

A Answers

Key themes or ideas:

- The beauty of nature
- The power of nature
- The freedom of childhood

How these are explored:

- The peaceful night and beauty of nature are suggested in highly **focused descriptive detail**, e.g. '**Small circles glittering idly**'.
- The **first person voice**, '**I found/A little boat**', recalls a **childhood experience** in this narrative poem.
- Wordsworth suggests an unsettled mood at the start of the poem, describing feelings of '**troubled pleasure**', while '**the voice/Of mountain-echoes**' foreshadows the disturbing **personification** of nature that follows.
- The mountain is **personified** as a threatening force in the phrase '**Upreared its head**'. Wordsworth **repeats** the word '**huge**' to emphasise the scale and power of the mountain.
- The boat is also personified ('**She was an elfin pinnacle**'), suggesting the narrator feels an affinity with it. Because he can control his little boat, he feels in **control of nature**.
- He **contrasts** the beauty of nature with its power as '**huge and mighty forms**' overwhelm memories of '**pleasant images of trees**' and '**green fields**'.

REVISING THE POEM



Match

Can you match the gaps in the analysis to the words below?

Wordsworth uses vivid to convey the power of nature in this poem. The word 'huge', used to describe the mountain, is, and phrases such as 'Upreared its head' the peak. In the final lines it is clear that the memory of the event the poet's imagination.

personify imagery repeated haunts



Learn

1. Beauty of nature: **'sparkling light'** (l. 11). The adjective 'sparkling' suggests an almost magical beauty.
2. Beauty is forgotten: **'no pleasant images of trees,/ ... no colours of green fields'** (ll. 40–1). The repetition of 'no' emphasises nature's power in destroying the speaker's memories of its beauty.
3. Disturbing nature: **'mighty forms, that do not live/ Like living men, moved slowly through the mind'** (ll. 42–3). The ominous image suggests the powerful impact the experience has had on the speaker.



Think

How could you use one of the quotations above to complete this paragraph?

At the start of the extract, Wordsworth presents nature as beautiful and benign

How do the poets explore war?

- In 'Exposure', soldiers in the First World War feel **detached** from the '**dull rumour**' of war, endlessly waiting while '**nothing happens**'.
- In 'Bayonet Charge' the poet presents a negative attitude towards war. A soldier is **frozen with uncertainty**, then **charges on to escape 'that blue crackling air'**.
- In 'Remains', Armitage presents a soldier's **experience of killing**, and the **inescapable** feelings of **guilt** at '**his bloody life in my bloody hands**' that haunt him.
- In 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', Tennyson evokes the **atmosphere** of the battlefield, the **dangers** of war and the **bravery** of the '**Noble six hundred**' who rode '**Into the valley of Death**'.
- In 'Poppies', Weir explores a **mother's memories** of the day her son left home for war.
- 'War Photographer' discusses the presentation of the '**agonies**' of war through the media. It shows the **distance** and **desensitisation** that **images of war** can create.
- In 'Kamikaze', Garland explores the **shame** brought upon families by those who **avoid war**.

Q Three key questions

1. Name a poem in which soldiers directly experience war.
2. Name a poem that explores the experience of those left behind at home.
3. What different attitudes towards war are explored in the poems? Give an example.

Answers

1. Direct experience of war is explored in poems such as 'Exposure' and 'Bayonet Charge'.
2. Voices such as the mother in 'Poppies' or the daughter in 'Kamikaze' explore the viewpoints of those who have been left behind.
3. Attitudes to war range widely, from the heroic ('The Charge of the Light Brigade') to shame or suffering ('Exposure', 'Remains', 'Kamikaze'). Contrasting voices (a mother, soldiers, a photographer, etc.) provide different perspectives on the impact of war.

Learn

Now learn these key quotations to enhance your skills.

1. Heroism: '**Into the mouth of Hell/Rode the six hundred**' ('The Charge of the Light Brigade')
2. Fear: '**a yelling alarm**' ('Bayonet Charge')
3. Trauma: '**even the drink and the drugs won't flush him out**' ('Remains')

Think

How could you use one of the quotations above to complete this paragraph?

Armitage powerfully conveys the trauma a soldier can experience after committing an act of violence. In 'Remains'