

## Poetry (+ Prose) Revision Notes (Secondary One)

### (Part 1) Introduction to Poetry

#### Descriptions of poetry:

- less common than prose, typically reserved for expressing something artistically
- often uses rhyme and rhythm to create a particular mood or feeling
- ideas are written in lines that may or may not be sentences and grouped into stanzas
- does not need to follow grammar rules
- language is figurative and “decorated”
- tend to use a limited number of words and are of shorter length
- the shape of the text varies depending on what meaning the author wants to convey

#### Key parts of a poem:

Verse: a single line in a poem.

Stanza: a group of lines.

Space: gap between stanzas.

Couplet: two lines of verse, usually in the same meter and joined by rhyme, that form a unit.

Title: the name of the poem.

Capital letters: each line of a poem must begin with capital letters.

Speaker / Persona: tells the story

To analyse poems, annotation is the most effective way to ‘think with your pen’ and it pushes you to go beyond surface or literal meaning

- highlight striking words or phrases and jot down your interpretation

- mark out techniques used by the poet, and consider their effects and meanings
- make notes about important ideas, feelings and thoughts you uncover

#### Types of poems:

##### (1) Acrostic

- first letters of each line spell out a word
- word is usually the subject of the poem

##### (2) Free Verse

- free of rules and limitations
- do not have to use rhyme
- need not use a specific form or number of syllables

##### (3) Haiku

- exactly 3 lines and 17 syllables
- syllables are arranged in a 5-7-5 pattern

##### (4) Rhyming Poem

- uses rhyme to create rhythm and musicality
- \*refer to ‘Additional Tips: [Sound] - rhyme’

##### (5) Shape Poem

- plays with line length and format
- shapes take the form of the topic or images seen in the poem
- interesting shapes to add meaning

### (Part 2) Level Up Analysis - Devices

#### 1. Diction

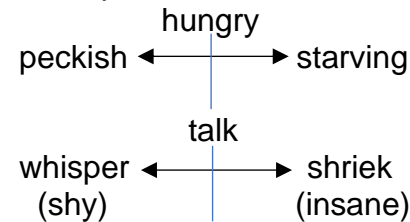
A poet carefully chooses each word and the order in which they appear to convey feelings and thoughts.

#### Analysing Words

- denotation - connotation

- word intensity
- why (this word), not (that word)?
- subtext

#### Examples:



Striking words | Absolute words | Repetition  
Capitalisation | Punctuation

#### 2. Imagery

It is the picture created in our minds through words used in a text. This mental picture engages one or more of our senses.

👁️ Visual - how things appear

👂 Aural - how things sound

👋 Tactile - sense of touching things

👃 Olfactory- descriptions of smell & odour

👅 Gustatorial - how things taste

#### Examples (respectively):

“The boy had rosy cheeks”

“And thud! Fump! Thud! Down to the steep steps came thumping and splashing in the flood!”

“... in the furry dark”

“Seasons of citrus mists and mellow fruitfulness”

“With jellies smoother than creamy curd and lucent syrups”

It also includes Figure of Speech:

- Simile: compares one quality of an object / person with another (like, as)  
“I wandered as lonely as a cloud”
- Metaphor: strong comparison, where all qualities of one is identified with another (is, was, are, were, am)  
“My hear is the light of the moon”
- Personification: non-human entities are given human attributes  
“A host of daffodils dancing in the breeze”
- Hyperbole: exaggeration & overstatement, which could be genuine, comic or ironic  
“Homework is giving me fits”

### 3. Sound

The way a poem sounds is created through words and their letter sounds.

[Alliteration] Repetition of first letter sound in words next to or close to one another

“wild and wicket wind” (/w/)

[Consonance] Repetition of consonant (not vowel) sounds found at the start, middle or end of words, which are next to or close to another

“let’s kll this love” (/l/)

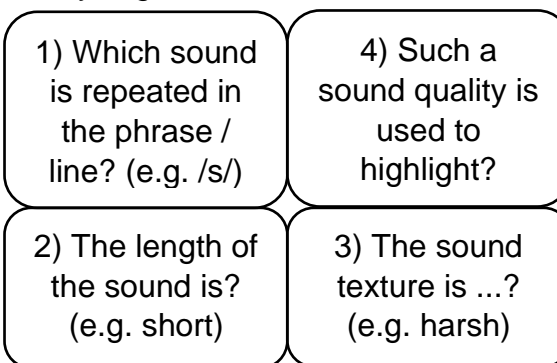
[Onomatopoeia] Words containing sounds similar to the noise(s) they describe

“The **clanging** of pots woke the baby” (other examples: hiss, splat, clang, meow, boom)

Devices and the sound texture they produce can be used to:

- draw attention to certain words, to emphasise a point
- simulate an action or experience captured in a line (making it more life-like and intimate)
- mirror the emotional landscape of speaker
- enhance the mood of a poem

Analysing sound:



### 4. Tone & Theme

Tone refers to the use of words to convey a person’s attitude towards a topic.

A theme is a central idea or topic of a story. By studying a theme, we can uncover key messages or lessons to be learnt from the poem.

### (Part 3) Essay Writing

Use (M.E.A.L.) to writing a clear and insightful response:

**(M)ain Point:** have I closely and clearly answered the question based on its keywords and what it requires?

**(E)vidence:** have I accurately quotes from the book to prove my main point?

**(A)nalysis:** have I deeply analysed the quote for techniques and its effect and meaning to best prove my point?

**(L)ink:** have I linked my analysis to a relevant theme / purpose of the poem, and its related messages or learning points?

Poem analysis technique:

**‘See-Show-Feel’**

Ask:

- What do I see happening? What devices do I see?
- What does it show or symbolise about the speaker in or situation? What is the effect of the device?
- How does the speaker and I, as a reader, feel?

Using questions to ‘dig deeper’ (5W1H): (Who...)

- is the poem about?
- is the poem addressed to?
- else is in the poem?
- point of view is the poem written from?

(What...)

- does the title tell me about the poem?
- is the poem about? - a person / place / experience / emotion?
- words / images are particularly striking or

- unusual?
- is noticeable about stanzas and lines?
  - kinds of sound patterns are used in the poem?
  - messages are being conveyed through the poem?
- (When...)
- is the poem set in? - present, past, future?
- (Where...)
- is the poem set?
  - can we find a shift in the tone or feelings?
- (Why...)
- are certain words/images used/repeated?
  - is the poem structured in a particular way?
  - does the poem open and end in a particular way?
- (How...)
- does the poem start and end?
  - does the poem look on the page?

Paul Elder's Critical Thinking	
Elements Of Thoughts	Trigger Questions
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the poet's purpose of writing the poem?</li> <li>• What is the purpose of the words or images used?</li> </ul>
Problem Or Issue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main issues discussed in the poem?</li> <li>• What problems can be seen in the poem, and how do you know?</li> <li>• What themes are covered?</li> </ul>

Point Of View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What point of view is adopted?</li> <li>• Whose point of view are we made to engage with?</li> <li>• Who are we made to empathise with?</li> <li>• Who is being addressed in the poem?</li> </ul>
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which line(s) best highlight the persona's feelings or situation?</li> <li>• Which techniques in the poem are significant, and why?</li> </ul>
Consequence And Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What key messages does the poet leave the reader with?</li> <li>• What thoughts and feelings are evoked by the poem?</li> </ul>

#### (Part 4) Wrapping Up 'Poetry' - Additional Resources

##### 1. Examination Information

Please note that this applies to Weighted Assessment One only that only consists of a poem (unseen / seen poetry).

1 Hour | Annotation (5 Marks) + 3 Essay Questions (25 Marks Total) = 30 Marks

##### Recommended Time Allocation (minutes)

Annotate	Essay Writing	Check
8	45	7

Tips to avoid time constraints:

\*Try not to analyse too much, as it will take time away for other questions -> (23 Rule)

2-3 Quotes | 2-3 Analysis per Quote | Max. 230 Words per M.E.A.L. paragraph

\*Never skip any question for whatever reasons. Attempt to at least write a M.E.L. paragraph (instead of M.E.A.L.) if you are really running out of time.

\*Write as fast as possible (average 1 word -> 1 seconds, excluding thought process), ensuring **legible handwriting** at the same time

Types of questions:

Q1) What impressions do you form of the speaker in lines \_ to \_ of the poem?

Q2) What are the speaker's feelings in lines \_ to \_ of the poem?

Q3) How does the poem make you feel in lines \_ to \_ of the poem, and why?

OR

Q3) How do you feel as you read the text?

OR

Q3) How do you feel towards the persona / speaker from lines \_ to \_ of the poem?

\* Refer to the next page for G3 Annotation + Essay Rubrics\*

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G3 Annotation Rubrics					
	Good	Mediocre		Poor	
	5-4 Marks	3 Marks	2 Marks	1 Mark	
<u>Breadth</u> What points of view do you have?	Annotations cover the entire text and are abundant and well-dispersed.	Annotations are frequent but do not cover the text thoroughly	Annotations are sparse or only cover part of the text, missing the larger section	The text is only annotated at the beginning or the end	
<u>Depth</u> What inferences and implications can you derive?	The annotation has a deep understanding and discussion of the purpose and effect of the literary elements identified	There is insight on the purpose and effect of the literary devices used, with a deeper understanding of the text	There is identification of literary devices with a few insightful comments on their purpose and effect	Annotation identifies devices without purpose or effect	
G3 Essay Rubrics					
	Good	Mediocre		Poor	
	Excellent 21 - 25 Marks	Accomplished 17 - 20 Marks	Developing 12 -16 Marks	Beginning 0 - 11 Marks	
<u>Relevance</u> Does the point clearly and relevantly answer the question?	The points made address the question intelligently and insightfully	Most points thoroughly address the question. Each section's answer comprises required no. of paragraphs	Some points address the question, some superficially	Some points are irrelevant (do not answer the question)	Most points are irrelevant OR answers are extremely brief
<u>Evidence</u> Does the quote accurately support the point?	All of the evidence support the points closely and superficially	All of the evidence supports the point	Most pieces of evidence support the point	Few pieces of evidence support the point	No evidence at all
<u>Explanation</u> Have you explained precisely what the quote shows?	Personal response is deep and insightful with a thorough interpretation of the text's context	There is clear personal response and understanding of the text's context	There is personal response and some knowledge of context in the question	The answer expresses opinions with difficulty and little knowledge of context	The answer is incoherent, with no context
<u>Thoughtful Analysis</u> What are the issues and concepts in the text?	Answers identify the main idea and provide creative insights on major themes and ideas	Answers understand the major themes, but insights are vague and unfocused	Answers the shallow, only seeing the details without the whole. The focus is too narrow	Answers misunderstand the big picture	There is no knowledge of the big picture

## 2. Key Vocabulary Bank














Common themes in poetry:




Friendship - its impact on who we are, and how good friendships are formed
Death - dealing with the death of a loved one, and how it shapes our view on life
Self and identity - figuring out who we are as we grow up or face obstacles in life
Dreams - finding our purpose and what we enjoy in life
Growing up - reflecting on changes to our mindsets as we become older
Loneliness - the pain of being isolated and impact on our mind
Failure - coping with disappointment and re-envisioning our goals
School - what makes it difficult, wonderful or memorable
Environment - about human's treatment of nature and our natural world
Love - a force of good that inspires people to sacrifice themselves for others
Courage - moral / mental strength to face our fears and make unthinkable choices
Childhood and innocence - when a child embraces a new trait, it enters forever
Hope - great miracles can happen in blank spaces that seems like nothing will change
Pain - embracing it makes us feel and drop to our knees in gratitude

List of words to describe tone:



- ☐ Admiring [think highly of]
- ☐ Amused [entertained; pleased]
- ☐ Apologetic [acknowledging failure; regret]
- ☐ Appreciative [grateful]
- ☐ Arrogant [disdainful; condescending]
- ☐ Bitter [angry; antagonistic]
- ☐ Compassionate [sympathetic; tolerant]
- ☐ Concerned [worried; apprehensive]
- ☐ Confused [unable to think clearly]
- ☐ Curious [wanting to find out more]
- ☐ Defiant [obstinate; argumentative]
- ☐ Depressing [melancholic; pessimistic]
- ☐ Disapproving [displeased]
- ☐ Disappointed [discouraged]
- ☐ Egotistical [selfish; boastful]
- ☐ Empathetic [understanding]
- ☐ Enthusiastic [excited]
- ☐ Forceful [energetic; confident]
- ☐ Humorous [amusing]
- ☐ Intimate [familiar; informal]
- ☐ Judgmental [finding fault; critical]
- ☐ Loving [affectionate; showing concern]
- ☐ Mocking [making fun of someone]
- ☐ Nostalgic [thinking about the past]
- ☐ Optimistic [hopeful]
- ☐ Pessimistic [seeing the negative side]
- ☐ Resentful [offended; bitter]
- ☐ Urgent [insistent]

Feelings vocabulary:

Negative Emotions		
 Fear	 Annoyed	 Disgust
insecure	frustrated	sickened
nervous	disgruntled	horrified
worried	impatient	repulsed
foreboding	irritated	irked
frightened	displeased	
panicked	exasperated	
 Angry	 Confused	 Pain
enraged	dazed	agony
furious	hesitant	devastated
livid	lost	grief
resentful	puzzled	heartbroken
	torn	miserable
 Sad		
depressed	disappointed	gloomy
despair	disheartened	sombre
Positive Emotions		
 Happy	 Engaged	 Excited
joyful	absorbed	surprised
blissful	curious	eager
pleased	intrigued	enthusiastic
 Confident	 Hopeful	 Grateful
empowered	encouraged	appreciative
safe	optimistic	thankful
assured	sanguine	touched

		
Affectionate	Exhilarated	Peaceful
loving	ecstatic	calm
warm	elated	content
sympathetic	thrilled	serene

Impressions vocabulary:

 Negative	 Positive
aggressive	adventurous
arrogant	bubbly / cheerful
bored	compassionate
cowardly	confident
critical	courageous
discouraging	determined
hostile	energetic
snobbish	honest / sincere
miserable	humble
moody	imaginative
petty	observant
pessimistic	knowledgeable
rude	optimistic
ungrateful	youthful

### 3. Extra Tips + Analysis Examples

\*It is not recommended to memorise - same word in different context = different analysis\*  
[Diction]

#### Striking words

e.g. "settee shattered into pieces"  
"glass doors were smashed"

Intense diction of 'shattered' and 'smashed' emphasises immense violence and damage done as he releases all of his pent-up pain, making us feel nervous as it becomes clear nothing can be done to cover up the damage

#### Absolute Words

- inclusive, all-encompassing, and end in themselves

- cannot be modified in any way

(absolute word) shows / emphasises / highlights total \_\_\_\_\_

List of absolute words + possible inferences:

#### 'only'

- (context: addiction to TV) total isolation and entrapment
- (context: shocking results, as in 'only \_\_\_\_\_?') total disapproval / disappointment

#### 'nobody'

- (context: an order / instruction given, e.g. stopping a fight) total control over \_\_\_\_\_ and total frustration that (somebody) managed to \_\_\_\_\_

#### 'must'

- (context: an order / instruction given) total control ((someone) have no choice but to follow)

#### 'first'

- total priority (e.g. always thinking of \_\_\_\_\_)

#### 'no'

- (context: asserting a statement) total certainty that (something will / will not happen)

#### 'nothing'

- total absence of (something) - shows how (someone) experiences (something) without (something)
- (context: 'there's nothing like a/an...') total eagerness in \_\_\_\_\_

#### 'every'

- (context: boasting) total and extreme confidence at \_\_\_\_\_

#### 'really'

- (context: convincing someone) total certainty that \_\_\_\_\_

#### 'ever'

- (ever = at all times; always) total certainty and confidence that \_\_\_\_\_

Examples of Other Absolute Words			
all	none	always	best
worst	up	sure	just

Basically, absolute words can be said to be non-gradable adjectives (cannot be modified by adverbs) (e.g. ✓ very bad | ✗ very terrible)

#### Repetition

A word, phrase or line can be repeated to:

- emphasise a point
  - show how much something is circling or stuck in someone's mind
- e.g. "Nobody. Nobody could hear me"  
The repetition of the word "nobody" emphasises the feelings of loneliness and being abandoned. The fact that the word is repeated highlights how the problem is stuck in his head and he thinks about it again and again.

#### Capitalisation (puts emphasis on words)

e.g. "MUM!"

Capitalisation shows his voice increasing in tone of panic and fear

## Punctuation

List of punctuation marks + possible analysis:

[ - ] Dash

(context: scolding for poor results)

"These are the pits -"

The use of dash prolongs "**pits**" (represents being surrounded by darkness; entrapment; helplessness)

[ ! ] Exclamation Mark

(context: scolding for poor results)

"Peabrain! Cretin!"

The fierce shouting represents how unreasonable he is

"Recess! Oh, Recess!"

The shouting expresses excitement, enthusiasm, passionate about recess

[ . ] Full Stop

(context: a child growing up)

"I skin my knees. I bleed."

The use of choppy and short sentences created by the two full stops reveals how emotionally 'chopped up' and fractured he feels about the realities of growing up.

[ ? ] Question Mark

(context: a speed camera mocking and traffic cameras)

"Traffic cam? How unglam"

The question mark shows that the speed camera is trying to provoke, taunt and tease the traffic camera as it thinks it is best camera and the traffic camera is of no match. However, as a matter of fact, all cameras have different abilities, pros and cons.

## [Imagery]

### 5 Senses

Examples:

Playground imagery (swings & slides) represents fun and building friendship

"run in the sun"

Imagery of sun carries the joy of lighting up the morning, bringing warmth high in the sky and evoking high spirits.

(context: a person with a deceased father)

"When summers seems short and winters colder"

The weather imagery reflects his sadness. The warmth of summer is slowly fading away and the emptiness, loneliness and coldness of winter is replacing it. Winter days mean more darkness, and he feels physically and emotionally overwhelmed by darkness.

"whoosh of wind rushed...into his room"

The auditory imagery of "whoosh" highlights the speed and suddenness of the wind, which is an invisible force that cannot be seen or held - making us feel more nervous and in suspense for him as we are unclear what he is up against.

### Simile

- comparing "A" to one aspect of "B", using 'like' or 'as...as...'

the use of simile compares the A to (one aspect of B), to highlight \_\_\_\_\_

"Sadness sags like a heavy look" or "His sadness is as heavy as a bag of rocks"

The speaker compares the feeling of sadness to being weighed down physically, to highlight how sadness can be a burden that impedes us from moving forward.

(context: a child growing up)

"like I am coming down with something," +

"something worse than any stomach ache"

The use of simile, to compare adulthood with sickness, which brings pain and suffering, shows that he is extremely upset about approaching a new milestone in life.

## Metaphor

- strongly comparing "A" to "B" using 'is, am, are, was, were'

The use of metaphor compares A to the qualities of B, in order to emphasise \_\_\_\_\_

"She **is** an eternal summer"

The speaker compares "she" to the qualities of a summer that does not stop: bringing warmth and light, a time when flowers flourish, in order to emphasise how much she chases away cold and darkness in her life.

## Personification

(non-human entity) is given the human ability to \_\_\_\_\_, to highlight \_\_\_\_\_

"The breeze **kissed** our cheeks"



Wind is given human ability to kiss, to highlight how gentle it is against the skin; and how he feels close to nature because of it.

### Hyperbole

- use of exaggeration to give a sharper picture of the situation

exaggerating the (one aspect of the word in focus) to show \_\_\_\_\_

“The baby cried **louder than a thousand men**”

The speaker is exaggerating the volume of the baby’s cry to show how shocking, deafening and overwhelming it was to him

Other quick examples:

“he fired the shot **heard round the world**” - exaggeration of the sound coverage of the gun shot

“homework is **giving me fits**” - overstates the physical effects of homework

“she **burned** you with radiance” - exaggerating the glow / beauty to the point it burns

[Sound]

### Rhyme (additional)

- repetition of words with the same ending sound
- creates rhythm and musicality

Rhyming pattern = rhyme scheme

- emphasise particular words

- connect ideas and words together
  - make the poem more catch and memorable
- We can work out the rhyme scheme by labelling the words that rhyme with each other, starting with the letter ‘A’

Extracted from The Trouble with Snowmen	
‘The trouble with snowmen,’	A
Said my father one year	B
‘They are no sooner made	C
than they just disappear.	B

They can be:

- > repeated and standard
- > breaks apart at some point
- > messy / neat pattern
- > spell out a word / phrase

e.g. “messy pattern in rhyme scheme shows the internal emotional mess he is in”

### Alliteration + Consonance

alliteration / consonance of /\_ / produces a (short / prolonged) and (jarring, harsh, heavy, murmuring, mild, soft, light, soothing) sound, resembling the sound of \_\_\_\_\_, to show / highlight / emphasise...

Top Tip: never use vowel syllables as each of them has more than one sound

Syllables Bank (with sound analysis):

[/m/]

“**to do your bit from the human race**”

(consonance) calm and murmuring sound -> highlights how kindness can soothe and make the world a more peaceful place

[/n/]

“**run in the sun**”

(consonance) prolonged and humming sound -> highlight the joyful satisfaction of being outdoors

[/r/]

“**And winters colder**”

(consonance) shivering effect, like someone’s teeth chattering due to the cold -> mirrors the speaker’s uncontrollable sadness, as he feels that his father’s love for him is no longer there

“**We really need those scissors, that’s what makes me mad**”

(consonance) resembling a groan and a growl -> highlighting the angry desperation in the speaker’s words to find the seven pairs of scissors

[/s/]

“**Your slides are the best**”

(consonance) airy and swooshy sound -> resembles the sound of speed -> highlights the exhilaration of being on a slide

“**When summers seem short and winters colder**”

(consonance) hissing and whooshing sound -> resembles the sound of icy cold wind blowing against the speaker physically and emotionally - suffering -> highlights how vulnerable he feels with no protection and nothing blocking the wind

“**For as years pass**”

(consonance) prolonged, harsh and hissing sound -> highlights his prolonged pain



**“This is the beginning of sadness, I say to myself”**

(consonance) prolonged and long sound -> resembles the sound of a balloon deflating  
-> mirrors how he is deflates about no longer enjoying what it is like to be a child, who is free to wonder and imagine, free of burden

**“Their voices slither and slide”**

(consonance) hissing sound -> highlights the sinister and sly nature of thr voices he is hearing

**“His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow fall”**

(consonance) prolonged and soothing sound -> highlights the calm and relaxing snowfall

[/t/]

**“You brats - take that! And that!”**

(consonance) short and jarring sound -> resembles a cane hitting -> highlights aggression to kids due to grades

**“You can’t be that. No, you can’t be that”**

(consonance) sharp and snapping sound -> resembles a ‘tsk’ sound - they think they are superior and want to control his choices -> shows disapproval

**“what’s that all about”**

(consonance) short and sharp sound -> resembling the sound of bullets -> shows the sharp and prideful anger from the Speed Camera in shock about running out of film. But he does not see it as a disadvantage and starts self-praise again.

**“Tiptoe through the tangles trees of terror”**

(consonance) short, sharp and harsh sound -> mirrors the harsh environment of the forest + resembles the sound of the rapid and sharp heartbeat of him who is frightened by it

[/th]

**“like I’m coming down with something” + “something worse than any stomach ache”**

(consonance) airy, light and breathless sound -> resembling the sound of air rushing out of something -> highlights the happiness and joy from his childhood rushing out and leaving his life

**“Oh, I do think it is the pleasantest thing”**

(alliteration) prolonged and echoing sound -> his everlasting and prolonged affection for swings

[/w/]

**“wild and wicket wind”**

(alliteration) short and whipping sound -> mimicking the sound of wind whipping -> highlight the strong force of the wind

### Onomatopoeia

- word that mimics and is named after the sound that is made

the use of onomatopoeia makes the action of \_\_\_\_\_ more \_\_\_\_\_ for the reader

“The frog went plop, and splash into the pond”

The use of onomatopoeia makes the action of the frog leaping into the pond more vivid and action-packed for the reader

### Other techniques

- Past tense (diction)

(context: son of a deceased father)

**“Said my father one year”**

- shows that the father is no longer there

- however, it is a memory that is still intact in the speaker’s mind: it was a meaningful and unforgettable dialogue

- Rhetorical question (tone)

(context: a speed camera boasting)

**“Traffic cam? How unglam, Hardly on par,”**

- mocking tone, judging the abilities of traffic cameras

- reveals how instead of working in partnership with the traffic camera, the Speed Camera is too obsessed with being the best

- thus, the speed camera looks down others and thinks that everyone else is leagues below him

- Singlish (diction)

(context: a speed camera boasting)

**“Take me on lah”**

- shows how overly confident and gangster-like the speed camera gets as he thinks that no one stands a chance against him

- Conjunction (diction)

(context: experiencing a nightmare)

**“The one with the darkness and the wind and the screaming”**

The use of 2 conjunctions 'and' to join words mirrors how the darkness, wind and screaming are strongly connected to form a 'jail' he can't escape

#### 4. Learn By Example

##### Level 1: Annotations

\*Refer to the page 40

##### Level 2: Essay writing only

\*Words within the brackets are on the same line though they have occupied more than one line (due to lack of space)

##### To Be a Super-hero

You don't have to be  
a super-hero  
To make the world  
A better place

You don't have to have  
A super power  
To do your bit  
For the human race

You don't have to wear  
A mask or costume  
Or battle a bandit  
Atop a runaway train

All you need to do  
Is show compassion  
Reach out your hand  
To those in pain

You don't have to slay  
A deadly dragon  
You don't have to risk  
Life or limb

You don't have to fight  
An evil villain  
You needn't do  
Anything grim

It's really not hard  
To be a hero  
You can do it with ease

Q: What are your impressions of the speaker in the poem?

[Simpler Paragraph]

The speaker is an optimistic and thoughtful person, as he encourages everyone to do their part to do good; and be an everyday hero. I see this from "to do your bit from the human race". The tone of the line is earnest, encouraging and sincere, showing how he genuinely wants to improve the world. The word "bit" is striking as it means just a little, which shows how kindness does not have to be grand or obvious - it can be a small and humble action. Furthermore, the consonance of the /m/ sound in the line, produces a calm and murmuring quality, which highlights how kindness can soothe and make the world a more peaceful place. The speaker's thoughtful personality makes me feel inspired. I also reflect on the theme

of compassion and learn that anyone and everyone can be a hero if they show warmth and tenderness. We do not need superpowers, our power comes from kindness and humanity.

##### Scissors

Nobody leave the room.  
Everyone listen to me.  
We had ten-pair of scissors  
At half-past two,  
And now there's only three.

Seven pair of scissors,  
Disappeared from sight.  
Not one of you leaves  
Till we find them.  
We can stop here all night!

Scissors don't lose themselves,  
Melt away, or explode.  
Scissors have not got  
Legs of their own  
To go running off up the road.

We really need those scissors,  
That's what makes me mad.  
If it was seven pairs  
Of children we'd lost,  
It wouldn't be so bad.

Q: How does the speaker feel in the poem?  
[Simpler Paragraph]

The speaker feels angry and frustrated,

because he has to deal with and discipline his careless students after school. I can quote this from the line “Nobody leave the room” and “We really need those scissors, that’s what makes me mad.” The word “nobody” is an absolute word and highlights the speaker’s total control over his students and total frustration that his students managed to lose seven pairs of scissors. This shows that the speaker is giving direct orders to his students in a firm, frustrated and acerbic tone. From the line, “We really need those scissors, that’s what makes me mad.”, I can see the consonance of the /r/ sound being used. The /r/ sound resembles a groan and a growl, highlighting the angry desperation of the speaker’s words to find the seven pairs of scissors. Thus, I reflect on the theme of school and how it can be chaotic teaching the young.

#### The Trouble with Snowmen

'The trouble with snowmen,'  
Said my father one year  
'They are no sooner made  
than they just disappear.

I'll build you a snowman  
And I'll build it to last  
Add sand and cement  
And then have it cast.

And so every winter,'  
He went on to explain

'You shall have a snowman  
Be it sunshine or rain.'

And that snowman still stands  
Though my father is gone  
Out there in the garden  
Like an unmarked gravestone.

Staring up at the house  
Gross and misshapen  
As if waiting for something  
Bad to happen.

For as the years pass  
And I grow older  
When summers seem short  
And winters colder.

The snowmen I envy  
As I watch children play  
Are the ones that are made  
And then fade away.

Q: What does the speaker feel in lines 13 to 27 of the poem?

[Model Paragraph #1]

The speaker feels forlorn, as his father is no longer alive and with him. I see this from "When summers seem short and winters colder". A depressed and hopeless tone is used to highlight how much he misses his father over the seasons. Time goes by very quickly as he feels like there is nothing worth living for anymore. The weather imagery

also reflects his sadness. The warmth of summer is slowly fading away and the emptiness, loneliness and coldness of winter is replacing it. Winter days mean more darkness, and he feels physically and emotionally overwhelmed by darkness. The consonance of the /s/ sound produces a hissing and whooshing sound which resembles the icy cold wind blowing against the speaker internally and physically – highlighting his suffering. This sound also highlights how vulnerable he feels with no protection and nothing blocking the wind. This pushes me to reflect on the theme of loss. The grief and sorrow you feel and wishing for the person to come back to live. However, we should not be so controlled by our emotions. Our loved one would not want us to feel depressed, and therefore we should take this time to cherish those memories with them and show our appreciation to them.

[Model Paragraph #2]

The speaker feels sad and grieved, as he cannot let go of his father and he keeps imprisoning himself in the past. I see this from 'For as years pass' and 'And winters colder.' The speaker uses a solemn tone to highlight his heavy heart, as he cannot get over the fact that his father passed away and he is still grieving. The consonance of /s/ creates a harsh, hissing and a prolonged effect, which highlights his prolonged pain.

While time passes, the speaker is stuck in the past. I feel sympathetic to the speaker as he is tormented by such persistent sorrow. The image of 'winter' creates a dark and freezing environment, highlights that speaker's emotional darkness and coldness weighing him down. The /r/ consonance creates a shivering effect, like someone's teeth uncontrollably chattering due to the cold, it mirrors the speaker's uncontrollable sadness, as he feels that his father's love for him is no longer there. I feel pity for the speaker and the poem makes me reflect on the theme of family and we should cherish their presence when they are around as their love is irreplaceable.

### On Turning Ten

The whole idea of it makes me feel like I'm coming down with something, something worse than any stomach ache (or the headaches I get from reading in bad light--)  
a kind of measles of the spirit,  
a mumps of the psyche,  
a disfiguring chicken pox of the soul.

You tell me it is too early to be looking back, but that is because you have forgotten the perfect simplicity of being one (and the beautiful complexity introduced by two.)  
(But I can lie on my bed and remember every digit.)

At four I was an Arabian wizard.  
I could make myself invisible  
by drinking a glass of milk a certain way.  
At seven I was a soldier, at nine a prince.

But now I am mostly at the window  
watching the late afternoon light.  
Back then it never fell so solemnly  
against the side of my tree house,  
(and my bicycle never leaned against the garage)  
as it does today,  
all the dark blue speed drained out of it.

(This is the beginning of sadness, I say to myself,  
(as I walk through the universe in my sneakers.)  
(It is time to say good-bye to my imaginary friends,)  
time to turn the first big number.

It seems only yesterday I used to believe  
there was nothing under my skin but light.  
If you cut me I could shine.  
But now when I fall upon the sidewalks of life,  
I skin my knees. I bleed.

Q: What are your impressions of the speaker in the poem?

[Model Paragraph #1]

I feel that the speaker is a very emotional person because he has deep feelings about what is happening in his life. From the line,

"This is the beginning of sadness, I say to myself," It shows the author's disappointed and depressed tone of voice, lamenting about growing up. He is clearly pessimistic and says this is only the "beginning" of bad news. The striking word suggests more sorrow will definitely follow. The consonance of the /s/ sound is a long and prolonged sound, which resembles the sound of a balloon deflating. This mirrors how he is deflated about no longer enjoying what it is like to be a child, who is free to wonder and imagine, free of burden. He describes what he is going through as "a disfiguring chicken pox of the soul". The use of disease imagery shows that the writer feels uncomfortable and he feels sick both physically and spiritually or emotionally. The striking word "disfigured" shows how he has been deeply scarred by the need to grow up. As a reader, I feel puzzled and concerned about why the speaker is so emotional and distressed about growing older, and why he thinks about sadness all the time. This shows the theme of emotions, and I learn that emotions can be extremely overwhelming and take over a person's mind. It is important to learn to manage our emotions, and not let them overpower us too much.

[Model Paragraph #2]

I see the speaker as a moody and pessimistic person, because he seems to concentrate on a lot on the negatives of

growing up and is unable to accept the fact that he has to let go of childhood. Firstly, from "like I'm coming down with something" together with "something worse than any stomach ache", I can see the use of simile, to compare adulthood with sickness, which brings pain and suffering. This shows that he is extremely upset about approaching a new milestone in life. Also, I see the consonance of the /th/ sound in "something" and "than", which creates an airy, light and breathless sound, resembling air rushing out of something. This sound highlights the happiness and joy from his childhood rushing out and leaving his life, leaving it empty as he becomes further away from childhood as every second tick by. From "I skin my knees. I bleed." the use of choppy and short sentences created by the two full stops reveals how emotionally 'chopped up' and fractured he feels about the realities of growing up. The sorrowful and bitter tone also shows how much he misses his childhood but cannot turn back time. The speaker's pain makes me feel thankful for my joy and fun I have as a teen. This then pushes me to reflect on the theme of growing up and that although now, some of us may be enjoying a life free of adult responsibilities, we may not be doing so in the near future and we should appreciate and make use of our teen-hood to the fullest.

### Speed Camera

Standing at attention  
Poised in every direction  
I am the King of Tar,  
I am Speed Camera.

Don't play play,  
On my express way,  
Slow down your car,  
I am Speed Camera.

Day to night,  
Left or right,  
Take me on lah,  
I am Speed Camera.

Traffic cam?  
How unglam,  
Hardly on par,  
I am Speed Camera.

Keeping apace,  
With many a face,  
I deserve a hurrah,  
I am Speed Camera.

Driving Daddy's Beamer?  
Hand on girl's femur,  
Watch out, Cassanova,  
I am Speed Camera.

Oops, the film's run out,  
What's that all about?  
No matter, I'm the star,  
I am Speed Camera.

Q: What are your impressions of the speaker in the poem?

[Model Paragraph #1]

My impression of the speaker is that it is egotistical and commanding. It thinks that it is better than everyone and is not concerned or anxious about doing its job, as it feels like it is on top of everything and everyone and has nothing to be worried about. I can see this from "Traffic cam? How unglam, Hardly on par," and "Take me on lah". The first quote has a dismissive and arrogant tone, making the traffic camera seem ridiculous, inferior and nowhere near as good as the speed camera. The rhetorical question in the first quote is in a mocking tone. It reveals how instead of working in partnership with the traffic camera, the Speed Camera is too obsessed with being the best. Thus, the speed camera looks down on others and thinks that everyone else is leagues below him as seen from "King of Tar". The striking word "King" connotes royalty, superiority and supreme rule, emphasizing the heights of his self-praise. The Singlish used in "Take me on lah" shows how overly confident and gangster-like the speed camera gets as he thinks that no one stands a chance against him. I feel disappointed at the speaker, as it relaxes and does not think it has to work harder to improve. This pushes me to reflect on the theme of being boastful and how it can stop or blind us from growing and evolving into a better person.

## [Model Paragraph #2]

The speaker is arrogant and proud, as he is constantly praises himself and thinks he is invincible. It thinks no one can stop it from catching people and giving them fines. I see his arrogance from "I deserve a hurrah", "what's that all about" and "Traffic cam? How unglam" The first quote shows an over-confident and snobbish tone, which highlights that the speaker thinks that he is the best at everything and no one can beat him in terms of policing others. At the sight of this, I feel very disgusted as he is not motivated by helping people or prevent accidents, but he does it to feel powerful. In the second quote, the consonance of the /t/ sound creates a short and sharp bullet-like sound. It resembles the sharp and prideful anger from the Speed Camera in shock about running out of film. But he does not see it as a disadvantage and starts self-praise again. The repetition of "I" in the poem also emphasises that the speed camera is very self-centered and vain. Lastly, The speed camera used a mocking tone to address the traffic camera, a competitor of sorts. The question mark shows that the speed camera is trying to provoke, taunt and tease the traffic camera as it thinks it is the best camera and the traffic camera is no match and inferior. But as a matter of fact, all cameras have different abilities, pros and cons. This makes me reflect on the theme of pride. If we have nothing constructive to say

and just want to praise ourselves, we should stay quiet as what we say might disappoint. A little bit of confidence can be good but too much may cause people to dislike or even be afraid of you.

## (Part 5) Quick Introduction to Prose

Descriptions of prose texts:

- more common form of writing, as seen in newspapers, essays and articles
- more straightforward language and more similar to everyday speech
- ideas are written in sentences, one after another, which form paragraphs

Elements of analysing prose:

Character	Language
Looks	Tone
Actions	Imagery: 5 senses
Relationships	Diction: connotation and intensity
Motivations	
Changes and development	Sentence length & structure (format)
themes, messages, impact on reader	
Conflict	Time (e.g. day vs. night)
Tension	
Suspense	Place
Plot twists	Mood (i.e. vibe)
Plot	Setting

Purpose of stories:

- > (entertainment) engages us
- > (emotion) makes us feel
- > (evocative) makes us reflect on ourselves

Stories pushes us to see what we might usually fail to realise about ourselves or the world...

Stories are thought provoking, and help us confront difficult truths or issues...

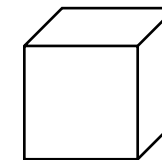
Stories do not just reveal, they also help us heal...

A turning point refers to a moment when a character goes through a drastic or obvious change. It changes our impressions of them and alters course of events in the story.

## Simple vs Complex Characters



One side to personality



Different sides to personality

Tension produces a strong sense of...

- (1) excitement (positive)
- (2) anxiety (negative)

- The writer creates an eerie and heavy mood or vibe using setting...
- The writer portrays a rapid, risky or violent activity...
- Moments of intense external conflict between characters (e.g. quarrel, fight)
- Moments of internal conflict or struggle inside of characters
- Foreshadowing: a hint that a character we like is going to suffer or be harmed

- T ✓ Exam stress
- H ✓ High expectations of parents
- E ✓ Academic stress
- M ✓ Childhood → differs in countries
- S ✓ Obsession with results

### Evening Song

Come, my darlings, let me see

Your files and papers please;

Put them neatly on my table;

How did you fare in Assessment Three?

Off with TV; sit on either side;  
her emotional abuse  
exhausted of

Let's first look at Chinese and Math.

[show] how discouraging the I wonder if you've progressed –

Speaker is and 80 for Math? A shocking slide!

how agitated she feels

[see] a tone of disbelief  
discouraging overly

[feel] I feel And you, my girl? This will never do!

pity for her kids Chinese, only 82% listen, both:

due to parental pressure out I expect better things from you!

grades Peabrain! Credit! These are the pits

use of absolute word: shows All this will count toward

total disapproval Your final position in the standard;

/disappointment Pull up your socks; shape up, or else

of children Demotion will be your reward.

- shows how she is expecting more

- I feel frustrated Since overall performance is AVERAGE.

at mother for I must assign more exercises,

being so So you'll improve in CA Four

discouraging To secure an A-STAR percentage.

use of absolute word: highlights her total control - they have

What's that whispering I hear? no choice

grouching: takes Brain damage from too much work?

anger out of them There's mud in your cerebral cortex –

Grey matter has nothing to fear!

highlights total disapproval and disappointment

Never forget the fact –

There's nothing like an early start;

Avoid Normal and Express for SAP

You brats – take that! And that!

### ★ Use of acerbic tone:

1 throwing acid with words, highly criticizing

↳ to threaten them to do better

↳ to assert dominance over her children

children

rather than realising

• I feel pity for children

• I feel terrified of the mother

use of the dash: prolongs

signals lowest point

represents surrounded by darkness, entrapment, helplessness

shouting fiercely – highlights how unreasonable she is

unreasonable she is

Impressions of mother

1) unreasonable, as she fails to recognise their achievements and abuses them emotionally and physically instead

2) demanding, expects perfection

3) strict as she controls 20 – must obey her commands

conscience of /t/ sound

• creates a short and jarring sound

• resembles a cane hitting flesh

• highlights her aggression to kids due to grades

### SWIH

• Who is speaking? An angry Asian Singaporean mum

• What is she angry? Furious about bad grades (two children)

• Problem:

- I feel the mum is too strict, bothering on abuse

- From mother's point of view, children underperform, lack where?

Why from Wen's view?

- To make such expectation sound ridiculous / abused

- Push parents to reflect on stress they cause to kids

- At home - supposed to signify safety/peace/comfort

(By Leong Liew Geok)