girl's death matters only if it might be made public. His relief is entirely selfish. Priestley then ends the play with the telephone call announcing that a girl has died and an inspector is on his way, which punishes this complacency. Structurally, the cyclical ending suggests

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that people like Birling will be confronted again and again until they change.

Overall, I agree that Birling is uncaring, and Priestley makes him so deliberately. His few protective gestures are limited to his own class and his own household, and even then they are tied to reputation. Through Birling, Priestley warns his post-war audience that a society built on "look after himself and his own" leaves people like Eva Smith with nothing, and he contrasts this with the Inspector's message that "We are members of one body".

2b

I only partly agree that the Birling family is honest. Priestley presents honesty as something that is forced out of the family by the Inspector rather than offered freely, and the family splits along generational lines in how they respond. Eric and Sheila move painfully towards the truth, even when it shames them, while Mr and Mrs Birling treat honesty as a danger to be managed. The extract from Act Three captures this division precisely, because one character confesses while the others try to control, silence or hide what is being revealed.

At the start of the extract, Eric's short, definite answers suggest a new willingness to tell the truth: "Yes. And that's when it happened." There is no evasion here, and Priestley's plain syntax gives the confession a bleak honesty. Eric is also honest about his emotional state, admitting "I was in a hell of a state about it", which is strikingly blunt language in front of his parents. His speech is broken by dashes and hesitation as he explains that he gave Eva money, "about fifty pounds all told", and these pauses show how hard it is for him to say the words. In this sense Eric is the most honest character in the scene, because he speaks the truth even though it destroys his standing in the family.

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However, Priestley does not let Eric off lightly. The truth he confesses is itself a story of dishonesty, since he stole the money from his father's office. When pressed, he tries to soften the crime: "No, not really. I intended to pay it back". The qualifier "not really" is an attempt to avoid the full meaning of theft, so even Eric's honesty is incomplete. As Eric does not reply to some of his father's questions, the stage direction marks silences which suggest he cannot yet bring himself to face everything in front of his mother.

Mr Birling's response shows that he values honesty only when it serves him. He demands the truth, "Where did you get fifty pounds from?", but his concern is the money rather than the girl. When Eric attacks the hypocrisy of men like his father's friends, the "responsible" men he has seen with women in town, Birling shuts him down "angrily": "I don't want any of that talk from you". Priestley shows that honesty about the family's own class is exactly what Birling cannot tolerate. His instinct is to cover up the theft to protect his reputation, which is itself a form of dishonesty. Eric's devastating line, "you're not the kind of father a chap could go to when he's in trouble", is perhaps the most honest thing said by any Birling, and the anger it provokes shows how little room for truth there has been in this household.

Mrs Birling's role in the extract is particularly revealing. She re-enters, saying she "had to know what's happening", which might suggest she values the truth. Yet her reaction to Eric's confession is horror rather than understanding: "You stole money?" Then Sheila, with a simple declarative sentence, "She told mother", reveals the connection between Eric and Mrs Birling's refusal of help. Priestley ends the extract with Mrs Birling "alarmed", crying "Sheila!" The exclamation is an attempt to silence her daughter, and it shows that Mrs Birling fears the truth more than anything else. The audience already knows, through dramatic irony, that

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she has condemned her own grandchild by insisting the father should be made to take responsibility.

Elsewhere in the play, the same pattern is clear. Mr Birling can be frank in Act One, telling Gerald "frankly, without any pretences" how much the engagement means to him, but that honesty is about business advantage. Later he regrets having been open with the Inspector at all, admitting he was "a fool" not to have seen him alone. Mrs Birling is evasive throughout her interrogation in Act Two, giving guarded answers such as "I dare say there was", and when she is honest, it is only about her prejudice, admitting that the girl's use of the name Mrs Birling "prejudiced me against her case". Her claim that she did nothing she is ashamed of reveals a dishonesty with herself that is arguably worse than lying to others.

Sheila, by contrast, grows in honesty as the play progresses. She is quick to admit her jealousy in having Eva sacked from Milwards, and she refuses to let the family pretend: "This isn't the time to pretend that Eric isn't used to drink." She values honesty in others too, telling Gerald that his admission is "probably about the best thing you've said tonight. At least it's honest". By the end, she warns the family "Don't let's start dodging and pretending now", and the verbs "dodging" and "pretending" sum up the older Birlings' approach. Eric also maintains his honesty in Act Three, recognising that "The money's not the important thing", which shows he has grasped that the real issue is moral.

Overall, I do not fully agree that the Birling family is honest. Priestley presents honesty as a test that only the younger generation begin to pass, and even Eric's honesty is mixed with past deceit. The parents, especially after the Inspector leaves and they convince themselves the whole affair might be a hoax, choose comfortable dishonesty over the truth. Through this contrast Priestley suggests to

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his 1945 audience that real change depends on a willingness to face uncomfortable facts, something the young may achieve but their parents, so attached to status and appearance, refuse to attempt.

3a

I largely agree that Madge is strong-minded. In a household where neither Gar nor his father can say what they feel, Friel presents the elderly housekeeper as the one character who speaks plainly, takes the initiative and holds the home together. Yet Friel also allows the audience to glimpse the cost of that strength, especially in her private disappointment over the christening, so that her strength of mind is presented as something she chooses and maintains, often at great emotional expense.

From the opening of the play, Madge's voice cuts through Gar's fantasies. Her short, curt calls such as "Gar! Your tea!" establish her authority in the house, and her brisk imperatives show that she, not S.B., runs the domestic world. When Gar grabs her and forces her to dance, she orders him "Stop it! Stop it! You brat you!" The repetition and exclamations are comic, but the affectionate insult "brat" also shows that she treats Gar almost as a mother would, firm and fond at once. Her sarcasm when he jokes about his departure, "He's losing a treasure, indeed!", shows a sharp, unsentimental mind that refuses to indulge his self-pity.

Madge's strength of mind is clearest in her willingness to defend S.B. against Gar. When Gar mocks his father's silence, she insists that "just because he doesn't say much doesn't mean he hasn't feelings like the rest of us". This is an important moment in the play, because Madge is the only character who explains each man to the other. Friel uses her as a bridge between father and son, and the steady, reasoned rhythm of the sentence shows that she is not swayed by Gar's wit. She

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is equally firm in controlling what she tells Gar about his dead mother. She gives him some details, but she refuses to be drawn further: "For you're not going to pump me". Gar Private's repeated "Madge says" when he thinks about his mother shows how completely he depends on her version of the past, and the fact that Private, who mocks almost everyone, never mocks Madge suggests that even Gar's inner self respects her.

She also takes the initiative in practical and emotional matters. It is Madge who quietly arranges for the boys to call on Gar on his last night, a fact that deflates Gar when he learns it, and her conversation with the Canon is so witty and direct that he admires her as "a sharp one". When S.B. and Gar sit in silence she comments with cutting irony that "A body wouldn't get a word in edgeways with you two", using humour to expose their failure to communicate. Late in the play, when S.B. sentimentally recalls Gar going to school in a sailor suit, Madge contradicts her employer bluntly: "He never had a sailor suit". This is a small line with great dramatic weight, because it shows that she will not allow comforting false memories to stand, and it links to the play's wider concern with how people rewrite the past.

However, Friel complicates this strength. Madge is clearly under-appreciated by S.B., who sees her mainly as the housekeeper, and her frustration occasionally breaks through. When she complains about all the work Gar's departure creates, Friel uses dashes and exclamation to show her anguish: "I won't have time to lift my head!" Her gruffness, as in "Ah! Will you leave me alone", may be a way of hiding feelings she cannot express. Most movingly, the christening of her grandniece shows her vulnerability. She had expected the baby to be named after her, but she returns from Nelly's to announce flatly "They're going to call it Brigid". Her attempt to explain it away, telling herself that her own name must be

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too old-fashioned, is broken with pauses that reveal her hurt. When Gar asks what is wrong she says only that she is very tired.

Some might read this as weakness, but I think it is the opposite. Madge could share her disappointment, yet she chooses to hide it so that Gar's last night is not spoiled. Her strength of mind lies in her self-control. This is confirmed in her final monologue in Episode III, which Friel gives to her alone on stage. She slips an envelope into Gar's coat pocket and, looking at the bedroom door, reflects that when S.B. was young he was "the very same" as Gar, and that one day Gar will turn out just like his father. Her clear-eyed, almost fatalistic view shows that she understands both men better than they understand themselves. The quiet staging, an old woman alone in the kitchen, gives her a dignity no other character achieves, and Gar himself recognises this when he asks her, in effect, to give him a piece of her courage.

Overall, I strongly agree that Madge is strong-minded. Friel presents her as the emotional centre of the O'Donnell home: practical, honest, witty and willing to speak truths that the men avoid. Her moments of weariness and sadness do not undermine this; rather, they reveal that her strength is deliberate. In a play about two people unable to say what matters, Madge is the one who sees clearly and carries on, which makes her loss to Gar perhaps the greatest one of all.

3b

I largely agree that Gar and the boys cannot accept reality, although Friel draws an important distinction between them. The boys, Ned, Tom and Joe, live inside a shared fantasy of sexual conquest and wild nights, and they cling to it because the truth of their dull, stagnant lives in Ballybeg is unbearable. Gar is just as prone to escapism, yet Friel's device of the divided self allows Gar Private to see

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through the fantasy, so that Gar is presented as someone who can recognise reality even when he cannot fully face it.

The extract opens with Private's uncertain question: "The boys.... They weren't always like this, were they?" The ellipsis and the tag question suggest doubt and nostalgia at once. Private is trying to remember a time when the boys' company was genuinely enjoyable, but the very need to ask implies that the memory may itself be unreliable. Friel immediately establishes that this scene will be about the gap between what is said and what was real.

Tom, in particular, works hard to keep the fantasy alive. The stage direction "briskly" shows him forcing energy into the conversation, and his prompts, "Remember" and "Mind the night", are invitations to retell old stories rather than to talk about the present. His exaggerated claim that last year was "a holy fright", night after night, inflates ordinary events into legend. Friel shows that this is a ritual, a script the boys perform to avoid acknowledging that Gar is leaving and that nothing ever really happens to them. When Public tries to join in, he is quickly brushed aside in favour of another far-fetched story, and when Joe innocently asks "Was I there, Ned?", his attempt to anchor the memory in fact is ignored. Joe's question is comic, but it quietly exposes that the story may be invented.

The language of the boys' stories reveals how distorted their view of reality has become. Women are reduced to objects, "two wee Greenock pieces", "hot things" and "tramps", and Ned's sulky "Bloody cows" shows the resentment that lies beneath the bravado. The crude vocabulary suggests that the boys' sexual boasting is a cover for inexperience and frustration. As the story builds, Tom and Ned feed each other ever more lurid details, such as the girls being "In the bloody pelt", and

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Tom's admiring "Lucky bugger!" turns Ned into a hero. The stage direction "thawing", as Ned is drawn back into the fantasy, shows that he too needs the myth. The pauses in the dialogue are significant: they may suggest a flicker of awareness that the story is too inflated to be believed, before the boys press on regardless.

Friel then uses Private's monologue to puncture the fantasy. With biting sarcasm, Private recalls that the girls "defied not only the brave Ned but the whole lot of us", and the mock-heroic "the brave Ned" exposes the cowardice behind the legend. The flat closing line, "And that was that night", deflates everything that has gone before. This structural contrast between the boys' loud fiction and Private's quiet truth creates dramatic irony, since the audience hears the reality while the boys, who cannot hear Private, carry on as though nothing has been said. In this sense, the extract supports the view that the boys cannot accept reality at all, and that Gar can, at least privately.

Elsewhere in the play, however, Gar is shown to be just as dependent on fantasy. His imaginary football commentary, casting himself as the dashing hero "pride of the Ballybeg team", and his daydreams of conducting music show that he constantly escapes into self-glorifying roles. He is flattered when the boys come to see him, only to be deflated when he learns that Madge arranged the visit, which forces him to accept an unflattering truth. His relationship with Kate Doogan is also replayed in his memory as a lost possibility, and Private's remark that this is "a film you'll run over and over again" shows that he knows he will keep revisiting the past rather than accepting that it is gone.

There are moments when the boys do face reality. Ned gives Gar a belt as a parting gift and gruffly tells him "You'll make out all right over there", a rare

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acknowledgement that Gar's leaving is real. Joe, too, seems to understand the emptiness of their lives, suggesting that they will simply hang about the gable of the hotel and do nothing. These small moments suggest that the boys are not entirely blind; rather, they lack the words or courage to say what they feel, a failure of communication that runs throughout the play.

At the end, Gar comes closest to confronting reality. Asked by Private why he has to leave, Public can only answer "I don't know", stammering over the first word before repeating the phrase, and this broken repetition reveals that he cannot be sure his new life will be any better. Friel gives Gar no comforting fantasy here, only honest uncertainty.

Overall, I agree that the boys cannot accept reality, because their friendship depends on shared illusions that protect them from the narrowness of Ballybeg life. Gar is more complex: he indulges in fantasy as much as they do, but through Private he sees the truth clearly. Friel suggests that seeing reality is not the same as being able to change it, and that this painful awareness is precisely what drives Gar to emigrate.

4a

I largely agree that Russell presents class as the force that destroys the friendship of Mickey and Edward, but I would argue that class does not work alone. It operates through the choices of individual characters, Mrs Lyons, Mickey and Edward himself, and through a tragic structure that makes the ending feel fixed from the opening moments. Russell lets the audience weigh these causes, but by the final speech of the Narrator the weight seems to fall heavily on class.

At first, class difference seems almost harmless. When the boys meet at seven,

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they are fascinated by each other precisely because they are different. Edward, who is used to sweets and toys, offers his sweets freely, while Mickey, who has very little, is stunned by his generosity. Russell uses contrast in their language to comic effect: Mickey's swearing delights Edward, who admires the way Mickey talks, while Mickey is amused by Edward's polite vocabulary, so that Edward's "You say smashing things don't you?" becomes a moment of shared wonder. Their decision to become blood brothers, cutting their hands and swearing loyalty, is staged as an innocent ritual that ignores the gap between the house "up by the park" and Mickey's crowded home. In these childhood scenes Russell seems to suggest that friendship can cross class lines, at least while the boys are too young to understand them. Class is present, but it does not yet divide them.

What divides them at this stage is adult interference, and here class and guilt are tangled together. Mrs Lyons forbids Edward from seeing Mickey, insisting "I don't want you mixing with boys like that!" Her disgust is clearly class prejudice, yet the audience knows that her real fear is that Edward will discover the truth of his birth. Russell's dramatic irony means we cannot fully separate the two motives. Even so, the attempt fails: the families end up living near each other after the Johnstones are rehoused, and the boys find each other again as teenagers. This suggests that class barriers imposed by adults are not enough on their own to end the friendship.

It is as the twins grow up that class becomes decisive. Russell structures Act Two through parallel scenes and songs that show their lives pulling apart. Edward is sent to boarding school and then to university, while Mickey leaves school, works in a factory and is soon made redundant. The contrast is sharpened when Edward returns home full of energy, unable to understand Mickey's despair. His question, "why is a job so important?", is not cruel, but it exposes how far apart their

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experiences have become. To Edward, life is a series of choices; to Mickey, it is a trap. Russell gives Edward money he offers freely, and Mickey's refusal, along with his blunt "You're a dick head!", shows that what once fascinated him about Edward now humiliates him. When Mickey dismisses blood brotherhood with "That was kids' stuff, Eddie", the stage direction that Edward is slightly unsure but laughs anyway hints at his growing uncertainty. The bond formed in innocence cannot survive adult inequality.

However, it could be argued that the final collapse comes from personal betrayal rather than class. Edward's love for Linda, and his relationship with her while Mickey is depressed and dependent on tablets, gives Mickey a very personal reason to turn on him. Mrs Lyons spitefully points out Edward and Linda together, and the Narrator's warning, "There's a man gone mad in town tonight", marks Mickey's loss of control as an act of jealous revenge. On this reading, it is pride, envy and love that destroy the friendship. Yet even here class lurks beneath the surface. Mickey's prison sentence, which follows a robbery he joins out of desperation for money, and the depression that follows, are presented as consequences of his lack of opportunity. Edward, meanwhile, has become a councillor and is able to find Mickey and Linda a house and a job. Mickey's bitter question in the final scene, "how come you got everything... an' I got nothin'?", turns a private betrayal into a statement about class. His recognition that he could have been Edward, had he been the twin who was given away, suggests that the two lives were separated not by nature but by circumstance.

Russell also offers fate and superstition as an alternative explanation. The Narrator constantly reminds the audience of the devil and the debt that must be paid, and the play opens with the twins already dead, so the tragedy feels inevitable. The superstition about twins secretly parted, invented by Mrs Lyons to frighten Mrs

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Johnstone, seems to come true. Nevertheless, the closing question, "And do we blame superstition for what came to pass?", is followed by the suggestion that the cause might be what the English have come to know as class. The structure of the ending invites the audience to reject the comfortable explanation of fate in favour of a social one.

In conclusion, I agree to a large extent that class differences cause the failure of the friendship. Russell shows that class barely matters to the children, but that as Mickey and Edward grow, unequal education, work and opportunity drive them apart, and they shape even the personal betrayal of the final act. Pride, jealousy and the meddling of Mrs Lyons speed the collapse, but Russell's framing of the ending makes clear that class is the deeper cause.

4b I largely agree that Russell presents Mrs Lyons as dislikeable, since she manipulates, deceives and finally destroys the people around her. However, Russell is careful not to make her a simple villain. Her loneliness and her desperate longing for a child invite some sympathy in the extract, and her later collapse into paranoia makes her as much a victim of the bargain as its author.

The extract shows the moment her plan is born, and Russell makes its speed unsettling. The repeated question, "Twins? You're expecting twins?", suggests an idea forming in her mind even as she speaks, and the Narrator underlines this: "How quickly an idea, planted, can/Take root and grow into a plan". The image of a seed growing could suggest something natural, even hopeful, but the word "planted" also implies something deliberate and calculating. Russell's stage direction that she is containing her excitement shows that she sees an opportunity in another woman's crisis. The urgent repetition of "Quickly, quickly" denies Mrs Johnstone

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any time to think, and this is where Mrs Lyons first becomes dislikeable: she is not persuading but rushing her.

Her language soon turns to command. "Give one of them to me" is blunt and imperative, treating a baby as an object to be handed over. She then exploits Mrs Johnstone's fears with cold precision. She reminds her that "Already you're being threatened by the Welfare people" and uses Mrs Johnstone's own words against her: "You said yourself, you said you had too many children already". The repetition of "you said" makes this sound almost like an accusation, so that Mrs Johnstone is made to feel that giving up a child is what she wanted all along. When Mrs Johnstone protests, "Oh, it's mad...", Mrs Lyons interrupts and reshapes her objection: "I know it is. It's mad...but it's wonderful". Russell's use of interruption shows that she simply does not listen. She also plans to deceive her husband, claiming "He need never guess", and her imagined script, "I have a baby, our baby", shows how quickly she is prepared to build a whole life on a lie. The stage direction in which she grabs a cushion and arranges it beneath her dress is almost comic, but it is also disturbing, because it shows a woman literally acting out a pregnancy that is not hers.

Yet Russell complicates our response. Mrs Lyons does offer Mrs Johnstone real benefits, pointing out that "at least if the child was with me you'd be able to see him every day". Her song, "I've dreamed of all the places I would take him", reveals a genuine, aching love for a child she does not yet have. The pleading "Please, Mrs Johnstone. Please" sounds manipulative, but it may also be heartfelt. Earlier, she has explained that she and her husband have been trying for a long time, and that she finds the house large and empty while he is away. Her final half-smile and shrug, perhaps slightly embarrassed at what she has revealed, suggests a vulnerable woman who has exposed more of herself than she intended. At this

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point, a sympathetic audience might see her as desperate rather than wicked.

Elsewhere in the play, though, Russell makes her increasingly dislikeable. Once she has the baby, she turns on the woman who gave it to her. She tells her husband that Mrs Johnstone neglects her work, and dismisses her, breaking her promise that she could see the child every day. When Mrs Johnstone tries to take the baby back, Mrs Lyons uses her superstitious nature against her, inventing the belief that if either twin learns he was one of a pair "they shall both immediately die". Her chilling warning, "you will kill them", silences Mrs Johnstone for years. This is perhaps her cruellest act, because it uses fear to control a woman she knows to be poorer and more vulnerable than herself. Earlier she has even mocked Mrs Johnstone's beliefs, laughing at her for being superstitious, which makes her exploitation of those same beliefs more hypocritical.

Her treatment of Edward is presented more ambiguously. She forbids him to play with Mickey, saying "I don't want you mixing with boys like that!", which reveals class snobbery, and she later claims "It's only because I love you". Russell suggests that her love is real but has become possessive and fearful. When she finds the locket containing a photograph of Mrs Johnstone and Mickey, her panicked questioning shows how terrified she is of losing him.

By the end, Mrs Lyons has become a figure of instability. She attacks Mrs Johnstone with a knife, crying "I curse you. Witch!", and blames her: "You ruined me". Russell's use of the off-stage chant about the mad woman suggests that others have begun to see her as a monster. Yet this breakdown also makes her pitiable. Her most damaging act comes when she turns Mickey round and points out Edward and Linda together, an act that pushes him towards the final tragedy. It is spiteful, but it is also the act of a woman consumed by the guilt and fear

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her own lie has produced.

In conclusion, I agree that Mrs Lyons is largely dislikeable, because she manipulates others to get what she wants and uses fear to protect her secret. However, Russell shows in the extract that her actions begin in loneliness and longing, and her decline into paranoia suggests that the bargain she forced on Mrs Johnstone has destroyed her too. She is unpleasant, but she is also tragic.

Sa

I agree to a large extent that Sherriff presents Trotter as someone to admire. At first he seems a comic figure, greedy, overweight and slow, but as the play develops Sherriff reveals beneath this surface a steady, good-humoured and quietly brave man whose ordinariness becomes a kind of heroism. The audience may laugh at Trotter, but by the end it is hard not to respect him.

Sherriff's first presentation of Trotter invites some mockery. He enters alongside Stanhope, and the stage directions emphasise the contrast between them: Stanhope is tall and slim, while Trotter is short and fat, middle-aged and homely looking, with a red, round face and a bursting tunic. Even his name, with its suggestion of pigs, seems to mark him out as a joke. His obsession with food reinforces this impression. His first concern on arriving is his supper, and his colloquial complaint, "I don't fancy crawling about on my belly after that cutlet", turns the danger of no man's land into a joke about his stomach. Later, his horror at a meal without pepper, his feeling that "war's bad enough with pepper" but much worse without it, is absurd. A reader might argue that, just as Stanhope drinks to cope, Trotter eats, and that his appetite is a sign of weakness rather than strength.

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However, Sherriff uses this humour to show something admirable. Trotter's jokes are a way of holding fear at a distance, and they help others to do the same. His throwaway reference to "this 'ere war" refuses to let the conflict seem grand or terrifying. When Stanhope is tense, Trotter tries to lift the mood, telling him to "cheer up skipper. You do look glum!" Even on the morning of the final attack, he sings to relieve the strain. In a dugout full of men close to breaking point, his cheerfulness is not foolishness but a contribution to morale.

His speech also tells us something about his background. Trotter has been promoted from the ranks, unlike the public-school officers around him, and his dropped letters and phrases such as "dooty" mark him as a "temporary gentleman". Sherriff could have used this to make him look inferior, and the other officers do sometimes make fun of him. Yet Trotter never resents the advantages of Stanhope, Osborne or Raleigh. His sense of duty is simple and unshowy: he is there because his country called him, and he does his job. In this sense he represents the ordinary man who answered the call, and his lack of pretension is something the audience is invited to admire.

Sherriff also shows Trotter's kindness and decency. He is friendly and welcoming to Raleigh when the young officer arrives, reassuring him that he will soon get used to the trenches. He is loyal to Stanhope and concerned about his drinking and his health. His talk about his wife and his garden at home, and his delight at noticing a may-tree, "Why a blinkin' may-tree!", reveal a gentle, homely man who still notices beauty in the middle of destruction. This memory also shows how long he has endured the trenches, since he can recall the previous spring. His habit of drawing circles on a piece of paper and shading them in to pass the hours of his duty is comic, but it is also a practical and quite sensible way of surviving the boredom and tension of the line.

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The contrast with Hibbert is especially important. Hibbert complains of neuralgia and tries desperately to be sent home, while Trotter, who is older and in worse physical shape, never asks to leave. Sherriff uses Hibbert's fear to throw Trotter's endurance into sharper relief. Trotter is realistic about the war and does not see why he should suffer more discomfort than is necessary, but he never shirks his duty.

What makes Trotter most admirable is the hint, late in the play, that his calm is not effortless. When Stanhope praises his consistency, telling him "you're always the same", Trotter replies, "Always the same, am I?" and sighs, adding that Stanhope knows little about it. Sherriff's stage direction makes this a moving moment: the audience suddenly realises that Trotter's good humour is a mask he keeps up for others, and that he feels the strain just as much as anyone. After Osborne's death, Trotter becomes Stanhope's second in command. He is honoured by the promotion, and he supports Stanhope quietly, without trying to replace Osborne. His courage lies in carrying on.

Some readers might still argue that Trotter lacks drive and is happy with his lot in life, and that his limited imagination protects him from fear in a way that is less admirable than Stanhope's conscious struggle. There is some truth in this: Trotter does not experience the agonising self-awareness that makes Stanhope so tragic. However, Sherriff suggests that Trotter's steadiness is itself a form of bravery, and the brief glimpse of his hidden strain shows that he is not simply unaware.

In conclusion, I strongly agree that Trotter is someone to admire. Sherriff introduces him as a figure of fun, but he gradually reveals a loyal, kind and resilient man whose humour sustains those around him. Trotter's heroism is

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	unglamorous, but in a play that exposes the cost of war, his quiet endurance is perhaps the most dependable courage of all.
5b	Sherriff presents life in the trenches as something every man must endure, but the extract and the wider play make clear that each officer reacts to it differently. Some, like Trotter, cope through humour and routine; Hibbert tries to escape; Stanhope survives through whisky and fierce self-control; and Osborne offers calm concern for others. By placing these reactions side by side in a single cramped dugout, Sherriff shows that there is no single way to face the war.
	The extract opens with Trotter, whose reaction is to make the war ordinary. His colloquial "I don't fancy crawling about on my belly after that cutlet" turns the dangerous work of patrolling no man's land into a joke about digestion. His phrase "this 'ere war" is casual, almost dismissive, as though the war were simply a nuisance. Sherriff uses this refusal to be solemn to show how humour shrinks the horror to a manageable size. The frequent references to food, including the business about the apricots, work in the same way. Mason's almost farcical, apologetic appearance to discuss the apricots, and Stanhope's curt dismissal of him, also remind the audience of the class structure that continues even here, with servant and officer roles preserved in a hole in the ground.
	Other details in the extract suggest how far the men insist on domestic routine. The casual remark "This was Hardy's bed" shows how quickly men come and go, and how little time there is to dwell on it. The comment "Must have a little comfort in your old age, Uncle" turns the dugout into a kind of home, with Osborne cast as the kindly uncle. The stage direction in which a whisky and water is taken shows that drinking has become part of the ordinary rhythm of trench

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life.

Hibbert's reaction is very different. When he reports on the line, he speaks lightly: "Bit of sniping somewhere to our left; some rifle grenades coming over just on our right." On the surface this is as offhand as Trotter's humour, but Sherriff shows that it hides real terror. Hibbert's pallid face and the stage direction of him gently rubbing his forehead suggest that he is physically affected by fear. He cannot eat, which contrasts sharply with Trotter's appetite. His complaint of "beastly neuralgia" and his apology, "I'm damn sorry to keep on talking about it", show that he is trying, rather pathetically, to win permission to leave. Sherriff makes the audience unsure whether he is ill or simply terrified, and perhaps that is the point: in the trenches, fear itself becomes an illness.

Stanhope's reaction to Hibbert reveals his own way of coping. His rapid change of subject, "I see. Mason's got your supper", refuses to engage with Hibbert's complaint. After Hibbert leaves, there is silence, a stage direction that makes the audience feel the judgement in the room. Stanhope then lashes out: "Another little worm trying to wriggle home" and "Artful little swine!" The insults are cold, and the image of a worm reduces Hibbert to something contemptible. His advice to "Get tight" shows that for Stanhope drink is the answer to fear. His declaration, "No man of mine's going sick before the attack", ends with his insistence that his men will all take an equal chance together. This suggests that his harshness comes from a fierce sense of fairness: if he can force himself to stay, so must everyone else. Osborne, by contrast, quietly fills his pipe and tells Stanhope "I wish you'd turn in", offering care rather than judgement.

Elsewhere in the play, Sherriff develops these differing reactions. In the opening scene, Hardy is jovial because he has the luck to be relieved before the attack, and

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he describes trench mortars in nursery language as "Minnies" and things like pineapples. His complaint that "There's nothing worse than dirt in your tea" makes a minor inconvenience seem more important than danger, and this counter-intuitive humour is a way of avoiding the reality of death. The officers' absurd talk of earwig races, where dipping an earwig in whisky is said to make it go faster, ironically echoes Stanhope, whose own courage comes from a bottle.

Stanhope's reaction is the most developed and the most painful. He admits that he drinks to keep going, and it becomes clear that without whisky he could not face the front line. When he censors Raleigh's letter he fears what it will say about him, and his drunken, dreamy wish that everyone could simply be killed in the attack, so that Raleigh's sister would go on thinking him a fine fellow, shows how heavily his reputation weighs on him. Near the end, his denial of reality is fierce: he tells the others to forget the raid and complains that they were having a jolly decent evening until someone started talking about the war. His sarcastic response to the staff, "How awfully nice", when told that the brigadier is pleased with the raid in which Osborne has died, reveals his bitterness towards those far from the line.

Osborne and Raleigh offer a gentler escapism. Osborne reads Alice in Wonderland in the dugout, and before the raid he talks to Raleigh about walking in the New Forest, retreating into fantasy and memory. Trotter, meanwhile, remains cheerful and practical, facing his fate with good humour and toughness.

In conclusion, Sherriff shows that there are many differing reactions to life in the trenches. In the extract alone, humour, denial, fear, anger and kindness sit side by side. Sherriff seems to suggest that every reaction is a survival strategy, and that none of them, however brave or funny, can fully protect a man from what the war

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demands.

6a Stephens builds the play around a central irony: Christopher, who cannot tell lies, is surrounded by adults who lie to him. I would argue that Ed and Judy are not honest for much of the play, since both deceive Christopher in serious ways. However, Stephens presents their dishonesty as coming from love, fear and weakness rather than cruelty, and by the end both parents are struggling, in different ways, to become honest with their son. They are not honest people, but they are people who learn honesty at great cost.

Ed's dishonesty is the more shocking because he is the parent Christopher trusts. Early in the play he tells Christopher that his mother "has had to go into hospital", and then that she has died because of "a problem with her heart". Stephens makes this lie especially painful because Ed appears to try to soften it. There is an awkward quality to his explanation, as though he is half aware of how inadequate it is. The audience later learns that Judy has left with Roger Shears and is living in London, so Ed's story is a complete invention. He compounds it by hiding Judy's letters in a box in his bedroom. When Christopher finds them, the stage becomes a place of revelation: Judy's voice reads the letters aloud while Christopher discovers the truth, and the shock is so great that he lies still, wrapped in a ball. The lie that was meant to protect him has broken his world.

Ed also deceives Christopher about Wellington. He insists that Christopher should not ask questions about the dog or about Mrs Shears, apparently in order to stop him discovering the truth. When it emerges that Ed himself killed Wellington with a garden fork after his relationship with Mrs Shears broke down, the audience understands that Ed's anger at Christopher's investigation is really fear of being

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exposed. Stephens presents this as the climax of Ed's dishonesty, and it destroys Christopher's trust so completely that he flees to London.

Yet Stephens complicates the picture by showing Ed's honesty in other areas. He is frank, even blunt, with his son: "Jesus, Christopher, how stupid are you?" is harsh, but it is the honest outburst of an exhausted father rather than a calculated deception. He is honest about his son with others too. When he speaks to Christopher's school, he defends his son bluntly, insisting that "Christopher is getting a crap enough deal already", and he is willing to hear Mrs Gascoyne's views directly rather than be shielded from them. Most importantly, when he confesses to killing Wellington, he does so of his own accord, explaining what happened and how he lost his temper. This confession is a turning point: Ed chooses honesty even though he knows it may cost him his son. Stephens shows his love physically through the stage direction in which he holds his right hand up and spreads his fingers in a fan, the gesture he and Christopher use instead of a hug. At the end, Ed's pride in Christopher's A level, and his patient effort to rebuild trust, suggest a father committed to being honest from now on.

Judy's honesty is presented differently. She too has deceived her family. She has had an affair with Roger and has abandoned Christopher to move to London with him. Christopher cannot understand that his mother has lied to him, and her absence adds to his confusion. In this sense, Judy's dishonesty is just as damaging as Ed's.

However, Stephens presents Judy's letters as acts of remarkable honesty. Through them she tells Christopher about her new life, explaining that she has found a new job as a secretary, and she gives him her address in the hope that he will write. The letters are apologetic but forthright. She admits that she "was not a

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very good mother" and recognises that Ed is more patient with Christopher than she is. Her account of the day in Bentalls, when Christopher's behaviour in the shop overwhelmed her, is painfully frank: "that night I just cried and cried". She confesses that she felt really lonely and that she "couldn't take it anymore". By having these letters read aloud, often while Judy stands on stage, Stephens gives her voice a confessional quality, as though she is speaking directly to Christopher and to the audience. She hides nothing about her failings.

There is, though, a limit to this honesty. Judy was honest only once she had already left, and her letters, however truthful, could not undo the fact of her departure. Her honesty is also partly self-justification. Nevertheless, when Christopher arrives in London, she chooses him over Roger, leaving London and returning to Swindon. Her actions finally match her words.

In conclusion, I only partly agree that Ed and Judy are honest. Both tell serious lies, and Ed's deceptions about Judy and Wellington are the central betrayals of the play. Yet Stephens presents both parents as capable of painful honesty: Judy in her confessional letters, and Ed in his confession and his attempt to rebuild trust. The play suggests that honesty is difficult for imperfect adults, and that Christopher's own truthfulness exposes, and eventually changes, the people who love him.

6b

I agree to a large extent that Stephens presents Christopher as someone who struggles with relationships. The extract shows how a single piece of unwelcome news can make him impossible to reach, and how this places strain on everyone around him. However, Stephens also suggests that the struggle is not Christopher's alone. Several of the adults around him fail to understand him, while others, such

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as Siobhan and Mrs Alexander, show that relationships with Christopher are possible when people adapt to him.

The extract begins with an ordinary attempt at kindness. Judy's offer of an iced lolly is a mother's way of comforting her son, but the gesture quickly collapses. When she reveals that she has phoned Mrs Gascoyne about him sitting his Maths A level, the stage directions tell us that Christopher screams and throws the iced lolly away. Stephens uses the sudden violence of this action to show how unpredictable life with Christopher can be. The lolly, a symbol of comfort, is rejected along with the person who offered it. The A level is the one fixed point Christopher has clung to throughout his journey, and its loss is unbearable to him. His reaction is not a rejection of Judy as such, but he cannot separate the bad news from the person who brings it.

Stephens then uses stage directions to show how extreme his distress becomes. Christopher screams and screams, and stops only because his chest hurts. The repetition emphasises that this is not ordinary anger but a loss of control that no words can reach. He then listens to the white noise and turns the volume up very high, creating a wall of sound between himself and the world. In performance this would be a powerful moment: the audience would be surrounded by the noise Christopher uses to block out everyone, perhaps sharing his sense of overload. It is a clear image of how he withdraws from relationships when they become too much.

Judy's language shows the strain on her. Her repeated "Calm down" is a desperate attempt to regain control, but the repetition suggests helplessness rather than authority. When a stranger, the Woman on Heath, asks whether Christopher is "OK", Judy's strained reply, "Well, what does it look like to you?", reveals her

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embarrassment and exhaustion. Stephens shows that Christopher's difficulties draw his parents into public conflict and isolate them too. Christopher's relationship with Roger is even worse. He refuses Roger's gifts, dismissing them as "for children", which makes it hard for Roger to win him over, and Roger's patience with him wears thin. When Roger becomes aggressive and grabs him, Christopher rolls himself into a ball to hide. Judy's reaction, in the stage directions She grabs Roger and She pulls him away, shows how Christopher's struggle spreads into Judy's relationship with Roger. The extract ends only when he is safe, with the stage direction Eventually he calms, which suggests that calm comes slowly and on his own terms.

Elsewhere, Stephens shows the same struggle with his father. Christopher talks enthusiastically about the Milky Way, but Ed's brief replies suggest that he does not share the interest, and Christopher does not notice. This one-sided conversation shows how he cannot read other people's feelings. More seriously, Christopher's refusal to stop investigating Wellington's death, despite his father's instructions, leads to a confrontation in which Ed hits him. When Christopher later discovers his mother's letters, he lies still, wrapped in a ball, unable to cope. Throughout the play, Christopher dislikes being touched, which is why Ed and Christopher touch fingers in a fan instead of hugging. Stephens turns this gesture into a symbol of a relationship that is loving but full of limits.

However, some evidence suggests that Christopher does not always struggle. His relationship with Siobhan is calm and reasoned. She understands how his mind works and encourages him to write the book that becomes the play we watch, and Stephens' use of her as a narrator who reads his words aloud shows a relationship built on trust. Mrs Alexander, too, is patient with him, and when he becomes defensive she reassures him: "I apologise. I didn't mean to suggest that you were

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lying". Her willingness to apologise allows a real conversation to happen. These moments suggest that Christopher can form relationships when others meet him halfway.

Indeed, Stephens hints that the adults around him are often responsible for the difficulties. Roger's dismissive tone, "A gold star. Well that's very original I have to say", mocks something that matters deeply to Christopher. Ed's lies about Judy and about Wellington break Christopher's trust, and his difficulty with relationships is partly a reasonable response to having been deceived. By the end of the play, Ed's gift of a puppy and his patient efforts to rebuild trust suggest that the relationship can be repaired if Ed respects Christopher's need for honesty.

In conclusion, I largely agree that Christopher struggles with relationships. The extract shows vividly how he withdraws from those who care for him and how his distress strains Judy and Roger. Yet Stephens also presents adults who fail to understand him, and others who succeed, so that the struggle belongs as much to the people around Christopher as to Christopher himself.

7a

I largely agree that Dr Gibbs is caring, but Wilder presents his care as something quiet, practical and unshowy rather than tender or eloquent. He is a man who expresses love through duty, patience and gentle humour, and his occasional gruffness and small-mindedness make him a believable small-town husband and father rather than a saint. In a play that asks its audience to notice the value of ordinary lives, Dr Gibbs embodies a kind of care that is easily overlooked precisely because it is so constant.

Wilder establishes Dr Gibbs's caring role before he even speaks. The Stage

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Manager, acting as narrator, steps out of the action to tell us that the doctor died in 1930 and that "The new hospital's named after him". This disjunctive device, revealing a character's death at the moment we meet him, encourages the audience to judge him by his whole life, and the naming of a hospital after him suggests a lifetime of service that the whole community has recognised. His first entrance reinforces this: he is returning at dawn from delivering twins in Polish Town, so his first action in the play is to bring new life into Grover's Corners. Because the set is almost bare and the doctor's bag and actions are largely mimed, Wilder strips his work back to its essentials, making his steady, unglamorous labour the focus.

His care extends naturally to the townspeople. In his brief exchange with young Joe Crowell he asks, "How's your knee, Joe?", and the casual, everyday question shows that he notices and remembers the small troubles of the people around him. Similarly, his remark about a patient, "Mrs Wentworth's coming at eleven. Guess I know what it's about", is wry but not unkind; the colloquial "Guess" suggests long familiarity and an understanding of his patients that goes beyond medicine. Most strikingly, when Mrs Gibbs raises the gossip about Simon Stimson's drinking, he claims, "I guess I know more about Simon Stimson's affairs than anybody in this town", and concludes that there is "nothing we can do but just leave it alone". Here his care takes the form of discretion. Rather than joining in the judgement of the choir ladies, he protects a troubled man's privacy, which suggests a compassionate tolerance that Mrs Gibbs herself lacks.

As a father, Dr Gibbs is presented as firm but fair. When George neglects to chop wood for his mother, the doctor does not shout but calls his son into his study and lets him realise for himself how hard his mother works. His later comment, "Well, I knew all I had to do was call your attention to it", reveals a parenting

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style based on trust and reasoning rather than punishment, and George's tears show that the quiet approach has worked. He then softens the moment by announcing, "I've decided to raise your spending money", acknowledging that George is growing up, and he is careful to be fair to Rebecca too: "Probably Rebecca'll feel she ought to have some more too". This sequence, structured as a small crisis followed by reconciliation, shows his care for both his children's feelings and their moral growth.

However, there is some evidence that Dr Gibbs is less caring towards his wife. Mrs Gibbs calls him "grouchy" and "unreasonable", and complains that she has not heard a serious word from him since she has known him. He teases her that she has no more voice than "an old crow", criticises her for "Traipsin' around the streets at this hour of the night", and dismisses the choir as "a lot of hens". Most tellingly, he refuses to sell the highboy and take her to Paris, preferring his trips to Civil War battlefields, and he closes the discussion with "there's no sense in going over that again". Wilder uses this repeated motif of Mrs Gibbs's unfulfilled wish to hint at a quiet selfishness in him, and the audience, knowing from the Stage Manager that she will die far from home, probably without ever seeing Paris, may feel this more sharply than he does.

Yet even these moments are softened by stage directions and tone. The repeated directions in which Dr Gibbs starts laughing and both laugh suggest that the teasing is affectionate banter between partners who are comfortable together. On the morning of the wedding he tells Julia, "I thought you were the prettiest girl I'd ever seen", and jokes that they have been "conversing for twenty years now without any noticeable barren spells". The mock-formal phrasing is gently humorous, but it also expresses gratitude for a long companionship. His irritable cry, "George, do as your mother tells you!", is less unkind than protective, and he

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is the only one who notices that Rebecca is crying, even if he does not comfort her.

In Act Three Wilder offers a final, moving image of his care. He is seen bringing flowers to his wife's grave. Mrs Gibbs, now among the Dead, cannot thank him or tease him back, so this silent gesture is entirely selfless, and it suggests that the affection hidden beneath years of teasing was real all along. Wilder's broader point, made through Emily's return to her twelfth birthday, is that the living rarely realise life while they live it, and Dr Gibbs's care, expressed in routines rather than declarations, is exactly the kind that people take for granted.

Overall, I strongly agree that Dr Gibbs is caring. His flaws, his stubbornness over Paris and his gruff teasing, make him human, but his service to the town, his discretion towards Simon Stimson, his wise handling of George and his loyalty to his wife after death show a man whose care is constant, if understated.

7b

Wilder presents marriage as the central ritual of life in Grover's Corners, but he deliberately sets very different attitudes to it side by side: fear and reluctance in the young couple, firm conventional support from their parents, sentimental romance from Mrs Soames and weary cynicism from the Stage Manager. Rather than settling on one view, the extract holds these attitudes in tension, and the wider play suggests that marriage is both an ordinary, almost mechanical custom and something precious that people only fully value too late.

The extract opens with a striking structural mirroring of George and Emily. As the choir sings 'Love Divine, All Love Excelling', a hymn about perfect, heavenly love, both young people are seized by panic. George asks, "Why's everybody pushing me

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so?", and the passive sense of being pushed suggests that he experiences marriage less as a choice than as a social machine he has been fed into. His broken, interrupted dialogue with his mother, "listen to me", "for the last time I ask you", conveys his desperation through hesitation and repetition. Emily's fear runs in parallel. Her plea to her father, "Why can't I stay for a while just as I am?", shows a longing to halt time and remain a child, while her hyperbolic outburst, "I hate him. I wish I were dead", reveals how frightening the step into adulthood feels. The ironic contrast between the serene hymn and the couple's terror shows that the idealised religious vision of marriage is far removed from the nervous human reality.

The parents' attitudes are very different. Mrs Gibbs is horrified by George's doubts and her exclamations, "Why, I'm ashamed of you!" and "If anyone should hear you! Now stop", show that she is concerned as much with appearances as with her son's feelings. Mr Webb is gentler but equally determined. His imperative "stop and think a minute" calms Emily, and the stage direction He leads her towards George shows him physically steering the marriage to completion. Wilder suggests that the older generation sees marriage as a necessary institution, the natural next stage of life, and that individual doubts must be overcome rather than explored. Their approach seems almost unfeeling, yet once George and Emily are brought together their attitudes transform. George's simple declaration, "I love you Emily", and Emily's honest reply, "All I want is someone to love me", strip away the ceremony and reveal what marriage means to them, and the stage direction They fall into each other's arms resolves their fear in a moment of tenderness.

Wilder then complicates this happy resolution through two contrasting onlookers. Mrs Soames chatters in clichés, "I do love a good wedding", "Doesn't she make a lovely bride?", "I always cry", and her breathless, repetitive exclamations present

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the stereotypical romantic view of marriage as a pretty spectacle. Her comic chatter suggests she sees only the surface of the event. In sharp contrast, the Stage Manager, who has stepped into the role of the minister, freezes the action. The direction that the stage is suddenly arrested into silent tableau is a powerful dramatic technique: the wedding becomes a still picture while he addresses the audience directly. He admits that he has married many couples and wonders, "Do I believe in it? I don't know", before summarising a married life in a rapid list from courtship to the deathbed and the reading of the will, concluding that "Once in a thousand times it's interesting". The flat, accumulating list makes marriage sound routine and repetitive, a pattern repeated by millions of couples. Yet Wilder does not let this cynicism have the final word. The action resumes, the couple run up the aisle radiant, and Mrs Soames insists that "The important thing is to be happy". By ending the act on joy rather than on the Stage Manager's bleak summary, Wilder perhaps suggests that a marriage which seems ordinary from outside can be extraordinary to those living it.

Elsewhere in the play, these differing attitudes are developed further. Earlier in Act Two Dr Gibbs recalls that on his wedding day he was "marryin' a total stranger", yet the couple's affectionate teasing suggests that a happy partnership has grown out of that uncertainty. Mrs Gibbs voices the most traditional view when she says that "people are meant to go through life two by two", implying that marriage is the natural human state. Mr Webb tells George that "Marriage is a wonderful thing", but his own relationship with Myrtle is presented more drily: when she interrupts, he responds bitingly, offering to go upstairs and leave her alone with the boy, a moment that hints at the small frictions of a long marriage. The Stage Manager's monologue at the start of the wedding scene widens the perspective again, presenting marriage as a sacrament and reminding the audience that the ancestors are witnesses too, so that George and Emily's wedding becomes one link

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in a vast chain of human weddings.

Finally, Act Three gives the most poignant attitude of all. Emily, now among the Dead after dying in childbirth, speaks of the farm that she and George built together and says simply, "I loved him so". Her past tense quietly answers the Stage Manager's cynicism: the marriage that began in panic became the centre of her life. However, her return to her twelfth birthday shows that the living never realise how much such ordinary happiness is worth while they have it.

Through mirroring, tableau, direct address and contrasting voices, Wilder therefore shows that attitudes to marriage differ widely, from fear and duty to romance and doubt. His own attitude seems to lie between them: marriage is a commonplace custom, but one capable of holding real and lasting love.

8a Both Kid by Simon Armitage and Catrin by Gillian Clarke present growing up as a struggle for independence, a painful but necessary separation from a figure who once held the speaker close. However, the poems approach this from opposite sides. Armitage gives voice to the young person breaking free, defiant and triumphant, while Clarke speaks as the parent being left behind, and her tone is tender and conflicted rather than gleeful. Together they suggest that growing up always involves a tug of war, and that neither side escapes without some sense of loss.

Armitage's speaker is Robin, Batman's sidekick, and the dramatic monologue form allows him to address his former mentor directly and contemptuously. The opening alliteration, "Batman, big shot", sets a mocking tone, deflating the hero with a casual, almost schoolboy insult. Robin claims that Batman gave "the order / to grow up", and the military noun "order" suggests that growing up was imposed on

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him rather than chosen, yet he then undercuts Batman's grand language by correcting it: he was "ditched me, rather, / in the gutter". The slang verb "ditched" and the image of the gutter reveal the bitterness of a young person who feels abandoned. Clarke's speaker, by contrast, begins with memory rather than accusation: "I can remember you, child", and the direct address to her daughter is gentle and intimate. Where Robin's growing up begins with rejection, Catrin's begins with birth itself, so Clarke suggests that the process of separation starts from the very first moment of a child's life.

Both poets present growing up as a conflict, but they use very different imagery to do so. Clarke describes the birth as "our first / Fierce confrontation", and the alliteration of "first" and "Fierce" gives the moment a startling violence. The umbilical cord is transformed into "the tight / Red rope of love which we both / Fought over", a metaphor that captures both connection and struggle: the rope binds mother and child, yet each pulls against the other. The cry "We want, we shouted, / To be two, to be ourselves" shows that the desire for separate identity belongs to both of them. Armitage's conflict is less physical but more vindictive. Robin reveals Batman's secrets, scotching the "he was like a father / to me" rumour and exposing an affair with "the married woman". The slangy clichés, such as "let the cat out", make the revelations sound like tabloid gossip, as if growing up for Robin means seeing through the hero worship of childhood and recognising his former idol as flawed and hypocritical.

The poets' use of sound and structure reflects these different attitudes. Kid is written as a single breathless stanza in which almost every line ends with the same feminine "er" rhyme, "order", "wander", "yonder", "rather", "older". This relentless rhyme, perhaps echoing the jaunty theme tune of the 1960s television series, gives the poem a comic energy, while the enjambment creates the sense of

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a rant that Robin cannot stop. Armitage, who wrote his MA dissertation on the effects of television violence on young people, may be playfully exploring how pop-culture heroes shape a child's sense of self. Catrin, on the other hand, is divided into two stanzas, the first set in the past at the birth and the second in the present, with Catrin as a teenager. This structure mirrors the separation the poem describes, showing two people, then and now, still connected across time. Clarke's free verse, with its irregular line lengths, sounds more like private reflection than performance.

The two speakers also differ in how they view the outcome of growing up. Robin celebrates his new maturity. He is "not playing ball boy any longer", a metaphor that rejects his subordinate role, and he has swapped his costume for "a pair of jeans and crew-neck jumper", ordinary clothes that symbolise an adult identity of his own. The list of comparatives, "taller, harder, stronger, older", builds to a triumphant climax, and his claim to be "the real boy wonder" turns Robin's famous title into a declaration of independence. The title Kid, however, carries an ironic edge: the more Robin insists he has grown up, the more childish his taunting sounds, and the general title extends his experience to every teenager eager to prove they no longer need their parents.

Clarke's speaker, by contrast, does not see the struggle as won. She admits, "Still I am fighting / You off", and the present tense shows that the conflict continues. Her description of Catrin's "straight, strong, long / Brown hair and your rosy, / Defiant glare" is full of pride: the monosyllabic, stressed adjectives give the girl a forceful presence, while "Defiant" admits that she is now a separate person who challenges her mother. The rope returns, rising "From the heart's pool", "Trailing love and conflict", so the poem's central image binds the two ideas together. The ending is deliberately ordinary: Catrin simply asks if she may skate "In the dark,

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for one more hour". Clarke, writing as a mother in Wales about her own daughter, captures a universal parental dilemma: whether to protect the child or let her go into the darkness of the wider world.

In conclusion, both poems present growing up as a battle for selfhood. Armitage's Robin speaks with youthful arrogance, rejoicing in his escape from a disappointing father figure, while Clarke's mother speaks with mature ambivalence, recognising that love and conflict cannot be separated. Robin believes he has won; Clarke's speaker knows that in this struggle no one ever fully wins or loses, and that is perhaps the truer picture of what growing up costs.

8b

Both Prayer Before Birth by Louis MacNeice and Belfast Confetti by Ciaran Carson present facing danger as a threat not only to the body but to identity itself. Each speaker fears being overwhelmed by violent forces beyond their control, and each poet links that danger to a specific period of conflict: the Second World War for MacNeice and the Troubles in Belfast for Carson. However, while MacNeice's unborn speaker anticipates future dangers and prays for protection, Carson's speaker is trapped inside a danger that is already happening, and his response is confusion rather than prayer.

MacNeice establishes the vulnerability of his speaker from the opening line, "I am not yet born; O hear me." The title suggests a mother praying for her child, but the first-person voice reveals that the speaker is the child, and the juxtaposition of this innocent, voiceless figure with the evils of the world makes the danger seem all the more terrible. The anaphora of "I am not yet born" at the start of almost every stanza works like a refrain in a litany, constantly reminding the reader of the speaker's helplessness. Carson's speaker, by contrast, is an adult caught in a

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riot, and his poem opens with abrupt immediacy: "Suddenly as the riot squad moved in". The adverb "Suddenly" plunges the reader into danger without warning, so where MacNeice's danger looms ahead in the future, Carson's erupts in the present.

Both poets use imagery to make danger vivid, but in strikingly different ways. MacNeice begins with nightmarish, almost childlike fears: "the bloodsucking bat or the rat or the stoat or the / club-footed ghoul". The polysyndeton piles creature upon creature, and the assonance of "bat" and "rat" gives the list a chant-like quality, like a frightened child naming monsters in the dark. The danger quickly becomes human, however: "I fear that the human race may with tall walls wall me". The internal repetition in "walls wall" and the alliterative "with strong drugs dope me, with wise lies lure me" suggest systematic, deliberate cruelty, culminating in the graphic "in blood-baths roll me". Written during the Second World War and published in 1944 in Springboard, the poem seems to capture the horror of a world shaped by fascism, torture and mass killing. Carson's imagery is more surprising. He describes the shrapnel of the riot as "raining exclamation marks", and lists the missiles, "Nuts, bolts, nails, car-keys", in short, blunt monosyllables that sound like objects striking the ground. The extended metaphor of punctuation runs through the poem: the explosion is "an asterisk on the map", and a burst of gunfire becomes a "hyphenated line". The title, Belfast slang for metal scraps hurled in riots, makes confetti bitterly ironic.

The poets also explore how danger threatens the self. MacNeice's speaker fears being turned into something less than human. The child asks for strength against those who would "dragoon me into a lethal automaton", make him "a cog in a machine", "a thing with / one face". These metaphors of mechanisation reflect the fear that war turns individuals into obedient instruments. The similes of fragility,

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that the child might be blown "like thistledown" or spilt "like water held in the / hands", show how easily his "entirety" could be scattered. Carson's speaker experiences a similar loss of self, but through language. He tries "to complete a sentence in my head but it kept stuttering", and the metaphor suggests that violence has broken his ability to think and speak clearly. The poem ends with a series of anxious questions, "What is / My name? Where am I coming from? Where am I going?", described as "A fusillade of question-marks". The military noun "fusillade" shows that the questions themselves are fired at him, perhaps by soldiers at a checkpoint, and the questions about name and origin carry a sinister weight in Belfast, where identity could mark someone as a target.

Structure reinforces these dangers in both poems. MacNeice's stanzas grow longer as the poem progresses and the lines are indented in irregular patterns, so the poem seems to swell with the accumulating dangers, perhaps even imitating the contractions of birth. Then the final line, "Otherwise kill me", stands alone. Its shocking brevity delivers a nihilistic conclusion: if the child cannot be protected from becoming a "stone", it would be better not to live at all. Carson uses long, sprawling lines broken by caesurae and full stops, so the reader, like the speaker, keeps being stopped short. He knows the streets "so well", yet asks "Why can't I escape?" and finds "Dead end again". The street names, Balaclava, Raglan, Inkerman, Odessa, recall battles of the Crimean War, and Carson, who grew up in the area, suggests that the city's very geography is shaped by conflict, so that danger seems built into the place itself.

There is one important difference in the speakers' responses. MacNeice's speaker still has hope. Amid the dangers the child asks for "water to dandle me, grass to grow for me, trees to talk / to me, sky to sing to me", and the gentle alliteration and personification present nature as a protective force. The repeated imperatives,

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	"console me", "provide me", "forgive me", show a belief that someone might hear his prayer. Carson's speaker has no such comfort and no one to appeal to; his questions go unanswered.
	In conclusion, both poems present facing danger as a struggle to keep a whole, independent identity in a violent world. MacNeice universalises this through the voice of an unborn child, creating a prophetic prayer against the forces of war, while Carson roots it in a specific, claustrophobic moment of the Troubles. MacNeice's speaker faces danger with a desperate plea; Carson's simply cannot find a way out.
9a	Both To His Coy Mistress by Andrew Marvell and Sonnet 130 by William Shakespeare present desire through a playful engagement with the conventions of love poetry. Each speaker mocks the exaggerated flattery that lovers traditionally offer, yet each uses that mockery to make a serious point. However, their desires are very different. Marvell's speaker desires physical fulfilment and builds an urgent argument to persuade a reluctant woman, while Shakespeare's speaker expresses a quieter, more honest desire for a real woman, valued precisely because she is not the goddess of conventional verse.
	Marvell's poem is a dramatic monologue structured like a logical argument in three verse paragraphs: if we had time, but we do not, therefore let us act now. The opening conditional, "Had we but world enough and time, / This coyness, lady, were no crime", sounds reasonable and courteous, but the word "crime" already hints at the speaker's impatience, turning the woman's modesty into something almost guilty. Shakespeare's sonnet also begins with a provocative statement, "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun", but its effect is the reverse. Where

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Marvell flatters in order to persuade, Shakespeare refuses to flatter at all. The comparison of eyes to the sun was a cliché of Petrarchan love poetry, popular in Elizabethan England, and by denying it Shakespeare signals that his poem will express desire through truth rather than hyperbole.

Both poets use the blazon, the traditional catalogue of a woman's beauty, but they treat it in opposite ways. Marvell exaggerates it to absurdity. He imagines that "An hundred years should go to praise / Thine eyes", "Two hundred to adore each breast, / But thirty thousand to the rest". The escalating numbers are comic, and the final euphemism, "the rest", reveals the sexual nature of his desire beneath the elaborate praise. His "vegetable love" which would grow "Vaster than empires and more slow" is a typical metaphysical conceit: the image of a slow, mindless plant growing to imperial size is witty and grandiose, but also faintly ridiculous, suggesting that he does not really want such a leisurely courtship at all. Shakespeare, by contrast, deflates each element of the blazon. "Coral is far more red than her lips' red"; her breasts are "dun"; "black wires grow on her head". The blunt, monosyllabic language and the unflattering noun "wires" overturn the conventional golden hair of the idealised mistress. Even her breath, compared to perfume, "reeks", a word that in Shakespeare's time could simply mean "is breathed out", but which to a modern reader sounds comically insulting. Where Marvell's exaggerations inflate desire, Shakespeare's honesty brings it down to earth.

The two speakers' attitudes to time sharpen this contrast. For Marvell, desire is driven by the fear of death. The second verse paragraph turns on the word "But", and the image of "Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near" personifies time as a pursuer at the speaker's back, while the "Deserts of vast eternity" create a bleak, empty vision of the afterlife. The imagery then becomes deliberately grotesque: "worms shall try / That long-preserved virginity". The rhyme of "dust" with "lust"

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juxtaposes death and desire, and the ironic understatement "The grave's a fine and private place, / But none, I think, do there embrace" uses dark humour to press his case. Marvell lived in a Puritan age that valued chastity and restraint, and the poem's carpe diem argument, borrowed from classical poets such as Horace, deliberately challenges that morality. Shakespeare's sonnet, on the other hand, is not concerned with time at all. Its desire is calm and settled, rooted in the present reality of the woman rather than in fear of losing her. His admission, "I love to hear her speak, yet well I know / That music hath a far more pleasing sound", shows a desire that accepts imperfection with affection and gentle humour.

Form and rhythm also reflect each speaker's desire. Marvell writes in rhyming couplets of iambic tetrameter, a brisk, short line that creates momentum, especially in the final section where the pace quickens with "Now therefore" and "now". The simile of "amorous birds of prey" presents desire as predatory and fierce, and the violent verbs "devour" and "tear our pleasures with rough strife" suggest a passion that is almost aggressive. The closing couplet, "Thus, though we cannot make our sun / Stand still, yet we will make him run", ends triumphantly: the lovers cannot stop time, but they can defy it. Shakespeare uses the sonnet, the traditional form of love poetry, in its English structure of three quatrains and a couplet. The quatrains systematically dismantle the clichés, but the volta in the final couplet, "And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare / As any she belied with false compare", transforms the poem into a sincere declaration. The oath "by heaven" adds weight, and "false compare" sums up his criticism of poets who praise women with lies.

In conclusion, both poets subvert romantic conventions to express desire, but for different purposes. Marvell uses wit, hyperbole and macabre imagery to create an

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urgent, seductive argument in which desire is a race against death, and his concern seems to be his own gratification as much as the lady's worth. Shakespeare uses honesty and anti-romantic imagery to show that genuine desire does not depend on idealisation, and his final couplet suggests a more respectful love. Marvell's speaker wants to possess the moment; Shakespeare's wants the woman exactly as she is.

9b

Both When You Are Old by W B Yeats and Wild Oats by Philip Larkin present regret as the lingering pain of a love that was never fulfilled. In each poem the speaker looks back, or imagines looking back, on a relationship with a woman who did not return his feelings in the way he hoped. However, the tone of their regret is strikingly different. Yeats's regret is lyrical, dignified and tender, transferring the sorrow onto the woman he loved, while Larkin's is wry, self-mocking and understated, as if he is embarrassed to admit he feels regret at all.

Yeats's poem is addressed directly to the woman, and its title, repeated in the opening line, "When you are old and grey and full of sleep", projects her into a distant future. The polysyndeton of "and grey and full of sleep" slows the rhythm, creating a drowsy, dreamlike quality that suits an image of old age, and the gentle tone ensures that this vision is not cruel. Yeats wrote the poem for Maud Gonne, the Irish nationalist who repeatedly refused his proposals, so the regret is rooted in his own unrequited love. Larkin's poem also begins by looking back, but in a casual, conversational voice: "About twenty years ago / Two girls came in where I worked". The vague "About" and the plain, everyday diction make the memory seem unremarkable, yet the fact that he remembers it at all, two decades later, suggests that it still matters to him. Where Yeats imagines a future regret, Larkin records a regret that has already settled into his past.

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Both speakers contrast physical beauty with a deeper connection, and this contrast lies at the heart of their regret. Yeats suggests that "many loved your moments of glad grace, / And loved your beauty with love false or true", but the volta-like "But" introduces his own love: "one man loved the pilgrim soul in you, / And loved the sorrows of your changing face". The metaphor of the "pilgrim soul" suggests a restless, searching spirit, and the speaker's claim to have loved her ageing face and her sorrows sets his devotion apart from that of shallower admirers. The regret is that she did not recognise this love when it was offered. Larkin also divides two kinds of attraction. He describes "A bosomy English rose" and "her friend in specs I could talk to". The cliché "English rose" and the blunt adjective "bosomy" reduce the first girl to a sexual stereotype, while the friend is defined by conversation. Yet, ironically, it is "the friend I took out", so Larkin's regret is more confused than Yeats's: he chose the woman he could talk to but desired the one he could not have.

The poets' use of form reflects these different tones. Yeats writes three neat quatrains with an enclosed ABBA rhyme scheme and a smooth iambic pentameter, and this regular, musical structure gives the poem the quality of a lament. The imperatives "take down this book, / And slowly read" are soft rather than commanding, inviting her to discover in his poetry what she missed in life. Larkin, writing in the early 1960s and publishing the poem in The Whitsun Weddings, uses three eight-line stanzas with loose, half-hidden rhymes and colloquial phrasing such as "The whole shooting-match". The flat, matter-of-fact listing of his long relationship, "Wrote over four hundred letters, / Gave a ten-guinea ring / I got back in the end", uses numbers to measure seven years of effort, and the anticlimax of "I got back in the end" captures failure with dry understatement. Larkin's own long engagement to Ruth Bowman, which he eventually broke off, and his lifelong

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reluctance to marry, lend this ironic voice a confessional edge.

The endings of the two poems reveal the different ways each speaker handles regret. Yeats closes with a powerful, mythic image. The woman, "bending down beside the glowing bars", will "Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled / And paced upon the mountains overhead / And hid his face amid a crowd of stars." The personification of Love as a figure who flees to the mountains and stars elevates the poet's rejected love into something vast and eternal, and the phrase "a little sadly" suggests that she, too, will feel regret, though only faintly. There is perhaps a quiet revenge in this: he imagines her realising too late what she lost. Larkin's ending is far more deflating. The parting was "an agreement / That I was too selfish, withdrawn, / And easily bored to love", and the speaker accepts this harsh verdict with the sarcastic "Well, useful to get that learnt." Yet the final lines betray him: "In my wallet are still two snaps / Of bosomy rose with fur gloves on." The adverb "still" reveals that he has kept her photographs for years, and the closing phrase, "Unlucky charms, perhaps", turns the cliché "lucky charm" into a wistful admission that the memory both haunts and comforts him. The tentative "perhaps" shows a man reluctant to confess how much he regrets.

In conclusion, both poems present regret as the result of love that was misdirected or unreturned. Yeats expresses regret openly and beautifully, consoling himself that his love was the truest and imagining the woman's eventual sorrow. Larkin hides his regret behind humour, irony and self-criticism, so that it surfaces only in small details like the photographs in his wallet. Yeats's regret is romantic and elevated; Larkin's is ordinary and private, but perhaps just as deep.

10a Both Thomas Hardy's "The Man He Killed" and Keith Douglas's "Vergissmeinnicht"

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confront the same uncomfortable reality of conflict: that the enemy a soldier kills is an ordinary human being, someone who in other circumstances might have been a friend or a lover. However, the two speakers arrive at this truth differently. Hardy's speaker reaches it through puzzled, halting reflection on an act he cannot justify, while Douglas's speaker confronts it physically, standing over a rotting corpse. Hardy exposes the absurdity of the reasons men are given for killing; Douglas exposes the grotesque physical cost. Together they suggest that the reality of war is the destruction of shared humanity.

Hardy's title immediately tells the reader what has happened, and its third person form generalises the experience, as if this could be any man, while the poem itself is a first person dramatic monologue. The speaker opens with a hypothetical: "Had he and I but met / By some old ancient inn". The tautology of "old ancient" and the dialect phrase "Right many a nipperkin!" create a cosy, colloquial voice, and the exclamation conveys the warmth of the drinking companionship that might have been. Douglas, by contrast, opens in the brutal present of the aftermath: "Three weeks gone and the combatants gone". The repetition of "gone" is flat and weary, and the "nightmare ground" establishes a landscape of horror before the body is even described. Where Hardy imagines a meeting that never happened, Douglas returns to a meeting that has already ended in death.

The moment of killing is central to both poems. In Hardy's second stanza the conjunction "But" jolts the reader out of the imagined inn and into reality: "But ranged as infantry, / And staring face to face". The short, plain lines and the balanced syntax of "I shot at him as he at me" suggest how arbitrary survival is, since the two men are mirror images and either could have died. The bluntness of "And killed him in his place" is almost emotionless, and this understated tone makes the reality more chilling. Douglas also uses irony to show the soldier's

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death, but focuses on the dead man's "frowning barrel of his gun / overshadowing". The personified gun seems to frown, still threatening, yet it is now useless. Later the soldier is "mocked at by his own equipment / that's hard and good when he's decayed", a bitter contrast which suggests that in modern warfare machines outlast men. Both poets therefore strip the act of killing of any glory, though Douglas's imagery is far more visceral.

Hardy's third stanza dramatises the speaker's search for a reason. The repetition of "because" across the line break, followed by "Because he was my foe", sounds like a man trying to convince himself, and the hesitant rhythm reflects his confusion. "Just so: my foe of course he was; / That's clear enough" is so insistent that it becomes unconvincing, and the word "although" at the end of the stanza, carried over by enjambment, lets doubt break through. The fourth stanza then reveals that his enemy perhaps joined up for the same reasons he did: he "Was out of work", "had sold his traps", with "No other reason why". The broken phrasing increases the uncertainty, and the reader realises that these were poor working men enlisted by economic necessity rather than hatred. Douglas's speaker reaches a parallel recognition through an object rather than reasoning: "the dishonoured picture of his girl" inscribed "Steffi. Vergissmeinnicht". The German word, meaning "forget me not", humanises the enemy instantly; he is not just a German but someone's beloved. The adjective "dishonoured" suggests both the dirtied photograph and the broken promise of his return.

The poets differ most in the attitude their speakers adopt. Hardy's speaker ends with understatement: "Yes; quaint and curious war is!" The words "quaint" and "curious" are absurdly mild for the act he has described, and this inadequacy is the point; he lacks the language to process what war made him do. The final lines return to the inn and the half crown he might have lent his enemy, so the poem's

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structure circles back to the ordinary kindness war has destroyed. Douglas's speaker admits something darker: "We see him almost with content". The qualifying "almost" reveals the hardened detachment of a soldier, yet the poem then turns to Steffi: "she would weep to see today" the "swart flies" and "the burst stomach like a cave". This shocking simile forces the reality of decay upon the reader. The final stanza resolves the conflict in a paradox: "the lover and killer are mingled / who had one body and one heart". Death "has done the lover mortal hurt", a line of quiet devastation.

Form reinforces these differences. Hardy's regular quatrains and simple ABAB rhyme scheme give the poem a ballad like simplicity which contrasts with its serious subject, increasing its poignancy. Douglas also uses quatrains and rhyme, but the irregular rhythms and harsh imagery unsettle that order, mirroring the chaos of the battlefield.

Context deepens the comparison. Hardy, who studied history and had a pessimistic view of mankind, wrote the poem in response to the Boer War, never having fought himself; his speaker is an imagined everyman and his purpose is to question the futility of war. Douglas was a tank commander in the Western Desert campaign, and the poem draws on his own experience in North Africa in 1943; he was killed in Normandy in 1944. His poem therefore carries the authority of a witness. Ultimately both poets show that the reality of conflict is that enemies are made, not born, but where Hardy leaves us with bewildered pity, Douglas leaves us with the stark image of a body in the sun.

10b

Edna St Vincent Millay's "What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why" and Carol Ann Duffy's "Last Post" both present remembering the past as an act

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shaped by loss, but their speakers relate to memory in almost opposite ways. Millay's speaker cannot remember the details of her past and mourns what has faded; Duffy's speaker remembers the First World War only too vividly and longs to reverse it. One poem laments forgetting, the other wishes memory could be rewritten, yet both suggest that the past leaves an ache in the present that cannot be healed.

Millay's opening line, which also serves as the title, is built around three questions without answers: "what", "where" and "why". The alliteration of "lips my lips" has a sensual, intimate sound, yet the line ends in the blunt admission "I have forgotten". The speaker's past is presented as a series of lovers and nights, "what arms have lain / Under my head till morning", but the memories have lost their particulars. Duffy also begins with someone else's memory: the italicised lines from Wilfred Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est", "In all my dreams, before my helpless sight", recall the gas attack that haunted Owen. The present participles "guttering, choking, drowning" make the past horribly alive. So where Millay's past has dissolved, Duffy's is fixed and recurring, like a nightmare.

Both poets use the present moment to trigger memory. In Millay's poem a turn comes early with "but the rain / Is full of ghosts tonight". The personified rain that will "tap and sigh / Upon the glass and listen for reply" turns the weather into the returning spirits of former lovers, and the soft sibilance of "sigh" makes the memories gentle and melancholy rather than terrifying. The speaker feels "a quiet pain / For unremembered lads", and the coined adjective "unremembered" is poignant: they existed, but they have slipped away. Duffy's trigger is the poet's own imagination: "If poetry could tell it backwards, true". The conditional "If" governs the whole poem, so that everything which follows is a wish rather than reality. The violent alliteration of "shrapnel scythed you to the stinking mud"

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recalls the real past, before the poem reverses it: "but you get up, amazed".

The poets' language for time is central. Millay's sestet becomes an extended comparison between herself and a tree in winter: "Thus in winter stands the lonely tree". Winter symbolises the present, ageing and isolation, and the tree that "Nor knows what birds have vanished one by one" suggests a gradual, almost unnoticed loss, with the birds symbolising her lovers. Yet the tree "knows its boughs more silent than before", showing that although she cannot name what has gone, she feels its absence. Duffy instead reverses time in a cinematic rewind. The blood "run upwards from the slime into its wounds", and "lines and lines of British boys rewind" back to the trenches. The list "Harry, Tommy, Wilfred, Edward, Bert" individualises the dead with ordinary names, while also hinting at real figures such as Harry Patch, Wilfred Owen and Edward Thomas. Here remembering becomes a form of resurrection, as the soldiers "light a cigarette" and are "released / from History".

Both endings return the speaker to painful reality. Millay concludes: "I only know that summer sang in me / A little while, that in me sings no more". The metaphor of summer singing captures the joy of youth and love, but it is undercut by the past tense of "sang" and the finality of "no more". The repetition of "sings" against "sang" makes the contrast between then and now painfully clear. Duffy imagines the soldiers' "several million lives still possible / and crammed with love, work, children, talent, English beer, good food", a long, generous list that celebrates everything stolen from them. However, her final lines, "If poetry could truly tell it backwards, / then it would", return to the conditional, quietly admitting that poetry cannot. Both poems end in recognition of irreversible loss.

Form shapes each speaker's remembering. Millay uses a Petrarchan sonnet,

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traditionally a form of love poetry; the octave dwells on lovers she has forgotten, and the sestet moves into the extended image of the tree, its controlled rhyme and iambic pentameter giving her grief a dignified restraint. Duffy writes in free verse with scattered rhyme, such as "bread" and "dead", and her fluid, long lines mirror the flowing rewind of film. Her fragmented echo of "Dulce", "Decorum" and "Pro patria mori" breaks Owen's ironic Latin apart, rejecting the idea that such deaths were glorious.

Context enriches the contrast. Millay, born in America in 1892, was celebrated for her finely crafted sonnets and her bohemian lifestyle and open relationships, which may explain the frank, unashamed acknowledgement of many lovers; she won the Pulitzer Prize in 1923. Her poem is a private remembering. Duffy, as Poet Laureate, wrote "Last Post" in 2009 for the BBC as the last surviving British soldiers of the First World War, Henry Allingham and Harry Patch, died. Her title refers to the bugle call played at military funerals and remembrance services, so her poem is public, an act of national remembrance. Ultimately, Millay suggests that the past fades and leaves only a vague sadness, while Duffy suggests that the past is unbearable precisely because it cannot be forgotten or undone.