"Do Now" Work

How does Owen present his ideas in 'Exposure'?

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

Task:

Look at the image from the trenches in WWI.

How might you describe the conditions?



In Silence Please

BOURNVILLE

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

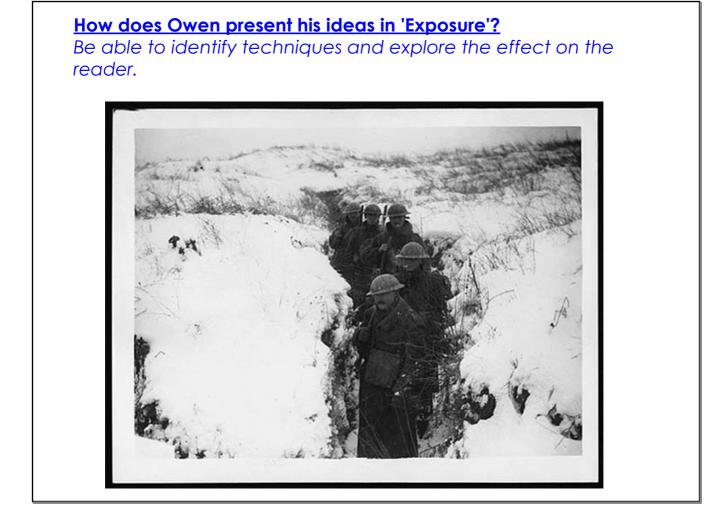


Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

World War One began in July 1914 and at first it was predicted that it would end swiftly, and soldiers thought they would be home for Christmas. However, as both sides dug trenches across France and Belgium, the opposing armies became locked in a stalemate that neither side could break. By the winter of 1917 both sides had sustained massive losses and extreme cold weather made the misery even worse. It was said to be the coldest winter in living memory. The soldiers suffered from hypothermia and frostbite and many developed trench foot, a crippling disease caused by feet being wet and cold and confined in boots for days on end.

Owen and his fellow soldiers were forced to lie outside in freezing conditions for two days. He wrote: "We were marooned in a frozen desert. There was not a sign of life on the horizon and a thousand signs of death... The marvel is we did not all die of cold."

It was against this background that Owen wrote Exposure.



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

Owen and a number of other poets of the time used their writing to inform people back in Britain about the horrors of the war and in particular about life on the front line. The picture they painted contradicted the scenes of glory portrayed in the British press. *Exposure* is a particularly hard-hitting example of this.

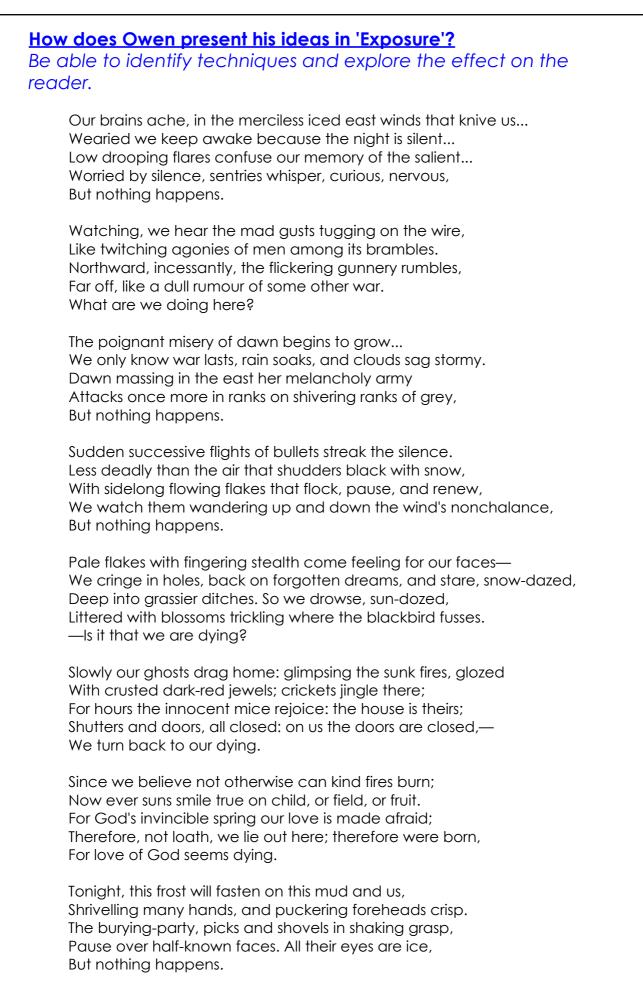
Owen had joined the army in 1915 but was hospitalised in May 1917 suffering from 'shell shock' (today known as PTSD – Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). In hospital Owen met the already established war poet Siegfried Sassoon who, recognising the younger man's talent, encouraged him to continue writing. Owen eventually returned to the war but was tragically killed just days before the war ended; he was just 26. He is now regarded as one of Britain's greatest war poets.

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

Key Words

- 'flares' flare guns were used in the First World War to send signals and identify positions
- 'sentries' soldiers set to keep guard
- 'nonchalance' disinterest or indifference

• 'burying-party' – Owen uses this phrase to refer to the group of soldiers who come along to collect and bury those who have not survived the night.



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Comprehension Questions

- 1. Where is this poem set?
- 2. Who is speaking in the poem?
- 3. What threatens to 'knive' the men?
- 4. Which men 'whisper'?
- 5. Which phrase is repeated at the end of the first, third, fourth and final stanzas?
- 6. What is more dangerous to the men bullets or the weather?
- 7. What feels for the men's faces?
- 8. How do they feel about God?
- 9. What effect does the frost have on them?
- 10. Who comes with picks and shovels?

Deeper Thinking Questions

- 1. How do you interpret the title of this poem?
- 2. How do you feel about the soldiers in 'Exposure'?
- 3. How would you justify the business of war when it puts individual lives in danger?
- 4. Is this poem relevant today?

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

Compare the ways poets present the experience of soldiers in 'Exposure' and in one other poem from Power and Conflict.

How does Owen present his ideas in 'Exposure'? Be able to identify techniques and explore the effect on the reader.

	Bayonet Charge	Exposure	Comparison
Context			
Structure	"lugged a rifle"	" brains ache"	
Patterns	"Bullets the belly out of the air"	"successive flights of bullets streak the silence"	
Language	" he awoke and was running"	"But happens"	
Imagery	"The tear sweating like molten iron from the centre of his chest"	"For love of seems dying."	
Theme	"King, honour etcetera dropped like	"What are we here?""Is it that we are ?"	

 Themes: Effects of conflict Power of nature Experience of soldiers Reality of conflict All their eyes are ice' - metaphor - hints the men are either dead, or they can no longer feel emotion. What are we doing here?' '- is it that we are dying?' Owen uses thetorical questions to highlight the futility of war. He suggests that the soldiers are there to die.

