



Being Human: Y9 Poetry

Home Learning Booklet: Autumn Term 2

The booklet contains two weeks of lessons for Y9 English. This work links to the Being Human poetry scheme that you currently complete once a week in English. The poems in the booklet link to the theme of ageing.

You will also need to complete your “An Inspector Calls” work alongside this booklet.

- Lesson 1** – Analyse the poem “Shave
- Lesson 2** – Analyse the poem “Warning” and **make comparisons** with “Shave”

Week One:

L.O. To **analyse** the poem “Shave”

Task One:

Sort these eight words into two groups. You can decide the reasoning.

Strange	Cold	Despair	Quick
Gracefully	Youthful	Shameful	Pleasant

Task Two:

Read the poem Shave on the next page. Make a note of any words you don't understand and look up their definitions.

Shave

Observe yourself in the mirror,
Unchanged yet strange,
Still shaggy with sleep, startled
At seeing your likeness.
These wrinkles, these graying temples
That you've already accepted gracefully
- affable guests who showed up
So suddenly, that you can't quite recall
Just when they initially appeared.
They represent the shameless price required
For this fictitious intimacy with the body.
And now, begin to shave.
The blade, once quick and cold, no longer
Glides taut on your skin like the pleasant
Lickety-split friction of youthful skis:
You're forced to stretch your flabby cheek
With your fingers. Don't despair.
Perhaps if you're shrewd and willfully avoid
The shameful mark of a nick,
You'll forget your alliance with your body
Has already begun to dissolve.

Vocabulary:

Affable – pleasant; sociable

Fictitious – made up

Taut - tight

Shrewd - perceptive

Alliance – a union

Task Three:

How does the poet present growing older?

Make a list of words that come to mind in response to this question

Task Four:

Choose a phrase from “Shave” and annotate with at least three ideas. See the example below.

Ageing = destructive, painful

“You are **forced** to stretch your **flabby** cheek with your fingers”

Verb - No choice but to age

Happens to us all

Adjective – repulsed
by his own skin

Task Five:

Turn your annotations into an analysis paragraph, answering the question. There’s a high level example done for you.

How does the poet present growing older?

In Shave, the writer presents growing old as a destructive and painful process, demonstrated by the quotation “You are forced to stretch your flabby cheek with your fingers”. The verb “forced” shows that humans have no choice – aging it is something that happens to each and everyone of us. The adjective “flabby” shows how repulsive he finds his own skin. No longer “youthful” or “pleasant”, the man’s skin is now rough and harsh and he feels uncomfortable within it. The act of shaving each day is a painful reminder of the damage that age does to us.

Task Six:

Review your work against the criteria and set yourself a target to focus on.

- ✓ Have you started off with a clear point/statement about how growing older is presented?
- ✓ Have you included a quote?
- ✓ Have you explained how the quote links to your point?
- ✓ Have you used any literary terminology?
- ✓ Have you explored (made an alternative interpretation)?
- ✓ Have you analysed a word or phrase and suggest how/why it is effective?
- ✓ Have you suggested *why* the poet presents ageing in this particular way? What is the effect of the reader?
- ✓ Have you included a final sentence to link back to the focus of the question?

Optional Extension Week 1:

If are able to, interview someone older than you – preferably someone elderly.

Growing Older – Interview	Notes
1. What is your favourite childhood memory?	
2. What are the positives about growing old?	
3. What are some of the negative aspects?	

Week Two:

L.O. To **analyse** the poem “Warning” and **make comparisons** with “Shave”

Task One:

What inferences can you make about today’s poem title - Warning?

How might it compare or contrast with Shave?



Task Two:

Read the poem Warning. Make a note of any words you don’t understand and look up their definitions.

Warning

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.

I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practice a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

Task Three:

How does the poet present growing older?

Make a list of words that come to mind in response to this question

Were your inferences from the start of the lesson correct?

Task Four:

Find evidence in the poem that:

- A. Being old allows you to do whatever you want
- B. Being old allows you to eat whatever you want
- C. Being old means you can spend your money whatever you want
- D. Being young means you have to behave well

Task Five:

Under last lesson's "Shave" paragraph, you're going to analyse a quotation from "Warning" answering the same question and **CONTRASTING** the poems.

This means you should consider how Warning presents a very **different** impression of ageing to Shave.

1. Reread your "Shave" analysis and the target that you set for yourself last lesson.
2. Select a quotation from "Warning" that contrasts effectively with your quotation choice in "Shave". Annotate it for your ideas.

Ageing = a carefree time for breaking the rules

"I **shall** sit down on the **pavement when I'm tired**"

Verb – she's in control of her behaviour,
will do what she wishes

Imagery – ageing can be
tiring but almost acting like a child, carefree

3. Write your paragraph in green pen and work to address your target within this second paragraph. **Try to use comparative connectives to link it back to Shave.** The paragraph below is a high level example.

How does the poet present growing older?

On the other hand, in Warning, the writer presents growing old as a carefree time, when you're allowed to break the rules, demonstrated in the quotation "I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired". The poet uses humorous imagery of her future elderly self sitting down on the floor when she's tired, which suggests that while ageing can be a exhausting process, she is able to act almost like a child with carefree behaviours that she has earned in old age. Furthermore, the use of the verb "shall" suggests she will do as she pleases and is in complete control of her actions and behaviour, **which seems to contrast with the speaker in Shave.**

Comparative Connectives:

On the other hand

Although

Instead

But

However

Whereas

In contrast

On the contrary

Optional Extension Week 2:

Use the information gathered from your interview to answer the following questions:

1. Do older people find it easy to remember their youth? What sort of things are they happy to talk about? What do they feel about their youth?
2. What are the main problems older people report about growing older?
3. What advantages do they report to growing older?