

The Poetry of World War One



Introduction

War has always inspired poetry. It has been around for as long as there have been wars, one of the oldest examples being 'The Illiad' by an ancient Greek poet called Homer. This poem depicted the Trojan wars (and the famous *Trojan Horse*) and was composed around 75 BC, roughly two thousand years ago.

War poetry brings history to life by telling us the private thoughts of men and women who have experienced conflict between nations.

Some of the most famous poems and plays written in the English language about war were "*Henry V*" by Shakespeare, about the battle of Agincourt in 1415 and, "*The Charge of the Light Brigade*" by Alfred Tennyson about the Crimean War in the 1850s. These are all stories of heroism and glory and depict the bravery of the soldiers.

However, World War One saw a complete change in the way wars were fought and the attitudes towards them. More advanced technology saw death on a huge scale and there were nearly a million British casualties. In total over 8.5 million men were killed during the 'Great War'. This in turn created a new breed of poets such as Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, who wrote in protest of the war and its dire conditions. This study pack concentrates on the poetry written during the First World War for this reason.

At the beginning of the war in August 1914, people had no idea of the scale and length of the conflict they were to be involved in and people were eager to enlist in a war that they thought would be over by Christmas.

- Look at the poem on the next page by Jessie Pope, who wrote for the Daily Mail newspaper.
1. How would this poem make you feel as a young person whose country was at war?
 2. Are there any phrases from this poem that would make you feel a certain way? Why?
 3. What do you think the poet feels about war?
 4. How might that make you feel?



5. Why do you think the poet wrote this poem?
6. What is the effect of the repetition in the poem?
7. This poem made many soldiers angry after they had been to the front, in particular Wilfred Owen. Why do you think this might be?

"The Call"

By *Jessie Pope (1914)*

Who's for the trench—
 Are you, my laddie?
 Who'll follow French—
 Will you, my laddie?
 Who's fretting to begin,
 Who's going out to win?
 And who wants to save his skin—
 Do you, my laddie?

Who's for the khaki suit—
 Are you, my laddie?
 Who longs to charge and shoot—
 Do you, my laddie?
 Who's keen on getting fit,
 Who means to show his grit,
 And who'd rather wait a bit—
 Would you, my laddie?

Who'll earn the Empire's thanks—
 Will you, my laddie?
 Who'll swell the victor's ranks—
 Will you, my laddie?
 When that procession comes,
 Banners and rolling drums—
 Who'll stand and bite his thumbs—
 Will you, my laddie?



Poetic Techniques

N G E G N M E Y B W U T V H Q
 G O S P O A E N R W C S F G F
 Y Z I Q I B N T F F U G O U N
 C F P T T A B F A J R I Z P A
 Q S F Z A J E Z X P Y C P I H
 A Q U H R C F S X G H R E T F
 Q X S D E I I R O S T O K M R
 U Q X L T S P F B J P Z R P J
 I T Z B I V B I I O Q N V U I
 M Q J M L Z N Y T N E Z Q L W
 A L I X L V H A U G O M T A K
 G L F T A K M C T J B S Y W Q
 E P A S S O N A N C E Z R H K
 R D X Y N M H T Y H R I B E R
 Y F Z O J V P G W A O C L B P

- A _____ is a comparison between two things. We can recognise a ----- by the presence of like or as.
- A _____ is more difficult to understand. It suggests a comparison between two things that are not really alike. For example: "John was a lion"
- _____ is achieved by repeating the same sound or letter at the beginning of two or more words in the same sentence or line. For example: "gravelly ground".
- _____ is the repetition of the vowel sounds of two or more words in the same sentence. For example "sound ground".
- The technique where words imitate the sound of the word they are describing is called _____
For example "splash, clash, babble, gurgle".
- _____ is where the words of the poet create a picture in the reader's head. This is a very personal thing for the reader.
- _____ is when a thing or object is given human qualities. For example "The crying wind"
- _____ is the where the words are similar in sound, especially in respect to the last syllable. For example "All lost things lie under closing water, in that lake with the poor man's daughter."
- _____ is the perception of sounds heard with respect to time. The 'beat' of the poem when it is read aloud.

Understanding Similes and Metaphors

Task:

Draw the image. Underneath your picture, explain whether this is a metaphor or a simile and why you think the poet has chosen this image.

1. The boxer had an iron fist.	2. The birds on the telegraph wire looked like music notes on a page.
3. The car shot through the night like a bullet.	4. Her eyes were still, blue pools.
5. A simile of your choice.	6. Now a metaphor of your choice.

1. The teacher was a raging lion.

2. He was as big as a house.

This is a simile / metaphor. The poet has chosen it because.....

This is a simile / metaphor. The poet has chosen it because.....

3. His eyes blazed with anger....

4. ...*coughing like hags*.....

This is a simile / metaphor. The poet has chosen it because

This is a simile / metaphor. The poet has chosen it because

5. A simile of your choice (something is like something else).

6. Now a metaphor of your choice (something is something else).

I chose this simile because.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I chose this metaphor because.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....



Poet Fact File



Name:	Siegfried Sassoon
Date of Birth:	8 th September 1886
From:	Weirleigh, near Paddock Wood in Kent
Education:	Marlborough School, then Clare College Cambridge University.
Served with:	Sassoon enlisted as a cavalry trooper in the Sussex Yeomanry He then became an officer in the Royal Fusiliers.
Rank:	Company Commander
Where Served:	The Somme, Palestine, St Floris
Medals:	The Military Cross
Wounds:	Lots of minor wounds, known as 'Mad Jack' for the risks he would take. Spent some time in Craiglockhart Hospital while the authorities decided what to do with him when he protested against the war, where he met Wilfred Owen. A head wound at St Floris.
Date of Death:	1967
Some Poems Written:	How to Die, The General, The Hero
Style of Poetry:	Sharply against the war and the people in charge, a satiric edge.



Name:	Wilfred Owen
Date of Birth:	18 th March 1893
From:	Plas Wilmot, Oswestry
Education:	Birkenhead Institute and at Shrewsbury Technical School
Served with:	Enlisted in 3/28 th London Regiment Then commissioned into Manchester Regiment and served with both the 2 nd and 5 th Battalion.
Rank:	Lieutenant
Where Served:	The Somme, Serre, Bearevoir-Fonsomme Line, Sambre-Oise Canal
Medals:	The Military Cross
Wounds:	Concussion at the Somme Shell Shock, stayed at Craiglockhart Hospital where he met Sassoon
Date of Death:	4 th November 1918
Some Poems Written:	Disabled, Strange Meeting, Mental Cases
Style of Poetry:	Lyrical, longer poems that protest against the war by highlighting the soldiers' conditions.

Research Task

On the previous page, you have discovered the basic facts about the two most famous First World War poets. However, there were lots of poets who were equally well known and important.

Your task is for your group of three or four to present your research about your chosen poet to the class. You can either do this orally using a poster you have made or using PowerPoint.

Remember: don't copy chunks of text from the Internet onto a PowerPoint presentation. This must be your work, the Internet is a tool for information and PowerPoint is a presentation and prompt tool. The words you write and say:

MUST BE YOUR OWN!

Poets:

- Rupert Brooke
- Robert Graves
- Edward Thomas
- Isaac Rosenberg
- Ivor Gurney
- Jessie Pope
- Margaret Postgate-Cole



You must fill in a grid for your poet, like the ones made for Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon (obviously, if the person didn't serve in the army, you can find out other information instead).



You can also find a picture of the person, a cover of a book of their poetry and you could read out one of their poems to the class.

The following web sites below are useful:

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/poetsandprose/>

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/>

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ltg/projects/jtap/tutorials/intro/>

Imagery in Poetry

One of the objectives of a successful poem is to create pictures into the mind of the reader of important images and issues they want to convey. The imagery in war poetry is very important as they want the reader to understand the suffering they have witnessed and experienced.

- Look at the poems below and choose one you connect with.
- Using some plain paper, draw some of the images you find have an impact on you, or that you think the poet is trying to make you see.

You can either do one large picture, or several small images, dotting words or lines around your picture/s from the poem to show what you are illustrating.

“In Flanders Fields”

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce hear amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders Fields.

~ **John McCrae**

“Anthem for Doomed Youth”

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
- Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, -
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall?
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each show dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

~ **Wilfred Owen**

"The Falling Leaves"

November 1915

Today, as I rode by,
I saw the brown leaves dropping from their tree
In a still afternoon,
When no wind whirled them whistling to the sky,
But thickly, silently,
They fell, like snowflakes wiping out the noon;
And wandered slowly thence
For thinking of a gallant multitude
Which now all withering lay,
Slain by no wind of age or pestilence,
But in their beauty strewed
Like snowflakes falling on the Flemish clay.



"C" ~ *Margaret Postgate Cole*

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 tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped 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 gangling 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.
~ *Wilfred Owen*

Analysing the Poem "Dulce et Decorum est"

1. What is the title of this poem? _____

First Stanza:

2. What is the main emotion expressed in the first stanza (verse)?

3. Write an example of a simile used in the first stanza:

4. Where were the 'haunting flares' coming from?

5. Describe what the soldiers looked and felt like as they marched away from the trenches:

6. Why were the shells 'disappointed'?

Second Stanza:

1. How does the emotion change at the beginning of the second stanza?

2. What were the soldiers 'fumbling' for and why?

3. Write and explain the simile that Owen uses to describe how the soldier acted when he breathed in the gas:

4. Owen uses a metaphor to describe what the gas looked like. Write it and explain it here:

Third Stanza:

1. Why do you think the third stanza is only two lines long? Think about the dramatic effect and the emotion:

Fourth Stanza:

1. What is the main emotion expressed in the fourth stanza?

2. How does Owen describe the soldier's face after he has been 'flung in the wagon'?

3. Write two similes that Owen uses to describe how disgusting the effect of the gas is:

4. Name three parts of the body that are affected by this sort of gas:

5. What does the final line mean in English:

*"Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori."*

Extension Question:

Write your opinion of this poem. Think about what the **emotion** expressed, use of **powerful words**, use of **similes and metaphors**, **layout**, and what the **poet is trying to say**. Try to use full sentences and give **reasons** to support your ideas:

"GLAD THAT I KILLED YER"

Hear my voice; hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man. — Genesis iv. 23.

Glad that I killed yer —
It was you or me:
Our bayonets locked,
And then I pulled mine free;
My heart beat like to burst;
But Gawd, I got in first—
Glad that I killed yer!

Glad that I killed yer,
Though you are so young:
How still you lie
With both your arms outflung:
There's red blood on your hair —
Well, what the Hell I care? —
Glad that I killed yer!

Glad that I killed yer —
You're my enemy;
I had to hate —
And you — you hated me;
You mightn't be to blame —
I killed yer just the same —
Glad that I killed yer!

Questions:

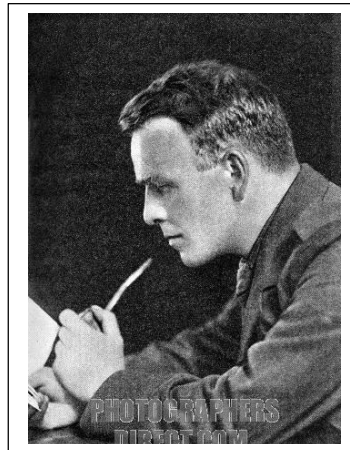
- 1) Describe how the poet's mood changes throughout this poem.
- 2) What is the poet's final thought on what happened? (see stanza 7)
- 3) What lasting effects will this moment have on the poet? (see stanza 5)
- 4) What line, which is repeated, suggests that he was simply lucky? (See stanza 1 & 7)
- 5) Do you think the poet was "Glad"?
- 6) Why does the poet use so much repetition?
- 7) Why does the poet use "yer" instead of you?

Glad that I killed yer —
That's the game o' war;
But for my luck
I'd lie just like you are;
Your blood is on my hand —
Surely you understand
I *had* to kill yer ?

Glad that I killed yer —
Yet I can't forget
The look you gave me
When we turned — and met —
Why do you follow me with staring eye?
Was it so difficult a thing to die —
Gawd! when *I* killed yer?

Glad that I killed yer—
Yet I'm sorry, too,
For those will wait
So long at home for you:
I have a mother living down at Bow —
Thank Gawd for this that yours will never know
'Twas I that killed yer!

Glad that I killed yer—
It was you or me:
It does seem strange,
But it had got to be.
My heart beat like to burst,
But Gawd, I got in first —
Glad that I killed yer!



~ *Joseph Lee*

"The Night Patrol, France, March 1916."

O ver the top! The wire's thin here, unbarbed
Plain rusty coils, not staked, and low enough:
Full of old tins, though — "When you're through, all three,
Aim quarter left for fifty yards or so,
Then straight for that new piece of German wire;
See if it's thick, and listen for a while
For sounds of working; don't run any risks;
About an hour; now, over!"

And we placed
Our hands on the topmost sand-bags, leapt, and stood
A second with curved backs, then crept to the wire,
Wormed ourselves tinkling through, glanced back, and dropped.
The sodden ground was splashed with shallow pools,
And tufts of crackling cornstalks, two years old,
No man had reaped, and patches of spring grass.
Half-seen, as rose and sank the flares, were strewn
The wrecks of our attack: the bandoliers,
Packs, rifles, bayonets, belts, and haversacks,
Shell fragments, and the huge whole forms of shells
Shot fruitlessly — and everywhere the dead.
Only the dead were always present — present
As a vile sickly smell of rottenness;
The rustling stubble and the early grass,
The slimy pools — the dead men stank through all,
Pungent and sharp; as bodies loomed before,
And as we passed, they stank: then dulled away
To that vague fetor, all encompassing,
Infecting earth and air. They lay, all clothed,
Each in some new and piteous attitude
That we well marked to guide us back: as he,
Outside our wire, that lay on his back and crossed
His legs Crusader-wise: I smiled at that,
And thought on Elia and his Temple Church.
From him, at quarter left, lay a small corpse,
Down in a hollow, huddled as in a bed,
That one of us put his hand on unawares.
Next was a bunch of half a dozen men
All blown to bits, an archipelago
Of corrupt fragments, vexing to us three,
Who had no light to see by, save the flares.
On such a trail, so light, for ninety yards
We crawled on belly and elbows, till we saw,
Instead of lumpish dead before our eyes,



The stakes and crosslines of the German wire.
We lay in shelter of the last dead man,
Ourselves as dead, and heard their shovels ring
Turning the earth, then talk and cough at times.
A sentry fired and a machine-gun spat;
They shot a flare above us, when it fell
And spluttered out in the pools of No Man's Land,
We turned and crawled past the remembered dead:
Past him and him, and them and him, until,
For he lay some way apart, we caught the scent
Of the Crusader and slide past his legs,
And through the wire and home, and got our rum.

~ *Arthur Graeme West*

Questions

1. Describe what has happened in this poem.
2. What evidence is there of a previous attack?
3. Find examples of how the dead are described.
4. How does the night patrol use the dead bodies?
5. What does the word "feter" mean? Why is this excellent use of imagery?
6. What is an "archipelago" and why is a good term to describe the dead men?
7. Find examples of the 5 senses; similes and metaphors.



8. The Poet refers to a dead soldier lying on his back "crusader-wise" like the grave of a Crusader Knight in a church. Why does the poet smile at this thought?

"Trench Idyll"

We sat together in the trench,
He on a lump of frozen earth
Blown in the night before,
I on an unexploded shell;
And smoked and talked, like exiles,
Of how pleasant London was,
Its women, restaurants, night clubs, theatres,
How at that very hour
The taxi cabs were taking folk to dine ...
Then we sat silent for a while
As a machine gun swept the parapet.

He said:

"I've been here on and off two years
And only seen one man killed."

"That's odd."

"The bullet hit him in the throat;
He fell in a heap on the fire-step,
And called out 'My God! dead!'"

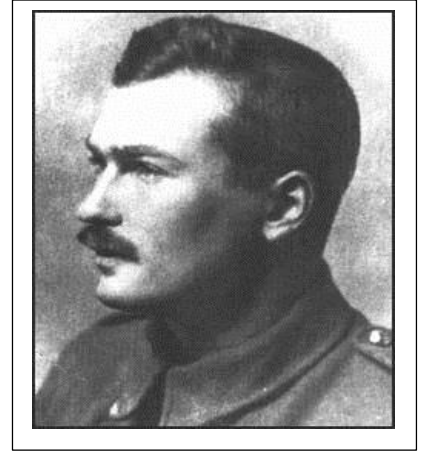
"Good Lord, how terrible!"

"Well, as to that, the nastiest job I've had
Was last year on this very front
Taking the discs at night from men
Who'd hung for six months on the wire
Just over there.
The worst of all was
They fell to pieces at a touch,
Thank God we couldn't see their faces;
They had gas helmets on ..."

I shivered:

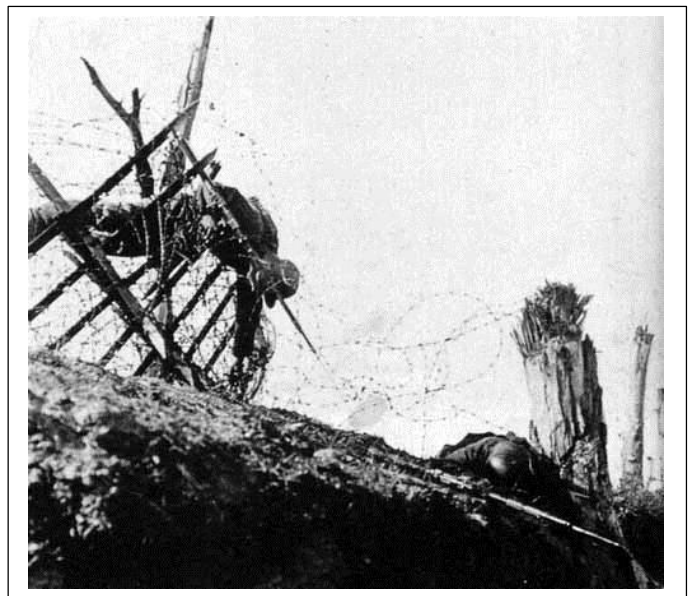
"It's rather cold here, sir; suppose we move?"

~ Richard Adlington



Questions

1. What was life back in London like?
2. How many men has the Officer that the poet was talking to seen killed up close and personal? Describe what happened.
3. What does he go on to describe as the "nastiest job" he's had?
4. How does the poet use 3 simple images to sum up the horror of war?
5. The ending: do you think the poet is cold, or, do you think something else is going on?





"Suicide in the Trenches"

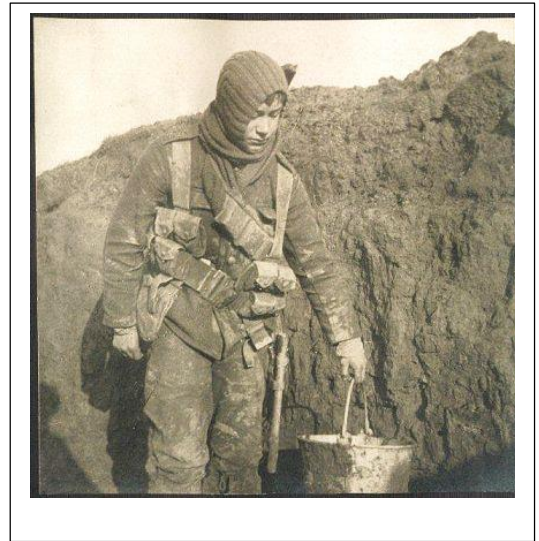
I knew a simple soldier boy
Who grinned at life in empty joy,
I Slept soundly through the lonesome dark,
And whistled early with the lark.

In winter trenches, cowed and glum,
With crumps and lice and lack of rum,
He put a bullet through his brain.
No one spoke of him again.

* * *

You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and prey you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.

~ *Siegfried Sassoon*





Questions:

1. What kind of mood do you think Sassoon was in when he wrote this poem? Explain your answer.
2. Who does Sassoon direct his anger towards?
3. Was it a surprise that the soldier killed himself?



We'd gained our first objective hours before
While dawn broke like a face with blinking eyes,
Pallid, unshaved and thirsty, blind with smoke.

Things seemed all right at first. We held their line,
With bombers posted, Lewis guns well placed,
And clink of shovels deepening the shallow trench.
The place was rotten with dead; green clumsy legs
High-booted, sprawled and grovelled along the saps;
And trunks, face downward, in the sucking mud,
Wallowed like trodden sand-bags loosely filled;
And naked sodden buttocks, mats of hair,
Bulged, clotted heads slept in the plastering slime.
And then the rain began,--the jolly old rain

A yawning soldier knelt against the bank
Staring across the morning blar with f
He wondered when the Allemunds would
And then, of course, they started with f
Traversing, sure as fate, and never a du
Mute in the clamour of shells he watche
Spouting dark earth and wire with gusts
While posturing giants dissolved in drift
He crouched and flinched, dizzy with ga
Sick for escape,--loathing the strangled
And butchered, frantic gestures of the



An officer came blundering down the trench:
"Stand-to and man the fire-step!" On he went ...

Gasping and bawling, "Fire-step ... counter-attack!"
Then the haze lifted. Bombing on the right
Down the old sap: machine-guns on the left;
And stumbling figures looming out in front.
"O Christ, they're coming at us!" Bullets spat,
And he remembered his rifle ... rapid fire ...

And started blazing wildly ... then a bang
Crumpled and spun him sideways, knocked him out
To grunt and wriggle: none heeded him; he choked
And fought the flapping veils of smothering gloom,
Lost in a blurred confusion of yells and groans ...
Down, and down, and down, he sank and drowned,
Bleeding to death. The counter-attack had failed.

~ *Siegfried Sassoon*

Questions.

1. Describe the trenches (the place where the counter attack takes place). Use quotations from the poem (the first and second stanzas in particular) plus your research to help you.
2. Why does Sassoon describe the rain as 'jolly'?
3. Make a table to list the examples of onomatopoeia, metaphor, simile and alliteration in the poem.
4. What are the 'flapping veils of smothering gloom'?
5. Describe the metaphor 'He sank and drowned'. What image does it portray? Is the image effective?



"Disabled"

He sat in a wheeled chair, waiting for dark,
And shivered in his ghastly suit of grey,
Legless, sewn short at elbow. Through the park
Voices of boys rang saddening like a hymn,
Voices of play and pleasure after day,
Till gathering sleep had mothered them from him.

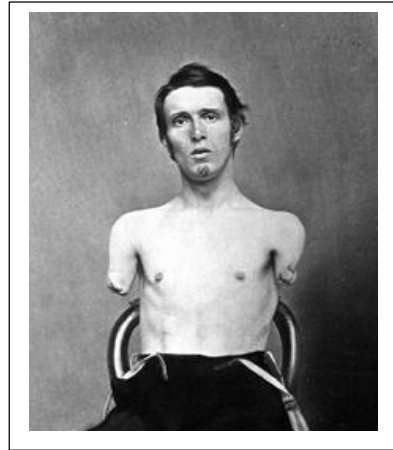
* * *

About this time Town used to swing so gay
When glow-lamps budded in the light blue trees,
And girls glanced lovelier as the air grew dim, -
In the old times, before he threw away his knees.
Now he will never feel again how slim
Girls' waists are, or how warm their subtle hands;
All of them touch him like some queer disease.

* * *

There was an artist silly for his face,
For it was younger than his youth, last year.
Now, he is old; his back will never brace;
He's lost his colour very far from here,
Poured it down shell-holes till the veins ran dry,
And half his lifetime lapsed in the hot race
And leap of purple spurted from his thigh.

* * *



One time he liked a blood-smear down his leg,
After the matches, carried shoulder-high.
It was after football, when he'd drunk a peg,
He thought he'd better join. - He wonders why.
Someone had said he'd look a god in kilts,
That's why; and may be, too, to please his Meg;
Aye, that was it, to please the giddy jilts
He asked to join. He didn't have to beg;
Smiling they wrote his lie; aged nineteen years.
Germans he scarcely thought of; all their guilt,
And Austria's, did not move him. And no fears
Of Fear came yet. He thought of jewelled hilts
For daggers in plaid socks; of smart salutes;
And care of arms; and leave; and pay arrears;
Esprit de corps; and hints for young recruits.
And soon, he was drafted out with drums and
cheers.

* * *

Some cheered him home, but not as crowds cheer a
Goal.

Only a solemn man who brought him fruits
Thanked him; and then inquired about his soul.

* * *

Now, he will spend a few sick years in institutes,
And do what things the rules consider wise,
And take whatever pity they may dole.

To-night he noticed how the women's eyes
Passed from him to the strong men that were
whole.

How cold and late it is! Why don't they come
And put him into bed? Why don't they come?

~ Wilfred Owen



Poppies
by Jane Weir

Three days before Armistice Sunday
and poppies had already been placed
on individual war graves. Before you left,
I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals,
spasms of paper red, disrupting a blockade
of yellow bias binding around your blazer.

Sellotape bandaged around my hand,
I rounded up as many white cat hairs
as I could, smoothed down your shirt's
upturned collar, steeled the softening
of my face. I wanted to graze my nose
across the tip of your nose, play at
being Eskimos like we did when
you were little. I resisted the impulse
to run my fingers through the gelled
blackthorns of your hair. All my words
flattened, rolled, turned into felt,

slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked
with you, to the front door, threw
it open, the world overflowing
like a treasure chest. A split second
and you were away, intoxicated.
After you'd gone I went into your bedroom,
released a song bird from its cage.
Later a single dove flew from the pear tree,
and this is where it has led me,
skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy
making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without
a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

On reaching the top of the hill I traced
the inscriptions on the war memorial,
leaned against it like a wishbone.
The dove pulled freely against the sky,
an ornamental stitch. I listened, hoping to hear
your playground voice catching on the wind.

"In Flanders Fields"



In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

~ *John McRae*

Questions.

1. Compare the mood in the first two stanzas with that in the third.
2. Is this a pro-war poem? If so why; if not, why not?
3. Who is the speaker in this poem?
4. What does the speaker want his listeners to do?
5. What do crosses mark "row on row" marking a place refer to? What is in the sky? What is heard below?
6. What happened "short days ago"? Have you thought of those that lived in the past this way before?
7. What is being tossed to us? Is this a "torch" you can touch? If not, to what is the author referring?
8. Explain what the following quote might mean: "If ye break-faith with us who die." Compare/contrast this with this quote from the bible, from John 15:13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his

friends.”

Rhythm		
Rhyme		
Descriptive Devices		
Tone of Poem		