



Ozymandias



A traveller tells of the decayed monument to an arrogant ruler.

Possible themes: power, loss, decay, pride, the power of art, the power of nature, arrogance.

Form: sonnet in iambic pentameter (some lines not iambic; eg 12).

Possible context: 1818 Shelley was a politically radical Romantic poet. Shelley despised monarchs, whom he saw as despots. George III (king at the time) had severe mental problems. Shelley felt that poets could be the “unacknowledged legislators of the world”, changing public opinion on important causes.

Two speakers plus speech from Ozymandias himself.

Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My Last Duchess



A Duke boasts of his painting and reveals the life of his last wife.

Possible themes: power, pride, control, the power of art, conflict between people, arrogance.

Form: a dramatic monologue. Iambic pentameter lines—like Shakespeare. Full rhymes (lots of control!). Implied listener.

Possible context: written in 1842 but set in C16th Renaissance Italy—a time of intrigue and Machiavellian politics. Could be a statement about Victorian attitudes to the control of women and natural urges.

Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

London



The speaker wanders around London, shocked at the misery.

Possible themes: power, powerlessness, control, social conflict, weakness, injustice, confinement, death.

Form: strongly rhythmic. Mostly iambic tetrameter—not line 4. Much repetition, in words and in rhyme. First person speaker.

Possible context: 1794. Blake was a political radical; often seen as Romantic. Saw Britain as a repressive state—especially in response to the French Revolution and the war with Napoleon. London's underclass: the urban poor, prostitutes, ex-soldiers. Mechanisms of control: church, palace, army, marriage.

Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Remains



A soldier suffering from PTSD recounts the action which still haunts him.

Possible themes: cost of conflict, mental scars, guilt, power, loss, pain, violence, emotions, isolation.

Form: first person monologue. Series of four line stanzas—until last couplet. Lots of enjambement. No rhyme / fixed rhythm.

Possible context: written in 2007. Followed interviews with veteran of the Gulf War and his difficulties upon return to the UK. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder now seen as common with soldiers; was once seen as merely cowardice (eg in WWI).

Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Emigreé



The speaker describes her sense of loss for her home country.

Possible themes: loss, social difference, isolation, cost of conflict, mental conflict, power.

Form: first person monologue, three stanzas, lacks set rhythm or rhyme.

Possible context: published in 1993. Looks at refugees, population displacement and asylum seekers. It explores prejudice within the country the refugees reach. “Emigreé” is the feminine form; ie the speaker is female.

Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Exposure



A soldier expresses the futility of WWI amid the onslaught of winter.

Possible themes: loss, violence, death, physical conflict, mental & moral suffering, effect of war, nature.

Form: five line stanzas, last line shorter. Half-rhyme throughout. Repetition. Uses ellipsis... Enjambement. Many phonological features: alliteration, assonance, sibilance etc.

Possible context: written in 1917, when the Western Front was in stalemate. Anti-war poem written to shock those back in Britain. Showed futility of war and the appalling conditions.

Owen was criticised by poet Yeats as “Passive suffering is not a theme for poetry”.

Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Storm on the island

<p>The inhabitant of an wind-swept island describes nature's onslaught.</p>	<p>Possible themes: powerlessness, nature, fear, conflict with nature, isolation.</p>
<p>Form: blank verse, regular iambic pentameter, lots of enjambement, caesura. Solid, single stanza.</p>	<p>Possible context: Irish poet. Published in 1966. Can be seen as exploring mankind's precarious relationship with wild nature, even in the technologically advanced C20th. Could equally be seen as a metaphor for the violence in Northern Ireland between the Loyalist and Nationalist communities, paranoid of attack from each other. STORMONTheisland.</p>
<p>Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	

Bayonet Charge

<p>A terrified soldier charges the enemy across open land.</p>	<p>Possible themes: powerlessness, control, the effects of conflict, violence, nature.</p>
<p>Form: third person, irregular line lengths, no regular rhyme. Enjambement and caesura used.</p>	<p>Possible context: written in 1957 but about an attack made in WWI—in which Hughes' father had fought. Takes a post-war attitude to the values fought for in war. Also looks at the impact of war upon nature.</p>
<p>Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	

The Charge of the Light Brigade

<p>The cavalry obediently follow orders which send them into a massacre.</p>	<p>Possible themes: power, loss, conflict, attitudes to war, bravery, control.</p>
<p>Form: highly rhymical—though rhythm varies. Repetition and anaphora. Shorter final stanza.</p>	<p>Possible context: written in 1844 at the height of the Crimean War following a military disaster. Tennyson was Poet Laureate, expected to support the Establishment and Britain's patriotic endeavours.</p>
<p>Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	

Poppies

<p>A mother talks to her absent son amidst an atmosphere of loss and war.</p>	<p>Possible themes: loss, effects of war, family conflict, internal conflict, mental & emotional scars of war.</p>
<p>Form: a first person monologue directed at the absent son. Free verse/irregular form, no set rhythm or rhyme, enjambement and caesura.</p>	<p>Possible context: written in 2009 in Exit Wounds, a response to the growing military involvement in Afghanistan and the Inquiry into the war with Iraq. Examines the personal cost of war to mothers left behind.</p>
<p>Three important quotations which allow impressive analysis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	