How does Wordsworth present his ideas in *Extract from The Prelude*?
Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

**Task:** Write a definition for the following techniques:

- adjective
- verb
- noun
- adverb
- pronoun

Use the glossary in your exercise book to help you.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'? 
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'The Prelude' is an autobiographical poem by William Wordsworth. You are only studying an extract from it.

The poem shows the **spiritual growth of the poet**, how he comes to terms with who he is, and his place in nature and the world. Wordsworth was inspired by memories of events and visits to different places, explaining how they affected him. He described *The Prelude* as "a poem on the growth of my own mind" with "contrasting views of Man, Nature, and Society".

This extract is from the section on childhood, and it describes how Wordsworth went out in a boat on a lake at night. He was alone and a mountain peak loomed over him; its presence had a great effect and for days afterwards he was troubled by the experience.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'? Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

Wordsworth was born in Cockermouth in the Lake District.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?
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• Romanticism was a school of thinking which believed in restoring the balance between man and nature. They believed that emotion was a key element to poetry.
• The power and serenity of nature were important elements to the early romantic poets.
• They believed that the people who lived in the country, particularly children, had the best appreciation for nature. Many of them wrote about the social injustice of the condition of the common people.
• Three key ideas: revolution, nature and transcendence
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in *Extract from 'The Prelude'席*?
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**Key Words**
- ‘cove’ – small sheltered bay
- ‘stealth’ – cautious, secretive or undercover
- ‘craggy’ – rough and uneven – refers to mountains or rocks
- ‘covert’ – a thicket where animals might hide
- ‘spectacle’ – a sight, usually dramatic
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?

Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

William Wordsworth 'Extract from The Prelude'

One summer evening led by her, I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree.
Within a rocky cove, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, or without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon's utmost boundary; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
And serious mood; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?  
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Comprehension Questions

1. Where is the poem set?
2. What does the speaker find ‘tied to a willow tree’?
3. How does the night appear initially?
4. What is it that inspires fear in the speaker?
5. What mood is the speaker in when he leaves the boat?
6. What hangs over him following this experience?
7. What ‘were a trouble to [his] dreams’?

Deeper Thinking Questions

1. Which conflicts are highlighted in this poem?
2. In what ways is this poem relevant today?
3. How would you compare the power of nature in this poem to the power of war presented in other poems in this collection?
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'? 
Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

Comprehension Questions
1. The poem is set on a lake near a mountain, possibly in the Lake District where Wordsworth was born and lived.
2. A boat
3. Initially, the speaker finds beauty in the night and describes how the moon glistens on the water.
4. The mountain on the horizon inspires fear in the speaker.
5. He is ‘in grave / And serious mood’.
6. A depression, ‘darkness’ or ‘blank desertion’ hangs over his thoughts following this experience.
7. ‘huge and mighty forms, that do not live / Like living men’

Deeper Thinking Questions
1. Answers might include:
   • Conflict between man and nature
   • Conflict of scale
   • Conflict between joy in nature and fear of its power and scale
   • Conflict between beauty and overwhelming terror
   • Internal conflict of human soul
2. Answers might include:
   • Nature still has the power to overwhelm.
   • Society, like nature, is more powerful than the individual.
   • The poem describes depression, which is part of human experience in today's world as well as Wordsworth's.
3. Answers might include:
   • The individual is helpless in the face of both war and nature.
   • The power of the mountain is immense, much like the power of armies and large scale conflicts.
   • There is a difference between the power of nature and the power of war: wars are created by mankind, whereas nature is unconscious.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'? 
Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

Compare the ways poets present fear in Extract from 'The Prelude' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'? Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

In 'Extract from The Prelude', there is a volta, signifying that the speaker’s view of nature changes from admiration to fear. At the start of the poem, nature is personified as ‘she led’ him to the boat. Personifying nature in this way makes nature sound enticing and almost seductive. However, nature becomes an ‘it’ when the mountain comes into view: ‘upreared its head’. By describing nature as ‘its’ suggests that the speaker is now struggling to describe what he sees as he now feels threatened by the mountain. The personification at this point creates the image of a monster rising up from the lake.

While Wordsworth focuses on his fear on nature, Hughes, however, focuses on a soldier’s fear in a battle in World War I...
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?
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When Wordsworth returns the boat, he cannot remember anything positive about his experience: ‘no familiar shapes… no pleasant images… no colours’.
By repeating the word ‘no’, Wordsworth emphasises that he has no positive memories of the trip on the lake. This implies that nature has the power to change his emotions, and his fear has overwhelmed him, taking away any positive memories. Previously, he described the lake as ‘glittering’, implying that his fear has prevented him from remembering positive emotions.

Similarly, the soldier’s emotions in ‘Bayonet Charge’ change and like Wordsworth, the soldier is also overwhelmed by his fear...
**How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?**
Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

Compare the ways poets present the conflict between humans and nature in Extract from 'The Prelude' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?
Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

Both Storm on the Island and The Prelude reveal the conflict between nature and humanity
(opening paragraph – a few lines summing up how you feel they are different/similar)

The poets’ use of structure in the poems draws our attention to the ways in which nature can feel overwhelming and powerful

Both Wordsworth and Heaney explore the power of nature through the use of dramatic imagery

Both poets personify aspects of nature to explore its power and authority

The conclusion of each poem shows both poets to be in reflective mood,
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'?
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Both Wordsworth and Heaney explore the power of nature through the use of dramatic imagery. Heaney shows nature to be destructive by comparing it to an attack from the skies: the ‘wind dives and strafes invisibly’. The verbs ‘dives’ and ‘strafes’ remind us of a war and suggests that the islanders are under attack from nature. For Wordsworth, the threat is less physical: it affects his imagination more than his body. At the end of the poem, he reflects on how his memory of the mountain is like ‘a darkness’ and compares it to a ghost: ‘huge and mighty forms, that do not live like living men’. He is unsettled by his experience. Like Heaney at the end of Storm on the Island, he is also troubled by something he feels he can’t grasp.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in Extract from 'The Prelude'? Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

Both Wordsworth and Heaney explore the power of nature through the use of dramatic imagery. Heaney’s presentation of the storm uses a semantic field of conflict: the ‘wind dives’ as if it were a fighter plane, that ‘strafes invisibly’ whilst the islanders feel ‘bombarded’. This imagery reinforces the storm as a destructive force but also highlights the vulnerability of the islanders and suggests they feel victims of nature’s power. The adverb ‘invisibly’ connects to the final line and Heaney’s suggestion that it is a ‘huge nothing’ that they fear. For Heaney, the storm thus becomes a metaphor for Ireland’s own vulnerability to invading forces who seek to occupy its territories; it is both real and intangible. This intangibility is also reflected in the powerful imagery at the end of The Prelude when Wordsworth reflects on the impact of his vision of the mountain. He describes its effect on his imagination as like ‘huge and mighty forms which do not live like living men’. Wordsworth’s use of gothic imagery captures how, even in reflection, he is haunted by the mountain’s threatening presence. It is a phantom, ‘a darkness’ which is both formless and mighty; a sublime presence which ‘moved slowly’ through his mind to trouble his dreams. Both poets thus reflect on nature’s power although for Wordsworth it its power to overwhelm the imagination whereas for Heaney it is nature’s physical threat combined with its intangibility which is destructive.
How does Wordsworth present his ideas in *Extract from 'The Prelude'/*?
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<td>Precise quotes to support intelligent ideas</td>
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<td>Exploration of contextual factors</td>
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<td>Thoughtful consideration of contextual factors</td>
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<td>Clear comparison and effective use of references/quotes</td>
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<td>'Extract from The Prelude'</td>
<td>'her', 'it' - nature is described as 'her' at the start of the poem. However, nature becomes an 'it' after the volta, implying it is unknown and frightening.</td>
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<td>Wordsworth</td>
<td>'No familiar shapes... no pleasant images ... no colours' - the repetition of no implies the narrator has forgotten all positive images about his experience.</td>
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<td>'hung a darkness' - this reflects the narrator's troubled state of mind, and it contrasts the image of 'sparkling light' earlier in the poem.</td>
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<td>'upreared its head' - personification - suggests the mountain is a monster chasing him.</td>
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<td>'trouble to my dreams' - he cannot forget the experience, and it stays with him in his dreams. The word 'trouble' reinforces that this experience was traumatic.</td>
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Context:
Wordsworth was a Romantic poet. He explores the connection between human emotion and the power of nature. He first wrote this poem in 1798, but it wasn't released until after his death in 1850. Wordsworth described this autobiographical poem as 'a poem on the growth of my own mind'; he explores the way human character is shaped by experience. This extract describes an event from his childhood.

Themes:
Power of nature
Individual experiences
Memories
Fear