

Context for 'London'

- One of the early Romantics: love of nature, use of symbolism / often reference to class divisions.
- Blake was religious but opposed the Church, whom he felt were corrupt.
- Explosion of population of London from around 1750 - 1820s: 750,000 → 3 million (approx)
- industrial revolution taking place.
- Factories often employed small children, about 5 or 6 yrs of age ↑ as they could fit under machines / go down chimneys. Infant mortality was high due to most living / working conditions.
- Women had to rely on poorly paid jobs. Thousands had to turn to prostitution to supplement income.
- In 1789, the French Revolution took place; it was very bloody and was seen by many as inspirational: the common man taking back control.

Quatrain -
stanza with
4 lines.

Context for "the Prelude"

- A romantic (embraced nature / symbolic / often plain language).
- Autobiographical - Wordsworth stole a rowing boat at Lake Ullswater.
- Long, ~~philosophical~~ philosophical poetry tended to be written in blank verse at this time.
- Wordsworth wrote predominantly about nature
- His parents died when he was a teenager, and he had to move to Penrith to live with his grandparents.
- Believed we could learn a lot about the human condition / society / values from studying nature.

Context for 'Charge of the Light Brigade'

- Poet Laureate from 1850.
- Engagement to future wife was at first forbidden by her father due to Tennyson's poverty. (theme of class)
- Victorian society was hierarchical, (class system).
- Set during the Crimean War (unpopular in Britain) 1853 - 1856.
 - ↳ Battle of Balaclava - an order was given by General Raglan (upper class): Light Brigade were sent to wrong area.
- Reported as a "hideous blunder" in newspaper.

Context for 'Exposure'

- Written about a period of time when it was one of the worst winters on record.*
- Soldiers spent weeks stuck in trenches.
- Owen wrote poems about the reality of war
- Before this, poems were written largely about the glory / beauty of war.
- * Owen wrote to his mother about sleeping / fighting in a "frozen desert."
- Owen chose to return to the front as he felt a keen sense of brotherhood.

Contextual Info for 'Storm on the Island'

- Much of Heaney's poetry is about nature: he was born into a farming family in ^{Northern} Ireland.
- He grew up during 'the Troubles'
- He felt that poets should create poems that meshed together, words that could have ambiguous meanings.
- Stormont building is the parliament building where they are trying to resolve the differences between different political factions.

Context for Bayonet Charge

- Hughes grew up in Yorkshire countryside; passionate about nature & animals. (1930 - 1998)
- Father served in WWI and was emotionally traumatised for rest of his life.
 - ↳ Ted Hughes was obsessed with WWI, (1914 - 1918)
 - ↳ Admired / influenced (heavily) by Wilfred Owen (Exposure).
- Interested in astrology

Context for Remains by Simon Armitage

- Poem based on real event / soldier - Guardsman Tromans in Iraq, 2003.
- Armitage often writes about the powerless or voiceless (the common man) in society.
- He often writes about real ^{sad} events & uses colloquial language.
- PTSD

Context for 'Poppies' by Jane Weir

- Poem was written to address the theme of suffering in war.
- At the time it was written, British soldiers were fighting and dying in Afghanistan & Iraq.
- She had two sons that were teenagers at the time; she tried to imagine how she would feel if they went to war.

Context for 'War Photography'

- Darkrooms are where photos are developed.
- Duffy interested in difficulties / choices that war photographers have to make.
- Friends with a couple of war photographers including Don McCullin.

Context for 'Tissue'

- Poems often address people's commonalities rather than differences.
- Poem comes from a collection (1st in the collection) about fundamentalism. - she believes that God has been hijacked by fundamentalists.
- Describes herself as a Muslim Calvinist / Scottish Pakistani who has been adopted by India & Wales.
- Many poems about the theme of freedom & has an interest in everyday things that we take for granted.
- Artist as well as being a poet.

Context for "The Emigrée"

- Rumans has travelled extensively
- Often writes about other cultures, customs & languages
- This poem is from a collection about politics/political thinking.

Context for kamikaze by Beatrice Garland

- Poem is from a collection called 'Fireworks', which explored how young people are willing to give their lives for a cause.
- In Japan, kamikaze pilots were honoured for their sacrifice.
- Honour itself was ^{an} (is) an important part of Japanese society.