

Year 8: Conflict Poetry – self isolation work (Autumn Term 2)

- ☐ **Lesson 1** – Dulce et decorum est.
- ☐ **Lesson 2** – Out of the Blue

Lesson 1: ‘Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori’

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori’ means: ‘It is sweet and right to die for your country’

How do you respond to this statement? Do you agree or disagree with it?

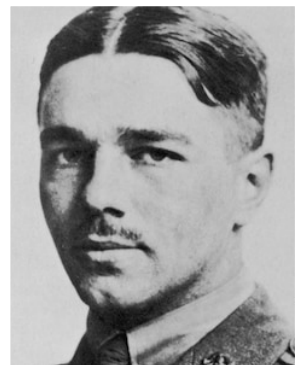
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Read through this contextual information about the poet:

- Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) was born in Oswestry on the Welsh borders.
- Owen had always wanted to be a poet but when he died in action, just one week before the end of the war, he wasn’t well known and had only had four poems published.
- In 1915 Owen enlisted in the British Army. His first experiences of active service at Serre and St. Quentin in January.
- April 1917 led to shell-shock and his return to Britain.



Watch this video about Wilfred Owen:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pQaU6q0W10>

Write a summary of what you learn about the poet:

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Read through the poem:

Dulce et Decorum est by Wilfred Owen (1917)

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!--An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.--
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.

Watch this video of a reading of the poem:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qB4cdRglcB8>

And this animation of the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgQhH67oPgY>

Some words you may not know:

Knock-kneed: legs that curve inwards – knees knocking together.

Fatigue: extreme tiredness

Ecstasy: A frenzy/a trance

Floundering: struggling/flapping

Obscene: offensive/disgusting

Ardent: passionate/enthusiastic

Lime: A type of gas used in the war

Writhing: Struggling/squirming

Cud: Partly digested food that comes back up when you feel sick

Task: Choose 3 key images from the poem and draw a picture of them. Put a quote next to them that links to the image.

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Challenge tasks:

Choose one line from the poem that you feel most significantly portrays the experience of war. Write the quotation here:

“ _____ ”

- 1) Annotate the quote that you have chosen using in the space around it. Think about meaning, language techniques and/or connotations.
- 2) Write one or two sentences about how Owen presents war to a reader. Can you use the word *patriotism* in your answer?

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Lesson 2: Out of the Blue

What does the phrase 'out of the blue' mean to you?

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The poem is about the 9/11 attacks. Watch this video to find out about the attacks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmedslmeiUc>



This is a picture from the 9/11 attacks.

What is your response to this image?

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Read through the poem:

You have picked me out.
Through a distant shot of a building burning
you have noticed now
that a white cotton shirt is twirling, turning.

In fact I am waving, waving.
Small in the clouds, but waving, waving.
Does anyone see a
soul worth saving?

And when will you come?
Do you think you are watching, watching
a man shaking crumbs
or pegging out washing?

I am trying and trying.
The heat behind me is searing, searing,
but the white of surrender is not yet flying.
I am not at the point of launching, leaving.

A bird goes by.
The depth is appalling. Appalling
that others like me
should be wind-milling, wheeling, spiralling, falling.

Are your eyes believing,
believing?
Here in the gills
I am still breathing.

But tiring, tiring.
Sirens below me are wailing, firing.
My arm is numb and my nerves are sagging.
Do you see me, my love. I am failing. Flagging.

Now watch this video of a reading of the poem:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufZey15WTak>

Watch this video of the poet, Simon Armitage, discussing the poem:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Y8YYKn0UQw>

Task: Verb choices

Go through the poem and highlight or underline all the powerful verbs that are used to describe the person in the poem

e.g. failing/flagging

Which verb do you think is the most powerful one? Can you explain why that is?

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Task: Comparing Dulce Et Decorum Est to Out of the Blue

Both of these poems show how powerless people can feel in war.

Using the sentence starters below, write a paragraph that explores this idea.

Both poems show how people can feel powerless in war. For example, in Dulce Et Decorum Est, the narrator says “.....”

This quote suggests that

The word.....implies that the soldier feels.....

In a similar way, the man in Out of the Blue feels powerless. For example he says “.....”

This quote suggests that

The word.....implies that the man feels.....

Use this box to complete your paragraph:

