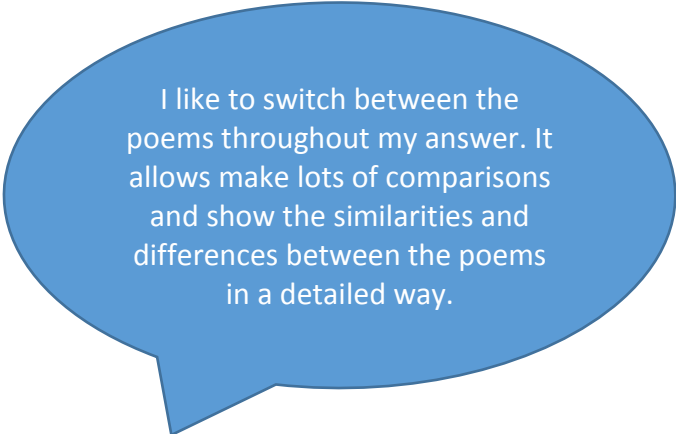


## Poetry revision session - *Power and Conflict* poems

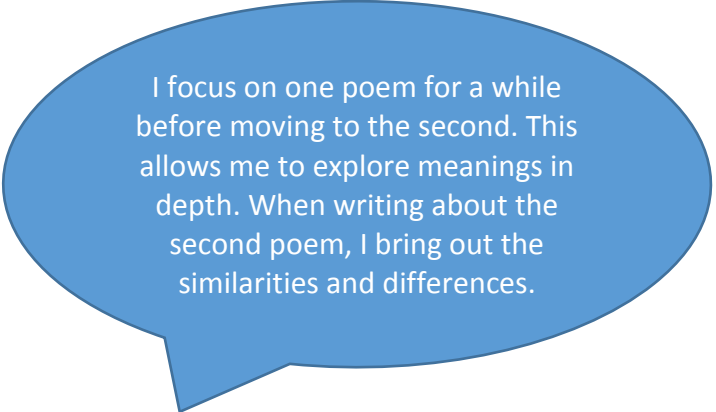
### Ways of comparing

There are different ways to compare poems. Some students like to make lots of points of comparison in their writing, alternating between both poems several times in their answer. Some students prefer to deal with one poem in full before moving on to the second poem. Although the mark scheme mentions the idea of comparison, examiners accept both of these approaches.

Both of these students' ways of comparing are valid. Which one do you prefer?



I like to switch between the poems throughout my answer. It allows me to make lots of comparisons and show the similarities and differences between the poems in a detailed way.



I focus on one poem for a while before moving to the second. This allows me to explore meanings in depth. When writing about the second poem, I bring out the similarities and differences.

### TIPS

- The very best answers deal with the concepts in a poem – the big AO1 meanings/ideas that the writer makes about the nature of power and conflict.
- As you begin to plan an answer, focus on the question and start by considering what big ideas the writer offers the reader.
- Along the way, remember to touch on the AO2 methods used.
- Any context work (AO3) will happen naturally if you answer the question.

## 1. London

*London* is about how ordinary people in the capital city are affected by the the powerful institutions that surround them. Blake shows how the people of London are powerless.

### AO1 meanings:

1. The people of London have their minds and lives **controlled by those in power**. They are shackled by everyday life.
2. The people of London **allow themselves to be controlled**. They don't rebel - **their own minds are trapping them**.
3. The **church and the monarchy are to blame** for people's suffering.

### AO2 aspects:

- key **image** - 'mind-forg'd manacles'
- **visual images** (things you see) and **aural images** (things you hear).
- **patterned, repetitive** - 4 stanzas of equal length, repeated words

### Quotations

1. mind-forged manacles
2. the chimney-sweeper's cry
3. Runs in blood down palace walls
4. the youthful harlot's curse
5. the marriage hearse

## 2. Remains

*Remains* gives a first person account of how a soldier shoots a looter. The poem shows how the effects of a moment of conflict remains in the narrator's mind.

### AO1 meanings:

1. **Everybody involved in a conflict suffers.**
2. The poem shows that **you can never forget violent acts.**
3. People who are caught up in conflict are **'normal' people**

### AO2 aspects:

- tone is conversational – narrator is **informal anecdote**
- repetition, alliteration
- words with **double meanings**

### Quotations

1. I see every round as it rips through his life
2. One of my mates goes by  
and tosses his guts back into his body.
3. drink and the drugs won't flush him out
4. he's here in my head when I close my eyes
5. his bloody life in my bloody hands

### 3. Storm on the Island

*Storm on the Island* describes how the power of nature affects the lives of people living on an island. Heaney explains how humans prepare themselves against the danger that storms pose.

#### AO1 meanings:

1. Nature is to be feared rather than admired. **Nature overpowers** man.
2. The danger of the natural world BUT - **humans admire nature's power**.

#### AO2 aspects:

- words which suggest violence or have **connotations** of war
- **simile** - '*spits like a tame cat / Turned savage*'
- one compact **stanza** – **blank verse**.

#### Quotations

1. we build our houses squat
2. leaves and branches  
Can raise a tragic chorus in a gale
3. spits like a tame cat  
Turned savage
4. wind dives  
And strafes
5. bombarded by the empty air.  
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

## 4. My Last Duchess

In *My Last Duchess*, the narrator (the powerful Duke of Ferrara) gradually reveals information about the life and death of his former wife. The poem shows his desire to control the actions of his female partner.

### AO1 meanings:

1. Power and wealth can be very dangerous – **power corrupts**
2. **Men feel threatened** by the power of female sexuality
3. Powerful people exert their **authority without being challenged**

### AO2 aspects:

- in the form of a **dramatic monologue**
- tone of the voice is **conversational**
- in **rhymed pentameter, enjambment** is used

### Quotations

1. 'twas not  
Her husband's presence only, called that spot  
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek
2. She had  
A heart – how shall I say? – too soon made glad
3. as if she ranked  
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
With anybody's gift
4. I gave commands;  
Then all smiles stopped together

## 5. Kamikaze

*Kamikaze* focuses on the feelings of a daughter whose father, a war pilot, abandons his mission. The narrator imagines the choice the father made and the ending of the poem reflects on the rejection that he suffered as a result of his choice

### AO1 meanings:

1. Criticises social structures that **force people to act** in certain ways.
2. **Grandfather is heroic** because he refuses to accept the power of society's views
3. The poem shows **the power of social forces**. The pilot's mother and neighbours are not presented sympathetically.

### AO2 aspects:

- first four stanzas are from the viewpoint of a **third person narrator**
- most of the **final two stanzas - daughter's perspective**
- **images of nature** and the natural world

### Quotations

1. a shaven head  
full of powerful incantations
2. a one-way  
journey into history
3. remembered (how) he and  
his brothers waiting on the shore
4. *mother never spoke again  
in his presence*
5. he must have wondered  
which had been the better way to die

## Practice tasks

1. Compare the ways poets present the suffering of humans in 'Remains' and in one other poem from 'Power and conflict'.

2. Compare the ways poets present the power of individuals in 'My Last Duchess' and in one other poem from 'Power and conflict'.

3. Compare the ways poets presents those without power in 'London' and in one other poem from the 'Power and conflict' collection.

4. Compare the ways poets present the power of nature in 'Storm on the Island' and in one other poem from the 'Power and conflict' collection.

5. Compare the ways poets present powerful memories in 'Kamikaze' and in one other poem from the 'Power and conflict' collection.