**Year 12 English Literary Studies Task Sheet**

**Assessment Type 1: Responding to Texts (Poetry Comparison Task)**

**Purpose**

To assess your ability to closely analyse a range of poems by three or more poets and display understanding of the comparison between the texts’ themes and stylistic features.

**Description of assessment**

* Choose between three to six poems by a variety of different poets. Show how the poets explore a similar concern in similar and/or different ways.
* Compare the poems in terms of thematic concerns, form, tone and stylistic features.
* You should produce three paragraphs. Each should compare two poems.
* Note: this is not an essay and therefore the ideas you explore do not require an introduction or conclusion

**Outline of the task**

* Particular aspects to consider:
  + Provide a heading for each comparison (preferably with a focus on the central idea)
  + Use descriptors to describe the overall theme and tone of each poem in your opening topic sentence.
  + Move logically from one idea to the next
  + Weave your discussion of the poems throughout your paragraph, rather than discussing poems sequentially
  + Use appropriate nomenclature
  + Use evidence and quotations to support your claims
  + You may address the poems by exploring the interpretation as affected by critical perspectives

**Assessment conditions**

Drafted and polished paragraphs of up to a maximum of 1250 words.

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| *Assessment Design Criteria* |
| Knowledge and Understanding  KU1 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.  KU2 Knowledge and understanding of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  KU3 Knowledge and understanding of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types.  Analysis  An1 Analysis of ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  An2 Analysis and evaluation of ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the interpretation of texts.  An3 Analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  An4 Analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform interpretation.  Application  Ap1 Use of conventions, and stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Ap2 Use of evidence from texts to develop, support and justify responses.  Ap3 Use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression appropriate for purpose and audience. |

**Grade**

**Comments**

Performance Standards for Assessment Type 1 (Responding to Texts): Poetry Comparison

|  | **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Analysis** | **Application** |
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| **A** | Detailed knowledge and understanding of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.  Thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Perceptive analysis of the ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  Perceptive analysis and evaluation of the complex ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the interpretation of texts.  Perceptive analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Perceptive analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Sophisticated use of a wide range of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Detailed and appropriate use of evidence from texts develop, support, and justify responses, with textual references incorporated fluently in discussion.  Use of precise and fluent expression, which is appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **B** | Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in most texts.  Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Knowledge and understanding of a range of stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Clear analysis of the ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  Clear analysis and evaluation of the complex ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.  Clear analysis of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Clear analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Use of a range of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create coherent texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Appropriate use of evidence from texts to develop, support, and justify responses, with textual references incorporated in discussion.  Mostly accurate and fluent expression, which is appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **C** | Knowledge and understanding of some ways in which ideas, perspectives, and values are represented in texts.  Knowledge and understanding of some ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Knowledge and understanding of some of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Some analysis of ways in which texts represent ideas, perspectives, and values.  Description, with some analysis and evaluation, of ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.  Description, with some analysis, of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Some analysis of ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Competent use of conventions, and/or stylistic features to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task.  Competent use of evidence from texts to develop, support, and justify responses, with some use of textual references in discussion.  Generally fluent and clear expression, which is mostly appropriate for audience and purpose. |
| **D** | Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a narrow range of ways in which ideas and values are represented in texts.  Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a narrow range of ways in which authors use stylistic features to communicate ideas.  Some knowledge and restricted understanding of a few of the stylistic features and conventions of different text types. | Description of the ideas and values represented in texts.  Description of some ways in which stylistic features are used to influence the reading of texts.  Some description of similarities and differences between texts in comparative tasks.  Recognition of some ways in which different critical perspectives inform critical interpretation. | Use of some language features to create texts that address the meaning and intention of the task in a limited way.  Some use of evidence from texts to develop, support , and attempt to justify responses, with use of a narrow range of textual references.  Occasionally clear expression, which is appropriate for some audiences and purposes. |
| **E** | Simplistic knowledge and very restricted understanding of the way in which an idea or a value is represented in a text.  Limited knowledge and restricted understanding of a restricted range of stylistic features used by authors.  Limited knowledge and restricted understanding of different text types and conventions. | Reference to an idea or value represented in a text.  Limited description of a way in which a stylistic feature is used to influence the reading of a text.  Simplistic description of a connection between texts in a comparative task.  Reference to a critical perspective. | Attempted use of some language features to create texts that attempt to address the meaning and intention of the task in a limited way.  Restricted use of evidence from texts to develop and support a simple response, with minimal textual references.  Emerging development of control of expression. |

# Memory is a temporary antidote to suffering

Gwen Harwood's 'In Hospital' & Kenneth Slessor's 'Out of Time'

Gwen Harwood and Kenneth Slessor suggest, in their respective poems 'In Hospital' and 'Out of time', that memory is a temporary antidote to suffering. In Harwood's poem the sharp pain that Time can cause is conveyed in the hard objects collected through life like "stones, shells" and "glass". The alliteration in these words creates a disjointed and somewhat broken rhythm which reflects that the poet feels "cracked like glass". In contrast to Harwood's use of techniques, Slessor personifies Time as a "bony knife". Using a staccato rhythm created by the monosyllabic verbs "drills" and "drives" "through bone and vein" he conveys the relentless and unforgiving nature of Time as it "aims to kill". Using water imagery Slessor portrays how no matter *what,* "Time flows" by "vilely" and "continuously". Harwood also recognises that even if you are "arrogant" and ignore Time it will still cause "pain" and thus she is fearful to "wake" because of "what pain may wake" as a result. Both poets find refuge from the harshness of Time in the comfort of gentle memories. For Slessor he enters a world of memory which he metaphorically describes as "a sweet meniscus" as he finds himself"out of time" and made "fleshless" "ageless" and "free". Even as the "torrent" of time continues, his memory described with positive imagery of "lighted beaches" and "waters" that "glitter" is unchanged as time is forced it to leave it "at his back". Similarly, Harwood escapes to dreams that are portrayed as peaceful where the sharp glass, stone and shells are now "sea-toys" and "child's jewels" "rolled smooth". Description of these "scavengings" implies that memory has softened the pain of Time and made the poet "free of pain for a brieftime". However, Harwood does not stay in a state of memory and "bear what's gone" but rather enters real time again and accepts that pain will be "re-made". This depressive tone is also reflected in the end of Slessor's sonnet sequence as he is metaphorically "taken by the suck of sea" back to real time where the "body dies and rots". However, the cyclical structure of the poem and repetition of the beginning phrase of time flowing "like a hundred yachts" indicates that although he has been pulled out of his nostalgic state, he can re-enter it.

False hope is ultimately harmful

Gwen Harwood's 'A Glass Jar' & John Keats's "La Bel Dame Sans Merci"

Although based around different protagonists and subjects, John Keats's and Harwood explore the concept that when placed in the wrong thing, hope can be destructive, through their respective poems 'La Bel Dame Sans Merci' and A Glass Jar'. Keats's knight places hope in an imaginary "faery child" and similarly, Harwood's boy places hope in a "glass jar" of the sun's "reeling light". Keats suggests that the knight invests a great deal of love in "beautiful" woman "in the meads" that he makes "a garland for her head" and "bracelets too". Likewise, the boy puts great faith is his "pulse of light" and wraps the jar in a scarf to capture it so that he can release the light in the frightening dark. Using biblical allusions Harwood depicts the object that hope is placed in, as sacred by describing it as having the ability to "bless" and "exorcize" the "monsters that whisper". This highlights the importance and "total power" that the captured light holds for the boy. The boy realises that his faith is misplaced when "hope/ [falls] headlong from its eagle height, with enjambment symbolising a break in the boy's hope. This misplaced hope is foreshadowed in the third quatrains with descriptions of his fears and "fiends" as being imagined things such as "vampire fang" which suggest that like the boy's fears, his hope is placed in something that is not real.? The knight also realises the emptiness of his hopes when he is woken from his dream on a "cold hill's side" by warriors who "cried" a "horrid warning" that the merciless woman in which he placed hope "hath thee in thrall". Images of "starved lips" and a rose that "fast withereth" illustrate that although once full and promising, the woman of hope was now only empty and destructive, leaving the knight "haggard and woe-begone". Comparably the boy's lost hope leaves him to return to "skeletons and "worse dreams". This is further emphasised by the sun that is personified in a mocking "wink and laugh" "in a glass jar beside a crumpled scarf'. The title's of both poems also reiterate that false hope can be destructive and easily broken with Keat's title establishing that the woman is "without pity" and Harwood's implying that hope is easily wasted when placed in something fragile such as a "glass jar". The Description in the third quatrain of the boy's fears and "fiends" as being mythical things such as "vampire fang" imply that his fears are really non-existent, and thus suggests that his hope is wasted in something that is not there. Reinforcing this wasted and lost hope is the imagery of his hope falling "headlong from its eagle height" with enjambment symbolising a break in the boys hope.

# Time has a destructive effect on physica l things

John Donne's 'The Anniversarie' & John Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale

Through their poems 'The Anniversarie' and 'Ode to a Nightingale' John Donne and Keats's respectively explore the entropic nature of time and the inevitability of death as time passes. Donne identifies that nobody is immune to the effects of Time and aging, as reflected in his opening statement that "all kings, and all their favourites" and even "the sun it selfe" will be "elder by a yeare". In The Elizabethan world order kings had the highest status and therefore, by listing them first it suggests that all other elements that are hierarchically below monarch will also be affected. The repetition of the word "all" emphasises that everything, including the intangible "honours, beauties" and "wits", is affected by Time and will to its "destruction draw". Keats notes that the passing of time and the human experience result in "youth" growing "pale, and spectre thin", "beauty" losing her "lustrous eyes" and "love" being unable to pine "beyond to-morrow". To reflect the weight of the effect of time Keats uses the glottal assonance of "drunk" and "sunk" in the first stanza. The glottal assonance of the words "drunk" and "sunk" emphasise the weightiness of time. However, whilst Donne admits that there is no solution to the "decay" caused by time he ends on a positive tone providing the solution that all humans have "soules" which leave the body at the point of death. He therefore describes the physical nature of man to be a "grave" itsef and so at the point of expiration the soul is able to leave the physical body, "eyes and eares". At the end of the poem he declares that Time can "adde againe/ Years and years unto years" triumphantly as the spiritual nature of people means people should welcome the onset of time. Contrastingly Keat's ends with the unanswered question of whether he should "wake or sleep", suggesting that even with everything that has been offered he has ot reached a place of consolation in finding a solution to the effects of time.

**Task:** **Poetry Comparison (A+ grade)**

*Knowledge and Understanding*

* KU1: Addresses a broad range of ideas in six separate poems: the temporary antidote of memory; false hope; the destructive effect of time. Displays an awareness of how these ideas are represented and captures the thematic concerns coherently.
* KU2: indicates understanding of a significant range of poetic features: rhythm, personification, choice of verbs, metaphors, imagery, tone, structure, form, repetition, enjambment, use of title, assonance etc. and weaves the discussion of these deftly into the line of reasoning.
* KU3: displays a comprehensive grasp of the stylistic features and conventions of poetry (dependent upon task design, may not be applicable)

*Analysis*

* An1: perceptive analysis of the approach of the poets to the thematic concerns explored in the poetry. Understands the nuances in the ways in which the poets influence the reader to respond to the ideas.
* An2: analyses the effect of stylistic features in presenting ideas to the reader. Once or twice the connection between the stylistic feature and the idea presented is incongruent, but in the significant majority of cases the way in which the stylistic feature enhances the concept is clear and insightful.
* An3: comparison is the driving structural feature of each paragraph. Fluent movement between poets is handled well and enhances the analysis of the paragraphs.

*Application*

* Ap1: Fluent, coherent, intelligently structured paragraphs that maintain a clear argument. (dependent upon task design, may not be applicable)
* Ap2: Frequent and appropriate references to the poems, deftly woven into the line of reasoning.
* Ap3: Mostly precise and fluent expression. A few minor errors in punctuation and spelling – but these never obstruct the meaning. (dependent upon task design, may not be applicable)

*Overall*

Well-developed responses to a range of poems that are well planned and executed. Textual justification and comparison are fluently integrated into the line of reasoning, and observations about the role of poetic devices are naturally and analytically incorporated throughout the paragraphs.