

“Do Now” Work

How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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

Task: Newspapers publish photographs of war zones. Which of the following statements do you agree with and why?

- I try not to look at them.
- They may be horrible but they are fascinating.
- I look at them and then think of something else.
- They remind me of how safe I am.
- The suffering I see is bad but I can't do anything about it.
- They make me angry.

In Silence Please

 **BOURNVILLE**
SCHOOL

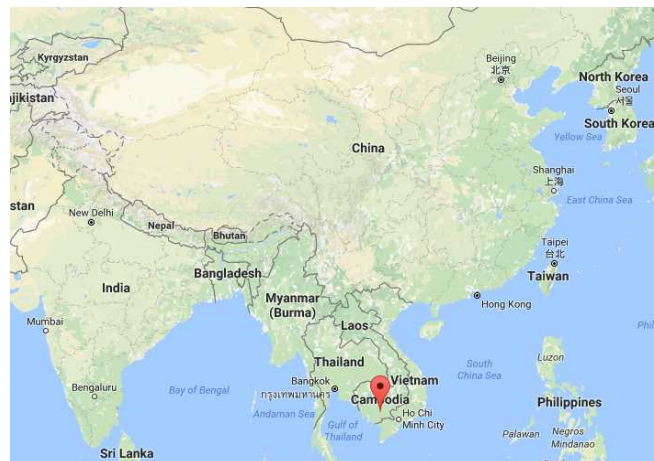
How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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



Where are the following places?

- Belfast
- Beirut
- Phnom Penh



How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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

Duffy was inspired to write this poem by her friendship with a war photographer. She was especially intrigued by the peculiar challenge faced by these people whose job requires them to record terrible, horrific events without being able to directly help their subjects.

Before digital photography, developing and printing photos was time consuming and a skilled process.

Most people took their film to a shop to be printed. For the professional photographer, like the one in the poem, it was important to develop and print your own photographs so that you could control how they looked.

The image begins to appear on the developing paper in the tray that holds the developing liquid. On the plain white sheet, darker forms start to appear, until gradually the image becomes clear.

How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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



How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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



How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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



Dark room



How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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

Key Words

- 'darkroom' – literally a darkened room, used to develop camera film and protect it from exposure
- 'spools' – the cylinder that camera film is wrapped around
- 'Mass' – a catholic act of worship
- 'Sunday supplement' – a section of a Sunday newspaper, usually in addition to the news

How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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

Carol Ann Duffy 'War Photographer'

In his dark room he is finally alone
with spools of suffering set out in ordered rows.
The only light is red and softly glows,
as though this were a church and he
a priest preparing to intone a Mass.
Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.

He has a job to do. Solutions slop in trays
beneath his hands, which did not tremble then
though seem to now. Rural England. Home again
to ordinary pain which simple weather can dispel,
to fields which don't explode beneath the feet
of running children in a nightmare heat.

Something is happening. A stranger's features
faintly start to twist before his eyes,
a half-formed ghost. He remembers the cries
of this man's wife, how he sought approval
without words to do what someone must
and how the blood stained into foreign dust.

A hundred agonies in black and white
from which his editor will pick out five or six
for Sunday's supplement. The reader's eyeballs prick
with tears between the bath and pre-lunch beers.
From the aeroplane he stares impassively at where
he earns his living and they do not care.

How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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

Comprehension Questions

1. Where is the photographer 'finally alone'?
2. Which is the only colour?
3. What is the meaning of the list of place names in the first stanza?
4. Where is home for the photographer?
5. How do the developing photos appear?
6. How does he perceive his work?
7. Where will the photos be printed?
8. How many images will the editor select from the hundreds of photos?
9. How do the readers react?
10. What does the photographer believe about his editor and the Sunday supplement readers?

Deeper Thinking Questions

1. What is important about the war photographer's job?
2. What characteristics would a person need to do this work?
3. Should a photographer get involved and try to save people from dangerous situations?

How does Duffy present her ideas in 'War Photographer'?

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

Compare the ways poets present the reality of conflict in 'War Photographer' and in one other poem from Power and Conflict.

'War Photographer' Carol Ann Duffy

Context:

Duffy said: "I'm more interested in the photographer... in the dilemma of someone who has that as a job... to go to these places and come back with the images." She was good friends with two war photographers.

The poem refers to: Phnom Penn, Beirut and Belfast. Readers may think of images from these conflicts.

Themes:

Effects of conflict
Reality of conflict
Anger
Memory

S 'reader's eyeballs prick / with tears... beers'. The **verb** 'prick' implies pain for a short amount of time. The readers will quickly forget the photos and move on. This is reinforced by the **enjambment** and **rhyme** with beers.

P 'spools of suffering set out in ordered rows'. **Metaphor** - The reels of film are described like rows of war graves. The chaos and pain are reduced to something orderly.

L 'blood stained the foreign dust'. Reminder that this is happening somewhere else. The **verb** 'stained' implies the lasting effect / impact of war.

I 'a half-formed ghost'. **Metaphor** with a double meaning - the photograph is still developing, or the person's body has been mutilated. 'Ghost' implies the images haunt the photographer.

T 'they do not care' - Ambiguous ending. **Pronoun** 'they' could refer to the readers of the newspapers who don't care about the victims of war, or it could refer to the wider world which is apathetic about others' suffering.