

English Revision Session: London.

- 1.) What is enjambment in a poem?
- 2.) Which war poem is written from a mother's perspective?
- 3.) Which poem uses the semantic field of cold weather?
- 4.) What is caesura?
- 5.) How many poems will you need to analyse in the exam?

Wednesday 18th January.



Session Two: London.

- 1.) What is enjambment in a poem? *Where lines of poetry run on to the next.*
- 2.) Which war poem is written from a mother's perspective? *Poppies.*
- 3.) Which poem uses the semantic field of cold weather? *Exposure.*
- 4.) What is caesura? *A pause in a line of poetry.*
- 5.) How many poems will you need to analyse in the exam? *Two.*

Wednesday 18th January.



London.

What is the poem about?

'London' by William Blake is a dark and dreary poem in which the speaker describes the difficulties of life in London through the structure of a walk.

The speaker travels to the River Thames and looks around him. He takes note of the resigned faces of his fellow Londoners. The speaker also hears and feels the sorrow in the streets, there is a true pain in the hearts of men, women, and children- mainly due to poverty and the oppression they face from the government.



London

Let's read the poem.

London

BY WILLIAM BLAKE

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice: in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

How the Chimney-sweepers cry
Every blackning Church appalls,
And the hapless Soldiers sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlots curse
Blasts the new-born Infants tear
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse



London:

Meaning/main messages of the poem:

- Blake wants readers to increase their awareness of the degrading conditions in London.
- The industrial revolution has taken its toll on citizens who now feel tired, sad and disconnected. Conditions in the city have worsened under the government's economic and social control, and people have abandoned much of their moral and ethical behaviour.
- Blake's message is a wake-up call, so readers won't be lulled into believing that their current situation is acceptable.



London:

Complete the cloze activity in your booklet:



London:

Diseases
French Revolution
Child labour
Suffering
Corruption

Deprivation
Vulnerable
Power
Poverty
Misery

On his walk through London, the speaker witnesses the _____ of many people. The speaker describes the _____ and weakness on the faces of the people living in _____: soldiers, chimney sweepers, prostitutes, and their newborn babies who suffer from the spread of sexually transmitted _____. The speaker blames the _____ of the church and the king for the _____ in London. The church did very little to prevent _____ and look after young and _____ people in society. Blake seems to hint that the people could take _____ and so end their suffering, hinting at the _____.

London:



Diseases

French Revolution

Child labour

Suffering

Corruption

Deprivation

Vulnerable

Power

Poverty

Misery

On his walk through London, the speaker witnesses the **suffering** of many people. The speaker describes the **misery** and weakness on the faces of the people living in **poverty**: soldiers, chimney sweepers, prostitutes, and their newborn babies who suffer from the spread of sexually transmitted **diseases**. The speaker blames the **corruption** of the church and the king for the **deprivation** in London. The church did very little to prevent **child labour** and look after young and **vulnerable** people in society. Blake seems to hint that the people could take **power** and so end their suffering, hinting at the **French Revolution**.



London:

Charter: is a written document issued by a figure of authority granting specific rights and permissions.

Suggests government owned or controlled by social elites.

Charter'd Street:
Everywhere he walks is monitored, controlled by someone rich or powerful.

Golden quotations:

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow.

Nature is no longer free. It too, is oppressed by the government and others in authority.

Charter: The repetitive 'charter' highlights the significance of authority in society. Blake's utilisation this term to carries a powerful image of being confined within the city. Ultimately, it stresses the physical and mental confinement. Connotations of oppression



London:

Forged: to make or produce something, especially with some difficulty.

Golden quotations:

**The mind-forg'd manacles
I hear**

Mind: the part of a person that makes it possible for him or her to think, feel emotions, and understand things.

Manacles: two metal rings joined by a chain, used to prevent a prisoner from escaping by fastening the legs or arms.



London:

Golden quotations:

The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

Mind-forg'd: An emotive metaphor - suggests that people in London are somehow entrapped in their own misery. It is a strongly visual image of a constraining form.

Manacles are a restraint. People are trapped in London. Trapped by authority (also linked to the physical entrapment of charter'd).

Blake challenges the people of London – the shackles are imaginary, we have to snap out of it!

Manacles: creates this view that people are powerless, physically constrained and lack all autonomy. Perhaps Blake is trying to evoke a deep sense of sympathy for those suffering under the government.

In an age where the slave trade was thriving in an industrialised London, perhaps Blake is ridiculing those in society who perceive that they face injustice when, in reality, they have choices available. Slaves do not.



London: Structure

Significance of structure

Blake employs an ABAB rhyme scheme, along with consistent stanza lengths. He uses quatrains (4 lines) and this fixed structure enhances the sense of complete control and oppression which could mimic the way he feels the people of London are suffering. The suffering is relentless and never-ending (like the structured rhyme scheme)

If you're super observant you might have noticed that the third stanza is an acrostic (where the letters from each line form a word).



London: plenary/exit ticket.

Imagine this is your exam question:

'Compare how feelings about a place are presented in London and one other poem.'

- 1) Decide which poem you would compare with.**
- 2) Write down one point of comparison between the poems.**

