

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

**KEEN READERS: A STUDY OF COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING IN
ADOLESCENTS' READING OF PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POETRY**

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

RESEARCH AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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This thesis elaborates how communication and learning strategies can foster keen adolescent readers of pre-twentieth century poetry. The term 'keen' readers (Benton, 1988: ix) denotes both senses of the word 'keen': intellectually acute and also enthusiastic. Investigating these two elements of keenness therefore involved a study of the aesthetic, cognitive and motivational aspects of response. Fieldwork has been undertaken in a three year longitudinal action research study of six selected readers (aged 14 - 16), saturated in late twentieth century culture, responding to a range of pre-twentieth century poems. Readers from the middle to upper ability range were selected who were not particularly keen on poetry, so that reasons for change could be evaluated. This research theorises knowledge and practice concerning the dynamic system that governs, 'the relation of cognitive and emotional development to the growth of aesthetic capabilities' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 43) and synthesises elements of both literary and educational theory into a coherent position. Following the account of the fieldwork, a model of the reading process is described and previous models are problematized. Pupils' ability to engage in theorising about the nature of literary transactions and aesthetic reading are examined in the context of a GCSE English Literature course. Subsequently, a contribution is made to pedagogy in poetry lessons through the development and application of a 'personal transactional model' of 'keen' reading. A number of specific recommendations are made for the fostering of keen readers as a result of the success of a range of strategies developed through action research. The development of 'keen' reading in the six readers is analysed and conclusions are drawn that it is hoped will be beneficial to other readers. Although this thesis focusses on responses to classic poetry, it is envisaged that the conclusions about how to improve pupils' motivation and attainment will have a wider application.

CONTENTS

	Page Number
ABSTRACT	i
LIST OF CONTENTS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: READING THEORY	3
1. Reader - Response Criticism 2. Theoretical and Actual Reader. 3. Cognitive and Affective Response.	
CHAPTER 2: LEARNING THEORY	15
1. Knowledge, Language and Learning. 2. Cognitive and Affective Learning. 3. Social Learning.	
CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH PROJECT	23
1. The Research Question. 2. Methodology 2.1. Readers. 2.2. Texts. 2.3. Teachers. 3. Method. 3.1. Reader.	

	Page Number
3.2. Texts.	
3.3. Teachers.	
THE STUDY: PART A - READERS	59
CHAPTER 4: READING READERS	60
1. Identity Style.	
2. Reading Readers.	
3. Readers: Feeling and Thinking.	
CHAPTER 5: SIX ADOLESCENTS	70
Steve	
Rob	
Anna	
Josie	
Adam	
Peter	
CHAPTER 6: SIX READERS	88
Steve - The Associative Reader.	
Rob - The Investigative Reader.	
Anna - The Speculative Reader.	
Josie - The Affective Reader.	
Adam - The Passive Reader.	
Peter - The Cognitive Reader.	

	Page Number
CHAPTER 7: THE PERSONAL TRANSACTIONAL MODEL	118
1. Requirements of a Model. 2. 'Best Fit' Transaction. 2.1. The Associative Reader. 2.2. The Investigative Reader. 2.3. The Speculative Reader. 2.4. The Affective Reader. 2.5. The Cognitive Reader. 2.6. The Passive Reader. 3. From Personal to Social Transaction. 4. The Diachronic Transaction. 5. Cognitive and Affective Transaction.	
THE STUDY: PART B - READING	142
CHAPTER 8: AESTHETIC TEACHING AND READING	143
1. Theory. 2. Practice. 3. Two Poems.	
CHAPTER 9: READING RESPONSE THEORY	158
1. Adolescents' perceptions of the genre. 2. Adolescents' understanding of the reading process.	

	Page Number
CHAPTER 10: READING THROUGH TALKING	167
1. Collaboration.	
2. Argument and Justification.	
3. Elicitation.	
CONCLUSION	192
APPENDIX A: GCSE COURSE INFORMATION.	
Extracts from NEAB GCSE English / English Literature Anthology.	2-12
Information for GCSE syllabus.	13-14
The GCSE course followed by the six readers.	15-16
APPENDIX B: PUPILS' POETICS INTERVIEWS.	
Pupils' Poetics interviews - explanation.	2
GCSE Speaking and Listening Assessment.	3-4
Adam's interview.	5-7
Peter's interview.	8-12
Anna's interview.	13-16
Josie's interview.	17-19
Steve's interview.	20-23
Rob's interview.	24-26
APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIPTS OF SELECTED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS.	
Tape 16 Anna and Josie discuss 'A Poison Tree'.	2-4
Tape 20 Anna and Josie discuss 'What Is Our Life?'.	5-8
Tape 23 Anna and Josie discuss 'The Latest	

	Page Number
Decalogue’.	9-17
Tape 24 Steve and Rob discuss ‘The Latest Decalogue’.	18-21
Tape 25 Adam and Peter discuss ‘The Latest Decalogue’.	22-25
Tape 26 Peter and Harry discuss ‘The Latest Decalogue’.	26-30
Tape 31 Josie and Anna discuss ‘The Human Abstract’.	31-36
Tape 45 Anna and Josie discuss ‘Jordan’.	37-39
Tape 48 Anna and Josie discuss ‘I am’.	40-42
Tape 52 Adam, Rob and teacher discuss ‘The Latest Decalogue’.	43-47
Tape 53 Peter, Anna and teacher discuss ‘The Latest Decalogue’	48-50
Tape 55 Teacher and six readers discuss ‘The Latest Decalogue’ and ‘What Is Our Life?’.	51-59
Audio tape catalogue.	60-61

APPENDIX D: READER RESPONSE JOURNALS AND ANNOTATED POEMS.

Analysis of initial annotation.	2-9
Sequence of first readings.	10
Representative extracts from journals.	11-27
Instructions for keeping a journal.	28
Initial preferences of six readers.	29
Pages from Adam’s journal and annotated poems.	30-51
Pages from Peter’s journal and annotated poems.	52-65

	Page Number
Pages from Anna's journal and annotated poems.	66-79
Pages from Josie's journal and annotated poems.	80-93
Pages from Steve's journal and annotated poems.	94-107
Pages from Rob's journal and annotated poems.	108-121
 APPENDIX E: WRITTEN RESPONSE DATA.	
Six readers' rank orders and personal statements.	2-14
Questionnaire responses.	15-25
 APPENDIX F: IDENTITY DATA.	
GCSE Personal Writing assignment guide.	2
Adam's short story.	3-10
Adam's letters.	11-15
Peter's Personal Writing.	16-22
Peter's short story.	23-25
Peter's letter.	26-29
Anna's Personal Writing.	30-34
Anna's short story.	35-37
Anna's letters.	38-43
Josie's Personal Writing.	44-49
Josie's short story.	50-54
Josie's letters.	55-61
Steve's Personal Writing.	62-67
Steve's short story.	68-72
Steve's letter.	73-75
Rob's Personal Writing.	76-83
Rob's short story.	84-86

	Page Number
Rob's letter.	87-89
 APPENDIX G: ABILITY AND ATTAINMENT DATA ON SIX READERS.	
Pupils' progress and attainment in Y9 and Y11.	2-3
Six pupils' reports Y9, Y10, Y11.	4-22
NFER GCSE Grade Predictions Based on CAT scores	23
 APPENDIX H: SIX READERS' POETRY ESSAYS.	
The development of intellectual keenness in written essays.	2
Essay titles and schedule.	3-5
Comparison between each reader's first and last essay.	6-19
Terminal Exam Essays	20-48
 APPENDIX I: EXTRACTS FROM RESEARCHER'S JOURNAL.	
	1-7
 APPENDIX J: TEACHING RESOURCES.	
Teaching materials for 'What Is Our Life?' and 'The Latest Decalogue'.	2-6
Revision booklet on 'The Way We Live' written for pupils.	7-22
'The Way We Live' - Worksheet for pairs.	23
Revision Worksheet.	24-25
 APPENDIX K: YEAR 9 PILOT STUDY DATA.	
'Glory of Women', by Wilfred Owen, worksheet.	2-3
Six readers Year 9 poetry essays.	4-14
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 1-11

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**To my wife, Babs
and my son, Luke Matthias.**

INTRODUCTION.

My title Keen Readers sums up the purpose of teaching literature in English which has been defined in the following way:

The task of literature teaching is an enabling one - to encourage children to become 'keen readers'. The ambiguity is deliberate: keen in the sense of enthusiastic and committed, and keen in the sense of intellectually acute and emotionally aware (Benton, 1988: ix).

How adolescent readers of pre-twentieth century poetry can develop into 'keen readers' is the focus of my research. However, the conclusions relate to the broader areas of literary theory, learning theory and pedagogy. Discovering how to foster readers who are intellectually perceptive and who experience pleasure in literature from another age and even gain an aesthetic appreciation of such literary works, is the challenge taken up in this enquiry. The purpose of studying literature has also been defined in these terms:

The fundamental aim of such an area of study is to help readers discover what texts are trying to reveal, in a spirit of good faith. This form of study aims to give young people access to what different generations and cultures are trying to tell each other about their lives; it aims to give them access to the excitement or amazement of hearing such things, and thus to enlarge the scope of their lives (Davies, 1996: 141).

The aim of this thesis is therefore to elaborate how, 'in a spirit of good faith', teachers can help readers, as explorers, in their discoveries of the literature of 'other generations' for, while 'the method of travel we provide for our pupils determines what they see' (Pike, 1999: 50) it also influences their enthusiasm for the journey.

Yet, poetry is generally known for its unpopularity with many adolescents and pre-twentieth century poetry was not likely to be any more popular with the six readers chosen for this study who demonstrated antipathy to poetry at the start. Consequently, what is reported here is the range of strategies employed in a longitudinal study to attempt to alter rather than merely to observe a situation and an analysis of the effectiveness of these strategies. The judgements made are influenced as much by research findings about the experiences of classroom poetry teaching as

by theory. The two areas drawn on to interpret pedagogy, literary theory and learning theory, are synthesised into a coherent position to facilitate a clearer understanding of the reading and response process.

Chapter 1 ‘Reading Theory’ and Chapter 2 ‘Learning Theory’ comprise a literature review of the two areas drawn upon which focusses debate on the specific research questions to be explored. Chapter 3 ‘The Research Project’ sets out the main focus of this research, to discover how keen readers of pre-twentieth century poetry can be fostered. Subsidiary research questions regarding the role of the teacher as well as that of oral and written work are also presented. A rationale for these research questions is provided and the research methods used for data analysis are justified. Both methodology and method are examined in relation to pupils, texts and teachers.

The account of the longitudinal study is organised in two complementary parts: Part A - Readers, comprising Chapters 4 - 7 and Part B - Reading, comprising Chapters 8 -10. Clearly, any such division between reading and readers is artificial but is intended to discriminate between the process of reading and the individual readers engaged in reading. Part A - Readers therefore focusses on those elements of the aesthetic experience that are more or less fixed psychologically. The way reading can only be understood by giving attention to the identity of the readers is presented in Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 apply this method to the six readers in the case study and in Chapter 7 the ‘personal transactional model’ of reading is described. Part B - Reading focusses on the elements that are modified and change either during a reading event or over time through experience, new readings, teaching and discussion. The notion of aesthetic reading and teaching is elaborated in Chapter 8. In Chapter 9 the experiences of readers’ reading of response theory is examined and in Chapter 10 the concept of reading developing through discourse is evaluated. In the Conclusion specific recommendations are made for fostering ‘keen’ readers of pre-twentieth century poetry.

CHAPTER 1: READING THEORY.

1. Reader Response Criticism.

Reader-Response Criticism denotes the broad range of literary perspectives which privilege the reader by challenging the autonomy of the text. Yet, while these approaches are united in their focus on the reader's activities, they are divided concerning the methods of interpreting the reader's experience. Holland (1975), Iser (1978) and Fish (1980) to name but the most significant, employ markedly different approaches in their attempts to understand the reader. The particular perspective taken in this thesis is the transactional and phenomenological one. As such, it is the antithesis of the position adopted by New Criticism where 'it is never what a poem says which matters, but what it is' (Richards, I.A., 1929: 33). Research can only focus on what a poem says as 'the sentence that seems to need no interpretation is already the product of one' (Fish, 1978: 637). Therefore, understanding the reader is where investigation must begin. Evidently, transactional theory is influenced by Heidegger who argued in Being and Time (1927) that 'Dasein' (givenness, existence, being) was a distinctive characteristic of the human being as our consciousness projects things of the world and is also subjected to the things of the world which belong to us, in some sense, only as long as our consciousness is projecting them. Consequently, we can never 'adopt an attitude of detached contemplation, looking down on the world as if from the mountain top. We are inevitably merged with the very object of our consciousness' (Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 52). Such a view reflects Gadamer's position in Truth and Method (1975) in which Heidegger's explanation of situation is applied to literary theory because, for Gadamer, the literary work does not appear as a completed and packaged artefact in which meaning is neatly wrapped, rather, it is influenced by the reader's actions in a historical situation. The 'actions', of selected readers in this study, are outlined in Part B- Reading. For the description of the process which produces the literary work 'a phenomenological analysis recommends itself' (Iser, 1980: 52) because this acknowledges that the only possible knowledge of a text is that of the reader:

The phenomenological theory of art lays full stress on the idea that, in considering a literary work, one must take into account not only the actual

text but also, and in equal measure, the actions involved in responding to that text (Iser, 1974: 274)

The most influential reader response theorists upon this investigation are Rosenblatt, Iser, Holland and Jauss. Rosenblatt and Iser emphasise that neither the text nor the reader is the sole repository of meaning which they see as the result of a transaction between the two. Holland's work on the influence of the reader's identity upon the reading transaction is drawn upon in my longitudinal study as an understanding of readers' identities developed over three years. Jauss' emphasis on the reception of literary texts over time also informs my thesis because readers were studied reading pre-twentieth century texts.

Initially, however, it is important to consider Iser's location of the literary work, described as 'virtual', existing in the space between the text and the realisation of the text, between the 'text created by the author' and the 'realisation accomplished by the reader' (Iser, 1974: 274). By locating the literary work in this way, 'the work is more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realised' (Iser, 1974: 274). However, the 'virtual' existence of the literary work comes about only when the text and reader interact:

The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and this convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual, as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader (Iser, 1980: 50)

The 'transactions' between readers and texts in my research are, therefore, seen as 'aspects of a total situation, each conditioned by and conditioning the other' (Rosenblatt, 1978: 16-17) where reader and text are inter-dependent. This is similar to Iser's 'implied reader' who must fill the 'gaps', 'blanks' or 'indeterminacies' in order to live through the text as a co-author because 'the implied reader designates a network of response - inviting structures, which impel the reader to grasp the text' (Iser, 1978: 34). Indeterminacy, however, may not only exist in Iser's implied reader. It has been argued that all the elements in 'the total situation' (Abrams, 1958: 6) of the literary work, considered by Abrams to be the universe, work, artist and audience, may be 'radically unstable and indeterminate, a product of the beholder's gaze' (Freund, 1987: 2). Focussing attention on the 'beholder's gaze' when readers

are adolescents is especially necessary because such readers behold poetry in various ways at different times as they are changing and indeterminate themselves. Contrary to Iser, I therefore suggest, in Chapter 7, that indeterminacy exists in the reader as well as the text and argue that an optimal match between the kind of indeterminacy in a particular reader and that within a specific text offers the greatest potential for keen reading.

Rosenblatt's realistic conception 'that each reading involves a particular person at a particular time and place' (Rosenblatt, 1994 / 1993: viii) is developed in my thesis and differs from many reader response critics who 'write as though people read literature in a vacuum or in a generalised kind of academic setting' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 22). Indeed, how situations that are conducive to aesthetic reading can be created is considered in Chapter 8. Aesthetic reading as distinct from efferent or information seeking reading occurs when:

the reader's attention is focussed on what he is living through during the reading event. He is attending both to what the verbal signs designate and to the qualitative overtones of the ideas, images, situations and characters that he is evoking under guidance of the text. The literary work of art comes into being through the reader's attention to what the text activates within him (Rosenblatt, 1985: 38).

In aesthetic reading there is attention to the 'experiential, cognitive, affective components of meaning' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 43) whereas efferent reading is quite different and is defined as follows:

In efferent (non-aesthetic) reading, the reader's attention is centered on what should be retained as a residue after the actual reading-event - the information to be acquired, for example, from the label on a medicine bottle; or the operations to be carried out, as in a scientific experiment; the conclusion to be reached as in a legal brief; or the actions to be performed, as in a recipe ... I have chosen to call this kind of reading efferent, from the Latin 'efferre', to carry away (Rosenblatt 1985: 37-38).

Although the efferent reader may decipher images and concepts, the distinguishing feature of the aesthetic reader is the focus on the self as well as the text, because the aesthetic reader 'pays attention to the associations, feelings, attitudes, and ideas that these words and their referents arouse within him' (Rosenblatt, 1978: 24).

Rosenblatt's transactional theory and Iser's theory of aesthetic response are influential because they acknowledge that the reader brings 'idiosyncratic knowledge' and 'personal style' to the poem which is 'socially, culturally and historically formed' (Benton, 1993: 8). In particular, the knowledge of the identity of each of my six adolescents proved essential to any understanding of them as readers and is explored in Part A - Readers. What a reader brings to a transaction is vital:

If we think of the total literary transaction, we must recognize that the reader brings to or adds to the non-verbal or socio-physical setting, his whole past experience of life and literature ... His memories, his present preoccupations, his sense of values, his aspirations, enter into a relationship with the text (Rosenblatt, 1978: 81).

The way the reader's past experience of life as well as literature influences reading is developed in my model of reading which is informed by elements of Holland's (1975b) work on the individuality of readers taken up in Part A - Readers. This emphasis upon the transaction between text and reader is valuable because it acknowledges the 'life experience of the reader' as the 'source of the most significant guiding factors during reading' (Benton et al, 1988: 14) and the importance of 'the reader's stance or focus of attention' which is 'lacking even in theoretical treatments that seem to emphasise the reader but still seek the aesthetic factor entirely in the text' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 38). This issue is directly addressed in Chapter 7 where the 'aesthetic factor' is found in the reader as well as the text in a 'personalised' transactional model which takes into account the need for research to 'elucidate the kinds of evidence that might signal growth in quality of transactions with texts' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 50) and illustrates how transactions can develop through interaction between readers.

While Rosenblatt sees aesthetic and efferent reading at opposite ends of a continuum, this may be nothing more than an intellectual cover device to protect her binary division from criticism. Rosenblatt's account is problematised as a result of findings concerning adolescent readers' reading and her continuum is considered to be in need of re-evaluation. Although Rosenblatt acknowledges that readings can be located centrally on her continuum between aesthetic and efferent poles and that the nature of a reading 'lies in the mix' between the two (Rosenblatt, 1994: 184) it must

be emphasised that wholly efferent or purely aesthetic readings still exist, in her model, at opposite ends of a continuum. It seems probable, however, that efferent and aesthetic reading are not opposites in the way Rosenblatt suggests. Arguably, the reader can achieve the objective of both types of reading at the aesthetic end of the continuum. Aesthetic reading necessarily entails efferent baggage; in short, readers remember what they enjoy and take information away from the reading event effortlessly when aesthetic reading has been engaged in.

In order to facilitate analysis of aesthetic reading, it is necessary to define the concepts of 'blueprint' and 'stimulus' and how they are related in Rosenblatt's transactional theory. The synthesis of text as blueprint and stimulus, is the essential transaction between the reader's world and the text which enables aesthetic reading to occur:

First the text is a stimulus activating elements of the reader's past experience - his experience both with literature and with life. Second, the text serves as a blueprint, a guide for the selecting, rejecting and ordering of what is being called forth (Rosenblatt, 1978: 11).

As we make sense of all new experience by drawing on past experience, no interpretation, comprehension or aesthetic transaction would be possible if the text did not function as a 'stimulus'. The relation between text as 'stimulus' and 'blueprint' is examined in my research as it is the 'inward looking synthesising activities' of these two elements 'which lead to the crystallization of a sense of the work' (Rosenblatt 1985: 46). It has been suggested that a text can function as 'blueprint' and 'stimulus' at the same moment and that 'both contrary impulses are needed in the creation of a work of art' (Teasey, 1988: 64). Exactly how this movement between differing elements of response operates in an aesthetic transaction, is of considerable importance. There is a need to study 'the relationship among the various aspects of response' (Purves and Beach, 1972: 178) such as cognition, perception, emotion and attitudinal reaction and the modification of these over time both during and after initial reading. The time scale involved in reading poetry and the way meaning is generated even in short texts such as poems is highly significant:

In every text there is a potential time sequence which the reader must inevitably realise, as it is impossible to absorb even a short text in a single moment. Thus the reading process always involves viewing the text through a perspective that is continually on the move, linking up the different phrases and so constructing what we have called the virtual dimension (Iser, 1974: 280).

Consequently, attention is given in my study to this moving perspective in order to examine how the reader's stance influences the transaction with the text and how this changes over time. The benefits of 'top-down reading' where readers 'bring knowledge with them and expect to use it' and the disadvantages of 'bottom-up reading' where the reader is 'preoccupied with understanding a poem sentence by sentence or line by line' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 27, 28) are also considered in the activities of actual readers. 'Top-down' readers clearly possess the qualities which Rosenblatt (1985) suggests are necessary prerequisites for an aesthetic transaction to occur, whereas 'bottom-up' readers with an 'extreme focus on itemised reading may prevent any attention to the poem as a poem' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 26). Such reading strategies are considered in my typology of readers in Chapter 7.

2. Theoretical and Actual Readers.

A number of theoretical readers have been postulated by different theorists. Among many are Iser's 'implied reader', Culler's 'ideal reader' and Fish's 'informed reader'. While there is value in such theoretical readers for the purpose of constructing models of the reading process there are also disadvantages inherent in such artificial constructs which often do not depict the way actual adolescent readers read. Thomson (1987) does, however, provide a model of the stages adolescents progress through as they become increasingly sophisticated readers based upon his study of 51 students between the ages of 13 and 16 which, it is claimed, is 'a likely approximation to the reality of the processes of literary development that all readers experience' (Thomson, 1987: 173). Six process stages and strategies are identified which are linked to the 'satisfactions' derived from reading. The most sophisticated reading process strategies, those in Stage 6 of Thomson's model, involve 'recognition of implied reader in the text' and 'reflexiveness, leading to understanding of textual ideology, personal identity and one's own reading process'

(Thomson, 1987: 361). How this development of metacognition can be fostered in real readers is examined in Chapter 9 as it is an essential element of intellectually keen reading whereby one is able to ‘reflect on one’s own knowledge’ (Bruner, 1986: 127). Coming to see such knowledge as a product of a certain cultural and historical era is going a step further and is one of the distinct benefits of studying ‘poetry from the English literary heritage’ and exploring ‘the appeal and importance of these texts over time’ (DFEE / QCA, 1999: 34). In a sense, when focussing on readers’ responses to pre-twentieth century texts, we need to ask what questions our peculiar cultural milieu permits them to raise because such works ‘take on meaning in relation to the very different ideological conditions of contemporary life’ (Easthope, 1991: 57). When readers gain an awareness of the historically located nature of their responses, they have clearly matured, as readers, beyond Thomson’s Stage 6. Understanding how readers apprehend the past when it can only be ‘grasped through the limited perspective of the present’ (Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 54) is an important issue. Indeed, how readers saturated in late twentieth century culture derive pleasure from texts that are produced trans-historically if ‘we cannot make our journey into the past without taking the present with us’ (Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 54) is a central concern addressed in my research.

It has been suggested that the ‘taste’ of different readers can only be understood when one has knowledge of ‘which trans-subjective horizon of understanding conditions the influence of the text’ (Jauss, 1982: 23). To understand adolescents’ responses to pre-twentieth century poetry, the position of such works within the reader’s literary history needs to be considered as the reception of texts, according to Jauss, is influenced by their position in the sequence of texts read. Any new work can change the reader by altering the reader’s experience and can result in a ‘change of horizons’ (Jauss, 1982: 25) because ‘the new literary work is received and judged against the background of other works of art as well as against the everyday experience of life’ (Jauss, 1982: 41). The influence of previous works of literature on what is currently being read is explored in Jauss’ fifth thesis concerning the aesthetics of reception. He asserts:

The theory of the aesthetics of reception not only allows one to conceive the meaning and form of a literary work in the historical unfolding of its understanding. It also demands that one inserts the work into its ‘literary

series' ... Put another way, the next work can solve formal and moral problems left behind by the last work, and present new problems in turn (Jauss, 1982: 30).

This may be particularly true if the 'literary series' read in school is made up of poems by the same author so that readers become increasingly familiar with ideas found in a particular poet's work. Conversely, pre-twentieth century poems may present problems if they follow more accessible twentieth century works and the reader's 'horizon' is in the process of adjustment. The difference between the reading of educated, literary adults and adolescents cannot be ignored because 'experienced readers tend to read a literary work against a background of literary history' (Kintgen, 1985: 183) whereas adolescent readers generally come to a text without knowledge of literary history in this sense. Jauss' 'horizon of expectation' is the criterion applied by certain readers to judge literary texts in a particular period in history. For example, modern readers of Blake or Keats operate inside an altered 'horizon of expectation' to those who judged either poet at the time they were writing, or in the late nineteenth century. Evidently, Jauss' theory is a derivation of Gadamer's hermeneutics for whom all interpretations of past literature are created out of a dialogue between past and present where a 'literary work is not an object which stands by itself and which offers the same face to each reader in each period', nor is it 'a monument which reveals its timeless essence in a monologue' (Gadamer, 1975: 20). It is necessary, therefore, to investigate how readers can mature so that expectations of modern works are not applied to works of the past. Arguably, it is only the removal of twentieth century literary expectations along with the application of the historic work to the present life of the reader that 'frees the text from the material of the words and brings it to a contemporary existence' (Jauss, 1982: 15). Jauss' 'horizon of expectation' is an important theory to consider when analysing readers' responses to pre-twentieth century texts and 'Jauss is entirely willing to submit his hermeneutical model to the concrete task of practical interpretation' (DeMan, 1982: xv). As texts and readers originate in different times in my study, it provides an opportunity to evaluate the validity of Jauss' theory when applied to the activities of real readers.

3. Cognitive and Affective Response.

Vygotsky believed the intellectual and emotional to be closely related as he saw ‘the existence of a dynamic system of meaning in which the affective and the intellectual unite’ (Vygotsky, 1986: 10). The recognition that ‘intelligence’ and ‘feeling’ are ‘mutually dependent aspects of human consciousness’ (Wade and Reed, 1987: 56) is especially relevant in the literature classroom. In fact, it has been asserted that ‘reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative’ (Iser, 1980: 51). Indeed, the ‘broad range of affective components of appreciation, not just emotions properly so called, but also moods, desires, feelings, drives and attitudes or frames of mind’ (Feagin, 1996: 9) needs to be examined. Students and teachers need opportunities to explore affective as well as cognitive elements within response. The capacity of pre-twentieth century poetry to make these demands on adolescents deserves particular consideration, as the same text may elicit more sophisticated emotional responses as the reader matures. In fact, Rosenblatt recommends that ‘environmental factors’ be examined to yield some ‘systematic understanding’ of the relation between ‘emotional development’ and the growth of ‘aesthetic capabilities’ (Rosenblatt, 1985: 43). Squire too acknowledges that the inter-relationship between the cognitive and affective is ‘sufficiently important to deserve more exhaustive study’ concluding that the influence of the affective upon the cognitive requires further research and recommending that this be carried out into ‘the intricate relationship of self-involvement and literary judgement responses’ (Squire, 1964: 52). Squire is also specific about the time when an aesthetic judgement may be made during the reading process of short stories, suggesting that only after ‘making those final or cumulative reactions to a story do many readers again reflect and pass aesthetic judgements’ (Squire, 1964: 51). The timing of aesthetic responses to very short texts, such as poems, is of interest because generally a student devotes most time to the study of a short poem after completing a first reading and ‘poems are read more than once’ (Stibbs, 1995).

The relationship between emotional response and intellectual analysis, is something we still know far too little about. Yet, it is important because ‘the way it feels to the reader, what it does for him / her may yield a more lasting influence than any critical analysis aimed at advocating what is often regarded as an expert

interpretation' (Britton, 1993: 88). Affective response and aesthetic appreciation are closely linked and 'we need to ask whether these emotions also characterise artistic endeavours' (Yob, 1998: 28) and Britton claims an 'art-like' quality for such responses:

But there is always something more than just information in our words uttered as spectators. There is always in some degree an indication of how we feel about someone or something; our words carry ... the pluses and minuses of our verdicts upon the world. They share characteristics of works of art as Vygotsky defined them: they have aesthetic value - they may be either works of art or, at a less intense or finished level, they might be called art-like (Britton, 1993: 86).

Britton's reader, his grandchild Laurie, is similar to my adolescent readers in her appreciation of relevance as she informed him that she liked books that had 'something to do with me' which she could 'relate to' (Britton, 1993: 91). Similarly, Molly Travers concluded from her study that 'pupils liked poems they could respond to personally. Favourite poems were often compared with their own feelings and experiences' (Travers, 1987: 216). Consequently, reading journals, similar to Bleich's (1975), where readers were encouraged to respond subjectively to text as 'stimulus' were employed in my study. It is only possible, though, for adolescents to read themselves if they find themselves in the text. It follows that texts in English should have 'many points of contact with the readers' so they are 'accessible to adolescents' (Squire, 1964: 56). Essentially, my research explores when and how these 'points of contact' occur between specific readers and texts. It has been suggested:

If poetry is to have any impact on pupils like these, then opinions, based on feelings which are part of an individual's personality and experience, must be taken into account, not only in the discussion of poems, but also in the selection of poems for classroom reading (Travers, 1987: 216).

The most pragmatic solution would be for teachers to allow time for responses to a range of poems to emerge so that poems which pupils relate to personally can be studied in greater depth. However, in selecting texts, it is not expedient for curriculum decision makers to pander entirely to the populist tendencies of adolescents. Travers' study indicated that 'the majority of students aged between

twelve to sixteen chose the least sophisticated poems' and reported that 'many rejected anything ambiguous or complex and refused to explore meaning. Poems were praised for being simple, straightforward and having no 'hidden' meaning' (Travers, 1987: 216). Indeed, Travers concludes her study with the rather disappointing remarks that readers 'sought positive or sentimental reactions' and rejected 'those which called for uncomfortable reappraisals of their established views' because 'jolts in ideas, emotions, or structure led to a rejection of the poem' (Travers, 1987: 216). How my readers responded to these 'jolts' which called for 'uncomfortable reappraisals' of their views is recorded in Part B - Reading and offers a contrary emphasis to Travers because art is conceived of as a 'programme for changing our behaviour' (Vygotsky, 1971: 253).

The relationship between how well pupils feel they have understood a poem and how much they enjoy it is also significant. It has been suggested that pupils do not enjoy what they do not understand, a lack of comprehension causes frustration. Understanding and liking are not independent because being 'baffled by what is offered ... sets up dissatisfaction' (Harding, 1968: 4). Yet, T.S. Eliot (1975 /1933: 93) believed poetry could communicate before it was understood. It seems likely, however, that both D.W. Harding and T.S. Eliot are correct; they may, however, be right for different readers or for the same reader at different times. While a reader's comprehension may be an important factor in determining whether the poem is enjoyed, the content of the poem will have varying appeal to different readers. For instance, 'there will also be liking or disliking of the meaning' because 'two pieces of verse may be equally comprehensible but one will be liked and the other disliked according to the interest and acceptability of what they say, in terms of the reader's individual structure of value - his interests and attitudes' (Harding, 1968: 4). My research therefore explores both the influence of comprehension and appreciation of content in readers' responses and how encouragement can be given for 'pupils to generate literary responses for themselves' ensuring that 'the experience of literature' does not get lost in the 'raw material of essays' (Hackman, 1987: 61-62).

The influence of the stance of the teacher is explored in my investigation as there are great dangers associated with the teacher adopting the stance of 'expert reader'. Dias and Hayhoe observe that 'Richards, in assessing his readers' protocols was doing so as an expert reader' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 6). The teacher who

adopts such a role as ‘expert reader’ judging pupils’ readings to be inaccurate by setting up ‘norms from which they had deviated’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 7) is not likely to generate enthusiasm in young readers. The teacher in the secondary school classroom, adopting such a stance may also inhibit ‘the development of adolescent readers who might speak confidently and responsibly from their own responses to the text’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 7). It is evident that the over-dominant teacher who transmits knowledge and interpretation in a traditionally didactic fashion will eliminate the adventure and creativity that students can experience if they are permitted to discover for themselves what the new fictional world of the text has to offer them. Indeed, ‘a successful educational process is one which transfers competence to the learner’ (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 159) and the sort of pedagogy which prevents this transfer of competence, resulting in the pupil remaining ‘scaffolded’ rather than autonomous, occurs when ‘teachers insist on retaining tight control, dominating the agenda and discussion, determining in advance what should happen’ (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 167). Consequently, when the teacher becomes involved in discussion ‘his/her views must also be expressed as questions or as exploratory, tentative probings, proffered not as some form of correction’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 156). The role of the teacher is considered further in Chapter 8 ‘Aesthetic Teaching and Reading’ and is, evidently, an important influence on readers. It has even been asserted that the teacher ‘plays more part in influencing whether adolescents will come to like poetry than the poems chosen or the methods used and can influence most pupils, whatever their personalities’ (Travers, 1987: 217). Yet, the claim that the teacher is more important than the poems in determining attitudes to a whole genre, appears entirely unsubstantiated in Travers’ study. More realistically, a matrix of factors encompassing teacher, methodology and texts should be considered in attempts to understand readers’ responses.

CHAPTER 2: LEARNING THEORY.

1. Knowledge, Language and Learning.

In Vygotsky's model of cognitive development the child learns through dialogue and exchanges with others. At an epistemological level, all knowledge is social:

Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them (Vygotsky, 1978: 88).

In other words, education is more about social interaction than individual exploration. Although verbal communication is the main medium through which interaction occurs, and research into communication and learning informs my thesis, the linguistic analysis of language is deemed inappropriate as a tool because the prime concern here is how humans collaboratively create and modify meaning. Arguably, the reason for language is that humans have meanings they desire to communicate, to consider language as meaning is valid because it is the social function of language that enables cognitive development and socialisation to occur. Indeed, the ability to modify one's meaning and to engage in metacognition is achieved through the use of the 'meaning potential' (Halliday, 1978: 197) in language. This ability to reflect upon one's own reflections is described by Vygotsky in relation to mathematical learning in the following way:

The new higher concepts in turn transform the meaning of the lower. The adolescent who has mastered algebraic concepts has gained a vantage point from which he sees arithmetic concepts in a broader perspective (Vygotsky, 1986: 202).

This concept has also been explained in relation to thinking in general for 'there seems then to be some interesting way in which it becomes possible to turn around upon one's thoughts, to see them in a new light' (Bruner, 1988: 88). It is precisely the way a peer or teacher facilitates the ability of a child to engage in such reflection about the reading process that is the subject of the investigation reported in subsequent chapters. Vygotsky's notion that children grow into the intellectual life

surrounding them has gained widespread support (Daniels, 1993) but there has been little exploration of the practical application of such theorising in relation to literature teaching despite the fact that it is an essential part of a child's culture as 'most learning in most settings is a communal activity, a sharing of the culture' (Bruner, 1986: 127). How such cultural sharing takes place in relation to literary response is examined in this research. The value of interaction and discussion between peers in learning contexts has previously been emphasised in a number of educational reports (Bullock, 1975; Cockcroft, 1982; Dearing, 1995) and various researchers have drawn similar conclusions. Doise (1975) concluded that significantly more progress was made by children assigned to groups or pairs than those working alone and a 'cultural communicative model of education' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 36) has, therefore, been proposed. Indeed, a detailed ethnographic study of learning in very young children concluded that 'the important developmental changes are ... those in which they attempt to argue, justify and negotiate' (Dunn, 1988: 186). Clearly, such findings may have considerable significance for the cognitive development of older children in English, when a child argues, justifies and negotiates with a peer or teacher. These more confrontational exchanges as well as discussion in collaborative work are explored in my research.

2. Cognitive and Affective Learning.

According to Vygotsky the interaction occurring between peers will only yield cognitive development if it is of a certain sort. This is summed up in what is now well known as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which is defined as:

the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978: 86).

Clearly then, the more advanced partner can provide a vicarious form of consciousness or 'scaffolding' until a time when the learner can think and act independently. Language acquisition is a prime example as competence is achieved by interaction with a parent who is more linguistically competent than the learner

who accommodates the discourse. In Vygotsky's ZPD, the value of language is made explicit as 'children solve practical tasks with the help of their speech, as well as with their eyes and hands' (Vygotsky, 1978: 26). It is my contention in this thesis, however, that far more than problem solving is achieved through such activity and that aesthetic appreciation as well as comprehension and problem solving can occur as a result of it (cf. Chapter 8).

Teaching should therefore create a learning environment which encourages the learner to reflect in ways that were not previously possible because language is 'a way of sorting out one's thoughts about things' (Bruner, 1988: 88). The significance of Vygotsky is that he has been responsible for the generation of a new model of education. For example, Edwards and Mercer, influenced by Vygotsky, acknowledge the false dichotomy between 'traditional' and 'progressive' ideologies and their reappraisal of the pedagogy based on Piaget has led to the conclusion that

The traditional ideology was all about teaching, and the progressive ideology is all about learning. What is needed is a new synthesis, in which education is seen as the development of joint understanding (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 36).

In the work of Edwards and Mercer, as well as Bruner, the emphasis upon the central role of communication in cognitive development, generated by Vygotsky, is evident and, in this thesis, analysis of the developmental encounters of fourteen to sixteen year olds discussing pre-twentieth century poetry is informed by such theory. Yet, readers do not learn in a vacuum as 'it is a matter of using whatever one has learnt before to get to then higher ground next' (Bruner, 1988: 96). Such a position is redolent of elements of reader response theory, examined in Chapter 1. The emphasis on text as 'stimulus' embodies this notion of the past experience of the learner being brought to any new reading encounter and acknowledges that 'prior experience' as well as 'prior knowledge' is essential in aesthetic reading (Rosenblatt, 1985: 42) because a 'system of expectations' (Jauss, 1988: 20) operates within learners.

Defining the Zone of Proximal Development leads us to consider how we get children there. At the moment 'it is very obscure how an adult gets a child to venture into the zone' (Bruner, 1988: 93) and this thesis seeks to make the processes by

which children gain access to the zone, less obscure. The advice offered for getting the child to cross the threshold of ZPD is for the teacher to make entry appear to be 'play' where the teacher is actively 'minimising the cost, indeed the possibility of error' (Bruner, 1988: 94). How exactly a progressive challenge can be provided in literature teaching is examined in Part B - Reading because it is this which ensures the child remains in the zone and 'keeps him from getting bored' (Bruner, 1988: 94). While any attempt to avoid boredom and make learning seem like play takes account of the affective element in learning, there is more to keeping the learner in the ZPD than this. In her transactional theory of the literary work, Rosenblatt, like Bruner, emphasises the importance of 'feelings' in generating the 'lived through experience' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 40) of aesthetic reading. Even in relation to comprehension, the affective components of meaning are considered to facilitate understanding and there is a need to give 'attention to experiential, affective and cognitive components of meaning' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 43). As the affective element of experience cannot be divorced from the intellectual, such response is unlikely to be simply an individual experience for 'the evocation of a literary work of art must be seen in both its social and personal aspects' (Rosenblatt 1985: 48). In Chapter 7, a new model of social reading is presented, informed by Vygotsky's notion of social knowledge, in which the affective and intellectual are explored in relation to children's experience of literature where their experiences of the social world prove to be crucial influences.

3. Social Learning.

A number of studies have been carried out into the relative merits of individual, pair or group work. The social dimension to learning in the literature classroom is of crucial significance and Rosenblatt considers the individual's personal transaction with the text to be the first stage in a response process that prepares the way for 'increasingly complex and demanding transactions' and 'group discussion' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 49). Practical examples of such 'demanding literary transactions' between modern adolescents and pre-twentieth century texts and the processes of 'group discussion' are given in Part B - Reading to show how these facilitate aesthetic appreciation of the literary work. It is essential for the classroom to provide the opportunity for discourse between peers because growth can be

fostered by 'spontaneous interchange among students, concerning the works evoked, and their responses to them' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 49).

Light and Perret-Clermont (1991) evaluated the earlier work of Doise et al (1975) where children were pre-tested on conservation tasks and then assigned to pairs or groups for an interaction session where collaborative activity was encouraged; subsequently, the children were post-tested individually to ascertain whether peer interaction led to cognitive development. It was found that 'children who participate in the interaction session show significantly more pre- to post-test progress than control subjects who do not have the opportunity to interact with a peer' (Light and Perret-Clermont, 1991: 138). However, ZPDs were traversed where an asymmetry existed as a result of having more able and less able peers interacting and Doise (1975) noted that a small difference in ability ensured better progress than a large difference. Consequently, the pairs in my research were arranged so that a small difference in ability was apparent within each. Other research into the relative merits of individual or group computer use concluded that 'groups performed substantially better than silent individuals' (Foot et al, 1991: 210) and that 'those who had worked in pairs achieved significantly better results, and this was especially true amongst low achieving children' (Foot et al, 1991: 209). My study of paired conversations complements these studies and focusses on the processes that encourage progress.

In many schools the assumption persists that silence facilitates better concentration. However, while there is a place for this, the value of overt verbalisation (Fletcher, 1985) in discussions between children cannot be ignored and the value of such talk is that children 'can collaborate in clarifying their own and one another's understanding' (Barnes and Todd, 1977: 24). Consequently, the relationship between talking and understanding is an important element in my research; talk was monitored in conjunction with other modes of language use, such as writing, so that the elements of a child's thinking that emerged in one context but not another could be analysed. Whereas Barnes and Todd (1977) based their analysis of children's discussions on a variety of disparate topics, my research focusses on discussion of works within a specific literary genre: poetry. Much important work has been carried out into the discourse of response to poetry; it has been noted that 'shared talk' is used by readers to 'balance and reconcile different ideas and feelings

through collaborative effort' and is a 'natural development from the individual's own response to the text' (Bell, 1988: 93; 97). Further, social interaction allows pupils to 'modify their points of view ... adopting and editing as they 'test' their thoughts - by setting their own responses against those of others in the group' (Bell, 1988: 116). Clearly, pedagogic approaches in this area need to be developed for teachers to gain the maximum cognitive dividends in return for the initial investment of setting up group discourse situations.

Vygotsky's theory 'has a place in it for the role of the teacher as a language user' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 20) because the role of the teacher or more competent peer functions as 'a vicarious form of consciousness until such a time as the learner is able to master his own action through his own consciousness and control' (Bruner, 1985: 24-25). The value of research stimulated by Vygotsky which emphasises the communicative process in education is that teachers may become more conscious of the central role of discourse and the ways in which children and teachers interact to achieve common objectives. How this works in practice is discussed at some length in Part B - Reading, which is informed by Rosenblatt's understanding of the function of the teacher and is also consistent with the role of the teacher as language user in Vygotsky's model. Rosenblatt states:

The teacher's function is less to impart information than to help students to reflect on their experience, clarify its significance for themselves, become aware of alternative emphases, discover their own blind spots, or reinforce their own insights (Rosenblatt, 1985: 49).

The teacher's understanding, influenced by developments in literary theory (Stibbs, 1993), that there can be no one valid interpretation of the meaning of a poem, can be a powerful determining factor in whether the teacher dominates or guides conversation. Rosenblatt suggests:

Much remains to be done through the study of classroom dynamics to discover how the teacher's guidance (without domination) of group discussion can contribute to growth in students' ability to handle and reflect on their transactions with text (Rosenblatt, 1985: 49).

Edwards and Mercer (1987) have defined two types of knowledge that teachers or peers can generate in the learner: 'ritual' and 'principle'. These kinds of

knowledge are evident from communicative processes identified in my data and inform my analysis of transcripts in Chapter 10. The basic premise of Edwards and Mercer is that much discourse in school, particularly teacher-pupil discourse, is different to that of everyday life because it is based on school rituals and not upon real understanding. Questioning is an example. If a person is at a bus stop and asks a passer-by for the time, the assumption is that the questioner does not know what time it is. The questioner asks questions he or she does not know the answer to. In schools, however, teachers ask questions that they know the answers to and therefore the communication is not realistic and is liable to become ritualistic. The peculiar status of teacher questions which result in ritual knowledge has been described:

It is indeed ironic that the teacher's questions are often not real questions; that is they are not questions to which the answers are not already known, questions that arise from genuine curiosity and promote inquiring (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 7).

Definitions of 'ritual' and 'principled' knowledge are necessary as they inform theorising and analysis of discourse in subsequent chapters. A student who possesses ritual knowledge may be defined as being able to 'go through the motions' or to perform a mechanical set of procedures without knowing why something works, or the principles behind the operation, or why something is as it is:

what we are calling ritual knowledge is a particular sort of procedural knowledge, knowing how to do something (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 97).

In contrast, the most profitable learning results from 'principled' knowledge or genuine understanding:

Principled knowledge is defined as essentially explanatory, oriented towards an understanding of how procedures and processes work, of why certain conclusions are necessary or valid, rather than being arbitrary things to say because they seem to please the teacher (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 97).

Whereas the purpose of Edwards' and Mercer's study was to 'establish the ways in which ritual or principled knowledge arise out of the discourse of school lessons' (Edwards and Mercer 1987: 97), the object of my study is to see the relation of types

of discourse, ritualistic and principled, to the creation of 'keen' readers. In this thesis the concepts of 'ritual' and 'principled' from cognitive psychology and of 'efferent' and 'aesthetic' reading from reader response theory, where the text is both 'stimulus' and 'blueprint', are used to analyse pupils' responses to poems. Consequently, 'a close examination of the discourse' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 105) within poetry lessons has been undertaken.

CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH PROJECT.

1. The Research Question.

The main research question that this project attempts to answer is:

- How can keen adolescent readers of pre-twentieth century poetry be fostered in English lessons?

As the term ‘keen readers’ denotes both senses of ‘keen’, intellectually acute and also enthusiastic (Benton, M., 1988: ix), both the motivational as well as the cognitive aspects of reading are necessarily the subject of investigation. My main research question is informed by three subsidiary research questions:

- What is the relation between oral communication and ‘keen’ or aesthetic reading?
- How do different forms of writing, about pre-twentieth century poetry, foster keen readers?
- What is the role of the teacher in the creation of keen readers of pre-twentieth century poetry at GCSE?

In this chapter the next section, Methodology, makes explicit the rationale behind these research questions and, in particular, explains why the fostering of keen adolescent readers of pre-twentieth century poetry is of considerable importance and current relevance. Following these theoretical considerations, the practical implementation of the longitudinal study is reported, where six readers were studied responding to fifteen pre-twentieth century poems, as part of a GCSE English and English Literature course. The same pattern (Readers, Texts, Teachers) is adopted in both the theoretical Methodology section and the practical Method section that follows it. Details about research methods and tools are provided within these sections.

2. Methodology.

2.1 Readers.

Discovering how adolescents can become well motivated and enthusiastic readers of poetry is relevant because such enthusiasm is, in general, quite rare. The

unpopularity of poetry with many adolescents is well documented so that much is known about the problems associated with the teaching of this genre in the secondary school. Andrews asserts that poetry provokes the ‘most groans’ from pupils (Andrews, 1991: 2) and Mathieson reports that poetry results in ‘pupils’ frustration and hostility’ (Mathieson, 1980: 38). Peter Benton’s information from 175 teachers in 43 schools revealed that 153 teachers listed 94 separate difficulties associated with poetry teaching and ‘more than one teacher in five mentioned specifically the problem of pupils’ ‘distaste for’, ‘prejudice against’ and ‘hostility towards poetry’ (Benton, P., 1984: 324). The problem is generally acknowledged to be more acute among boys (Yarlott and Harpin, 1970; QCA, 1998) and Peter Benton’s survey concluded ‘resistance occurs at a certain stage - the 3rd year stage especially with boys’ (Benton, P. 1984: 324). To sum up this regrettable situation, ‘poems are creatures rarely to be found coming to life within the confines of the classroom’ (Teasey, 1988: 42).

It has already been noted (Chapters 1 and 2) that research should focus on the affective as well as the cognitive elements of response. Clearly, knowledge about a poem is incomplete when divorced from its effect:

For the rhetoricians of antiquity and the Renaissance, and for many critics of other times a poem is a composition designed to produce an effect on readers, to move them in certain ways; and one’s judgement of a poem depends on one’s sense of the quality and intensity of its effect. (Culler, 1983: 39)

Providing opportunities for the enjoyment of poetry is also enshrined in the National Curriculum for English (1999). The emphasis on enthusiasm and enjoyment has been retained from English in the National Curriculum (1995). While reading poetry from the English Literary heritage, pupils should be ‘enthusiastic’ and ‘responsive’ and should do so for ‘pleasure’ (DFEE / QCA, 1999: 34). Yet, advice about how a teacher may achieve this is missing just as it was from the previous English in the National Curriculum (1995). The appearance of the ubiquitous phrase in the latest version (1999) that ‘pupils will be taught’ is not likely to provide the answer. Although it is universally acknowledged that motivated readers of poetry are desirable, very little (Pike, 2000a) has been written about how this can be achieved. Instead, the literature consists of various theories that seek to account for the

widespread antipathy. Pupils, teachers and texts all come in for their share of the blame. Irrelevance, in particular, is a reason cited by adolescents as a cause for disliking a poem and Rosenblatt notes that ‘before a student can enjoy a work, he must feel that it has some relevance to his own experience’ (Rosenblatt, 1968: 138). Certainly, too exclusive an emphasis upon the text as ‘blueprint’ can result in students’ failure to perceive the relevance of a text to their own lives. Another cause of disaffection is reported to be the ‘ambiguities of poetry, the sense that you can’t always pin down what the writer is saying’ (Andrews, 1991: 2). Alternatively, Dias and Hayhoe (1988), influenced by Rosenblatt (1978), argue that frustration occurs when the reader adopts the wrong reading stance, suggesting that if poems are approached to gain information, in the same way as one might approach a textbook, disappointment is inevitable. It has also been suggested that poetry suffers an image problem that contributes to its lack of popularity with many teenagers (Andrews, 1991). The reason for desiring that readers enjoy reading is related to their motivation and attainment because:

the performance of pupils who expressed positive attitudes to reading were significantly higher than those who expressed negative attitudes (Language Performance in Schools: A Review of APU Language Monitoring 1979 - 1983; 1988, 10.2.)

However, the need to foster ‘keen’ readers goes beyond the desire to improve attainment and reaches the heart of the debate about aesthetics and the function of art in the life of individuals, schools and societies. Engendering appreciative and enthusiastic readers of poetry is all the more vital in our utilitarian times where aesthetic education is often marginalized (Pike, 2000b).

Fostering readers who are intellectually keen is necessary because pupils’ passivity undoubtedly contributes to the negativity they express for this genre. Many pupils are not active readers and engendering readers who can think independently rather than slavishly relying on the opinions of others, should be one of the central aims of education. The reality may be rather different and concerns have been expressed about the lack of independence pupils display in secondary education. Whether ‘control over knowledge’ is transferred to pupils so ‘the pupil achieves

autonomy' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 161) has been questioned and the over-dependence of many pupils on teachers has been noted:

A successful reading of a work of literature is an act of interpretation, in a context where taste and style are often highly valued, and where inexperienced learners face an enormous temptation to rely on secondary understanding, parroting the opinions of teachers, textbooks or critics (Brumfit, 1991: 1).

Indeed, such a reliance on 'secondary understanding' is dangerous as intellectual laziness results if students are told their teacher's opinions rather than being stimulated to formulate their own. Teachers who fall into this trap encourage dependent rather than independent students and it has been acknowledged that 'throughout their secondary school careers, pupils are often persuaded to repeat their teachers' opinion rather than to develop their own points of view' (Cox, 1991: 78). If intellectually acute readers are not fostered in English lessons, even our 'more successful pupils will remain 'scaffolded' like some supported structure, unable to function independently' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 167). Indeed, intellectual independence as well as enthusiasm, the twin elements of keenness examined in this thesis, are legitimated by the National Curriculum for English (1999) which expects that 'during key stages 3 and 4 pupils read a wide range of texts independently both for pleasure and for study' (DFEE / QCA, 1999: 34). Discovering how independent and intellectually keen readers develop is justified as it is congruent with these national aims and with the broader aims of education in general. It is also, surprisingly, a significantly under-researched area if one is looking for solutions to, and not descriptions of, the problem.

Any research attempting to discover how keen readers can be fostered should, of course, focus on readers initially exhibiting antipathy so that the causes of any changes could be examined. Many previous studies of readers have focussed on expert readers (I.A. Richards, 1929; Holland, 1975a, 1975b) or on enthusiastic and well motivated adolescent readers who have given up holiday time to work with the researcher (Teasey, 1988; Myszor, 1993). To choose readers who are already 'keen' would not be expedient where the focus of the research is essentially concerned with bringing about change and engendering keenness where it did not previously exist. Such a task is particularly suitable for an action researcher in a 'real world' setting as

the objective is to ‘solve a problem in a specific context’ and to ‘improve practice’ (Cohen and Mannion, 1994: 186). Further, where readers’ perceptions are the focus of attention, a phenomenological and largely qualitative paradigm is the most appropriate one upon which to draw. As pupils are likely to change over time, a longitudinal study is most suited to record shifts in attainment and attitude. Indeed, a great strength of qualitative research is the way it enables perspectives to be portrayed. However, it is essential that the researcher’s interpretation of a situation concurs with that of participants. For the researcher’s interpretations to have greatest credibility, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that reconstructed perspectives should be corroborated by those being researched. For example, Mac an Ghaill (1991) showed his manuscript to pupils to see if they agreed with his interpretations. In research where reading processes and attitudes are interpreted, gaining pupils’ perspectives and interpretations of their own reading as well as those of the researcher increases the credibility of the study and has been followed here. I propose that ‘independent respondent validation’, where the reflections of the researcher and pupils are independently recorded so they cannot influence each other, has greater validity than the method of Mac an Ghaill (1991). Using both quantitative and qualitative data (Phillips, 1993) collected at various times and in different ways, from the readers themselves as well as from those observing them also maximises the validity of findings.

2.2 Texts.

The rationale for an investigation focussing on poetry rather than prose or drama texts is that, apart from presenting so many problems, poetry is also considered by teachers to be an exceptionally important part of English (Stibbs, 1995). It also constitutes a significant part of the curriculum in NEAB GCSE English (15%) and English Literature (35%) and in the English syllabuses offered by other examination boards. The possibility of reading holistically or of experiencing ‘virtual simultaneity’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 92) when reading a poem, mark this genre out as particularly suitable for an exploration of aesthetic reading. Although some reservations have been expressed about the social consequences of establishing a canon of classic works to be read in schools (Blackledge, 1994; Richardson, 1998),

studying pre-twentieth century poetry can provide readers with valuable experiences that are not usually gained from later works. Although establishing a canon represents a reduction in ‘teachers’ freedom to determine their own curriculum’ it is also true that, ‘a centralized curriculum still allows teachers to play a significant part ... in deciding what should be learnt, and how that should be learnt’ (Davies, 1996: 11). An exploration of how pre-twentieth century texts can be experienced by adolescents is certainly necessary. Choosing to focus specifically on pre-twentieth century poems is important because the difficulties which beset the teaching of poetry tend to be exacerbated when pupils read pre-twentieth century poetry due to the inherent cultural and linguistic challenges in literature from another age (Delaney, 1972; Protherough, 1985; Pike, 1999).

Although poems written before 1900 had, of course, been taught in English lessons prior to 1995, the National Curriculum for English (DFE, 1995), under which this research was carried out, made the study of pre-twentieth century poetry mandatory for pupils of all abilities across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Consequently, the challenge of making difficult texts accessible to children across a wide ability range between the ages of eleven and sixteen became the task of all secondary English teachers. Indeed, the requirement for pupils in this age range to study four poets from the English literary heritage, most of whom are pre-twentieth century writers, still exists (DFEE / QCA, 1999: 34). Yet, many teachers still have reservations about how to implement this requirement in ways that foster independent insight and enthusiasm in pupils. It is therefore, hoped that findings from this research will inform this element of literature teaching. There is also concern that the apparent difficulty of such texts has led to regression and to a more didactic mode of teaching being adopted, in the mistaken belief that pre-twentieth century poems are too difficult for pupils to generate their own responses to. Suitable approaches to pre-twentieth century poems need to be developed, piloted and disseminated if enthusiasm is to be fostered.

Delaney (1972) has argued that, today’s student is at a serious disadvantage when studying writers from the great tradition, because the experiences of the poets (she lists: fearing hell, observing nature closely, dying of love, dying of consumption, dying of the pox, going to church and going to prostitutes) are so alien to the life experiences of the modern reader. As pupils respond to literature partly from

‘cultural experience’ and ‘linguistic ability’ (Benton, 1995: 333) the difficulty of studying classic authors whose works were published before 1900 is that:

More than the work of most literary figures, the poetry of Chaucer, Donne, Milton and Pope demands some degree of knowledge about the historical, cultural and literary context. The genres and styles these poets use tend to be different from those that are popular today. The allusions (to classical mythology and Christian theology) have little resonance for most of our students, and to impart this information is not a likely way to increase enthusiasm for the poetry (Protherough, 1986: 125).

This illustrates the cultural gap between many pre-twentieth century writers and today’s adolescents whose preoccupations tend to be rather different. One issue this thesis confronts is how such works can become relevant to teenagers saturated in late twentieth century culture. A myth I seek to dispel is that modern adolescents cannot respond aesthetically to great works of the literary heritage because of the disparities between the experiences of the poets and of the modern reader. Further, the issue of relevance necessitates a consideration of the range of poems offered to pupils. It is misguided to assume that only poems written in the late twentieth century can be relevant to today’s adolescents; poems written by poets such as Blake and Donne ‘can have a good deal more relevance to life today than contemporary poems which foreground the ephemeral preoccupations of the present’ (Benton, M. and Benton, P., 1998: vii). The emphasis on Literature from the past can only be justified where the focus is upon ‘the study and production of cultural and linguistic forms in terms of aesthetic, emotional and humane values’ (Davies, 1996: 75) because this ensures we ‘address the needs and realities of the world our young people actually inhabit’ (Davies, 1996: 9). In fact, a recent case study of a school where negative attitudes to poetry persisted records that the ‘range of poems studied was very limited, was too often restricted to light verse, and subject matter too close to pupils’ own experiences’ (QCA, 1998: 14). Fleming also suggests that there is the ‘danger that the diet of poetry in secondary school will become restricted to immediately accessible poems with predictable subject matter’ (Fleming, 1996: 39). If such assumptions continue to be made about pre-twentieth century texts, pupils will not be sufficiently challenged by their poetry diet and enthusiasm will be unlikely to emerge. Although a number of tried and tested approaches (Atkinson,

1995) for teaching pre-twentieth century poetry have been disseminated that are designed to help readers enjoy texts through active approaches such as hot-seating, TV productions and comic strips, mention is rarely made of reader response theory applied to the classroom setting (Griffith, 1987) or of the need for the reader to find such texts relevant. That opportunities be given for pupils to develop truly aesthetic responses, seems to have been almost forgotten.

Eventually, readers should come to see themselves in relation to their particular cultural and historical period and the text situated within its period, read by readers with different preoccupations, beliefs and lifestyles to their own. Contact needs to be made between reader and text in the present if the motivation is to exist for the reader to enquire about how readers in another time would have responded to that text. Pre-twentieth century poetry is challenging because, as well as developing personal response, specific information about the social, cultural and historical context and also about form, has to be acquired by pupils. Simply allowing pupils to 'make their own sense of a poem may mean they miss some of the important ideas expressed in it' (Trelawny-Ross, 1998: 45). Therefore, approaches to pre-twentieth century texts which ensure exam success and also foster personal or even aesthetic response are needed and should be founded on strategies that have proven successful in the classroom.

A qualitative and phenomenological approach is suitable when pupils' subjective perceptions are the focus of research; investigating how readers make sense of a poem and of other readers' readings demands a research approach that gives access to the development of interpretation. It has been noted that:

The phenomenologist views human behaviour - what people say and do - as a product of how people interpret their world. The task of the phenomenologist, and, for us, the qualitative methodologists, is to capture this process of interpretation (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975: 14).

Clearly, a qualitative approach is suitable for this research because quotations about 'experiences, attitudes, beliefs and thoughts - raw data from the empirical world' (Patton, 1990: 22) are most likely to yield knowledge about subjective perceptions. It is, of course, essential that any findings in such research are triangulated, a form of which is to study response to different texts, generated at various times and in

diverse ways to ensure the accuracy of judgements made about a reader. It follows then, that to use oral as well as written data, which constitute texts in their own right, achieves greatest credibility. Further, any category and concept formulation leading to conclusions and theorising should emerge from more than one source or text; for example, from questionnaires, formal and informal interviews, transcripts of paired dialogue, written statements, formal essays and informal journal entries.

2.3 Teachers.

Although teachers' expertise and enthusiasm are considered to be the 'most important determinants of successful work in poetry' (OFSTED, 1993: 8), it is acknowledged that the vast majority of teachers would rather teach a novel or a play. In fact, 'relatively few would favour poetry', because they have 'little confidence' that they possess the 'strategies and techniques to make it enjoyable and absorbing' and are unfamiliar with 'a large enough selection of material that works' (O'Brien, 1985: i). Teachers' lack of confidence with poetry is confirmed by the findings of Wade and Siddaway (1990). It therefore follows that the curriculum should be designed and implemented in such a way that both the expertise and enthusiasm of teachers can be used and developed in fostering enthusiastic readers. Denying teachers the right to exercise their professional judgement by choosing poems and imposing a narrow range of works in an exam board anthology, may not be the best way of maximising the enthusiasm and expertise of teachers. It does, of course, maximise the profits of commercial organisations such as the exam board (NEAB) and publisher (Heinemann). However, given that teachers at GCSE have to work with a prescribed selection of poems, ways of helping them achieve success with poetry within these constraints are needed.

In view of the published aids to help teachers cope with the demands of teaching pre-twentieth century poetry and the guides that the NEAB / Heinemann produce to accompany their anthology (Childs, 1997), it is necessary for teachers to be discriminating in the approaches that are used:

Given the variety and number of books available and the plethora of advice and classroom aids, it is vital for literature teachers to build their work upon principled activities and to avoid what Roger Knight (1989) tellingly labelled 'trivial pursuits' (Benton, M., 1992: 50).

Teachers can easily fall into the trap of ‘trivial pursuits’, of doing things with texts to keep students busy, whilst ensuring comprehension and can be ‘less concerned with the literature than what can be done to it or with it’ (Benton, M., 1992: 50). Equally, the ‘technique of systematic questioning about meanings may cause problems to some pupils who are defeated by the complexity of poetic associations’ and ‘may also leave the suggestion in pupils’ minds that paraphrasing is of prime importance’ (Wade, 1981: 43). It has also been suggested that because examinations require personal response, ‘controlled inductive questioning can no longer be justified’ (Fleming, 1992: 33). The methodologies adopted by many teachers are still, it seems, founded upon theories of comprehension and criticism which have militated against poetic appreciation in the classroom:

the combined forces of the criticism industry and the examination system effectively snuffed out much of this delight. ‘Practical Criticism’ became the method with sixth formers and undergraduates; comprehension exercises became the lot of school children (Benton, M., 1992: 78).

In poetry lessons particularly, where independent thought, originality of interpretation and personal or aesthetic response should be highly prized, it may not be advisable for teachers to always formulate ‘well defined outcomes’ in terms of learning content in advance. Indeed, we have been warned of the dangers of teachers ‘determining in advance what should happen or what should be discovered’ (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 167) because an overly prescriptive structure can lead to adolescents remaining scaffolded rather than emerging as independent learners. Yet, over-dominance in teachers can only be reduced by providing alternative, tried and tested methodologies of approaching poetry informed by the Vygotskian perspective that, ‘knowledge is social and is created in interaction’ (Daniels, 1993: xxvi). Peter Benton notes the importance of developing suitable strategies for pupils ‘to read poems, to engage with them actively and to talk without teacher domination’ (Benton, P., 1986: 33). Dillon argues that teacher domination is manifested in the questioning strategies they adopt and suggests that teachers asking too many questions is inimical to the development of independent learners because in the question-answer relationship ‘the answerer is passive, reactive and dependent’. Such

questioning can result in pupils who ‘do not become active, independent inquiring learners’ (Dillon, 1988: 206) because they are not the ones asking the questions. If the locus of control always resides with the teacher, pupils will remain dependent and Davis et al (1999) are right to remind us that students should not merely reproduce or report knowledge, which is so often the case, but should generate knowledge. Researching the role of the teacher of pre-twentieth century poetry is necessary if these texts are not to continue creating ‘false expectations in teachers’ who expect these poems to ‘present problems for reading and understanding’ (Atkinson, 1995: 50). Geoff Barton (1994) has observed that if the past is another country our aim should be to dispatch explorers rather than sightseers to this far off land so that pupils are gripped by a sense of adventure and enthusiasm. However, the method of travel we provide for our pupils determines what they see:

There is a price pupils always pay for the convenience of ‘packaged tours’ : because they are not expected to make sense of a poem for themselves, they are unlikely to learn to ‘travel’ on their own (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 7).

The challenge with such works is how one moves from personal response to communicating the ideas required for the examination so that pupils see their earlier, often erroneous, interpretations as part of the process of understanding rather than as ‘wrong answers’. Although teachers may feel this tension between encouraging personal response and teaching what critics consider poems to be about, this dual aim is entirely congruent with the examination questions set by this board. One of the sample examination questions to accompany ‘The Way We Live’ section of the NEAB Anthology in the 1998 GCSE English literature examination required personal response and also specific knowledge. Candidates were asked ‘Which poems in this group make you think about the rights and wrongs of life around you?’ (Appendix H). The advice given in a bullet point was to consider ‘what the poems make you think about in your life’. Yet, specific knowledge was also required as candidates were asked to consider ‘similarities and differences between modern and earlier ideas’ and also ‘the writer’s purposes in the poem’. Teachers, therefore, have to ensure that social and cultural information relevant to the poem is assimilated by readers and concerns have been expressed about how this is done because ‘to impart this information is not a likely way

to increase enthusiasm for the poetry' (Protherough, 1986: 125). How teachers can successfully approach pre-twentieth century poetry is clearly worth researching.

How teachers organise the study of poetry is also significant. For instance, infrequent reading of poetry is considered to contribute to its unpopularity, yet many teachers still allocate a certain portion of a term or even year to the study of poetry, rather than ensuring that pupils experience the genre frequently, even every week. Frequent reading often reduces pupils' perceptions of poetry's strangeness and enables young readers to come to terms with the genre gradually. Yet, in most classrooms, poetry still receives 'insufficient attention' (OFSTED, 1993: 2). Indeed, a recent case study in a school where negative experiences of poetry were prevalent revealed that there were 'lengthy periods of time without poetry in lessons' (QCA, 1998). Limited opportunities for oral work and an overemphasis on writing can also have detrimental effects on pupils' motivation because learners clarify their own ideas by communicating with others (Barnes and Todd, 1977). If paired work, one of the richest sources of such activity with poetry, is not employed sufficiently by teachers, its benefits cannot be appreciated. Readers who do not have a clear understanding of the process of response, of *how* to read, may also be less likely to adopt the appropriate stance and a tolerance of ambiguity. Yet, it is easy for teachers to study poetry with adolescents without spending sufficient time with them on how poetry can be read. Often, however, the notion of aesthetic reading and of poetry as art is not taught and students do not have the vocabulary or the 'descriptive and evaluative predicates essential to art appreciation' (Wilson, 1980: 32). Ensuring our pupils adopt an appropriate reading stance can, however, be facilitated by ensuring they acquire an explicit notion of what poetry is and why they are reading it, so they develop an understanding of the process they are engaged in (Pike, 2000b).

There is, clearly, a need to theorise response-oriented approaches to pre-twentieth century poetry as the study of such literature has been mandatory since 1995. Such theorising must, however, emerge from a synthesis of theory and the study of real readers' responses:

For the teacher of English, the study of literature must involve not only consideration of the literary work itself but also concern for the way in which students respond to a literary work (Squire, 1964: 1).

The aims of the teacher-researcher of English following such advice are congruent as both are concerned with understanding processes at work in real situations. As widespread antipathy to the genre exists, a study of how this situation can be improved is necessary; it is appropriate that such a study be carried out by a teacher-researcher because ‘research carried out by practitioners into their own practices’ (Kemmis, 1993: 177) with the specific aim of improving practice is most likely to lead to the development of strategies that can be applied in the classroom. It is fitting that such teacher research is employed to solve a ‘response’ problem because this research method is:

based on a rejection of what has come to be called transmission teaching, a form of pedagogy which presupposes that education involves this transfer of knowledge and skills from teacher to pupils (Hammersley, 1984: 221).

It has been noted by Carr (1993) that the dialectical relationship in action-research between theory and practice is, in fact, the hallmark of ‘praxis’ in the Aristotelian sense (Aristotle, 1955), carried out by a ‘phronimos’, who exhibits a combination of good judgement and action as a result of ‘deliberating well’ or ‘phronesis’. Evidently, the action-research method drawn upon here considerably predates Kurt Lewin’s (1946) theory of social interaction. In fact, the focus on developing ‘concepts’ through the ‘interplay of data collection and analysis’, known as ‘grounded theory’, (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 178) can be conceived of as the practice of ‘phronesis’ or ‘deliberating well’ leading to both practical action and theorising. As ‘actors’ understandings are crucial in understanding educational action’ (Kemmis, 1993: 181) a teacher-researcher, operating within the qualitative paradigm, has numerous advantages over an outside researcher and is best placed to gain access to this understanding. Having a visiting teacher involved in research where conclusions are drawn independently may be considered ideal, as strangers’ perceptions are valuable and can also facilitate triangulation and ensure the validity of qualitative research. It has, however, been suggested that the teacher is more able to interpret classroom data than a stranger (Stenhouse, 1975) because an outside researcher observing classroom events may not fully understand the causes of particular actions even if the researcher is taking a qualitative approach. It has been suggested (Schofield, 1993: 105) that qualitative research is like a ‘movie’ whereas quantitative research is more likely to produce a

‘snapshot’. However, even qualitative research runs the risk of producing a series of snapshots if the researcher has not seen the start of the film or a particularly influential episode. A researcher permanently based within the research setting is ideal because the closest a teacher can get to the ‘movie’ by carrying out a longitudinal study so that changes in the situation which occur over time can be experienced. Although simply being in the child’s environment as a teacher, rather than removing the child to an alien testing environment, will not automatically ensure that the truth about a situation is obtained, the reactivity generated by a stranger is avoided in teacher-research if the teacher is permanently based in the institution where the research is carried out. The long term presence of an observer such as a teacher also minimises reactivity which is a significant threat to validity. A ‘teacher’s subjective perception’ (Stenhouse, 1975: 35) is valuable because procedural, if not ontological, objectivity can be attained by an insider who is a teacher-researcher. It must also be remembered that the aim of action research is not simply to improve practice but to achieve ‘understanding of the practice and the situation in which the practice occurs’ (Kemmis, 1993: 182).

To ascertain how keen readers can be fostered, the teacher-researcher is more concerned with exploring processes than the frequency of their occurrence, rendering solely quantitative methods inappropriate. Consequently, a similar methodology to that of Edwards and Mercer (1987) and of Barnes and Todd (1977), involving extensive audio-recording and transcription of situated classroom discourse, is appropriate given the focus on fostering ‘keen readers’. It is unlikely that any linguistic analysis would be of use because ‘linguistics, in brief, is not a hermeneutic; it has little explanatory value when we come to enquire into the effects of literary language’ (Freund, 1987: 75). The teacher-researcher investigating the development of ‘keenness’ in readers is considered to be more likely to understand the complexity of the processes involved by engaging in careful transcription and reflection about meaning, than by studying the grammatical type of utterance the meaning is framed within. Equally, Mercer (1991) has noted that when Edwards and he were researching Common Knowledge (1987) they could not pursue their ‘interests by conducting a large scale, statistical analysis of classroom interactions in which only a relatively superficial consideration of the exchange of meaning would be possible’ (Mercer, 1991: 42). The same argument is appropriate with this research. It is the ‘qualitative nature of classroom talk and its content’ (Mercer,

1991: 42) that is likely to provide clues about how keen readers of pre-twentieth century poetry can be fostered.

3. Method.

3.1. Readers.

Six readers were chosen for my study who were not 'keen', in both senses of the word, on poetry at the start. Previous studies (Kintgen, 1985; Teasey, 1988, Myzsor, 1993) have attempted to understand reading by researching those who enjoy it and do it well. In contrast, my readers generally expressed antipathy towards the genre at the start of their GCSE course, which is why they were chosen, given that the aim of the project was to establish how improvement in attitudes could be achieved. To give an idea of the level of keenness demonstrated at the start of Year 10, pupils' comments and also numerical scores are helpful. The value of quantitative scoring to ensure maximum validity in qualitative research (Phillips, 1993) was employed in my study. Pupils scored each poem read in their journals and used the same system to indicate their views of the genre in four questionnaires (Appendix E) between the start of Year 10 and end of Year 11. A simple scale of 1 - 10 (1= loathed it, 5= it was okay, 10= really enjoyed it) was used and pupils also expressed their views qualitatively, in words. At the start, Peter was the most negative about poetry and explained 'I don't like it. I still hate it - 2/10'. Steve's response was 'I find poetry quite boring, I personally feel it is pointless - 4/10'. Adam, who also awarded poetry 4/10 explained 'I haven't detested poetry but I don't particularly like it much'. Rob reflected 'I didn't enjoy the poetry a lot but it wasn't awful - 5/10'. Similarly, Josie explained 'I don't really enjoy reading poetry - 5/10' and Anna, despite giving poetry 6/10 noted 'I don't hate poetry but I don't love it'. Such information gives an indication of the motivational keenness of the six readers in relation to poetry at the start of their course.

In Year 11, two years later, generally improved attitudes to poetry were evident (Appendix E) although all six readers showed far greater keenness in response to particular pre-twentieth century poems than they did for the genre as a whole. Anna and Peter showed the most marked improvement in attitude to the genre. Peter's view at the end of Year 11 was 'The poetry this year has been more enjoyable than the last two

years. I have become a lot more positive towards poetry - 6/10'. This was a considerable improvement given his original antipathy. Anna reflected 'I feel more positive about poetry - least I like the poems we have studied - 9/10'. Similarly, Josie stated 'I definitely feel more positive about poetry now 6/10' and Adam reflected 'I have enjoyed poetry more because I have been able to understand more about them and the ideas used - 5/10'. Rob explained 'Since Year 9 my attitude has been more positive as more poetry has been studied' and he reflected 'some poetry, mainly pre-twentieth century was quite good - 6/10'. Steve appeared from the questionnaire to be the most negative and wrote 'it takes a great deal of effort to make myself read the stuff - 2/10'. However, he had very positive reactions to some pre-twentieth century poems as demonstrated by his journal scores and comments (Appendix D).

Detailed information about the personality and identity of each reader is given in Chapter 5, 'Six Adolescents', because the identity of readers is used to inform analysis of their reading. This valuable qualitative data is too extensive to include in this chapter and is derived from personal writing (Appendix F), observations (Appendix I), journals (Appendix D) and taped conversations (Appendix C).

The pupils' intellectual keenness in terms of their ability and attainment can be formed using national assessment data. One source of quantitative data available on each reader at the end of Year 9 was the end of Key Stage 3 examination results. 'Normal' progress is considered to be around 1.7 National Curriculum levels per Key Stage (QCA, 1997). The term 'value-added' denotes progress in excess of such 'expected' improvement: 'Value added analyses compare the progress made by individual pupils and groups of pupils between two stages in their education with the average progress made by all pupils' (QCA, 1997: 10). Consequently, the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies and pupils' progress can also be evaluated through the use of value added data. In general, significant progress was made by my six readers far in excess of what would be considered normal progress. In addition, four CAT (Cognitive Ability Test) scores from Year 9 indicating ability in an NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) test were available which the school used for monitoring pupils' attainment against ability. The four CAT scores were VRQ (Verbal Reasoning Quotient) Quantitative and NVRQ (Non-Verbal Reasoning Quotient). A mean score was also available which enabled a

prediction to be made of each pupil's potential GCSE English grade based on an NFER survey (Appendix G). It must be remembered, in using this data, that CAT scores indicate potential ability and KS3 SAT results indicate actual attainment at the age of 14. For example, a mean CAT score of 125 - 130 indicates that attaining a grade A in English is possible and mean CAT scores of 95 - 114 indicate that a grade C was possible.

An idea of the overall intellectual keenness of each reader is provided by such statistical information. Intellectual keenness in relation to poetry in Year 9 can be gauged from readers' essays on First World War poetry before and after teaching (Appendix K). Steve's mean CAT score of 113 indicated that, according to the NFER, he could hope to achieve a C grade in most GCSE subjects including English. Steve's quantitative score (116) was the highest although his non verbal reasoning (110) and verbal reasoning (113) were close to this. In Steve's Year 9 English SAT he achieved a Level 6 with 70 marks, equivalent to a grade D at GCSE and indicating, if he made progress at the rate of one level per year, he could hope for a B at GCSE. When mean CAT score and SAT result are compared Steve appeared to be making good progress relative to his ability at the end of Key Stage 3.

Two years later at the end of Year 11, Steve had made even better progress than his attainment in Year 9 indicated could be expected, achieving excellent results in English Literature in particular. At GCSE, Steve attained an A grade in English with 149 marks (A = 147 - 165). In English Literature Steve attained an A* with 126 marks (A* = 124+). These results indicate value added of three grades in English Literature and two grades in English if CAT scores are used to predict and of two grades for English Literature and one grade for English if SAT results are used to predict.

Rob's mean CAT score was 113.6 indicating that he was capable of attaining C grades in most GCSE subjects including English. However, according to the NFER (Appendix G), children with CAT scores of 115 - 124 could expect B grades and Rob's CAT score was close to this band. Rob's verbal reasoning (122) was by far his highest score and his non verbal (112) and quantitative (107) were significantly lower. In Rob's Year 9 English SAT, aged 14, he attained a level 7 with 92 marks, equivalent to a C at GCSE and indicating that, assuming progress of one level per year, he could hope for an A grade at GCSE, aged sixteen. When mean CAT score

and SAT result are compared, it appears that Rob was achieving beyond his ability and demonstrating pleasing progress at fourteen. It must be remembered, though, that Rob's verbal reasoning CAT score of 122 was high and that the NFER system for predicting relies on mean scores and not VRQ scores.

Despite Rob's high attainment in Year 9, he still exceeded expectations based on these results by the end of Year 11, especially in English Literature. Rob gained an A grade in English with 158 marks ($A = 147 - 165$). In English Literature, Rob received an A* with 127 marks ($A^* = 124+$). These results represent value added of three grades in English if CAT scores are used to predict or one grade in English Literature and performance in line with ability in English if SAT results are used as predictors.

Anna's mean CAT score of 110.6 indicated that she could achieve C grades in most subjects at GCSE including English. Anna's quantitative CAT score (112) was marginally higher than her verbal reasoning (110) and her non verbal reasoning (110). In Anna's Year 9 English SAT, aged 14, she attained a level 7 with 82 marks, equivalent to a D/C grade at GCSE and indicating that, assuming progress of one level a year she could expect a B/A grade at GCSE, aged sixteen. When mean CAT score and SAT result are compared it appears that Anna was achieving results beyond those suggested by her ability in English indicating value added at the age of 14.

By the end of Year 11, Anna achieved even better results than her Year 9 attainment suggested was possible particularly in English Literature. At GCSE Anna attained an A grade in English with 152 marks ($A = 147 - 165$). In GCSE English Literature, Anna attained an A* with 125 marks ($A^* = 124+$). These results represent value added of three grades for English Literature and of two grades for English if CAT scores are used as predictors or of one to two grades value added for English Literature and performance in him with ability or a grade above this for English if SAT result is taken.

Josie's mean CAT score of 109 indicated she could achieve C grades at GCSE in most subjects including English. Josie's verbal reasoning CAT score (120) was far above her quantitative (98) and above her non verbal (109). In Josie's Year 9 English SAT, aged 14, she achieved a level 6 with 71 marks, equivalent to a D grade at GCSE and indicated that, assuming progress of one level per year, she could

achieve a B at GCSE, aged 16. When CAT scores and SAT result are compared it appears that Josie was achieving results beyond her ability indicating value added at 14.

At the end of her GCSE course two years later, Josie attained higher results than her Year 9 performance suggested. At GCSE Josie attained an A grade in English with 149 marks (A = 147 - 165). In GCSE English Literature Josie gained an A with 115 marks (A = 109 - 123). These results indicate value added of two grades in both English and English Literature if prediction is based on CAT scores and of one grade in each subject if the SAT result is used as a predictor.

Adam's mean CAT score was 113.3 indicating that he should be able to attain a C grade in most GCSE subjects including English. Adam's verbal reasoning (115) was higher than his non-verbal reasoning (108) and his quantitative score (117) was his highest. In Adam's Year 9 English SAT he attained a level 5 (GCSE equivalent grade E) with 52 marks placing him as 'average' within the population of 14 year olds and indicating that if he improved by one level a year, a level 7 or a C grade would be possible in GCSE English at sixteen. Both CAT score and SAT result indicated that a C grade would be attainment in line with ability and that he was performing in line with his ability at 14.

At the end of Year 11, Adam attained better results in English than his Year 9 results indicated would be possible. Adam attained a B grade in English with 139 marks (B = 128 - 146). In English Literature Adam also attained a B with 99 marks (B = 94 - 108). These results represent value-added of one grade in GCSE English and of one grade in GCSE English Literature.

Peter's mean CAT score was 119 indicating that he was capable of attaining B grades in most GCSE subjects including English. Peter's verbal reasoning, non verbal reasoning and quantitative scores were all the same (119). In Peter's Year 9 English SAT, aged 14, he attained a level 5 with 54 marks (GCSE equivalent grade E) placing him as 'average' within the population of 14 year olds and indicating that if he improved by one level a year in English, a level 7 or a grade C would be possible in GCSE English, aged sixteen. When CAT score and SAT result are compared, it is clear that Peter was underachieving by one grade in relation to his ability at the age of 14. What is interesting about Peter is that he was underachieving

the most of the six readers and also had the most negative attitude towards poetry. Of the six readers his attitude to poetry improved the most and so did his attainment.

Peter was the most dramatic over-performer if his SAT and GCSE results are compared. After very disappointing results in Year 9, he achieved excellent results at the end of Year 11, particularly in English Literature. Peter attained a B grade in English with 143 marks, missing an A grade by only 4 marks (A = 147 - 165). In GCSE English Literature Peter attained an A* with 129 marks (A* = 124+). These results represent value added of three grades in English Literature and of one grade in English if the SAT result is used as a predictor, or value added of two grades in English Literature and performance in line with ability in English, if CAT scores are used as predictors. It must be remembered that CAT scores indicate potential ability and SAT results indicate actual attainment at 14.

Four readers (Steve, Rob, Anna and Josie) were reasonably 'keen' intellectually in English at the start of their GCSE course, but were not 'keen' readers of poetry in the motivational sense. Two readers (Adam and Peter) were lacking both intellectual and motivational keenness if actual attainment as well as motivation is considered. Such readers were appropriate research subjects as the focus in this investigation was to explore how intellectual and motivational keenness could be improved.

It was decided that three pairs of readers who were already 'partners' in the classroom should be used as audio tapes of paired discourse would be an important source of data and 'studies of pair - talk' (Benton, M., 1988: 222) had been recommended. Choosing pairs that existed naturally meant that each pair had an easy relationship and could converse productively. The pairs were: Anna and Josie, Peter and Adam, Steve and Rob. In addition to emerging naturally as pairs they were chosen from my Year 9 English class because they were not 'keen' readers of poetry in the motivational sense and also because they all had a good attendance record needed to provide consistent data. During the pilot research in Year 9 (April - July 1996) readers' paired conversations in response to a range of First World War poetry had been recorded and analysed which proved that the pairs of readers chosen for the main stage of the research collaborated well together. Readers were also chosen who represented the widest spread of ability I could obtain within one class given the constraints of the setting system in operation in the institution. As this class was set

according to ability, readers from the top, middle and bottom of the group were chosen who had been awarded levels 5 to 7 in their Year 9 English SAT so that varying degrees of attainment were obtained. While, they did not fall across the full ability range, they were likely to cover the C to A grade band of attainment at GCSE. All six readers were from Set 2 out of 11 sets in a comprehensive school where 65% of pupils normally attained a C grade or better in GCSE English. For GCSE, Rob should have been in Set 1 and Adam and Peter were due to be in Set 3. All three remained in Set 2 thus ensuring a spread in ability between levels 5 and 7 at Key Stage 3. To be fair, I gave Rob the choice of being in Set 1 or Set 2 and told him his scores were good enough for Set 1. He chose to stay in Set 2 of his own accord. Data about attainment at GCSE was obtained from the examination board who also kindly returned candidates' scripts.

Similarly, pupils exhibiting a range of negative attitudes to poetry, from feeling it was just bearable to hating it, were chosen. It was thought that a strongly negative reader could develop differently to a moderately negative reader. As a detailed analysis of processes was to be undertaken, six was considered to be the maximum viable number of readers to be studied, especially as the research project entailed the study of situated classroom discourse during the four, forty-five minutes lessons pupils had with me each week. In order to ensure the research setting was as naturalistic as possible, my pupils followed a normal GCSE course and gave their consent for me to use their responses to poems in my research project at the end of their course. During their two year course the six readers were not aware that their GCSE work was intended for research purposes. This was done to avoid reactivity and to ensure I worked within the constraints of a normal GCSE course. The names of the readers have been changed to preserve their anonymity although they were happy for their real names to be used if I had so wished. Permission was also gained from the NEAB to quote material candidates produced in public examinations.

Of the six readers, four were boys and two girls because the greatest antipathy to poetry (QCA, 1998) is reportedly found in boys. As amelioration of negative attitudes was an integral element in the focus, any changes in male disaffection would be particularly valuable. Generally, because stable pairs from Year 9 were chosen, these tended to be single sex as at that stage in their

development, the closest friendships tended to exist between individuals of the same gender.

Overall, my intention was not to select six students who were typical and therefore representative of a larger aggregate but to choose readers, of average to above average ability, who were not keen on poetry and who could work together profitably in existing friendship pairs. As readers change over time, a longitudinal study across the entire length of the GCSE course was appropriate with pilot work in Year 9 as preparation. The readers attended a 1,400 pupil 11 - 18 comprehensive school in southern England and all came from middle class backgrounds. Their relationship with their English teacher tended, with the exception of Steve, to be amiable, but none of the readers came into the special relationship category that most teachers have with some pupils. They were not, for instance, involved in any extra-curricular activities I organised, such as a creative writing club.

Qualitative research is a high risk enterprise because the researcher does not know if anything will be discovered at the end of it and also does not know precisely which research tools will be used. As data emerged and progressive refinement occurred, different research tools were used that had not previously been considered. There was no guarantee, having chosen readers who were not keen on poetry, that they would become keen by the end of the project. Fortunately though, this thesis is not a discussion of strategies that were implemented in the attempt to foster keen readers and why none of them worked.

The pupils themselves prompted the most significant developments in the research as a loosely fixed research design was decided on at the start consisting of the Initial Response Sequence (IRS) of individual, paired and group work. For example, Steve's incomprehension about what poetry was and what it was for, revealed in an unplanned and informal interview well into the course, prompted me to explore literary theory with the group. Similarly, Josie's remarks that she tended to focus on mood in poems encouraged me to attempt to encourage all readers to reflect on their reading style and to draw conclusions about themselves as readers (Appendix C). The whole notion of personal reading style discussed in Chapter 7 had not been considered at the outset but emerged from the way different pupils began to develop differently as keen readers. These two areas resulted in some of the most rewarding aspects of my overall thesis: the use of literary theory at GCSE and the

construction of the personal transactional model including a typology of reading styles. Further triangulation occurred as my PGCE student, after observing the six readers for some time, concluded, for instance, that Steve lacked a concept of poetry and Josie worked through ‘mood’ (Appendix I). These were exactly the tentative conclusions I had also reached at that point. Such confirmation was heartening, because a visitor’s perception gained over some weeks corroborated my own.

The way my independent respondent validation worked was to generate hypotheses about readers myself and then to ask them to independently reflect on their process of reading, to see if they reached the same conclusions. Although their responses constituted my data because it showed their perception of themselves, the fact that these perceptions agreed indicated that my perceptions were, in fact, accurate. It was also important that the data pupils generated was collected at different times. During the two years, both oral and written work of different types was produced at different times and in different contexts to ensure further triangulation.

Six pupils were considered to be sufficient to examine, in practice, the models of literary theorists, such as Iser, Rosenblatt and Holland, concerning how readers read, and the theories of psychologists such as Vygotsky and Edwards and Mercer concerning how learners learn. A longitudinal study of the six readers was employed so that the transition that occurred in readers could be analysed.

3.2 Texts.

A range of texts was studied by readers for this research. The six readers read, responded to, discussed and wrote about the fifteen pre-twentieth century poems in the NEAB / Heinemann GCSE English and English Literature Anthology 1998 (Appendix A). Five poems by William Blake were studied for GCSE English: ‘The Tyger’, ‘The Lamb’, ‘A Poison Tree’, ‘London’ and ‘The Human Abstract’. Ten poems by various authors were studied for GCSE English Literature from different thematic areas: ‘The Despairing Lover’ by William Walsh and ‘The Lowest Trees have Tops’ by Sir Edward Dyer from the section ‘Hearts and Partners’; ‘The Twa Corbies’ (Anon) and ‘I am’ by John Clare from ‘Caught in Conflict’; ‘Jordan’ by George Herbert and ‘Nuns Fret Not’ from ‘Words’Worth’; ‘The Daffodils’ by

William Wordsworth and ‘The Sick Rose’ by William Blake from ‘Dancing in the Breeze’; ‘What is our Life?’ by Sir Walter Raleigh and ‘The Latest Decalogue’ by Arthur Hugh Clough from ‘The Way we Live’. However, in addition to these pre-twentieth century texts, the written and spoken responses of adolescents constitute texts which were also the subject of analysis.

An important source of data is the collection of audio recordings made of situated pair talk in response to the fifteen pre-twentieth century poems, the most important of which have been transcribed (Appendix C). Nearly fifty audio-tapes are available for inspection. In addition, transcripts were made of audio recorded interviews with pupils reflecting about their reading (Appendix B). Students’ writing about poetry, both in journals and formal essays, collected throughout their GCSE course has also been used. Details about the particular GCSE course followed by these students are included in Appendix A. The range of data listed below enabled a comprehensive picture of the development of each pupil’s response to emerge.

1. Initial annotation around pre-twentieth century poems. (Appendix D)
2. First journal entry made before discussion comprising a quantitative appreciation score as well as a qualitative explanation. (Appendix D)
3. Selected transcripts of taped paired conversation about poems (Appendix C) and transcripts from audio recording of occasional small group discussion, e.g. of six readers discussing ‘What is our Life?’ and ‘The Latest Decalogue’. (Appendix C)
4. Second journal entry made after paired and whole class discussion. (Appendix D)
5. Selected third journal entries for ‘What is our Life?’ and ‘The Latest Decalogue’ made after further teaching and learning. (Appendix D)
6. Interview about the process of reading carried out by PGCE student. (Appendix B)
7. Findings from four questionnaires administered throughout Year 10 and Year 11 about pupils’ attitudes and reactions to poems and rank orders of 15 pre-twentieth century poems and personal statement about preferences. (Appendix E)

8. Extracts from pupils' short stories and personal writing which enabled identity profiles to be constructed. (Appendix F)
9. Quantitative information on pupils such as KS3 and GCSE results. (Appendix G)
10. Practice exam scripts and official terminal GCSE exam scripts provided by NEAB. (Appendix H)
11. Selected notes, observations and journal entries by the teacher-researcher. (Appendix I)
12. Teaching materials. (Appendix J)

The sequence of work carried out on each of the fifteen poems in the Initial Response Sequence (IRS) was the same but only a few poems were studied in greater depth towards the end of the course as pupils prepared for their examination. There were three distinct phases of data collection or 'periods of immersion' (Patton, 1990: 47) where pupils responded to poetry (February - July 1997; September - December 1997; March - May 1998). This was interspersed with non poetry work which provided the balance, 'times of withdrawal and distance' (Patton, 1990: 47) followed by 'new experience of immersion in and intimacy with the program' (Patton, 1990: 47) which characterises action research. The outline of the two year GCSE course is included in Appendix A so that the poetry work can be seen in the context of the broad range of work undertaken at GCSE. What follows is a plan of the data collected from pupils' work with poetry.

DATA COLLECTED

2/9/96 - 20/12/96	
Year 10 Autumn Term	20/12/96 <i>Questionnaire</i>
6/1/97 - 26/3/97	
Year 10 Spring Term	26/2/97 <u>London</u> by Blake (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1 + 2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 5/3/97 <u>A Poison Tree</u> by Blake (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion (iv) Transcript. (Anna and Josie) 15-18/4/97 <u>What is our Life?</u> by Raleigh (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion (iv) Transcript. (Anna and Josie)
14/4/97 -23/7/97	
Year 10 Summer Term	10-13/6/97 <u>The Sick Rose</u> by Blake (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 10-13/6/97 <u>The Latest Decalogue</u> by Clough (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped

Year 10 Summer Term	paired discussion (iv) Transcript. (Anna and Josie; Steve and Rob; Adam and Peter; Peter and Harry) 16/6/97 <u>The Lamb</u> by Blake (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 14/7/97 <u>The Tyger</u> by Blake (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 23-27/7/97 <u>The Human Abstract</u> by Blake (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion (iv) Transcript. (Anna and Josie) 14/7/97 Personal Writing 14/7/97 <i>Questionnaire</i> 15/7/97 - 23/7/97 <u>Essay on 3 Blake poems.</u>
Year 11 Autumn Term	3/9/96 - 19/12/97 22/9/97 <u>The Lowest Trees</u> by Dyer (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 30/9/97 <u>The Despairing Lover</u> by Walsh (i) Annotation

Year 11 Autumn Term	(ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 6-7/10/97 <u>The Daffodils</u> by Wordsworth (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 15-16/10/97 <u>Jordan</u> by Herbert (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion (iv) Transcript. (Anna and Josie) 15-16/10/97 <u>Nuns Fret Not</u> by Wordsworth (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 21/22/10/97 <u>Twa Corbies</u> by Anon (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion 21-22/10/97 <u>I am</u> by Clare (i) Annotation (ii) Journal Entries 1+2 (iii) Audio taped paired discussion (iv) Transcript. (Anna and Josie) 18/11/97 The Latest Decalogue / What is our Life? - 3rd journal entries.

	19/11/97 The Latest Decalogue - Audio tape / Transcript (Teacher with Anna and Peter; Teacher with Adam and Rob) <u>26/11/97 MOCK EXAM 2 Blake essays, 1 Way We Live essay.</u> 11/12/97 Rank Order of 15 pre-twentieth century poems. 11/12/97 Personal statement explaining rank order of 15 pre-twentieth century poems. <i>15/12/97 Questionnaire</i>
5/1/98 - 3/4/98	
Year 11 Spring Term	5/3/98 Informal, unplanned interview with Steve. 25/3/98 Researcher journal notes on teaching of literary theory 'New Criticism to Post Structuralism' - What is a poem? (diagrams on board). 3/98 PGCE student's observations of 4 of 6 readers. 3/98 The Latest Decalogue - Audio tape / Transcript (Teacher and six readers) 1/4/98 Pupils' Poetics Interviews by PGCE student six readers' views of literary theory (i) Audio tape (ii) Transcript.
20/4/98 - 22/7/98	
Year 11 Summer Term	2/4/98 Essay 1 - Way We Live 30/4/98 Essay 2 - Way We Live 7/5/98 Essay 3 - Way We Live 12/5/98 Essay 4 - Way We Live 14/5/98 Essay 5 - Way We Live 15/5/98 Informal, unplanned interview with Steve - notes/rough transcript <i>20/5/99 Questionnaire</i>
	GCSE TERMINAL EXAMINATION SCRIPTS FROM NEAB

In the Initial Response Sequence (IRS) the poem was read aloud twice to the class by the teacher and then pupils spent roughly five minutes annotating the text which would go into their journals. Their instructions (Appendix D) were to allow the text to function as 'stimulus' as well as 'blueprint' and to write their thoughts or feelings down where they occurred. The annotation was numbered in the order it

appeared on the page as can be seen from Appendix D. The instructions pupils had at the front of their journals are given in Appendix D. Simply annotating a poem with interpretations, associations and other comments may seem like an easy option but was, in fact, a challenge as they had to be pro-active rather than passively responding to a series of questions (Appendix K). After individually annotating the poem, pupils completed a first journal entry (1st JE) without conferring. Pupils were similarly encouraged to record in the journal 'stimulus' as well as 'blueprint' responses and also to give the poem a score out of 10 (1= loathing, 5 = okay, 10 = very enjoyable) with a justification of their score in words. Journal entries were completed fairly quickly, normally in about five minutes, and were confidential, allowing pupils to respond in the security that their work would not be read to the class unless they gave permission. They did, however, permit me to use this data for research purposes. Following this, armed with journal entry and annotated poem, pupils spent about fifteen minutes in pairs discussing the poem and tape recorded their conversation. The very best of such conversations, they were informed, would be recorded as a paired En 1 (Speaking and Listening) GCSE coursework assessment. This was an incentive for pupils but not a threat. They were told they would not be penalised if they were struggling with a poem and were consequently less articulate than at other times because that particular conversation would not be used as an assessment. Only their best conversations would be recorded as coursework. In these conversations, readers had considerable freedom to focus on certain lines or phrases rather than others and to say about them what they wished. They did not follow a list of prompts to help them converse and were responsible for structuring their conversations within the usual time frame, normally quarter of an hour. The tapes of these conversations are texts in their own right and constitute important data in this research. All paired conversations were carefully listened to in order to locate sections for transcription and closer analysis. The criteria for selecting extracts for transcription was straightforward. If it was germane to the research focus on the development of keenness and was to be included in the thesis, it was transcribed. I was particularly interested in transcribing original conversations about 'The latest Decalogue' and 'What Is Our Life?' because these poems were the focus of greatest attention and were discussed later in the course as they were to be written about in the terminal examination. After this paired conversation, a whole class discussion lasting up to a

quarter of an hour took place which the teacher joined. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to audio record whole class discussions. Following whole class discussion a second journal entry (2nd JE) was made as pupils' views often changed as a result of hearing their peers' readings of a poem. Pupils became accustomed to the IRS of individual annotation, 1st JE, paired discussion, whole class discussion and 2nd JE which provided appropriate pace and variety.

The poems in the section 'The Way we Live' including the pre-twentieth century poems 'What Is Our Life?' by Raleigh and 'The Latest Decalogue' by Clough, were studied in greater depth because the six readers' first and second journal entries indicated that they preferred these poems to other pre-twentieth century poems in the anthology. Appendix E contains a chart of first and second journal entry scores for each of the ten poems in the literature section and shows the popularity of these two poems. Questionnaires were filled out at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms in Year 10 (20/12/96 and 14/7/97) and Year 11 (15/12/97 and 20/5/98). Personal statements reflecting on their full journals were made in December 1997 and interviews about pupils' perceptions of themselves as readers in April 1998 were transcribed in full as this provided valuable data. In addition, pupils' first and last poetry essays for GCSE Literature were examined so that developments could be analysed. Triangulation was achieved by collecting data of different sorts in different ways at different times to ensure maximum validity.

In the end, such a mass of data was collected that, in common with another longitudinal qualitative study of peoples' views, 'patterns appeared fairly readily' (Nias, 1993: 142). Although some ready-made categories such as Rosenblatt's 'stimulus' already existed, theories about a reader's personal reading style emerged naturally from the data. Such ideas, which eventually led to the construction of a new model of reading (Chapter 7), are therefore examples of 'grounded theory' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The range of texts collected was diverse and even the fifteen pre-twentieth century poems that generated other texts (such as transcripts) represented a broad range and, whereas six were by one poet, Blake, others were studied as the first and only work read by a particular poet.

Some of the interviews were formal (Appendix B) and planned. Others, such as Steve's conversation in the foyer (Appendix I), were initiated by pupils and were quite unplanned. Indeed, the full range of texts to be collected in this research

project was not planned at the start. It was not anticipated that pupils' ideas about aesthetic reading and literary theory would be evaluated in a GCSE oral and collected as data, because teaching literary theory was not on the agenda at the start and was only implemented as a result of reflection about pupils' needs for a functional definition of poetry in response to discussion with them. Similarly, it was not envisaged that pupils would reflect by writing a personal statement, upon completing their journals, about the patterns that had emerged in themselves as readers. The decisions about which texts to collect and when to collect them, developed from analysis of data that had already been collected. Although the pre-twentieth century texts focussed on in greatest detail were 'The Latest Decalogue' and 'What is our Life?', it was not decided that these texts would be the focus of attention at the start of the course. As the aim was to create keen readers of pre-twentieth century poems, only after all fifteen had been read, was the decision made about which texts could potentially offer the keenest responses. Of all six thematic sections, scores for 'The Way We Live' were highest and therefore these texts were the focus of greater attention. The responses of the pupils together with the teacher's judgement and reflection determined the texts to be studied in greater depth.

Because some texts (interviews and paired / group discussion) were oral texts that were subsequently transcribed and others were written in a variety of forms (journals, statements, essays) the necessary triangulation was achieved with texts (3.2.) as well as with pupils (3.1) and teachers (3.3). Also, in addition to some texts being formal and others informal, some were created under timed conditions and others were not. For instance, conversations between peers were normally terminated by the pupils when they ran out of things to say, whereas only five minutes was allowed for journals. The mass of data was useful because different sources enabled a more accurate picture to be constructed of each reader and of the reading process.

3.3 Teachers.

The research was carried out by the teacher-researcher although some interviews and observations were carried out by the teacher's PGCE student, although she was briefed in detail about the areas for questioning in advance. It was appropriate, given the focus of the research to improve a situation and foster 'keen'

readers, that it was carried out by a teacher-researcher performing action-research, because ‘action research is primarily concerned with change, being grounded in the idea that development and innovation are an essential part of professional practice’ (Altrichter et al, 1993: 201). This approach was appropriate, not only because it was part of my professional practice but also, because ‘action-research is appropriate whenever specific knowledge is required for a specific problem in a specific situation; or when a new approach is to be grafted onto an existing system’ (Cohen and Mannion, 1994: 194). Indeed, action-research was especially suitable as it contributed to ‘curriculum development and improvements in the practical situation under research by developing the quality of teaching and learning through new and successful action research strategies’ (Altrichter et al, 1993: 207).

The role of the teacher was also a focus of the research as previous research had concluded by recommending ‘studies of the teacher’s role in the reader response process’ (Benton, M., 1988: 222). There are, evidently, many advantages of being an insider when conducting such a longitudinal study as this. By the end of the data collection I had taught the students, whose responses constitute my data, for nearly every day of their school lives for three consecutive years; we had spent over four hundred hours in the same classroom together and I had seen them mature between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. However, while such insider status did, indubitably, have advantages (Kemmis, 1993) it was also necessary to beware of the threats to validity this posed and to preserve my analytic distance. It proved to be easier to maintain such distance than I had originally thought because as soon as my data collection was completed I moved to be Head of the Faculty of English, Communications and Drama in another school in the same county. Consequently, during the final phase of data analysis I was no longer in contact with my six readers. Being geographically removed from their educational setting did facilitate objectivity and reflection. It is, however, important to realise the subjectivity inherent in perception and the impossibility of ontological objectivity for ‘we are concerned with the development of a sensitive and self-critical subjective perspective and not with an aspiration to unattainable objectivity’ (Stenhouse, 1975: 35). This was facilitated by my reflection upon action and by regular discussions with my supervisor, Professor Michael Benton, who could offer a different perspective as a result of being outside the research setting.

Some consideration of the individual researcher carrying out the research is essential if true validity is to be obtained yet most 'social science and educational research methods textbooks have abstracted the researcher from the process of research in the same way as have natural science textbooks' (Walford, 1991: 2). While the researcher must achieve procedural objectivity by applying rigorous checks to ensure that maximum validity is achieved, it is necessary for some information about the researcher to be communicated so that something is known about the lens through which events have been viewed. Arguably, this is particularly important when conducting research into English teaching as, 'English teachers' beliefs about English teaching ... are both deeply rooted and highly influential on what goes on' (Davies, 1996: 9). Recognising my own identity is an important element in the research because it illuminates the social dimension of my study.

Reid and Hill observe that most English teachers prefer teaching novels or drama to poetry (1985) and I am, in this respect, therefore, untypical of the population of English specialists in secondary schools. That the chosen area for this doctoral research is poetry teaching is indicative of my interests. I particularly enjoy reading pre-twentieth century poetry and had moved to the school that was the research setting to co-ordinate the A level English Literature course in a newly created sixth form. Although my enthusiasm for poetry would have been easily detected by pupils, it is not of overriding significance as the pedagogy developed in this thesis requires a teacher who is prepared to facilitate the understanding of pupils rather than an enthusiast who is a widely read poetry 'expert'. The teacher's views about how children read and learn are also particularly important. Equally important are the teacher's views about how pre-twentieth century poetry should be approached. My intention was not to perpetuate passive learning as 'traditional teaching of English literature has been attacked because it creates in the pupil a mood of passivity, an instinctive submission to authority' (Cox, 1991: 78). After a fairly traditional English degree at Leeds University and a PGCE course at Nottingham University in 1989, my views were similar to those expressed by the 'liberal humanist' teachers in Davies' study as I 'advocated notions such as personal growth, essentially through the study of Literature and the engagement with imaginative, expressive writing' (Davies, 1996: 26) although between the pilot phase and the main study, I began to place increased emphasis on pupils as well as

texts. The shift in my approach to teaching poetry occurred, to encompass a pedagogy based on theories of reading and response, as a result of some extensive reading of reader response theory and classroom research. Consequently, my revised conception of poetry in English had to be worked out in the classroom. The absolute necessity of translating idealistic aspirations into specific practice, if they are to benefit pupils is clear:

If one is not forced into working out the practical implication of one's aims - which involves thinking about how they might be translated into desirable outcomes for all students - then there is every chance that the feel-good satisfaction of boasting about the 'humanizing' effect of one's work are not likely to lead to much actual good in the classroom (Davies, 1996: 29).

Rather than starting with a particular hypothesis to test, 'inductive analysis' was performed during my longitudinal study and 'grounded theory' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), such as the model of reading described in Chapter 10, developed during the research. Progressive focussing also occurred and facilitated what has been termed an 'escalation of insights' (Lacey, 1976) throughout the stages of my investigation. This led to a reappraisal of my approach to literature teaching.

My pilot research in the last term of Year 9 (April to July 1996) focussed on pupils' paired conversations in response to Owen's and Sassoon's First World War poetry while following a prepared worksheet intended to guide their understanding. Analysis of the worksheets that accompanied some poems (Appendix K) illustrates that a major emphasis was upon comprehension and criticism. For example, the line 'Fondly thrilled by tales of dirt and danger' in 'Glory of Women', was followed by the questions: What are the women 'Fondly thrilled' by? Why are the women 'Fondly thrilled' by this? Why is the word 'thrilled' used? What do you associate with this word? Although members of the class did respond personally and even aesthetically to this line, despite the comprehension and criticism approach adopted, analysis of the pilot transcripts indicated that the most successful responses were those in which pupils used their own life experiences to interpret the poem. For instance, the phrase 'Fondly thrilled by tales of dirt and danger' was only fully appreciated when students recalled situations in their own lives where danger could be exciting. Steve struggled to understand this part of the poem until he thought of the 'thrillers' on television he liked to watch where danger produced excitement.

Similarly, Anna and Josie only made sense of this phrase when they thought of an outward bound course in which they had participated, remembering the thrill of being scared by the danger they felt abseiling for the first time. Following the analysis of data, my practice was re-evaluated and an approach was adopted in Year 10 and Year 11 which owed more to notions of reading and response than to the concepts of comprehension and criticism. An important motive for the shift in emphasis was the desire to create 'keen readers'.

Having a mature student following a two year PGCE with the Open University, who was also interested in literary theory, as she had just completed an English degree, was advantageous. My research needs and the course requirements of both my pupils and my student teacher combined. She had to complete observations of selected pupils and reflect about them, so my six readers were the obvious choice. The six pupils had to produce written and oral work for their GCSE course which was also used as data. It was envisaged at the start of the research that I would ask a colleague to do some observation to achieve further triangulation, but the placement of a PGCE student made this unnecessary. Just as my readers changed over time so did I. The value of a longitudinal study is that such change can be reflected upon.

As KS3 and KS4 work was assessed externally, I also had the benefit of other teacher's views of my pupils' abilities who were outsiders as they were examiners and therefore did not know the pupils personally. An external award of an A* grade to Peter was valuable because it was objective. Whereas I wanted him to become keen, the examiner's task was simply to assess his work as accurately as possible. Similarly, with internal examination essays, another teacher assessed the essays of my six readers to ensure the accuracy of my marking.

As a researcher who was a full-time teacher, with curriculum management responsibilities, it was frequently necessary for analysis to take place at the same time as data collection. Having breaks between stages of fieldwork was, therefore, useful and facilitated reflection. Competing agendas between researcher and subjects was not an issue as pupils gained higher grades as a result of my research than they were likely to, had I not been carrying out a research project.

THE STUDY: PART A - READERS

The account of the longitudinal study has been divided into two complementary parts: Part A - Readers and Part B - Reading. The first part focusses on the individuals whose reading was studied. The second part has a greater emphasis on the processes involved in reading. While any such division is artificial, it provides clarity and a well defined structure for elaborating my thesis.

Part A - Readers is divided into four chapters. Chapter 4, 'Reading Readers', is methodological and develops some of the concepts outlined in Chapter 3 concerning research methods. Essentially, it proposes that the reading process can only be understood through a recognition of the individual who is reading. In Chapter 5, 'Six Adolescents', the individuals who were studied reading are described and certain identity themes in each of their lives are outlined. This knowledge is then used to inform the understanding of each pupil as a reader in Chapter 6, 'Six Readers'. Finally, a new model of the reading process is described in Chapter 7, 'The Personal-Transactional Model', which takes account of findings about readers previously reported.

CHAPTER 4: READING READERS.

1. Identity Style.

From analysis of transcripts, journal entries and interviews, the same theme or pattern of response consistently appeared in the comments of each reader. Journal entries, where readers were encouraged to respond to the text as ‘stimulus’, are similar to Bleich’s (1978) ‘response statements’ and both facilitate insight into the individuality of the reader and ‘function as a systematic way of identifying interests and exposing the forms of intellectual discipline unique to each reader’ (Bleich, 1989: 271). That individual readers have individual or personal reading styles should not be surprising. Dias and Hayhoe report from their research that ‘both protocols from each pupil reveal the same pattern of reading, a pattern that is largely undeflected by differences in form and content between the two poems’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 52). Similarly, Benton and Fox acknowledge that individual children exhibit ‘personal patterns in reading’ which persist ‘irrespective of the nature of the book being read’ (Benton and Fox, 1985: 16,17). The value of identifying a particular reader’s individual style or theme is that it allows the interpretation of actual reading transactions to be informed by the way a particular reader reads. The work of Norman Holland on the identity themes of readers has influenced theorising about readers in this thesis, but important differences are evident between Holland’s work (Holland, 1975a, 1975b) and mine. While Holland’s use of psychoanalysis as a hermeneutic has been rejected, his initial methodology has proved to be valuable.

In Five Readers Reading (1975b), Holland recounts his attempt to understand the reading process and his discovery that patterns of response could only be explained by reference to the individuality of the reader. Meek (1983), Dias and Hayhoe (1988) and Bleich (1978, 1989) have drawn similar conclusions which are also true for my six readers. For example, a pattern to emerge in Anna’s personal style was that she found complexity, difficulty and hidden meanings, rewarding and tended to enjoy works she did not find easy to understand. Conversely, Adam preferred immediately accessible texts and found the sort of works Anna enjoyed, extremely frustrating. Such knowledge about readers enables us to understand the reading process in which they are engaged. The same point can be made about my

research that Dias and Hayhoe make about their own, its usefulness ‘lies in its alerting teachers to the differences among readers in their ways of making sense of poetry’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 57). Examining such difference is of crucial significance for Bleich notes that the ‘substantially different’ nature of such responses is the ‘starting point for the study of aesthetic experience’ (Bleich, 1978: 98) explaining that his own reaction to a Kafka short story was ‘grounded in a unique configuration of feelings and associations each aspect of which occurs in a degree and combination in me not found in others’ (Bleich, 1989: 263).

My research emphasises that the difference among pupils, as individuals, should be taken into account if they are to be understood as readers. An adolescent cannot be understood as a reader before he or she is understood as a person and individuality does not only manifest itself in the reading event. Holland advocates attention to readers’ ‘uniqueness as human beings’ (Holland, 1985: 19). Yet my research differs from Holland’s in the way patterns that emerge in a reader’s responses are interpreted and the way information about a reader’s life and identity is related to his or her reading. Holland resorts to psychoanalysis and his premise that this pseudo-science is the only way to interpret the way readers read is wholly rejected here. Holland states:

readers respond to literature in terms of their own ‘lifestyle’ (or ‘character’ or ‘personality’ or ‘identity’). By such terms, psychoanalytic writers mean an individual’s characteristic way of dealing with the demands of outer and inner reality.’ (Holland, 1975b: 8).

While it is entirely congruent with the findings to emerge from my data to conclude that readers read in their own individual, even idiosyncratic ways, to interpret ‘identity’ psycho-analytically is only one method of interpretation. Indeed, Holland makes some rather grand claims for the role of psychoanalysis, asserting not only that ‘psychoanalysis offers a powerful theory of individual responses to literature’ (Holland, 1975 b: 8) but that psychoanalysis ‘is par excellence the science of human individuality’, which, of course, one would expect from a psycho-analytic critic. It has been noted that Holland ‘takes for granted the competence and prerogative of psychoanalysis to teach literature something about itself and its unconscious motives, whereas literature is granted little or nothing to teach psychoanalysis about itself’

(Freund, 1987: 113). Compelling arguments against the use of psycho-analysis to interpret readers' responses exist, and there are certainly alternative ways of understanding patterns in readers' responses. Firstly, considerable doubt must be cast, according to Popper (1959), upon any theory that is not falsifiable and as conclusions reached through psycho-analysis cannot be proved or disproved, the validity of such conclusions is highly dubious. The problem is that those notions are theoretical and as observable evidence is unclear, what we would have to do to falsify them is unknown. Secondly, psycho-analysis imposes a series of categories upon a complex reality when work carried out in the qualitative paradigm has questioned the usefulness of such an approach, suggesting that categories can emerge from the data. A simple example of the way psycho-analytic analysis of literature imposes categories is Holland's assertion that 'each of us finds in the literary work the kind of thing we characteristically wish or fear the most' (Holland, 1980: 124). Taking the concepts of 'wish' or 'fear' from Freud (1938 / 1933) and applying them to a reader's response to a text is clearly the imposition of external categories of analysis. Yet, while Holland criticises methods which 'require categories from outside the reading transaction itself' (Holland, 1985: 5), such as Purves' (1968) 'reaction to content', he imposes his own interpretative categories. In this thesis, where six readers' reading is analysed, the themes or patterns emerging from their responses form the basis of interpretation in a genuinely qualitative way.

The term 'identity style' has been adopted in this thesis and is a composite of Holland's 'identity theme' and the notion of 'personal style' (Benton and Fox, 1985: 16). The term 'identity style' has been used to denote a broader understanding of the reader than is signified by either 'identity theme' or 'personal style'. Consequently, 'identity style' is considered to encompass the reader's identity, the past experience of the reader, the purpose of reading and the expectations of the reader, all of which influence response. Holland's initial methodology (before using psychoanalysis to analyse his data) is extremely useful, as is the basic question he asks, with pleasing succinctness, which this part of my thesis attempts to answer:

The root question for someone researching reading or the teaching of Literature is: Why does this person read this text in this way in this context ? (Holland, 1985: 3).

2. Reading Readers.

Holland's method of construing several smaller themes and then organising them into larger themes is informed by the method of literary analysis, where a text is analysed for its unity, as he suggests that data about students can be organised 'by sub-theme, theme and central theme' (Holland, 1985: 11). As Holland points out, many researchers, from galactic astronomers to anthropologists use the method of gathering data 'which they then must organise into a coherent pattern, in order to explain a given feature by placing it within the pattern of the whole' (Holland, 1985: 10). When applied to the reading process, this is extremely useful because a 'coherent pattern' in a given reader can be constructed. Holland explains, 'I found I could understand my readers' reading by formulating unifying themes for their responses' (Holland, 1985: 16). Using this method, journal entries and then transcripts of pairs of readers discussing poems were analysed in my investigation. The starting point with the journals was very broad: all references to a reader's mood, emotional response, reading process, cognitive procedure or past experience in response to pre-twentieth century poems were collected (Appendix D). Findings then emerged about the 'personal theme' of a given reader in response to the content, as well as the style, of a range of texts. This method produced clear insights that could be considered together with findings about the identity, personality and background of adolescents that emerged from their personal writing (Appendix F). For example, relevance emerged as a key determining factor in Steve's response to poems just as the power of a poem to evoke a mood in the reader was important to Josie. From a rather vague finding that emotional response was a significant theme in Josie's spoken and written responses to poems, progressive focussing, in the light of personal writing, enabled a more specific, but tentative, hypothesis about the way mood influenced Josie, as a reader, to emerge. Similarly, Steve's characteristic emphasis on relevance was informed by his writing about his background and personality. Holland terms such an approach 'holistic research' where 'we collect data in a rather unstructured, uncritical way, by free association, for example, as opposed to questionnaire' (Holland, 1985: 15). However, the deductions in the present study were made as a result of gaining quantitative as well as qualitative data. Questionnaires (Appendix E) were used in addition to journal entries and my

readers were asked to record their perceptions of their keenness and the way they read (Appendix B). Consequently, two views were obtained: the readers' views of themselves and my views of them.

Holland suggests some important avenues to pursue in future research such as the collection of 'associative responses to texts' (Holland, 1985: 16); encouraging my readers to allow the text to function as 'stimulus', produced precisely such 'associative responses'. Holland also suggests that we should consider the expectations readers bring to texts and my readers' expectations of specifically pre-twentieth century poems is considered in this part of the thesis. Although Holland investigated readers' reading and allowed the data to generate patterns of response that were unique to each reader, there are some important differences, apart from my rejection of psychoanalysis, in the methods used in *5 Readers Reading* (1975b), and those employed in my study. Certainly, Holland's research design did not seek to replicate ordinary classroom conditions whereas the six readers, whose reading is considered here, experienced exactly what the rest of their class did. Each of Holland's readers appear to have met him once a week for only eight to eleven weeks (Holland, 1975a: 61), whereas my readers were studied over three years (although most of the data reported here is from the last two years of this period) during which we spent almost four hundred hours in the same classroom with each other. Further, Holland relied heavily on psychological testing (Rorschach ink blots and a thematic Apperception Test). Alternatively, I had a good knowledge of the personality and identity of each of the readers from data collected while teaching them over three years. Whereas Holland's thematic Apperception Test entailed the reader being shown a picture and having to construct a story, each of my readers wrote their own short stories during the GCSE course and also completed some personal writing about themselves for coursework and in examinations which is used to show what was important to them. The fact that this study of six adolescent readers was a longitudinal one cannot be underestimated as even Holland admits, 'even the same reader ... will respond differently at different times in his life' (Holland, 1975b: 13).

The readers Holland chose were also very different to those considered here; his five readers were 'well trained' and 'fairly experienced' (Holland, 1975b: 1), being graduate students of English Literature which follows a trend, familiar since

I.A. Richards' selected undergraduates, of choosing the best readers on the assumption that their reading will tell us about how others read. Holland worked from the same premise: 'If I could discover the dynamics of response for this group, the same principles should hold, *mutatis mutandis* for anyone' (Holland, 1975b: 41-42). Yet, choosing such an untypical section of the population would appear to threaten the validity of such a hypothesis. He also states that they 'volunteered' and that he 'preferred literature majors because they were used to voicing their reactions freely to literary works' (Holland, 1975b: 41). In contrast, my readers did not volunteer to be studied nor were they 'keen' in the sense of being well-motivated as Holland's literature majors were. Data was collected on the whole class as part of the course they followed and at the end of this course the six readers gave permission to have the data used. Further, the one-to-one taped interviews with a professor of English, placed the student in a different relationship to that experienced by my readers where they taped conversations with a partner they felt comfortable with. Holland is obviously acutely aware of the way his position influenced the data he collected and of the reactivity this caused. He tells us of his reaction to Saul, one of his readers:

irritated somewhat by his insistence that he had no reaction and no understanding of the poem, I gave him a testy, overbearing explication of a few lines, which led in turn to his flat rejection - not only of the poem but of me (Holland, 1975a: 95).

He also ventures the opinion that one of Sandra's comments may not have been the truth but that she 'just thought sound would be a good thing to mention to a professor of English' (Holland, 1975a: 81). Benton and Fox have noted that 'ends do affect means' (Benton and Fox, 1985: 16) and have drawn attention to the importance of the 'purpose' of the reading, whether it is for study or pleasure. Clearly, my readers were reading texts they had not chosen because this was required for a GCSE course. Although some motivation to do well did exist, my readers differed from Holland's readers who were chosen from a pool of graduates after completing a questionnaire about what they 'liked' reading. Further, although they were graduates, Holland picked texts that were 'not too difficult to interpret' (Holland, 1975b: 42). The issue

of difficulty is especially pertinent when modern readers of pre-twentieth century poems are the subject of a study.

3. Readers: Feeling and Thinking.

In The Dynamics of Literary Response (1968) Holland acknowledges that 'affect is the most cherished core of our response, but the least understood' (Holland, 1968: 307) and in a more recent explanation of the transactive model he argues that a 'literent creates meaning and feeling in one continuous and indivisible transaction' (Holland, 1992: 367) and suggests that 'all of you and me, our emotional as well as intellectual selves' (Holland, 1992: 370) are involved in a literary transaction. Evidently more work is needed on how emotions function in reading. The affective element is certainly neglected within English if a world perspective is taken. In English Literature in a World Context (1993), Benton and Brumfit show that of 38 separate aims of English teaching identified from nineteen papers, only one statement concerned the 'affective' and even this was not in secondary schools. Yet, Bleich has observed students becoming aware of 'the inseparability of their knowledge from their experience' (Bleich, 1978: 101) and an important focus in this part of my thesis is to examine both the intellectual and emotional responses of the six readers. Indeed, to attempt to explore one without the other would be futile. Yet, the affective dimension of response is not explored in any great depth in 5 Readers Reading (1975b) except, briefly, in Appendix A, 'The Question of Affect', where Holland admits that the four principles of psychoanalysis he has applied to his five readers' responses 'do not tell us very much about affects' (Holland, 1975b: 292) suggesting that 'no satisfactory theory of affect' for either life or literature exists. Despite this assertion, Holland proceeds to explain, again by recourse to psychoanalysis, that readers enjoy works where they have to 'defend' or ward off their fears. He states:

For a reader to take pleasure from a reading, he has to protect that pleasure. He must re-create for himself from the text rather precisely, all or part of the structures by which he wards off anxiety in real life ... He projects into the work a fantasy that yields the pleasure he characteristically seeks (Holland, 1975a: 77).

In Poems in Persons (1975a) Holland suggests that ‘associations’ and ‘wishes’ result in interpretation as well as a value judgement about a poem and recalls the case of one student: ‘by bringing her associations and wishes to bear ... this continuous creation of the poem went into her arriving at a value judgement and also a meaning’ (Holland, 1975a: 82). It appears that we think as a result of our feelings and feel as a result of our thoughts; the way thought and feeling interact in particular readers is, therefore, of considerable importance. However, the purpose of reading influences the feelings and thoughts a reader has. Holland, however, seems to assume that all readers seek pleasure when they read which could be because he drew his sample from people who had chosen to spend a significant part of their lives reading literature. Holland states that ‘ordinarily, since people seek pleasure rather than the lack of it, a reader will be actively expecting and trying to get pleasure from a literary work’ (Holland, 1975b: 295). Holland is presumably referring to Freud’s (1938 / 1933) ‘pleasure principle’ and extrapolating from this the notion that readers seek gratification from reading literature. This assumption is not always valid in the context of a secondary school literature classroom. Many adolescents, such as Adam, or Peter early on in this study, hardly expected to derive pleasure from a work of pre-twentieth century poetry. Indeed, in Adam’s case, his expectations of such works were coloured by a history of negative reactions to many poems. The power of such past experience was considerable because Adam expected to become frustrated when reading a pre-twentieth century poem and anticipated confusion and difficulty to result from his efforts. In contrast, other readers felt confident about their ability to read pre-twentieth century poems with perception and did, like Anna, seek gratification from the experience.

Like Rosenblatt (1968) and D.W. Harding (1968), Holland recognises that difficulty is a reason for a reader to dislike a poem suggesting:

Forces within the work ... may lead a reader to defend more strongly. For example, he might find the work so complicated ... or he might become so involved in its purely formal features ... as to lose the fantasy he was enjoying (Holland, 1975b: 296).

This was certainly the case with Adam, who frequently cited complexity or difficulty as a reason for not liking a work. Holland also notes the effect difficulty has on a

reader's awareness of self as opposed to absorption in a work and concludes, 'harder literature usually requires an effort that keeps one aware of oneself' (Holland, 1975a: 84). One could therefore expect a lack of absorption when adolescents read challenging texts written before 1900. Yet his comments about one of his readers, Sandra, who became absorbed in difficult poetry, are true of all the readers in my study, at least some of the time with certain texts. Another of Holland's findings, of relevance to this study, is his idea about personal associations, and the past history of a reader, influencing how much he or she enjoys a work. When Holland reflects about his own reaction and that of Sandra to a poem about a sea shell, he admits that 'much of what pleases me in the poem, though, is simply the talk about seashells, which never fail to delight me' (Holland, 1975a: 102). Clearly, positive views about seashells coloured readings of the poem and instead of taking clues from the text, the readers' pleasurable past experience, stimulated by the poem, took over. Holland explains that 'I, like Sandra, automatically assumed the shell in this poem to be something beautiful and special' (Holland, 1975a: 113). This is precisely what happened to two of my readers, Josie and Anna, who loved acting and performing arts in general. As soon as they read Sir Walter Raleigh's poem 'What is our Life?' and noticed that life was described as a 'play of passion' they assumed that Raleigh must have enjoyed life because they would have loved to be in a play all their lives, although the mood and point of the poem are quite to the contrary. This fact is acknowledged by Holland who notes 'it is not surprising, though, that simple preferences should follow a persistent ego style' (Holland, 1975a: 111). Susan Feagin in *Reading with Feeling* (1996) asks the same sort of question: 'am I reacting ... with pleasure because I like cats and there is a cat in the story?' (Feagin, 1996: 138). Yet, equating content with liking or disliking a poem is one factor among many and may not be nearly so simple as these examples about shells, cats or plays would suggest. In *5 Readers Reading* (1975b), for instance, Holland reports how another of his readers, Shep, enjoyed a Faulkner story because he liked the characters and the style in which it was written, despite having very different values and beliefs to those depicted in the story. We are told 'Shep could like the story despite its Southern system of values, so contrary to those he consciously held' (Holland, 1975b: 297). It appears that a reader can respond to several aspects of a poem positively which seem to override other negative reactions. A case in point is that Anna's aversion to

religious poems and being preached at in particular did not prohibit 'Jordan', by George Herbert, from being one of her favourite poems as she enjoyed the challenge it presented. She enjoyed 'Jordan' despite its content, and this poem, advocating simplicity, which Anna disliked, was enjoyed in much the same way that Shep enjoyed a poem espousing values which were contrary to his own. The elements being appreciated in 'aesthetic reading' deriving directly from the reader's identity style can be neatly summed up. Gratification for each reader is different. In the examples cited for Anna it is problem-solving, for Shep it is artistic skill and for Feagin, the cat lover, content appeal. The rest of Part A is an attempt to understand this aspect of aesthetic reading and to offer a typology of readers.

Of considerable relevance to this study, are Holland's conclusions about the difficulty of changing an emotional response once it is established. Very rarely did I witness a score in a journal entry increasing from a very low one to a high one. It appears that once an affective response is established, it is only gradually modified and first impressions do count. Teaching and classwork can help, but only if a sufficient threshold of pleasure exists to work with in the first place. Very negative reactions to a particular poem did not normally change into very positive ones in my study. This, of course, has important implications for teaching, suggesting that the affective dimension and the context of the learning are crucial. Holland observed this phenomena with two of his readers, Saul and Sebastian. He witnessed 'irreversibility in the negative direction: once the flow of satisfaction or pleasurable affect is broken, it is difficult to re-establish contact' (Holland, 1975b: 296). In Poems in Persons Holland describes this as being 'locked into' the positive or 'locked out' into the negative (Holland, 1975a: 83); this concept is explored in the analysis of my six adolescents' responses. In 5 Readers Reading Holland advocates research into the 'real feelings people experience in reading' (Holland, 1975b: 299) which is taken up in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 5: SIX ADOLESCENTS.

My six adolescents are considered as people before they are interpreted as readers. The method here is to present individual cases or pen portraits rather than extensive case studies of each student, the aim being to illustrate each of the six pupils' identities. Background information, derived from data collected throughout the longitudinal study, forms a general introduction to each adolescent, given in this chapter. Such an approach reflects the importance of identity and individuality in learning and is true to response and learning theorists who see the poem, and learning in general, emerging mid-way between reader and text, learner and object. This chapter concentrates on the adolescent and the next focusses on the adolescent as a reader and about the text in the reader's terms. Clearly, such division is artificial and some overlap does occur but it provides a helpful structure in the interest of clarity.

Holland (1975), Bleich (1978) and Dias and Hayhoe (1988) describe the interests, personality and ability of their readers in order to understand their identity and background, and to study how this affects the reading of particular texts. As the present study was conducted by the teacher-researcher, a comprehensive picture of each of the six readers emerged over three years. Whereas, Dias and Hayhoe relate that one of their readers, Peter, was '16 years old, of average ability and plans to enlist in the armed forces' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 61) far more valuable qualitative data is available on each reader in my study and detailed quantitative information about ability and attainment has already been given in Chapter 3. Information about the adolescent as a person is of use as it informs the analysis of the adolescent as a reader.

The qualitative data includes teachers' observations of the readers (Appendix I) as well as the readers' observations about themselves (Appendix F). For a GCSE English coursework assignment, the six pupils described their interests, relationships, family, personality, aspirations and views on life in considerable detail (Appendix F). Regrettably, Adam did not complete this assignment as he was on holiday in Vancouver during term time when it was written. The pupils also wrote their own short stories and were given complete freedom as to subject and theme. These short

stories (Appendix F) provide valuable information about each reader's identity. Other written data is available in the form of letters written in GCSE English examinations. Each of my readers chose to write at least one letter. For one letter candidates had to write to a friend who had moved away updating them on life at home. In the other letter, candidates had to persuade a friend not to leave home after reading some articles about homeless teenagers (Appendix F). Information about the identity and home background of each of my six adolescents also comes from the tapes of conversations they had about various texts over three years, especially as they were relating texts to their own lives and experience through focussing on text as 'stimulus'.

Steve

In Steve's GCSE personal writing assignment he appeared impetuous, energetic, individualistic and, in some ways, immature. He stated 'I don't really have a very high self-opinion of myself. This is because I am always doing things that I look back at and regret. I can't help doing things they just happen' (Appendix F). Despite his statement that he did not have a high 'self opinion', Steve often came across as arrogant and opinionated to many teachers. Steve reported an embarrassing incident in his personal writing GCSE assignment (Appendix F) where he said something entirely inappropriate given its context and felt a 'weight of guilt' and deep 'regret'. He explained 'I had surprised myself at my thoughtlessness and complete idioticness' but was keen to point out that he had virtuous attributes as well. It did appear, though, that his blunders were frequent as he remarked 'I don't spend my whole life making a complete prat of myself, just most of it'.

Steve perceived himself as an individual noting 'I enjoy my individuality and value it', choosing to play the tenor saxophone 'because no-one else in the school plays it, making myself an individual'. He also wrote 'I value my individuality. So my view on life is to not listen to what anyone else says'. He argued that the best approach was 'just get on and do what *you* want to do. If everyone listened to what everyone else said, life would be so boring'. Along with this fiercely individualistic streak, a drive, energy and determination was apparent in Steve's attitude to life. The

most comprehensive reflection about himself appeared towards the end of his GCSE personal writing. Steve wrote:

There is nothing really that I am scared of. I'm not just saying that either. Perhaps one thing worries me more than anything else; the thought of not being liked. That to me would be the worst thing that could happen. I can not survive without other people and friends. Perhaps this is the reason that I am so paranoid, a fear of the lack of friends. I need people to talk to, people to listen to, people to laugh with and people to enjoy life with. Maybe it's not actually a fear of not being liked. More a fear of upsetting other people. I hate making people feel upset or bad about themselves; the main reason for this is because I hate it being done to me (Appendix F).

Although Steve enjoyed music, it was the public performance that he particularly enjoyed. He explained 'I have had the pleasure to play assorted compositions in various concerts and assemblies' and he saw 'performance' as a reward for all his hard work, explaining, 'I enjoy the performing equally as much as the writing.'

Steve's writing was riddled with references to Christianity which had a profound influence on his actions and identity although he wrote, 'I am a 'semi-religious' person, but I don't take it to extreme limits'. A major incident where Steve 'puts his foot in it' occurred at a church barbecue 'on the evening of my confirmation of the faith into the Church of England'. He described his blunder as 'my traitorous words to Christianity', and his regret and guilt occurred as a result of failing to live up to beliefs he was committed to. After noting that he hated hurting other people or being hurt himself he explained:

This also keeps in line with a Christian teaching from the Bible: 'do unto others as you would have done to yourself' when I go to do something that I shouldn't, I almost always think of these lines. Most of the time they deter me from my actions, most of the time (Appendix F).

Another personal belief that Steve held was that one should 'make the most of everything you have got'. He explained that he invested considerable effort to develop his musical talent and was currently, in his words, 'milking' it. He worked hard and was very ambitious in English but found coursework a great burden. In his personal writing, he mentioned a desk full of GCSE coursework and the depression that occurred when he returned from fishing to see this pile waiting for him.

Throughout the course Steve made no reference to reading, apart from sheet music, and his only specific reference to a member of his family was to mention that his little sister aggravated him, although he did not name her. Although he wrote that his family was important to him he invariably linked them together with friends, referring to 'friends and family' and his need for company.

Steve's short story, another GCSE assignment, was based on Josh, a rebel schoolboy with a 'cool' image, who was lead guitarist in a rock band. He had frequent confrontations with Mr. Harrison, the geography teacher and eventually aggravated Mr. Harrison to the point where the teacher committed suicide. Although Josh was deeply sorry, it was still too late to save the man he had tormented. This story shows Steve's interest in school life and his clear identification with Josh, a cool teenage musician, who, like himself, did and said things he later regretted, causing another person harm. This interest in the teacher's emotional state is of interest. Steve's mother was a teacher and he showed an interest in the profession, returning of his own volition to help me teach Year 7 pupils after his GCSE exams had finished. In his GCSE examination letter to a friend thinking of running away from home, Steve reminds her of the dream she has of becoming a teacher, as an incentive to get her to remain at home and finish a good education. Despite this, Steve challenged my authority and became moody when reprimanded. He appeared to harbour a grudge against me to the end of Year 11 from Year 9 when I had, unintentionally, caused him to feel humiliated in front of the class when he was so desperate to be liked. Even towards the end of Year 11 Steve wrote:

The pupil's attitude towards the work is affected by the teacher. If the course is started with considerable bad feelings towards the teacher then the pupil will build up an automatic barrier towards the teacher and this will affect his/her ability to learn ... The method of victimising a pupil to the point of repeated public humiliation is not the best way to build a pupil-teacher relationship. There have been many occasions when arguments have taken place due to this existing barrier between pupil-teacher. IT DAMAGES THE CAREER OF BOTH PARTIES (Appendix E).

Steve's stubborn and rebellious approach was not confined to English lessons. The Head of English and Head of Music had to handle a difficult situation where Steve was in a pub, drinking alcohol underage after a concert. His reaction to advice was to

become even more stubborn. Yet, Steve's inconsistency is apparent when one realises he was the only pupil from the class to visit me of his own accord and to initiate conversation both during and after his GCSE course (Appendix I). After his examinations had finished, Steve was in school nearly every day practising on the grand piano and coming to chat to me. It appears that the vitriolic outburst above can be attributed, in part, to his volatility and mood on a particular day.

Certain themes appear repeatedly in Steve's personal writing and any attempt to understand Steve as a reader should begin with an understanding of him as a person. From a range of data sources, several key themes are evident. He experienced inconsistent moods leading to frequent confrontation and possessed the paradoxical desire to be a rebel, with a nonchalant image, and yet to be accepted by authorities in school. He also exhibited a lack of maturity which led to blunders and was plagued by a keen conscience after frequent rebellious or stubbornly individualistic acts. Steve also demonstrated a clear commitment to the Christian faith and a desire to live by it. His determination and individuality are illustrated by his approach to his musical talent and his pleasure in public performance. All this goes some way to account for Steve's very contradictory responses to poetry and alerts us to the fact that the mood Steve was in, on a particular day, influenced his responses. Steve's scores for particular poems changed the most dramatically of any reader and he would often make the paradoxical statement that he hated poetry but really liked a particular poem. During a discussion of 'The Latest Decalogue', Steve told Rob, 'I hate poetry but that's a good poem' and awarded it 9/10. Of all the readers he seemed the most image conscious, feeling the need to publicly declare his hatred of poetry and then, almost forgetting himself, getting carried away, and enjoying certain poems and feeling they were 'cool'. For example, in response to 'The Twa Corbies', Steve wrote 'I don't really like poetry at all' and in the same entry wrote 'I like the method the poet has used' (Appendix D). Steve's headstrong, inconsistent and contradictory approach to life and his mood swings influenced his response to poems and his interactions with me, his teacher. He was also enthusiastic about a number of poems which motivated him to explore them in greater depth and ultimately facilitated his progress from a level 6 in his Year 9 SAT to an A* in GCSE English Literature. Steve was likely to study Music, English and one other subject at A level. This knowledge informs interpretation of Steve as a reader.

Rob

Rob's GCSE personal writing (Appendix F) was wide ranging and gave a very full sense of his identity as he appeared honest and reflective about himself and was a sensible, thoughtful and caring boy. Having a good sense of humour was important to Rob but he was sensitive enough to acknowledge he could be 'unfair when they [his jokes] are at other people's expense'. Unlike Steve, Rob consistently conformed with instructions, took advice and did not challenge authority. He mentioned being given his prefect's tie and felt that he was 'given responsibility' and that people 'expect a lot out of me'. Also, unlike Steve, Rob was stable and amiable and the three years passed without the appearance of a single mood swing or confrontation. In Year 10 Rob reflected about his weakness and admitted 'I don't have a lot of self confidence in a lot of areas which is why I am not as good at some things as I could be, because I don't believe I can do it well' (Appendix F). In contrast, during Year 11 when my PGCE student observed Rob participating in group discussion, she considered him to be 'quietly confident in his own views' although she felt he was 'not a leader' (Appendix I). He considered his other major weakness to be procrastination and indolence which he viewed as the cause of his failure to fulfil his potential despite the fact that he was making excellent progress in English. Rob's conscientiousness and readiness to find fault with himself was evident and he did not tend to write about his virtues or admirable qualities. Recurring themes in Rob's evaluation of himself are his honesty and quiet sense of humour although he admitted, 'I do tend to bend the truth from time to time to suit myself'. These twin attributes, a sense of humour and honesty were also the qualities he admired most in other people.

The issues in life that Rob felt to be of great importance were the universe, space and UFOs. He asked philosophical and scientific questions about such phenomena and was clearly a perceptive thinker. He wrote:

I also often wonder what was there before the universe. Was it just empty nothingness or was it completely different? How big is the universe and do we accept it as not starting or finishing but just being there? (Appendix F)

In the future, Rob wanted to be a marine biologist, a career that appealed greatly to him, which he had been interested in for some years. This was, however, only second best in terms of career choice. The ‘ultimate dream’ job for Rob was to be a professional footballer. More realistically, he wanted to see Sheffield Wednesday ‘win the league or some really important trophies’ in his lifetime. Rob’s future A levels choices were Biology, Physics and Chemistry although he was going to substitute one of these for Business Studies or Psychology.

Rob stated that his interest in science was directly related to his reading tastes as he enjoyed science fiction and humour. He explained:

These beliefs also relate to my likes and dislikes as a reader. My favourite text that I have read is the ‘Hitch-Hikers guide to the Galaxy’, the so called trilogy. It is a comical look at the Galaxy and the Universe and the life within it. It is my favourite text because I find it relates to my beliefs but is also very funny (Appendix F).

At the stage he completed his GCSE personal writing, in Year 10, Rob expressed a dislike of ‘more serious texts’ yet he responded positively to some very serious pre-twentieth century poems by the end of Year 11.

Rob freely stated that his parents were the biggest influence in his life and wrote, ‘without them I wouldn’t get anything done at all, let alone done well’ but also admitted that it often seemed like they were nagging. His characteristic humility and readiness to criticise himself is evident from his view of his relationship with his parents, ‘I know that they are always right but I am too afraid to admit it, or maybe just too proud’. Rob’s closest relationships were with members of his family, he explained, ‘if I have a really bad problem or if I need to get something off my chest that I cannot talk to a member of my family about I don’t have anyone I can turn to for advice’ (Appendix F). Rob was a private individual and did not have many close friends although he was evidently well liked in class socialising well with boys although not with girls. Rob seemed happy and well adjusted, keen to succeed, diligent and conscientious although he was not a great talker in large groups although he enjoyed paired and groupwork (Appendix B).

Another of Rob’s pieces of original writing in his GCSE exam, in which he was required to write to a friend to dissuade him from running away from home, contained some strongly delivered opinions and confirm the importance to Rob of

family and of his relationship with his parents. He told his friend that ‘one little row doesn’t mean your mum and dad don’t love you’ and advised reconciliation with parents, by suggesting that his friend should apologise, ‘Your life would be a thousand times better if you could just swallow your pride and say you were sorry to your parents’. He even summed up the advantages of life at home for his friend which appear to draw heavily on his own experience:

Don’t waste what you’ve already got, don’t take it for granted. Think about what you have got: a mum and dad, your own bedroom - a warm one at that, loads of friends, food, water, clothes, education, excellent predicted grades, a good career and so much more as well (Appendix F).

Rob’s GCSE short story (Appendix F) assignment was a wartime adventure set in 1945 on the Rhine and confirms the importance of family to him. The hero had flattened blond hair and blue eyes, just like Rob, and was only sixteen, Rob’s age, when the city he lived in was bombed. The lone soldier had experienced the death of his family and friends and was therefore bent on exacting vengeance.

Key themes in Rob’s life were his consistency, honesty and good humour and also the importance of family and security. He showed his interest in football and science and clearly had an enquiring mind, desiring to solve puzzles about the universe. Rob also displayed sensitivity and a lack of confidence. These themes are of importance in any analysis of Rob the reader. His quiet nature meant that he did not speak in group discussions (Appendix C) as much as Steve, and his approach to poetry was more consistent than Steve’s (Appendix D). He also tended to focus most on solving the puzzle of the poem and discovering meaning (Appendix B). The content and meaning of a poem was of importance to Rob.

Anna

Anna’s GCSE personal writing confirmed her rather scatty, creative and philosophical nature which was already evident from her journal entries (Appendix D) and was later confirmed again by her reflections about her reading (Appendix B). She reflected mid way through her personal writing ‘this piece of coursework causes a problem for me as I am and becoming increasingly more analytical of myself,

others ... my life is too complicated to write down' (Appendix F). In her first paragraph, she explained how spontaneous she was, with a tendency to end up engrossed in a good book or her latest piece of English coursework, or in conversation with her mother due to an over-active mind. Subsequently, she commented 'of course, this paragraph above may be true of me, but it is not the truth' (Appendix F). Such philosophical speculation about truth is, in my experience, unusual in fifteen year olds. Anna proceeded to explain how the reader could misconstrue her words and how easily it was to stereotype herself. She was cautious about relating specific incidents, as the reader might then assume such information was somehow representative of her life which it might not be. Such consideration about the representativeness of anecdotes chosen for inclusion, confirmed Anna's nature as a speculative, even philosophical thinker. She eventually summed herself up this way: 'I think I can honestly say that my main personality trait is scepticism; I don't believe anything, what I see, what others say, or even what I feel' (Appendix F). Anna was able to adopt a detached viewpoint in analysing herself and often appeared older than her fifteen years:

I have blond hair ... blue eyes from my father and I used to be incredibly skinny. Now however the bottom half of my body seems to be filling out (i.e. getting fatter) and the top half of me is unfortunately taking after my mother stubbornly remaining considerably flat chested so I look like an eleven year old. I am always pale and pasty looking unless I pile on the blusher and as I've mentioned before I am 90% of the time tired out (again taking after my mum) (Appendix F).

Anna was even able to reflect on her own reflections noting, towards the end of her writing, how her writing changed according to the mood she was in and explaining that, upon re-reading, she felt she sounded very bitter and more educated in one part of her writing, about her disabled sister, compared with another.

A theme that emerged in Anna was complexity and a philosophical outlook as she questioned the notion of the validity of a piece of writing to depict her as a person, was wary of generalisations being made on the basis of a single anecdote, noted that her writing altered with her mood and reflected about how she appeared in print after writing. Her scepticism seemed to indicate an ability and readiness to question her own assumptions as well as those of other people. Although Anna was

an avid reader the only book she mentioned reading was Sophie's World by Gaarder in which philosophy is interspersed with narrative.

Anna devoted most of her personal writing to a description of her sister and her disability and recounted her vivid memory of her mother announcing in the playroom that her baby sister would not be like other children. She also frequently referred to her unemployed brother, who was a drug addict, and we learn that unlike Josie, her friend, she wanted to stay at home, if she had children, in order to care for them. Such siblings may account for Anna's maturity of outlook and her independence which is reflected in her short story, 'Mummy's Medicine' (Appendix F), told from the perspective of a eight year old girl, who has to look after her drug addict mother and takes on responsibility beyond her years.

Anna's GCSE examination letter (Appendix F) to a friend considering running away from home attracted an examiner's comment 'has a bit more depth than usual', which effectively summed Anna up. The friend Anna wrote to had a brother with the same name as her own brother who had caused the family tremendous problems, just as Anna's own brother had. Anna spent much of the letter focussing on Darren, the brother, and clearly drew on her own experiences with a wayward brother, who was expelled from the school where my research was carried out. She told her friend in the letter:

Due to the way he is, and how violent and irrational he can be, your brother has been allowed a lot of freedom by your parents, your school and by other people. It has been clear for some time that Darren has a social problem and because of this he very often gets chance after chance, and people always seem to go out of their way to help him (Appendix F).

Anna drew, I suggest, on differences between herself and her own brother in her letter. In her other examination paper, Anna wrote to a friend updating her on recent events in her life. Anna told her friend about a holiday in the USA she had just returned from, which was true to life, as Anna had time off in Year 11 to take just such a holiday. Anna had found a boyfriend in the United States and she told her friend in the letter about him.

Ross is absolutely gorgeous, he's a writer of screen plays and he plays guitar (he's written me three songs already). He has black hair and quite dark skin

and he's Jewish, at least his family is, he's not a practising Jew (Appendix F).

Anna also related the news that she had been accepted for a prestigious dance school, in the North of England, which was also true to life as she went to the institution after completing her GCSEs instead of doing A levels. Performing arts was Anna's passion. She explained how she would have her own flat and she seemed mature enough to leave home which would be a respite from life with her brother. In her letter, Anna gave the latest news about her drug addict brother:

On a more disturbing note, Darren has been chucked out of the home again by Mum and Dad as recently they found another bag of his hypodermic needles. It's so dangerous having him around as Emma (handicapped sister) could easily go into his bedroom and pick one of his syringes up ... I know he is my brother and I love him and everything (I suppose!) but being at home is so much quieter and relaxed when he's gone. Everyone gets to stop worrying about whether they've locked everything away in case he takes it. Which reminds me, Dad managed to buy back Emma's tape player from a pawn shop in Totton, I don't know how much Darren sold it for though (Appendix F).

The examiner noted the 'convincing detail' next to this portion of script and clearly it offers an insight into Anna's home situation. She suggested that her brother would die of AIDS as a counsellor had described him being on a 'slow suicide'. Detail like this about Anna's life and identity facilitates analysis of her as a reader. In her conversation with Josie, for instance, she commented at length on the relevance of 'Nuns Fret Not' by Wordsworth to her brother's situation. She was a speculative and philosophical thinker who exhibited considerable maturity for her years and had a very independent outlook, possessing the ability to reflect about herself in a detached way. She also enjoyed complexity and philosophical content in poems. Anna's artistic and creative nature was evident in her enthusiasm for drama.

Josie

In her personal writing GCSE assignment, Josie only wrote about herself after four closely written pages about relationships within her family and about her sister who had been seriously ill all her life. Josie explained, 'I find it very difficult

to analyse my own personality. I feel like other people don't understand me very well but I don't really understand me either' (Appendix F). Josie acknowledged being superstitious and also noted her own determination explaining:

one thing that I know for definite about myself; I don't give up. I'm grateful that I can be so determined. If I fail ... I try even harder to succeed. I am determined to have a successful and enjoyable life (Appendix F).

The determination acknowledged here was also witnessed by my PGCE student who commented that Josie 'seemed to take on the organising role' (Appendix I) when all six readers worked together. A desire to have a happy life was also a recurrent theme in Josie's writing. She reflected, 'if we do only get one chance we may as well enjoy it' and explained, 'I value life so much', giving as her reason 'when you are alive you have the chance to be happy'. Josie did wonder how her sister's illness had influenced her and spent most of her personal writing focussing on her sister and how she had nearly died. Arguably, the desire for happiness in life resulted, in part, from her experiences with her sister. To conclude her work Josie wrote, 'from reading this essay I have realised that I sound like a naive child ... I have a positive outlook on life ... I am happy with life and I want to keep it that way' (Appendix F). It is as if, after reading about the worry caused to her family by her sister's illness, Josie needed to reassert her own happiness. The emphasis here on mood and feelings recurs throughout Josie's reading (Appendix D) and in her reflection about her reading (Appendix B). Josie's positive outlook was underpinned by her beliefs:

I mentioned before that I believe in fate. I believe that bad things happen to make us stronger. Everybody has problems but I think that we shouldn't let problems upset us too much and take over our lives, we should use them as experience and learn from them (Appendix F).

A strong belief in making the most of experiences and overcoming difficulties recurred in Josie's personal writing and she believed problems should not dominate an individual's life but should be used as experiences to grow.

Josie's excellent short story 'The Up Line' was about a man who, after death, was consigned to be a branch line ghost. Josie's view that people should learn from difficult circumstances and not become dominated by them may be apparent here.

The protagonist in her story becomes increasingly vexed by the situation he finds himself in and is desperate to escape. Yet, through his difficulty he attains insight and understanding.

In Josie's GCSE letter to a friend, persuading her not to run away from home, the main cause of the problem appeared to be Christina's relationship with her mother which may be reminiscent of Josie's relationship with her own mother. From taped conversations, such as the one about 'The Latest Decalogue' (Appendix C), it was clear she lied to her mother and was not close to her. She wrote:

I know it seems unbearable at home at the moment but you and your mum are just going through a bit of a bad patch. I remember when I stayed with you last year, you and your mum got on like best friends and will be like it again (Appendix F).

Josie also explained, 'I understand that you feel like hurting your mum at the moment; but if she lost you she'd be devastated. Just because she's got a new boyfriend doesn't mean she doesn't want or need you anymore' (Appendix F). This is interesting as Josie lived with a step sister who had a different mother but the same father as Josie. The sister resented the situation and Josie may well have drawn on her home life in the letter. She certainly drew on her home situation when reading poetry (Appendix C).

Josie was creative and practical, a member of the school orchestra and, like Anna, performed in many school plays. She seemed to have considerable energy, drive and ambition, in contrast to Anna's rather nonchalant approach. She was confident and articulate and often engaged in verbal combat with Steve and Peter in class discussions becoming emotionally involved and exhibiting great earnestness. My PGCE student noted that, in addition to her emotional involvement, Josie used 'life experiences' in responding to poems (Appendix I).

Links can be found between key themes in Josie's life, which emerged from a variety of sources, and her responses as a reader. Josie was determined to enjoy life and mood and feelings were important to her as she became emotionally involved and animated when talking, unlike Anna who was more detached. The two family relationships that seemed to have greatest influence on Josie were with her mother and sister. Josie felt she should learn from experiences that occurred as a result of

Fate. A positive outcome seemed to be desired in both literature and life and consequently Josie often disliked poems that depressed her (Appendix D).

Adam

Adam had the most macho image of any of the boys studied. He was rather taciturn by nature and was often called a 'Fascist' by other boys due to his reactionary views. Themes that emerged from his writing were violence, rage, being 'macho' or 'hard' and competitive combative sport. He included liberal amounts of very bad language in his short story (Appendix F), which focussed on two eighteen year old Manchester United supporters, Steve and Ian. The story contains no less than nine separate incidents of rage, anger and violence. The two boys kicked a rival supporter to death in a totally unprovoked attack and appeared to revel in the experience. Violence and rage also appeared when, in the exam, Adam had to write a letter to a friend persuading her not to leave home. Near the opening of his letter, he wrote 'I didn't actually realise things were that bad between you and Phil, I knew things weren't that good but to hear that he beats you enraged me' (Appendix F). However, his advice to Laura was to stay at home because, if she left, she could get stabbed, become a prostitute, and end up on drugs. In his other GCSE English exam, where he had to write to a friend, who had moved away, Adam chose to write to Wayne who had left school to join the army. Adam told Wayne that his 'cheeky comments to Mrs. Wilford' were missed by everyone. Violence and pleasure at the physical suffering of another person also appeared in this letter as he told Wayne, 'Last Saturday, I organised a group of us to have another fight in the woods with our airguns'. Adam's personal voice comes across clearly in the following extract:

Art shot Golders in the ear with the repeater air rifle from about ten meters, it was the funniest thing I had ever seen, Golders was writhing in agony on the floor whilst we were all laughing at him. He'll probably have a scar for life now (Appendix F).

The rest of the letter simply serves to confirm the aggressive and macho identity of the writer. In it he tells his newly enlisted friend Wayne, that he is going out with Laura, gives him news from the rugby team, updates him on his failure to gain World

Cup tickets and tells him he may buy Wade's scrambler motorcycle. He also relates how he and Wade were finally asked for identification as proof of their age at a night-club and got thrown out.

Themes which recur and constitute important elements of Adam's identity and personality are macho male friendships, rage and anger. Adam seemed to enjoy violence and examples are given of humour or amusement at the suffering and pain of another person. This data serves to confirm my perception of Adam. He appeared truculent, surly and taciturn, did not share emotions and had a 'hard' image to conform to. In banter with other boys, he was not quick to respond and would change colour and seeth while suppressing his aggression. He did not mix with girls and preferred male company. The relevance of these themes in Adam's reading is of considerable value. For instance, he particularly enjoyed the ending of 'A Poison Tree' by Blake (Appendix D) where a revenge killing takes place. He also appeared to have quite a simplistic view of life and his short story displayed no ambiguity or sophistication, being a simple account of male violence. He certainly appeared to have a less mature and sophisticated outlook than the rest of the readers in my study. Adam also made significantly fewer annotations around the fifteen pre-twentieth century poems than any other reader (only 88 compared to Anna's 201) and repeatedly referred to his aversion of complexity illustrating his intolerance of ambiguity.

Peter.

Peter described himself as 'a very stuck in my ways type of person' and illustrated this by reference to his laziness. He was undoubtedly a very 'laid back' student indeed. He wrote 'my family think I'm lazy my friends think I'm lazy, I know I'm lazy', and declared he could 'only make a positive, assertive attempt at something when I'm really really motivated'. Characteristically, Peter did not appear particularly bothered by his laziness. In class when others would be writing copious notes he would be jotting down odd words, often incorrectly, exhibiting an extremely 'laid back' image as far as written work was concerned. In contrast, Peter was a leading member of the class as far as discussions were concerned. My PGCE student commented that he 'had a lot to say' and also that he was 'unruffleable' (Appendix

I). Peter was, however, occasionally unhappy with two aspects of his personality, his sharp tongue and a lack of thought for the consequences of his actions. Both characteristics conspired to get Peter into frequent trouble. He explained, 'this is a big problem when it comes to school and teachers. Many a time have I realised that laugh and the class laughs with you ... but you stay in detention' (Appendix F). Peter would often engage in verbal sparring with his teacher and his peers, occasionally overstepping the bounds of acceptable behaviour, but without malicious intent. Peter revelled in verbal combat and was determined to win any argument during oral work. Often he would stick to the point he was arguing long after he did not believe it anymore as he wanted to win the argument. Such highly competitive instincts somehow coexisted with Peter's 'laid back' image. Peter confirmed this in his personal writing and admitted:

I'm also the most stubborn person I know. I stick to my guns even when I know I'm wrong. This is sometimes a quality as it counteracts my laziness. If someone says: 'oh you'll never do it' I will even if it kills me I'll do it just to prove them wrong (Appendix F).

As an example, Peter described being bullied by a teacher in Essex. He had written that he wanted to be a pilot and alleged that the teacher laughed and told him he would never do it as he was 'too thick, too short and too lazy'. Peter promptly exercised his quick wit and sharp tongue on the teacher and explained that 'a hundred things that were wrong about him just popped into my head and rolled off my tongue'. Subsequently, he became even more determined to fly. Soon after the incident Peter moved schools and explained, 'Ever since I've not let anyone push me around (because they'll pay)'. Peter exuded confidence and was also very articulate. This was confirmed by my PGCE student's views of him (Appendix I). However, despite Peter's image and performance as a quick witted and stubborn boy, he could also be a profound and even philosophical thinker who was surprisingly perceptive under this brash exterior. After some time was spent discussing the universe and science, Peter remarked 'even the universe involves me'. He was also acutely aware of his privileged economic and social position and felt he had achieved little of consequence in his short life. He wrote:

Sometimes I watch the news about all the death and destruction in the world and I feel sad for those people, but I suppose that's normal everybody feels sorry for all the starving children in the world. But sometimes I feel something 'closer to home' than that. I look at my life and realise how good it really is and what a care and trouble free life I've had' (Appendix F).

In Peter's examination he decided to plead the cause of the homeless and wrote 'the fact that people, women, children, men, are enduring the hardship of not having any home, any food or any care should make a person give all they can to help' (Appendix F). He also noted the injustice of government extravagance in the face of such suffering and perceptively argued that vices such as drink, drugs and crime 'are so often the result of poverty and homelessness rather than the cause'. Although the theme of homelessness was set in the examination, it is clear from his personal writing that Peter did keenly feel the suffering of destitute members of society. Consequently, Blake's 'London' was considered to be socially relevant to the Britain in which Peter lived. It is also interesting that he chose not to write a letter to a friend who was thinking of running away but to promote the political cause within British society of this section of the population. He even compared himself to friends who had to endure parental divorces and observed, 'I feel a kind of guilt. I think that there is only a certain amount of grief in the world and I have not had my fair share which means other people carry my burdens' (Appendix F). In contemplating whether he had achieved anything worthwhile in his life, Peter related the death of a good friend in Year 8 and the fact that he had so much ahead of him in life that he missed, concluding, 'I have done so little, achieved few of my goals'. Peter's short story (Appendix F), set in the future, also concentrates on the discontent of the central character who fails to achieve anything of significance. This theme is also apparent when one reads Peter's appreciation of Sir Walter Raleigh's 'What is our Life?' and his remarks that the poem made him feel his age. For someone who always appeared jovial and optimistic, Peter's conclusion to his personal writing was quite serious:

Someone once said that 'It is not a tragedy to die doing what you love'. If this is true then I will die in the sky but so few of us choose so little of what we do. Choice for some is a luxury (Appendix F).

Peter was good at science and explained in a letter to a friend that he was going to do A levels in Maths, Physics and Psychology in the sixth form:

After two years I'll be able to analyse your behaviour, whilst knowing exactly how much potential energy I have and reciting the square root of all the numbers from 1 to 20. Now which employer could turn me down! (Appendix F).

Although Peter was looking forward to A levels, he did not, predictably, look forward to the work involved. Peter's humour was evident throughout his examination letter (Appendix F), riddled as it was with phrases like 'I am at the moment less endowed with cash than an extremely unlucky compulsive gambler'. Peter's personal voice, wit and humour are also apparent in his examination letter as he updated his friend, Gareth, on current events at home. In explaining to Gareth that he was in the middle of very intensive exam revision, he wrote 'I've discovered that my parents spent 25 hours a day revising for their exams, funny that isn't it! It started off at 6 hours but went up by 60 minutes every time I got the lecture' (Appendix F).

The themes to emerge from various sources about Peter as an individual are useful when analysing his responses as a reader. Key themes appear to be his laziness and stubborn nature combined with a keen wit and determination. He also showed social and political awareness and, unlike Adam, empathy for the suffering of others. In some ways Peter may be seen to have had a scientific predisposition and also demonstrated a detached, unemotional and cognitive approach. Yet, by the end of the course, he appreciated the social relevance of poems which is not surprising given his keen social conscience. He also liked to put his reasoning skills to use and came to dislike works that were insufficiently challenging. Oral work was evidently far more enjoyable than writing for such a boy.

CHAPTER 6: SIX READERS.

In this chapter the 'identity style' of each reader is examined and applied to their reading. The description and analysis of each reader has been standardised and the same pattern of reporting is adopted throughout. Firstly, data is reported which illustrates and typifies a reader's 'personal stance' or individual reading style, in terms of the process by which they read poems. Secondly, data is given that identifies the formal qualities of poems to which the reader responds, positively or negatively, such as rhyme or structure. A key element in both is development over time as a sense of the progress of readers is available from this longitudinal research.

Steve - The Associative Reader.

A recurring aspect of Steve's reading stance was his tendency to write in his journal what a poem reminded him of. Half of the pre-twentieth century poems were related by Steve to a situation, experience or text in his own life. The poems he liked most at the end of the course were enjoyed because they were considered to be relevant to his life although mood featured as a secondary theme in some of Steve's responses. Five poems that Steve eventually gave high scores to were: 'A Poison Tree', 'The Latest Decalogue', 'The Human Abstract', 'The Sick Rose' and 'What Is Our Life?'. All were related to his own knowledge and experience and focussed on issues that he felt to be of importance and interest. The poems Steve enjoyed most were those that were personally relevant. After first reading 'A Poison Tree' Steve wrote in his journal 'this poem I liked quite a lot', explaining that it reminded him of 'arguments that I sometimes have with my parents'. These quarrels and confrontations can well be imagined especially as Steve had a tendency, in school, to become increasingly sullen, moody and stubborn after any correction or reprimand. At home, it appeared he would go to bed without having resolved a conflict which then played keenly on his conscience, especially as he knew that his behaviour was contrary to Christian teaching, something of great importance to him, and familiar from Steve's personal writing in the previous chapter. He wrote in his very first journal entry on 'A Poison Tree' that after such arguments with his parents,

‘I go to bed still thinking about it. It also reminded me of a passage from the Bible, ‘Don’t let the sun go down on your wrath’ (Appendix D). The value of a personal knowledge of the identity of the reader is apparent when one realises that Steve’s journal statement above can only be adequately interpreted by reference to his identity and background. We know from his personal writing, reported in Chapter 5, that Steve often regretted his actions, that Christian teaching influenced his behaviour, and that he had a tendency to argue and to be moody, only becoming aware later of the immaturity of his actions. Reference in Steve’s journal to arguments and the appearance of quotations from the Bible, could not be adequately explained without a close knowledge of the reader.

A poem’s relevance to Steve’s life and experience was a key factor in determining his response. In December of Year 11, Steve explained why certain poems were at the top of his rank order:

The reason that the poem ‘A Poison Tree’ came first in my rank order is that it has a direct relation to modern life. It is not just applicable to Blake’s era. This is also true for ‘The Latest Decalogue’. We still find ways to ‘bypass’ the rules that society lays down for us (Appendix E).

Steve also responded positively to ‘The Latest Decalogue’, consistently giving it 9/10. The theme of the poem, applying biblical teaching to actual behaviour and conduct, coincides with an important theme in Steve’s own life. In his first journal entry on this poem Steve gave it 9/10 and wrote:

I like this poem. It was all about going around the 10 Commandments without actually breaking them. The whole poem was based on methods of self gain. For example, you mustn’t steal, but cheating is different and you’re allowed to. It reminds me of Del Boy out of ‘Only Fools and Horses’ (Appendix D).

In his second journal entry he also gave it 9/10 appreciating that ‘this poem was witty and clever’ but in a third journal entry, somewhat surprisingly, after such a positive reaction, he gave the poem 3/10 and explained ‘the poem created a mood of anger in me because the way we live is build around self-gain’ (Appendix D). It must be noted, however, that Steve also gave ‘What Is Our Life?’ another of his favourite poems at most times, 3/10, on the same day because this poem, ‘evoked a mood of

sadness in me'. Clearly, Steve's fluctuating mood was responsible, at least in part, for the 3/10 he awarded. A month later his score for 'The Latest Decalogue' was back up to 9/10 in his rank order (Appendix E) giving a sequence of 9/10, 9/10, 3/10, 9/10. The positive reaction to this poem occurred, in Steve's words, because it was 'relevant to twentieth century life' (Appendix E).

By December of Year 11 'The Human Abstract' was Steve's third favourite poem after 'A Poison Tree' and 'The Latest Decalogue'. In his first journal entry, Steve noted that:

this poem greatly resembles another poem by Blake, A Poison Tree about planting seeds of evil and deceit ... the tree bears the fruit of deceit. These are sweet to eat; we all like sweet foods so Blake is implying we all like deceit (Appendix B)

and his second journal entry reveals how it affected him personally:

The poem evoked in me a need for self-discipline ... it is our fault that all of those bad things are happening ... I didn't really like this poem, it put me in a bad mood for the whole day (Appendix B).

Although in both these journal entries, Steve gave the poem 5/10, by the time he explained his preferences in a personal statement (Appendix E), he was giving the poem 8/10 on the grounds that the poet was perceptive about human nature and it was relevant to him as a reader.

Although Steve, like Peter, valued relevance, it appeared that to a far greater extent than Peter, mood influenced Steve's reading of poems. While 'London' reminded Steve of film extracts of towns bombed in the Second World War and 'Nuns Fret Not' reminded him of school, the failure of these poems to say something about Steve's own nature and life, as well as humanity generally, meant that they were ultimately not appreciated as much as poems that held personal relevance like 'A Poison Tree' by Blake.

'The Sick Rose' is an example of another poem where Steve's scores altered dramatically. In his first journal entry the poem received 3/10 because 'hardly any of it was exactly what it seemed'. He also noted the mood it evoked and explained 'the poem has a very sad, dreary sound and is basically quite miserable'. However, after

listening to an interpretation of 'The Sick Rose' from his teacher during class discussion, Steve gave the poem 9/10 and wrote:

Prostitution! The woman is sick STD's [sexually transmitted diseases] ... the invisible worm. The violent storm were the violent acts etc. ... The direct reference to the bed talks about it being of crimson joy, red being the colour of the red light district. The dark secret love is one that is not public (Appendix D).

Clearly, once the poem became relevant to his society and emerging sexual knowledge, Steve appreciated the poem. The term STDs was presumably brought to the poem from his personal and social education course. He also interpreted the storm to be 'violent acts', elaborating upon my suggestion that the poem could be about prostitution. Similarly, with 'What Is Our Life?', Steve's first and second journal entry scores of 2/10 and 3/10 hardly indicated enthusiasm, although in his first journal entry he wrote that the poem reminded him of Macbeth's speech. He explained 'I didn't rate this poem much ... it had a very down appeal, gloomy dull' (Appendix D). However, almost a year later, in his rank order, Steve was awarding the poem 7/10 on the grounds that it was relevant to his life. The poems that Steve disliked, according to his Year 11 interview, were dismissed for the reasons 'Jordan' failed to be appreciated, 'I can't relate this to anything that's around me which makes it - I don't know - I just don't really like it' (Appendix B). In contrast, Steve continues, 'whereas The Latest Decalogue I can see what's going on around me and what's happening and people are avoiding the law and things like that and it's relevant' (Appendix B).

Unlike his partner, Rob, who saw his task being to discover the poet's meaning, Steve saw his role being to connect his own past or present situation with the poem. Steve's own experience had to be connected with the poem, which, at times, produced an emotional response. When Steve did mention the poet, the writer was only significant if he accurately perceived Steve's life or situation. It seems that Steve was quite egocentric in this respect and appreciated poems that related to his own world-view. In his personal statement in December of Year 11 (Appendix E) he wrote that 'The Latest Decalogue' was a poem that, 'demonstrates the skill of the poet and that the way we live hasn't changed'. It was, however, quite rare for Steve to mention the poet and he did not initially tend to see the reader in the context of a

relationship with a writer, until introduced to this concept through teaching. Steve's responses to text as 'stimulus' were not always shared publicly as they were, at times, very personal and confined to his journal, illustrating the fact that different responses (and data) can be obtained from different sources. For instance, his very personal reflection about arguments with his parents appeared in his journal but was not mentioned to his partner, Rob.

If a poem was incomprehensible, like Adam, this was sufficient reason for disliking it. For example, Steve thought 'Jordan' was 'confusing which is why I don't really like it that much' (Appendix E). Yet, comprehension was rarely an issue for Steve and only occasionally appeared as a theme in his responses. In many ways, Steve was a perceptive reader and actively constructed meanings for most poems, independently, before hearing the views of his teacher or peers. Although Steve was also able to identify literary features of a poem, he did not appear to appreciate these. He noted personification and figurative language in 'What is our Life?', when he was awarding it 2/10 and 3/10, and identified tone and imagery in 'The Sick Rose', when awarding it 3/10. Generally, there was an absence of appreciation of style in Steve's responses and he did not focus on imagery or rhyme as some readers did, because relevance or an appreciation of content or meaning overrode any appreciation of style.

A clear connection is apparent between Steve's identity and his response to poems, yet one theme in Steve's life was not always viewed positively when it appeared in a poem. Steve's faith was important to him but he did not like many religious poems or overtly didactic works. For example, in response to 'The Lowest Trees have Tops', Steve wrote that the poem sent him into a 'state of great confusion' and he commented on the line, 'the firmest faith is found in fewest words' by saying that this line 'had an effect' on him. He explained, 'It makes me think about people being ashamed to declare their true thoughts and beliefs due to the mocking of others' yet he only thought it was worth 4/10 (Appendix D). The reaction may, of course, have been caused by Steve's conscience as we know from his personal writing, recounted in Chapter 5, that his words did not always match his beliefs. 'The Lamb' was, similarly, disliked by Steve because he considered it to be very religious.

Steve tended to appreciate a poem if it held personal and social relevance and if he could associate aspects of his life with it. He also appreciated a poem if it was clever. ‘A Poison Tree’ and ‘The Latest Decalogue’ were so popular because they combined these attributes in Steve’s view.

Rob - The Investigative Reader.

Rob tended to focus predominantly on the process of making meaning in his responses, enjoying the challenge of constructing the poem with the poet. Indeed, he gave this as his reason for enjoying the pre-twentieth century poetry more than the twentieth-century poetry in the anthology. During the interview, where he reflected on his reading, Rob explained:

Twentieth-century poems seem to be more of the words put on the paper directly you know saying what they want to say, with pre-twentieth century poems you have to like go into them and try and find things, get really into the poem to see what the poet is trying to say (Appendix B).

In Rob’s first journal entry for ‘What is our Life?’ he explained ‘there was a lot written into the poem that I could really get into and I could understand what the poet was saying and what he meant’ (Appendix D). For a poem to sustain his interest, it was essential that Rob continued to find more in the poem each time he studied it. For example, his score for ‘What Is Our Life?’ actually decreased in his second journal entry because he ‘didn’t get much more out of it’ than he had from a first reading. Despite this, at the end of the two years the poem was one of his favourites because he had been provided with a progressive challenge through teaching each time the class revisited the poem. With Walsh’s ‘The Despairing Lover’, Rob recorded, in his first journal entry, that he liked it because he was ‘able to interpret and understand’ it and his score remained at 8/10 in the second journal entry because he ‘did get some more out of it’. Rob’s scores for ‘A Poison Tree’ increased from 6/10 to 8/10 between first and second journal entry, citing as his reason ‘I like it more because I know what it’s on about’. Similarly, with Dyer’s ‘The Lowest Trees have Tops’, Rob awarded the poem 5/10, on a first reading, explaining ‘some aspects of it I couldn’t interpret that well’ although he was

beginning to relate the poem to the GCSE set play A Man For all Seasons by Bolt he had, recently, read. Rob's appreciation of the poem grew with his understanding of it and in his second journal entry he wrote, 'I can see a much clearer connection with A Man for All Seasons. I definitely like it more now'. How well Rob felt he got to the bottom of the poet's meaning influenced the pleasure he derived from the poem. For example, on first reading Herbert's 'Jordan', Rob thought its theme was similar to Wordsworth's 'Nuns Fret Not' and he wrote 'I could also draw my own ideas from it'. However, on rejecting his original interpretation and acknowledging in his second journal entry, 'maybe the poems are not as similar as I thought' Rob's score went down from 8/10 to 7/10. Yet, in his first journal response to 'The Latest Decalogue', Rob noted 'I could get a lot of ideas from it, you could understand what the poet meant but it was hard to explain' and gave the poem 7/10. Despite his interpretation being modified, after a week spent studying the poem, Rob's appreciation increased and his score became 8/10, he admitted: 'After re-reading the poem again I think I have completely misinterpreted the ideas in the poem. I got the bit about hypocrisy right but in the wrong way'.

In some ways Rob seemed to see a poem as a code to crack, his task being to decipher the poet's hidden message. He revelled in the challenge of constructing meaning where sufficient 'indeterminacy' was left for him. As 'cracking the code' was of prime importance, a degree of tolerance seemed to exist. This caused Rob to respond negatively if too much indeterminacy was present and his tolerance was exceeded. Rob explained that for him, poems by Wordsworth came into this category:

Wordsworth poems, I didn't really, um I didn't really enjoy those poems, I thought they were a bit too, a bit too deep, there's kind of a line between what I can see and interpret and read into a poem and then there are other poems, they seem to be really simple but they can be really deep and there are just so many meanings and things that can be interpreted that it can get confusing which I don't really like in a poem (Appendix B).

Rob's investigative stance obviously had limits, and although he enjoyed being able 'to interpret and read into' certain poems, he found 'too many meanings' simply confusing, which caused him to dislike a text. He explained, 'I prefer it if there are just one or two things you can find in a poem, one or two meanings that the author is

trying to get across rather than seeing lots of things and just becoming confused' (Appendix B). Blake's 'The Sick Rose' provoked Rob to write in his first journal entry that he didn't like it because he didn't understand it. In fact, this was repeated several times, culminating in 'the bits I did understand did not fit in with anything else which spoiled the poem for me' (Appendix D). If a lack of understanding persisted too long, rather like a puzzle that refused to be solved, Rob grew to dislike the text presenting the problem because he enjoyed solutions. From 4/10, in his first journal entry on 'The Sick Rose', Rob gave 2/10 in his second journal entry, explaining 'most interpretations still do not make sense, this poem has become worse' (Appendix D). In response to John Clare's 'I am', Rob wrote 'I don't know what the poet is trying to say' and gave the poem 2/10 although he clearly knew that the poet was 'extremely sad and lonely'. He also failed to appreciate 'The Two Corbies', giving it 0/10 because, in his words, 'I couldn't understand what the poet was trying to say and therefore couldn't give any other mark but 0/10'. Even after class discussion, Rob wrote in his second journal entry, 'I still do not understand a word 0/10'. Yet, plainly, Rob understood the surface features of the poem and comprehended its literal meaning; what he appeared to be noting was his failure to gain access to the deeper message the poet was transmitting. For Rob, true understanding of a poem was inextricably linked to the poet and interpreting the poet's message. For example, he acknowledged 'I got the basic prison idea' when reading Wordsworth's 'Nuns Fret Not' but admitted he 'couldn't really draw that much from it'. The failure to 'draw' something definitive from the poem was repeated when Rob wrote about Blake's 'Tyger', explaining 'I couldn't really find a deeper meaning' and noting it 'didn't really mean a lot to me' because he couldn't tell 'whether the poem is actually about a tiger or whether it has some kind of deeper meaning' (Appendix D).

Most of the time, Rob's aim was to make a poem make sense in his own terms; success resulted in liking and failure, to generate a plausible interpretation, resulted in disliking. Speaking at the end of his course, it is clear that many twentieth century poems in the anthology did not provide enough of a challenge for him and Rob therefore appreciated pre-twentieth century poems more, even though he found some of them too challenging. Rob appeared to appreciate poems that were not too

open or closed in terms of meaning. Reflecting about the poems he had read during the course, in an interview with my PGCE student, he commented:

The worst poem had to be 'The Sick Rose' um I think there wasn't anything to interpret to see into it, and it was so short and there was nothing to read from it, there could be any interpretation - of the poem and you could say well yeah that could be right and it was quite difficult to find something in such a short poem (Appendix B).

It appears that he found 'The Sick Rose' difficult because 'there could really be any interpretation'. In a sense, there were too many clues to enable Rob to pin the most plausible meaning down. Prior to this, he had explained to the student teacher:

I prefer it if there's just one or two things you can find in a poem, one or two meanings the author is trying to get across, rather than seeing lots of things and just becoming confused with a poem (Appendix B).

It seems that in his investigative stance, too many leads were as confusing as too few. A few good suspects is what this investigator needed as he could then closely examine each one for further evidence and stand a chance of solving the mystery.

In December of Year 11, Rob was asked to draw conclusions about the pre-twentieth century poems he enjoyed and those he did not for his personal statement following his construction of a rank order (Appendix E). His four favourite poems of the fifteen pre-twentieth century poems studied were 'The Latest Decalogue 9/10', 'What Is Our Life? 9/10', 'A Poison Tree 9/10' and 'London 8/10'. He was very clear about his reasons for enjoying them. Each poem, for Rob, had a 'strong meaning'. This, however, had nothing to do with Rob feeling strongly about the poet's message. Rather, the poem's meaning was like a strong, detectable and clear pulse, once it was located. Rob explained why 'The Latest Decalogue' was his favourite poem by saying that there was 'a lot the reader could get out of the poem' because 'they really knew what the poet was trying to say'. Similarly, 'What is our Life?', like all four of Rob's favourites, had a 'strong meaning' and there was 'a lot which the reader could draw from the poem' and the reader 'knew what the poet meant'. In Rob's favourite four poems the 'strong meaning' was 'conveyed really well by the poet' and Rob concluded that 'the higher the scores for the poem the more I could draw from them and interpret' (Appendix E).

Although Rob's predominant characteristic was to investigate, there were traces of the affective or associative reader in his activities. In three out of the four poems Rob liked most, we have evidence that he was not simply able to construct the poet's meaning, he felt the meaning had some relevance to him or his world, although personal relevance was not the key theme in Rob's responses. Clearly, Rob appreciated poems he considered to be relevant. He commented in his journal entries that 'The Latest Decalogue' was 'very applicable today' and wrote of 'A Poison Tree' that, 'everyone feels this way sometime'. For example, 'London' prompted Rob to reflect in his journal upon the plight of the destitute, in cardboard city today, and he commented that the poem, 'makes you realise how lucky you are'. In his first journal entry for 'The Despairing Lover', Rob wrote that the second stanza reminded him of a song and commented in his journal, 'something of this poem is very true to life. Sometimes we all feel like doing something rash, then we realise it's not such a good idea' (Appendix D).

It has already been noted that Rob's focus was generally on poem as *poet* and he viewed his activity being to attempt to receive the poet's message. The most commented on feature in a poem by Rob was imagery. In his interview with my PGCE student, Rob was asked, 'what exactly is it that you respond to in a poem?' He replied, 'um probably things like um, literary devices, things like um imagery or personification um rhyme, rhythm, anything like that really that you can um investigate, go into, kind of look at in more depth' (Appendix B).

What is relevant, as it confirms Rob's keenness as an investigative reader, is that he almost always related technical devices to the meaning of the poem. He appreciated the imagery and title of 'A Poison Tree', and Blake's use of the apple, thinking that figurative language was 'a very good way ... of getting his point across' in his second journal entry. Equally, Rob appreciated the way 'What is our Life?' was written and the imagery used, comparing life to a play. In his journal, he wrote:

The author has used a lot of imagery in the poem which is probably why I could write so much about it. There was a lot written in the poem that I could really get into and I could understand what the poet was saying and what he meant (Appendix D).

Rob particularly appreciated the idea of one spectator in Heaven being a critic. Yet, although Rob generally enjoyed and appreciated imagery, he could not do so if he felt insecure about the meaning of the poem. For example, with 'The Tyger' he simply felt the imagery 'just served to make it more complicated', and while appreciating the cleverness of 'Nuns Fret Not', he thought the poem was 'not very good' in his second journal entry.

The other feature Rob tended to focus on was a poem's rhyme scheme but this was often only after paired and whole class discussion, whereas he independently analysed imagery before contact with other readers. Another frequent approach used by Rob to understand new poems was intertextuality as he would often relate a poem to a previous poem or another text. 'London' caused Rob to refer to a film he had seen about a chimney sweep in the back alleys of London, 'The Tyger' was compared to 'The Lamb', 'The Lowest Trees have Tops' was related to Robert Bolt's A Man for All Seasons and 'Jordan' was related to 'Nuns Fret Not' in journal entries (Appendix D). However, even Rob's intertextual awareness followed his characteristic emphasis on meaning.

Anna: The Speculative Reader.

Anna's speculative or even philosophical approach is evident from her journal entry in response to 'The Human Abstract' by Blake where she explained, 'I like poems that are confusing ... I do like analysing ... I like this poem as it is quite philosophical ... I feel it is cleverly written' (Appendix D). Anna also seemed to appreciate some of the most obscure poems, which the other readers tended to dislike as they found them inaccessible. Anna was an unusually 'laid back reader' and was able to speculate and set up tentative hypotheses easily, although Peter became more like this at the end of the course, not minding if he misinterpreted a poem at first.

When Anna and Josie were discussing Herbert's 'Jordan', which most readers found quite obscure, Josie demanded, 'okay, explain to me why you liked it. I know it's because it's complex and deep and meaningful'. Josie knew her partner well by this stage and could easily see what Anna liked most. Josie was right as Anna wrote in her first journal entry for 'Jordan':

I like this poem as for a start, there is no easy to explain reason why it is called Jordan and the writer is being very metaphorical all the way through. The poem is done very well in like a code that unless you look very carefully you cannot decipher. I think Herbert is writing about how people put on false acts and false appearances. He is asking what is wrong with showing the truth. I don't understand half this poem ... as it is confusing it must have a good meaning (Appendix D).

A poem's resistance to closure increased Anna's pleasure of it and she actually preferred not understanding a poem to start with. In their conversation about 'Jordan' Josie told Anna that she preferred poems that worked immediately on her and that she did not like having to work really hard to find out what a poem is about. Anna replied, 'I prefer not understanding it because then it makes me think how clever the bloke is that wrote it and think yeah he means something and he's being really difficult' (Appendix C).

Anna's love of ambiguity was not, however, evident at the start of the course, although it did develop fairly soon in Year 10. Peter's enjoyment of ambiguity, by contrast, developed only in Year 11. Anna's first two journal entries on pre-twentieth century poems, read in the spring term of Year 10, held no reference to an enjoyment of ambiguity and 'London' was awarded 5/10. Anna explained, 'I don't actually understand what this poem is talking about' and did not appreciate the challenge it presented as she did later in Year 10. Indeed, by the time she had read 'What Is Our Life?' she wrote, 'I like this poem, it is very meaningful'. Ambiguity began to be appreciated by Anna and the next poem she read, 'The Sick Rose', was actually appreciated less when meaning was pinned down. In her first journal entry, where she had a choice of interpretations, it was awarded 8/10 but after becoming convinced of a simple interpretation about sexually transmitted diseases, a too literal explanation of Blake's symbolism, her score went down to 5/10. Anna respected complexity. For example, even though she did not enjoy 'The Tyger' she wrote that it 'must be very good' because it was 'full of confusing metaphorical sentences'. Conversely, Anna recorded her dislike of 'The Lamb' in her journal because it was too straightforward and 'was not metaphorical or anything'. She appeared to like poems that were not only complex in terms of the process required to gain access to them but also had a profound or even philosophical theme or message of great

significance in Anna's terms. After reading 'The Human Abstract' she wrote, 'I like this poem as it is quite philosophical ... I feel it is cleverly written and never starts preaching' (Appendix D).

In December of Year 11, after four terms of GCSE, readers drew up a rank order of poems and explained their preferences. Anna explained that certain poems were at the top of her list because they were 'about a decent subject' and also stated 'I like poems that are confusing because then there seems to be more of a point to them plus they always seem deeper in the end than the ones that are simple - or at least they appear to be so.....the poems that are written in a way that is hard to decipher always seem to me that there must also be a reason behind the poem for it being written like that'. It can be assumed that when Anna notes her appreciation of poems that are 'confusing' she may well mean 'complicated'. In her interview with the PGCE student she explained, 'I usually like the ones that are confusing cos then I think there's more work to be done on it and there must be some deep meaning to it - like Jordan I like that one cos it's all confusing and metaphorical'; she reflected, 'I do like analysing and things' (Appendix B).

The concomitant of Anna's appreciation of complexity or on occasions, difficulty, in a poem, is that she often disliked a poem if it appeared simple and straightforward. Generally, in a first journal entry, a poem was not liked if it was considered to be simple. Subsequently, after finding that a poem was deceptively simple, and that there was more to it, Anna tended to like it more. She reacted in this way to 'Nuns Fret Not' where her score increased from 4/10 to 7/10 or 'The Daffodils' that was first thought to be about daffodils and then turned out to be about memories, causing a rise from 4/10 to 6/10.

She informed the PGCE student that she always focussed on meaning and not form or poetic techniques when she first read a poem and stated, 'I don't actually look at the form of it particularly and also imagery and juxtaposition, I don't actually look at that usually, I'm usually straight in there trying to find out what they mean and not looking at that is juxtaposed with that and personification I don't think helps'. The PGCE student asked, 'That doesn't help you get into the poem?' and Anna explained, 'Well it does after someone else mentions it - then I think oh yeah!' (Appendix B). This is confirmation that Anna's primary interest was in meaning and

interpretation when she first encountered a poem, it was only later that she allowed it to function as a ‘stimulus’ or to analyse literary features.

As Anna appreciated poems which presented a challenge in terms of interpretation, she tended to appreciate poems that were ‘metaphorical’. Yet complexity and metaphor alone was not sufficient to arouse her enthusiasm. For example, she did not like ‘The Tyger’ despite it being ‘very good’ and ‘full of confusing metaphorical sentences’. The theme of the poem had to be of profound relevance to the human condition for Anna to derive greatest appreciation from it. She liked ‘The Human Abstract’ as it was ‘quite philosophical’; complexity was associated with importance by Anna. She explained in her personal statement, ‘I like the poems that are confusing because then there seems to be more of a point to them and plus they always seem to be deeper in the end’ (Appendix E).

Anna also appreciated the poet’s skill, noting that ‘The Human Abstract’ was ‘cleverly written’. In fact, her score for ‘Nuns Fret Not’ increased from 4/10 to 7/10 as a result of coming to appreciate the poet’s ‘cleverness’ in structuring the poem after the teacher pointed out that it was a sonnet divided into octave and sestet. Anna was also influenced by appealing content. She enjoyed ‘What Is Our Life?’ and ‘Jordan’ as she considered these to be about performing arts, which she always found pleasurable, as Holland liked poems about shells and Feagin enjoyed poems about cats (Chapter 4). Her experience certainly influenced her interpretation as she considered the disguise in ‘Jordan’ to be make-up and wigs.

Anna also possessed the ability to relate poems to her own life and situations in her family in a remarkable way, making connections many would never have thought possible, allowing the text to work as a ‘stimulus’ in a prolific way. For someone with a CAT score of 110 VRQ to get an A* is rare indeed and could be due to the way she read, her attitude, and the pleasure she derived from ambiguity. Anna was able to make connections between texts and it may be that the skill of intertextuality, required in the literature examination, becomes easier if the reader is practised at seeing connections between a poem and his or her own circumstances. If a reader can make connections between everyday circumstances and a text, then making connections between texts may be relatively easy. For instance, Anna drew some perceptive conclusions, totally unprompted, between two Wordsworth poems

‘Nuns Fret Not’ and ‘The Daffodills’ and demonstrated a striking ability to generalise, being able to theorise about genres and poets.

From a careful comparison of journal entries (Appendix D) with transcripts of paired conversation, it is clear that, for Anna, the text worked to a far greater extent as a ‘stimulus’ when she was talking with Josie or others than when she worked individually. There is an almost total lack of ‘stimulus’ response in her journal entries where her focus is almost entirely on interpretation. This is in complete contrast to Steve who included personal details in his confidential journal but did not share these in conversation with his partner Rob. It seems that Anna’s initial strategy was to interpret a poem and only after doing so did she, in conversation, relate the poem to her own experiences of life or literature. Anna focussed primarily on meaning and was not, initially, a very ‘personal’ reader despite being able to make connections between a poem and her life very easily once talking to Josie. Working on her own Anna functioned in a detached and analytical way. Most of Anna’s journal entries come within the ‘blueprint’ category and yet the text functions prolifically as a ‘stimulus’ in conversation (Appendix D and Appendix C). Clearly, a different context produced different responses with this reader.

Her discussion of ‘Nuns Fret Not’ with Josie serves as a good example of the way Anna allowed the text to function as a stimulus. She related the message of this poem to the life of her unemployed, drug addict brother, Darren, who appeared repeatedly in her responses. She told Josie:

lots of people are like Darren and stuff, he never wants to get a job, that’s my brother by the way, he never wants to get a job but and he, a job for him is a really bad thing you know because he wont get any freedom and you have to go and do it and you have set hours you’ve got to do and you’ve got to work and it’s boring and this bloke, and Wordsworth is saying it’s not, it’s not like a prison at all, if you find something that you enjoy doing because you’ll like it and and ‘And hence for me, In sundry moods, twas pastime to be bound within the sonnets scanty plot of ground’ (Appendix C).

A little later Anna read from her first journal entry, ‘many people such as nuns and hermits are contented with the lives they have chosen’ (Appendix D).

Anna greatly enjoyed ‘Jordan’ as is indicated by a score of 9/10. In her conversation with Josie she quoted the line, ‘Must all be vail’d, while he that reads, divines / Catching the sense at two removes’ and admitted, ‘I don’t get that obviously

because it's confusing' but went on to hazard an interpretation which was very perceptive. In response to Josie's question 'What d'you think the point was of him writing this poem?' Anna explained:

people cover up the truth with different things....like he is actually doing in this poem, he's covering up the truth cos he's writing it all funny, I don't know, perhaps that's the way he spoke it might not be written all funny, confusing um he might be contradicting his point a bit by doing all that and so he might be covering up the truth (Appendix C).

The girls went on to allow the text to work as a 'stimulus' by referring to politicians, advertising and propaganda as contemporary examples of disguising the truth, none of which had been mentioned in their journal entries. These connections with contemporary life only emerged through their collaborative work as a pair. They also related the message about truth being covered up to their shared experience of performing arts and the way people cover up with make up and also with lies.

Anna's declared aversion to religious poems is of interest. She clearly stated that she did not like them and yet she enjoyed the challenge of 'Jordan' and seemed shocked when she found out it was 'religious'. Only at the end of the poem does Herbert reveal what should be said plainly: 'My God, My King'. At the end of their conversation, which focussed on truth and contained examples of the truth being covered up, Anna realised the poem was religious which she appeared not to have recognised due to the focus being on text as 'stimulus'. A brief extract from their conversation will suffice:

Anna: My God, My King
 Josie: That's like 'plainly say' instead of covering it all up with a load of imagery and everything
 Anna: Yeah
 Josie: About plainly saying My God My King
 Anna: I think he's sort of religious actually, that's annoyed me now
 Josie: You don't like religious poems
 Anna: No, yeah, oh that's a point (Appendix C).

Arguably, the pleasure Anna derived from interpreting the poem was more significant than its theme; the process was more important than the content, and style

therefore overrode content for Anna, even though in her December Year 11 statement she had said she liked poems about ‘a decent subject’ (Appendix E).

Like Rob, Anna also preferred the pre-twentieth century poems because they were ‘deep’ and she considered the language to be more ‘romantic’, stating:

I prefer the language, and um, plus like ‘Daily London Recipe’ and ‘I Wouldn’t thank you for a Valentine’ and stuff, they’re just, I don’t know, they don’t seem so deep and like they mean what they’re saying, the language in pre-twentieth century poems is more romantic and stuff (Appendix B).

Although she did not quite have the vocabulary to explain her preference for the language of the pre-twentieth century works, it is interesting that Anna chose to express her appreciation of the language, which many would consider to be a barrier preventing enjoyment and providing a source of difficulty in such works.

Josie - The Affective Reader.

Josie’s characteristic style as an ‘affective’ reader is apparent from her comments to Anna while discussing ‘The Human Abstract’ by Blake. She told her partner, ‘that’s what’s good about poems, one’s that affect you emotionally I reckon’ (Appendix C). Throughout this longitudinal study, a constant feature of Josie’s responses, in her journals, in discussion with Anna, and in interviews, was the power of a poem to evoke a particular mood in her. In her journal entries, Josie commented on eleven of the fifteen pre-twentieth century poems by referring to mood or emotion and her evaluation of a poem was influenced by its emotional effect.

A brief review of Josie’s journal entries (Appendix D) illustrates the importance of mood in her response to poetry. In response to ‘London’ Josie wrote, ‘this poem made me feel depressed’, and after spending a week discussing the poem, she explained, ‘I am now even more depressed by this poem than I was at the start of the week’. Yet, this did not stop Josie awarding the poem 7/10 in both entries. Some inconsistency is apparent in Josie’s journal entries as she initially responded to ‘A Poison Tree’ by stating, ‘this poem was depressing’. However, in her second journal entry she wrote, ‘This poem didn’t work for me because I just couldn’t get into it and it didn’t emotionally affect me’. It seems that as well as the mood in a poem being

important to Josie, her own mood altered between the two journal entries. Generally, a poem which provoked an affective response was appreciated more than a poem that did not by Josie. Any mood was better than no mood at all. If a poem was simply about an emotion, this was not appreciated by Josie as much as a poem that evoked an emotion in her. In response to 'The Despairing Lover', for instance, Josie wrote, 'Although this poem is about an emotion, it is still a bit uninteresting'. This was because it didn't make her feel anything. She continued, 'I still think this poem a bit shallow' and, similarly, with 'The Lowest Trees have Tops', Josie explained that 'the poem didn't really stir any emotions in me' resulting in her giving it a score of 4/10 for enjoyment although she appreciated its quality. In response to 'The Lamb' Josie wrote, 'I don't like this poem at all. It doesn't stir up any emotions in me except boredom'.

Although early in Year 10, Josie appeared to dislike poems that depressed her, towards the end of the course she was appreciating poems that had the power to evoke a mood whether this was positive or negative. Early in Year 10 Josie awarded 'What Is Our Life?' 8/10 and wrote in her journal, 'I did quite like this poem. The reason that I like this is because it is a happy and positive piece of poetry and I generally prefer poetry that doesn't depress me' (Appendix B). The next poem she read, 'The Sick Rose', was considered to be 'sad and depressing' and Josie described it as 'quite a depressing poem' resulting in her view, 'I didn't like it at all'. However, towards the end of the course, in Year 11, Josie responded to 'I am' by John Clare by writing, 'I like this poem although it's depressing. I enjoyed this poem'.

The affective element in poetry was not considered by Josie to be of importance in the reader alone. She considered it to pervade the whole literary transaction. If a poem was to be appreciated by Josie, it needed to evoke an affective response in her but was also considered to have been produced out of the poet's emotional experience. Josie told my PGCE student in an interview, 'the poet writing down their feelings ... that's what poems are' and later explained, 'the poet has to have written it through some kind of emotion' (Appendix B). Josie elaborated that a friend had informed her she could write a poem on the spot. Yet, Josie considered that this merely created a 'piece of text that had rhyming words'. She explained what she thought of her friend's 'poems':

I decided they weren't poems, that's not what poems are because she didn't think about them, she didn't have any kind of emotion when she was writing them - it was just a case of finding words that rhymed - that's how I came to the conclusion - it has to be created through an emotion (Appendix B).

Like most readers in this study, Josie appreciated pre-twentieth century poems in the anthology more than twentieth century poems. Yet, this was on the basis of the affective impact they had. She told the PGCE student, 'personally I prefer the pre-twentieth poems, I think that they're they seem to have a lot more emotion in them' (Appendix B). 'What Is Our Life?' was such a poem and Josie considered it to have been produced as the result of an emotional experience 'I think that Sir Walter Raleigh must have been having some sort of feeling, philosophical mood ... possibly he's depressed and um I think the poet was going through some emotions when he wrote it' (Appendix B). It is significant that Josie's personal writing demonstrated her determination to be happy regardless of circumstances and this need also manifested itself in her reading. Yet readers are by no means as simple as to respond in only one way. In Josie's reading there were features of Adam's need for understanding, of Peter's appreciation of relevance and even, occasionally, of interest, like Anna's, in poems that were felt to be philosophical and had a profound message. These were, however, subsidiary themes in Josie's responses in addition to the central emphasis she consistently placed on emotion.

Josie can be seen in the following extract expressing an appreciation of the meaning in a poem as well as its emotional impact. While talking about 'The Human Abstract', Josie and her partner Anna began discussing if they could ever award a poem 10/10 and, if they did, what sort of poem it would be:

Anna: Oh yeah, there is a poem I could give 10 out of 10 to - it's the one of Four Weddings and a Funeral and it's, I love that poem, I've got that at home somewhere

Josie: About your Sunday best

Anna: Hmm - the sun won't shine in the morning and there'll be no more stars

Josie: Yeah, cos that's a really, a poem that affects you

Anna: Hmm

Josie: When he reads it in the film everyone cries and it's just like, yeah that's a poem I could give 10 out of 10. That's what's good about poems

Anna: Is that by William Blake?

Josie: That's what's good about poems, ones that affect you emotionally I reckon, I mean this [The Human Abstract] is quite good

Anna: yeah

Josie: it's got a lot of meaning ... (Appendix C).

Although the responses to the poem they mention would have been coloured by the context of an emotional moment in a film, and one wonders if the same 10/10 would have been awarded had it appeared on a sheet of paper in a lesson, it is significant that Josie stated, 'that's what's good about poems, ones that affect you emotionally'. However, she also liked 'The Human Abstract' because it had 'a lot of meaning' which was important to Josie as this was responsible for eliciting any emotional response. After teaching, Josie did appreciate other features of poems and by December of Year 11, she was appreciating the message and relevance of 'The Latest Decalogue'. She wrote:

My favourite poem is 'The Latest Decalogue' by Arthur Hugh Clough. I gave this poem 9/10. I think I like it because I understand it and I agree with it. ... secretly people only do what is in their best interest. I think that life is still like this. People rarely do kind or selfless things (Appendix E).

By her third journal entry she had also come to appreciate the skill of the poet and his 'cleverness'. Here, Josie's agreement with the poet's message is cited as a reason for appreciating this work. Her reason for appreciating another poem was 'I also like 'What is our Life?' because it is emphasising the pointlessness of our lives, I think he has a very valid point and I suppose I agree with his theory' (Appendix E). Such responses were, however, secondary for Josie, in the sense that they did not appear in her journal entries which represented her own original responses, but followed intensive teaching on these two poems which broadened her appreciation of them. Indeed, 'The Latest Decalogue' and 'What Is Our Life?' were appreciated more by my readers after they received teaching on them. Although ease of comprehension did feature in some of Josie's responses this was not to the extent it was significant for Adam. For example, in discussing 'Jordan' with Anna, she explained:

Tell you why I didn't like this poem. I don't like poems where you have to, I don't enjoy sitting there and having to work out what a poems means, I like something you can read and think 'Oh my God, yeah' or something straight away (Appendix C).

At this point Josie was expressing the view that a poem should have a rapid impact. She did not enjoy having to put a lot of work into finding out what a poem was about. She appreciated 'The Latest Decalogue' the first time she read it and explained 'I liked this poem, I had a lot of ideas about it 8/10' and wrote of 'What Is Our Life?', '7 out of 10 as I think I can interpret it quite easily'. Understanding alone was not, however, sufficient cause for a positive reaction. When writing about 'Nuns Fret Not', she stated, 'even though I understand this poem more now I don't like it anymore than before'. However, Josie did comment on 'The Lowest Trees Have Tops' in her journal by writing, 'I think this poem is better than I did before because I now understand what it is about' (Appendix D).

Clearly, if Josie could not understand a poem, it would not evoke an emotion and she wrote of 'The Lowest Trees have Tops' that it 'didn't really stir any emotions in me, which is probably because I didn't understand it'. She also wrote in response to 'Jordan', 'I only think a poem is good if people can understand it. If it just seems like a load of nonsense, what's the point?' (Appendix D). Yet, Josie's tolerance of ambiguity and understanding of a poem's complexity did improve after learning about response theory as she came to feel that when a poet wrote about his or her own feelings, 'other people won't necessarily understand' which, for Josie, enabled her to accept difficulty in poetry more. This is taken up in Chapter 9, 'Reading Response Theory'.

Overall, the meaning, theme and subject of a poem was more important to Josie than the form and were of primary importance as they determined whether the poem evoked an emotive response or not. Josie also appreciated poems that were 'meaningful' or had a profound message about human existence leading her to dismiss a poem if it was too 'shallow' such as 'The Despairing Lover'. Even though, she was a 'bit confused' about 'I am', she still enjoyed it.

Josie did comment on literary features from time to time, spotting that 'Nuns Fret Not' was a sonnet and noting line length, syllables and rhyme scheme. Yet, despite this, she thought the poem was 'a bit uninteresting'. Even though she commented on the rhyme pattern in 'Jordan', she still did not react positively to the poem as 'understanding' presented a problem and meaning was not readily accessible to her. After teaching on particular poems, Josie's tastes developed and

she began to appreciate a poet's cleverness or skill, but this only enhanced her appreciation of poems she had initially responded to positively. Her comment on 'What Is Our Life?' illustrates what she had come to appreciate by the end of the course. The poem was 'pretty good' because it wasn't 'too depressing' and it was 'quite clever'. This neatly summarises what Josie had come to appreciate: mood, theme and skill. This poem had been created out of the mood of the poet and elicited an emotive response in Josie. It was also profound and skilfully written which, taken together, account for her positive reaction, given her disposition as a reader.

Adam - The Passive Reader

Adam summed up his difficulty with poetry in his interview with my PGCE student. He told her, 'that's the main reason I don't like poems, I find them hard to understand' (Appendix B). Throughout the data collected on Adam, whether from taped interviews or written journal entries, the degree he liked a poem was repeatedly related to how easy he found it to understand. Unfortunately, for Adam to have a chance of liking a poem, he had to find it easy to understand.

Overall, Adam responded positively to very few poems. His responses are riddled with references to the difficulty of poetry. It is interesting, that of the six readers in the study, he achieved the lowest GCSE English Literature grade, only a B, compared to 4 A* grades and one A grade. His experience of reading poetry was by far the least rewarding and he was the least 'keen' reader of poems in both senses of the word at the end of the study. Consequently, he also preferred modern, easier, more accessible poems to pre-twentieth century works, although he did enjoy 'A Poison Tree' by Blake and responded very positively to this. Adam struggled to interpret poems and this difficulty was the source of his frustration. Unlike other readers who came to appreciate ambiguity over time, Adam found it very irritating indeed. In his first journal entry about 'The Latest Decalogue' he wrote, 'I don't like thinking a great deal about the meanings of poems'. This passivity and reluctance to adopt an active reading stance prohibited Adam from becoming 'keen'. He did not enjoy the process of thinking about meaning in total contrast to Anna, or his partner Peter, who both found this the most enjoyable aspect of work on poems. With Clough's poem, Adam's score improved as his understanding increased. From 3/10

his enjoyment score increased to 5/10 because, 'After my discussion, I thought this poem was better because I understood it a lot more'. Enjoyment was repeatedly related to comprehension. In his journal entry for 'The Sick Rose' he wrote, 'it wasn't that bad because I thought it was fairly easy to understand....It wasn't hard to understand and I wrote about nearly every line'. In his entry for 'The Daffodils' he wrote, 'I found this poem rather hard to understand' and he awarded the poem 4/10. By the time he made his second journal entry he stated, 'I have understood a lot more. The poem has got a bit better now I understand it more'. His score improved marginally to 5/10 and was higher than his first reaction to the poem 'because I understood very little first time round'. There is a direct correlation between not liking and not understanding. Yet, even when Adam understood this poem more in his second journal entry he was unprepared to award more than a 5/10 because he found it so hard first time round. This illustrates Holland's point about being 'locked out' to positive response (Chapter 4). It may be that the difficulty experienced by Adam in his first encounter with a poem eliminated the possibility of pleasure subsequently.

In Adam's first journal entry for 'The Tyger' he awarded it 2/10, giving as his explanation, 'I thought that this poem was pretty hard to understand....This poem just didn't make much sense to me, I couldn't understand it'. Again, in his second journal entry the score improved to a 3/10 'because I've understood it more than before'. Similarly, with 'The Lamb' Adam gave this poem 1/10 in his first journal entry and explained, 'I didn't understand much at all from this poem....I did not enjoy reading this poem'. By his second journal he wrote, 'I have understood a bit more' 1/10. The focus was always on understanding with Adam who saw poems as difficult riddles that he was not good at solving. In response to Blake's 'London', Adam's score increased as he gained a fuller understanding of the poem. He found it 'pretty hard to understand - 4/10' and explained, 'I don't like it when the poem's paragraphs don't have any meaning to me'. Yet, eventually the score went up to 5/10 because 'I can appreciate it more because I understand a lot more of it'

In response to 'The Lowest Trees have Tops' Adam wrote, 'I thought this poem was fairly hard to make sense of... I didn't enjoy this poem at all - 2/10'. Again the score went up as understanding increased but although comprehension appeared to enable Adam to tolerate this work a little more, an enthusiastic response was not

generated. By Adam's second journal entry he wrote, 'I have understood more about this poem' and, 'I have understood virtually all the poem now which makes it better so I will give it a 4/10'. However, despite almost complete comprehension being reported in the second journal entry, this alone did not produce a positive, enthusiastic response.

After reading 'Jordan' Adam explained 'I found this poem exceptionally hard to understand ... it has a lot of strange sentences I don't understand.... the score out of 10 would be 1 because I understood very little about it'. Lack of comprehension and failure to decipher meaning was again cited as the prime reason for antipathy to a poem. The score went up to 3/10 when some understanding was gained and Adam commented, 'I now understand more about this poem'. The point is that understanding alone was not sufficient to produce enthusiasm but lack of understanding was a good enough reason for Adam to dislike a work.

In his first journal entry for 'The Twa Corbies', Adam wrote 'I found this poem hard to understand ... I only think I understand the part where his lady had taken another mate - 2/10'. His score went up to 4/10 with greater understanding and he explained he had given 'a 4 because I understand it more and it makes a lot more sense but I still didn't like it much'. The fact Adam understood more of this poem was not sufficient reason in itself for him to like it. This is also illustrated by Adam's response to 'I am' and his statement, 'I didn't understand much about this poem ... I'm sure it has a deeper meaning I just couldn't see it a 2 out of 10 because I haven't understood much about it'. In his second journal the score improved to a 3/10 because 'it makes more sense now'.

Adam seemed aware that there was often a meaning which he was failing to decipher when it came to reading poetry and this was the cause of his great frustration. Adam's experience of poetry was painful and mystifying. He always relied on someone else to explain a poem to him. In a way he was like an illiterate person, unable to 'read' a poem and therefore dependant on others, a humiliating experience. While others enjoyed their emerging independence, Adam was frustrated by his inability. He always needed a more able peer or teacher to help him. Overall, the prevalence of comments where a lack of understanding is related to a lack of enjoyment is unambiguous. Given such negative reactions, reasons for positive



reactions are all the more important. It appeared that for Adam to really enjoy a poem, content and rhyme were determining factors.

Adam greatly enjoyed 'A Poison Tree' by Blake and gave it 8/10 even in his first journal entry, explaining 'This poem wasn't hard to understand unlike all the others we have done'. Yet, understanding alone was not responsible for this score. Adam continued, 'I enjoyed it because the poem flowed so well because each two lines ending rhymed with each other ... I enjoyed reading it because it was a nice flowing poem'. Adam also allowed the text of 'A Poison Tree' to function as a 'stimulus' which was rare indeed. For him, the conflict between the speaker and his foe was envisaged in a school environment. Adam told his partner, Peter, in their paired discussion:

I sunn'd it with smiles/ And with soft deceitful wiles' I think he doesn't show his enemy he's fearful of him sort of thing....at school he's like you know 'soft deceitful wiles' trying to keep it all to himself and not show anybody (Appendix C).

However, for Adam to gain the fullest appreciation of a poem, two further qualities were necessary. Apart from being easy to understand, a poem had to have a structure that Adam found pleasing and he repeatedly mentioned his appreciation of rhyme and how this helped a poem to 'flow'. For a very positive response to emerge, a poem also had to be relevant to Adam's concerns. Rhyme was certainly a key feature of Adam's appreciation. Even with 'The Daffodils' which only got a mark of 4/10, because it was 'rather hard to understand', Adam noted 'I liked the rhyming scheme, every other two lines rhymed'. However, rhyme or ease of comprehension alone did not produce positive responses. With 'The Tyger' Adam noted, 'The rhyming at the end of each two lines didn't make me like it anymore', and with 'Nuns Fret Not', which Adam awarded 5/10 then 6/10, his comment was, 'This poem wasn't too bad I thought, the ending part of the lines rhymed which enabled the poem to flow', even though he admitted, 'I am not very clear on the meaning behind the poem'. In his second journal entry the score went up to 6/10 and a feature noted was rhyme again 'It's a clever change of rhyme scheme', which Adam certainly appreciated.

The following extract from Adam's interview with the student teacher shows his assessment of what he responded to in a poem; rhyme is a key feature:

- T: What is it would you say that gets you to respond to a poem?
 A: Respond to a poem, uh, well, it's sort of like the rhyme, I enjoy it like when the rhyme say at the end of each line, that makes it flow, I like it when I it flows, that makes it easier to understand. The ones with deeper meaning, that sort of puts me off a bit (Appendix B).

In his Year 11 personal statement about his rank order, Adam wrote, 'I thought 'A Poison Tree' was a pretty good poem, I thought the last paragraph was humorous, I liked it because I thought I understood a great deal about it'. The only other pre-twentieth century poem that Adam enjoyed was 'The Latest Decalogue'. He explained, 'I liked 'The Latest Decalogue' because I understand its meaning and a lot about it. It's good the way it can shock people with what it says especially the line about the currency'. Here, again, Adam appreciated poetic technique. The reason for Adam's appreciation of 'A Poison Tree' was that it had all five elements which he responded positively to: 1. humour (he found the death at the end amusing), 2. rhyme, 3. content / relevance, 4. comprehension and 5. form.

Humour was an important factor in determining Adam's response. He appeared to be the least mature reader because he still enjoyed being entertained by a poem. He often liked a work if it was amusing and would probably have loved limericks, his development appearing to have been arrested at the early secondary school stage of poetic appreciation.

Peter - The Cognitive Reader.

Peter's characteristic reading style can be summed up by reference to his personal statement completed in December of Year 11 and his interview about his reading carried out by my PGCE student. He explained, 'I prefer poems that reflect the actions of the society we live in, poems that involve me ... I like poems that require work to get the deeper meaning' (Appendix E and D). In describing Peter as a 'cognitive' reader, it is important to understand that this reflected his position only in the second half of Year 11 and took considerable time to evolve. Peter was not remotely like this during the early stages of his GCSE course. From the start, Peter enjoyed poems that were personally and socially relevant but not until the later

stages of the course did he enjoy complexity and ambiguity in a poem. In Peter's second term of GCSE, when he held very negative views of poetry, he reacted positively to 'A Poison Tree'. In his first two journal entries he wrote:

I can quite easily relate to this poem. If I have an argument with someone and don't resolve it, it grows until that person becomes the worst person in the world in my eyes ... I can relate to this poem as I can recall times when an argument with someone has grown into a hatred so much that I wanted to kill them (Appendix D).

Personal relevance was always appreciated by Peter. In his journal entry for 'The Despairing Lover', he stated:

I can make personal connections with the poem, not with the thought of suicide ... more a scheme I plotted in a rage but when I cooled down and thought about it, it turned out to be not such a good idea (Appendix D).

Yet, while Peter appreciated the personal relevance of these poems, he also liked them because of their simplicity and ease of understanding at this stage in his development as a reader. He enjoyed 'A Poison Tree' because it was 'fairly easy to grasp' and wrote of 'The Despairing Lover', 'I like this poem as it's not too complicated'. Peter did not appreciate complexity or ambiguity. Although ease of understanding did not automatically cause Peter to like a poem, it was significant enough for him to write about consistently in his journal. For instance, 'The Lamb' was 'easy to understand' but was still awarded 2/10 in his second journal entry as the content did not appeal to him. 'The Tyger', in contrast, was thought to be 'quite good' and Peter noted that it was 'quite easy to understand'.

Just at the end of Year 10, there were glimmers of a tolerance of ambiguity emerging in Peter's responses to odd poems. For instance, his journal entry for 'The Human Abstract' contains this statement: 'This poem is very good in my opinion. It is very intriguing, it leaves a lot unanswered so there is lots of room for personal interpretation'. However, such a love of active reading and pleasure being taken in the construction of meaning disappeared in his responses to subsequent poems where difficulty of comprehension seemed to elicit a negative reaction whereas ease of comprehension, in response to 'The Despairing Lover', for instance, yielded a more positive reaction. The changes that occurred in Peter can be illustrated best by

examining his responses to 'Jordan' by George Herbert. In October of Year 11, he gave the poem 2/10 and explained in his initial journal entry, '3/10 the poem itself is a riddle with a complicated form' (Appendix D). No tolerance of ambiguity was evident here. Yet, by May of Year 11 he stated in his interview, 'I much prefer a poem like this ('Jordan') than a poem that is just straight forward' explaining that, 'you can know what the poem's about by picking up little bits of it, there are some lines you might not understand to do with the meaning of the poem' (Appendix B). He continued, 'I think one of the confusing things about 'Jordan' is the title, it does seem a little abstract. I don't think it's that confusing.' For the last six months of the course, this stance persisted and he explained in his interview:

... I prefer poems with depth ... I like poems that require work to get the deeper meaning like some of Blake's work. A poem that can be seen for what it is in just a quick glance is not as enjoyable ... (Appendix B).

When asked what appealed to him in the poems he enjoyed he replied:

probably something that the immediate meaning doesn't just pop out at you, it's something you have to read into. I especially like poems that there are few interpretations of it - things that you can discuss over - have different views (Appendix B).

Peter's tolerance of ambiguity, in sharp contrast to his objection to it earlier in the course, was fostered by explicit teaching about the reader's role in the creation of meaning during March of Year 11, discussed further in Chapter 9 'Reading Response Theory'.

Another change that occurred in Peter during the course was his appreciation of the relevance of a poem. Whereas his first response to 'A Poison Tree' focussed on the personal relevance the poem had for him, by May of Year 11, while still seeing the poem as personally relevant, he appreciated it for the way it commented on the wider human condition. Peter also seemed to be one of the few readers who actually savoured words and derived pleasure from language. For example, in response to 'The Lowest Trees have Tops', Peter wrote, 'the line 'And Love is love in beggars and in kings' is a very good line, it is very philosophical and is my favourite line in the poem' (Appendix D). Peter experienced pleasure in particular

words and phrases which can be related to his own love of verbal wit and the pleasure he took in clever and thought provoking phrases. He appreciated the line 'mutual fear brings peace', in 'The Human Abstract' giving as his reason, 'it is very true even today', and noting that the contrasts in the poem lent it strength. Peter also appreciated the validity of a phrase as well as the language used to convey it. In his journal entry for 'London', Peter noted that repetition of the word 'every' was 'quite powerful' and thought that, 'the vocabulary makes the poem more powerful'. Imagery was noted by Peter and he had a vivid impression or 'picture of the manacles' from reading 'London' and also appreciated the imagery in 'What Is Our Life?'. He compared this poem to Macbeth's famous speech where life is also compared to a play. However, metaphors were occasionally a source of confusion for Peter, for instance, in response to 'The Lowest Trees Have Tops'. He also wrote of 'The Daffodils' that, 'daffodils must be a metaphor for something else but I can't work it out'. Peter appreciated rhyme, commenting about 'A Poison Tree' that, 'The rhyme and the twist in the tale of the poem made it more fun to read' and explaining that in 'The Daffodils', 'the rhyme scheme in the poem is quite interesting'. Peter also mentioned rhyme when writing about other poems in his journal. Seeing the poem as poet was not a dominant feature in Peter's response but he did comment on Clough that he was 'probably an atheist' who was 'criticised by the church' initially and noted Clare's mood in 'I am'.

Overall, Peter appreciated language more than any of the other readers in the study. Early on he wrote:

I do like 'A Poison Tree'. I can actually relate to this poem. It's something that won't change, written hundreds of years ago but things like emotions and relationships, making friends and enemies, never changes so I can sort of relate to this quite well (Appendix D).

Similarly, Peter's first reaction to 'The Latest Decalogue' was to find it very enjoyable because it was, 'in common with many of my own personal views' that the Ten Commandments were outdated. His response matured over time and he did come to see the poem as a criticism of the hypocrisy and materialism of contemporary society. He explained that poems like 'The Latest Decalogue' and 'What Is Our Life?' worked for him as they were relevant. He commented in his

interview, 'for example 'What is our Life' and 'The Latest Decalogue' are pre-twentieth century poems but they're very very relevant now as they were hundreds of years ago' (Appendix B). In his examination Peter wrote of 'The Latest Decalogue', 'a reader is intended to see the poets point of view by looking upon the person with contempt and scorn for their lack of moral fibre and ethics' (Appendix H). By then, Peter had become intellectually as well as motivationally keen. This response, where he noted social relevance and authorial intention, is a long way from his initial explanation of his enjoyment of the poem because he thought the Ten Commandments were a 'load of rubbish'.

In December of Year 11, at the start of Peter's 'keen period', he drew some conclusions about poems he liked and those he didn't in his personal statement. The reason for certain poems being at the bottom of his rank order was given: 'this is because I cannot relate to these poems very well. The poem is nothing to do with the things around me, issues that affect me or people I live with' (Appendix E). He also explained why certain poems were at the top of his rank order:

I prefer poems with depth ... I like poems that require work to get the deeper meaning like some of Blake's work. A poem that can be seen for what it is in just a quick glance is not as enjoyable as one with multiple deeper meanings (Appendix E).

By the end of the course Peter completed his journey from frustration at ambiguity to positive enjoyment of it and emerged as a 'keen reader' as a result.

CHAPTER 7: THE PERSONAL TRANSACTIONAL MODEL.

1. Requirements of a Model.

The model of reading proposed in this chapter is termed the ‘personal transactional model’ as it is a development of Rosenblatt’s transactional model informed by work on individuality in reading proposed by Holland (1975b), Bleich (1978), Benton and Fox (1985) and Dias and Hayhoe (1988). The central notion embodied in this model is that of a ‘best fit’ or ‘match’ between a certain reader and a particular text resulting in the reader being potentially ‘keen’ both in terms of motivation and cognition. Although the notion of an individual transaction is implicit in Rosenblatt’s work where literary transactions are described as events, ‘between individual readers and individual literary works’ (Rosenblatt, 1968: 26), her model does not elaborate upon the notion of individuality any further than this. The individual nature of the literary transaction, both in terms of motivational and intellectual response, is elaborated and defined in my model which is an attempt to define the ‘fit’ that occurs between types of readers and types of texts. The model differs from Rosenblatt’s in that it seeks to elaborate on this individual occurrence in a particular reader. It also takes account of the fact that ‘teachers need to know adolescents as individual readers’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 47), but also applies the argument elaborated in preceding chapters that before pupils can be known as readers they must be known as individuals. Bleich asserts that any reader’s ‘reactions are subjective’ (Bleich, 1978: 102) and acknowledges Squire’s conclusion that ‘individual variation is caused by the unique influence of abilities, predispositions, and experiential background of each reader’ (Squire, 1964: 50). The ‘personal transactional model’ described in this chapter takes account of the individuality of the reader in the reading event. However, this model is not simply a model of reading or of the developmental process like that of Thomson (1987), rather, it is specifically a model of ‘keen’ reading achieved by a specific category of reader, adolescents, reading a certain sort of literature, pre-twentieth century poetry. Rosenblatt notes:

The problem created by the fact that a text has been produced by an author living in a different time or place - that is, in a different culture - thus is

largely only an extreme instance of the tensions implicit in any literary transactions (Rosenblatt, 1978: 56).

The model presented here is therefore one of 'extreme' reading, because the readers as well as the texts are especially challenging. The individual nature of the literary transaction is guaranteed by any reader's uniqueness even when author and reader reside in the same era and co-create meaning out of a common culture; when author and reader reside in different eras there are features of the diachronic transaction that will be special due to the discrepancy between the environment of the reader and that of the writer. The cross-cultural and diachronic aspect of the model is of particular interest because it illustrates how young readers, immersed in their own culture can respond to works from a different cultural milieu. The interplay between reader and text is of a special sort when text and reader come from different times because the transaction between different codes is 'stretched'.

Previous models have tended to privilege the position of either reader or text. The model presented by Dias and Hayhoe (1988), for example, emphasises the characteristics of readers but not of texts. Similarly, Thomson's (1987) model is explicitly about the reader's development and, equally, the four categories of response defined by Purves and Rippere (1968) do not take into consideration the text being read. In contrast, the 'personal transactional model' addresses characteristics of readers as well as features of texts and seeks to relate them to each other. In true transactional fashion, where the reader is as significant as the text, the 'extremity' of the reading situation results from the kind of reader reading as well as the sort of text being read. Modelling the responses of adolescent readers is complex because the readers are, themselves, changing so rapidly and, while all readers are subject to change, adolescents are still in the process of becoming readers. Although many adult readers may not be entirely consistent, adolescents have 'not yet arrived at a consistent view of life' (Rosenblatt, 1968: 31) and do not have fully developed intellectual or emotional equipment. Any model of adolescent reading must recognise this and take account of the reader's development over time. It can be seen that the type of reader and text depicted in this model present a challenge not evinced by less demanding reading encounters where adult readers respond to texts produced by contemporaneous authors. The challenge of modelling such a transaction is also greater because adolescents, who are changing, are likely to be

more susceptible to their own culture than adult readers who may see their own time more objectively and in a historical perspective. The challenging nature of the situation, where late twentieth century readers read pre-twentieth century texts, is apparent when one considers the demands that texts written before 1900 place upon modern adolescent readers.

Very often in school, children are required to read works that demand a constant effort at comprehension because the vocabulary and sentence structure represent 'the next stage' toward which they are being led ... constantly reading works with a vocabulary that is strange to them or with a complicated style that demands unusual efforts of attention (Rosenblatt, 1968: 215).

Clearly, what is presented here will not be a model of easy reading by expert or mature readers. Yet, many of the models of reading offered by theorists are of just this sort, depicting either expert readers reading (I.A. Richards 1929, Holland 1975) or the activities of enthusiastic and well motivated readers (Teasey 1988, Myszor 1993). Although the model presented in this chapter is of 'keen reading' it should be remembered that the readers whose reading generated the model were chosen specifically for their antipathy to the genre, a further instance of extreme demands being placed upon the transaction.

Another requirement of the model being proposed is that it should represent and synthesise the two key elements of reading: thinking and feeling. Consequently, the model is designed to illustrate both the cognitive and affective elements of response and to show the relationship between the two. Such a project is ambitious as many representations of the reading process confine themselves to the purely cognitive aspects of reading. Dias and Hayhoe, for instance, in their typology of reading, focus on cognitive processes or intellectual reading strategies and their 'Paraphrasers', 'Thematizers', 'Allegorizers' and 'Problem Solvers' are similar to Iser's 'implied reader'; they have few emotions. The only insights we have into the affective dimension of the readers reported by Dias and Hayhoe are that 'Paraphrasers' are 'reluctant readers of poetry' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 53), 'Thematizers' exist where 'reader and text have not connected' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 54), 'Allegorizers', 'tend to be satisfied with their efforts in making sense of the poem' (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 55) and 'Problem Solvers', despite their name,

‘more than the readers in the other categories, they approach the poem with enthusiasm’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 55). The model outlined in this chapter is an attempt to integrate thinking and feeling and to illustrate the fact that cognition and emotion are interrelated.

A further, highly significant difference between the model proposed here, and many previous models is that it takes a longitudinal view of the reading process and is not limited to a reader’s first reading or to a series of re-readings over a short period of time such as a few weeks. Dias and Hayhoe acknowledge that they ‘describe initial encounters only’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988, p.57) whereas the model proposed here has emerged from a longitudinal study and accounts for the development of responses over time. The elements in a reader that remain fixed and those which change over time, need to be differentiated and although initial encounters are mapped here, they are seen as the beginning of an often lengthy process of coming to terms with a poem. Further, what is described in this chapter is a pedagogic model as well as a model of reading in school because adolescents’ reading cannot be understood if the teaching they experience is omitted.

Finally, previous models have often taken a reader in isolation or have envisaged the reading process as an individual’s reading of a text. These may be products of their time for many were formulated when Piaget, who emphasised the individual rather than the social context of learning, was the dominant figure in learning theory. The model proposed here owes more to Vygotsky than Piaget as it takes into account the social nature of learning (Chapter 2) and applies this to reading. The readers upon which the model is based, did not simply read alone as their reading was often a joint activity and poems were co-created with other people. Consequently, the role of peers and teachers must feature in a model which conceives of reading as a social as well as individual activity. Rosenblatt, like Piaget, does not appear to take the social element of learning into sufficient consideration and while her central concept of transaction is retained, other elements of her model, as well as those of other theorists, are problematized. The model of reading proposed here is depicted in stages. The individual encounter between types of reader and a range of texts is considered initially; subsequently the social nature of reading where responses are shared is explored. After this, specific features of the diachronic

transaction are described and finally, the relationship between thinking and feeling is depicted..

2. 'Best Fit' Transaction.

Six different types of reader: 1) Associative, 2) Investigative, 3) Speculative, 4) Affective, 5) Cognitive and 6) Passive are apparent from my data and it appears that an optimal match or 'best fit' occurs between certain readers and specific texts. Such 'best fit' transactions offer the greatest potential for eliciting cognitive and motivational keenness. The types of reader or identity style (Chapter 4) illustrate the satisfactions a reader may seek from an encounter with a text. It has already been noted that Steve, for instance, prized relevance in a work of literature whereas Josie desired a poem to evoke a mood in her. Individual readers possess particular preferences and operate predominantly within their own identity style initially, before their response is modified by others. Clearly, the types of reader are not exhaustive but are intended to emphasise the individuality of the reader. The variety of factors within the reader cannot be ignored for they, at least in part, determine the value of the text for the reader. Rosenblatt notes, 'the reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood, and a particular physical condition' (Rosenblatt, 1968: 30). However, the readers in this longitudinal study, from which the model emerged, operated predominantly within one of the six personal styles, described in this chapter, over a period of several months. A 'preoccupation' or 'physical condition' on a particular day did not, as a rule, shift them out of their predominant identity style although some evolution of their particular style did occur over time. The consistent way readers read in their own identity style was unambiguous and emerged clearly from analysis of a range of data sources.

The 'best fit' element in the transaction is illustrated by the fact that only some texts will become 'poems' for particular readers. Although it has been noted that, 'great care must be taken to match the text to the pupil', as if the 'patience, effort and imagination' (Marenbon, 1994: 8) of teachers were all that was required, the personal transactional model depicts such a 'match' as encompassing the nature of text and reader, although the influence of the teacher is not disregarded. A certain

text may become a 'poem' for the 'Affective Reader' but not for the 'Associative Reader'. Rosenblatt observes:

The same text will have a different meaning and value to us at different times or under different circumstances. Some state of mind, a worry, a temperamental bias, or a contemporary social crisis may make us especially receptive or especially impervious to what the work offers (Rosenblatt, 1968: 35).

This does not, however, appear to be strictly true. The same text certainly had different meaning and value for different readers but reactions of a given reader to a particular poem over two years were observed to be remarkably consistent regardless of the state of mind of the reader on a particular day, except in the case of particularly inconsistent individuals like Steve. Yet, even Steve's responses were only overtly influenced by mood on two occasions. Certain combinations of particular texts and particular readers therefore represent a 'best fit' and produce positive reactions whereas other combinations work to a lesser extent, producing varying degrees of response from acceptance to outright rejection. My theory is that only certain texts and readers are compatible for a 'poem' rather than 'text' to be evoked. There has to be compatibility between the text and the reader's identity style. Where such compatibility exists the reader is enriched by the encounter and the text is no longer the same text as it was when created by the author as it becomes infused with the life and experience of the reader. Both reader and text change in the process. Consequently, this is not simply a model of transaction or exchange but a model of amplification and growth. What is of particular relevance for teaching is that certain texts appear to appeal to a wider range of readers than others. Some texts can be accessed in a variety of ways according to a range of identity styles by more readers than others. It has been argued that, 'the adolescent needs to encounter literature for which he possesses the intellectual, emotional, and experiential equipment' (Rosenblatt, 1968: 26), but the fact of the matter is that intellectual equipment is utilised in the initial transaction by some readers whereas others rely more on their emotional equipment. Furthermore, as teachers cannot easily predict what readers will respond to, a wide range of texts should be experienced by readers so that they encounter a sufficient variety to ensure the possibility of positive reactions to some works.

The next stage of the model focusses on the readers who have evoked a 'poem' from the text being studied due to a 'match' or 'fit' occurring between their 'identity style' and the text. There is little point in spending too much time on a text with which a reader has not connected for an examination which allows candidates considerable choice as to which texts they can write about. Cultivating a germinated seed, where a poem is growing, is a more expedient use of time than persisting with texts that have fallen on the wrong type of ground. Indeed, it may be inadvisable to spend the most time on poems pupils appear to need most help with, in other words, those they find most difficult. Just because the reader and text are compatible in the initial stage does not mean the reader needs less help with such poems. It may, in fact, be possible to make greater progress from such an advantageous starting point and for the pupils to be able to receive greatest help with texts they have had a productive literary transaction with, as a result of the text fitting their 'identity style'.

Each of these patterns of reading or 'identity styles' of readers will be described briefly in the rest of this section. All of the first five readers (Associative, Investigative, Speculative, Affective and Cognitive) are 'active' which is significant as these types emerged from a study designed to develop 'keen' readers and it will be remembered that readers were not 'keen' initially. Once established, each reader operated consistently in their particular style.

2.1. The Associative Reader.

The Associative Reader enjoys poetry that is relevant to their own experience and sees their task being to connect their past experience with that of the poem. This reader, while seeking these associations, may also manifest aspects of the Affective Reader as their memories or associations, elicited from relating their experience to that depicted in the poem, can be emotionally coloured.

In the journal entries of the Associative Reader, the text seems to function prolifically as a 'stimulus', the poem reminding them of one thing after another. Poems tend to be related to issues of personal and social significance although a difference between the Associative Reader and the Cognitive Reader is that the text as 'stimulus' evokes more personal memories in the former than in the latter. The Associative Reader tends to focus mainly on the poet's perception and depiction of

issues which are relevant to the way the reader lives, thinks and feels. If a poem has a message to communicate about the reader's life and is relevant to the reader's society or interests, a positive reaction is likely.

Readers who associate poems with their own experiences rarely note comprehension or understanding as a problem. Like most readers in this category, the Associative Reader rarely comments on style in initial encounters with the text as meaning is of prime importance as it is the resource that connects the reader with the poem.

2.2. The Investigative Reader.

The Investigative Reader is the closest of the six readers to the Speculative Reader but differs in certain important respects. Like all good detectives Investigative Readers like to find a solution. While they are able to generate a number of tentative hypotheses about the meaning of a text, they are not as relaxed or as philosophical as the Speculative Reader because they wish for a definite closure of the poem and a solution. The Investigative Reader is less detached and less 'laid back' than the Speculative Reader about the difficulty of a poem and sees it as their job to discover the poet's views and message. Their job is to crack the enigmatic code of the poem. Generally, more than the Speculative Reader, the Investigative Reader believes in the existence of an objective, reasoned answer.

The Investigative Reader desires coherence in a text and attempts to fit the different parts of the poem into a unifying whole. If some of the parts of the poem do not fit with others after some time, the reading experience becomes less enjoyable and even frustrating. This would not frustrate the Speculative Reader who has far more tolerance of ambiguity than the Investigative Reader. However, the Investigative Reader needs a sufficient degree of 'indeterminacy', to use Iser's term, to be fulfilled. A negative reaction results from too much indeterminacy where a poem 'can mean anything' such as 'The Sick Rose' by Blake or too little indeterminacy where a single 'correct' meaning is obvious. Where a poem seems to offer a few meanings rather than multiple possibilities, the most plausible can be chosen and seen as the solution. The Investigative Reader does focus, to a degree, on

poem as poet and attempts, through a range of strategies, to gain access to the poet's meaning.

A progressive challenge is crucial if the Investigative Reader is to be motivated. Every time a work is examined new insights should be discovered or its appeal may be lost. The Investigative Reader, more than other readers, is likely to analyse literary devices, particularly those such as figurative language through which meaning is transmitted. Whereas other readers may examine imagery, after their own initial response when they discuss the readings of other readers, the Investigative Reader is likely to have comments about imagery within their original comments which appear in initial journal entries or annotations around a poem before contact with other readers. For the Investigative Reader, like the Speculative Reader, an emphasis on text as 'blueprint' is predominant although, later, through contact with other readers, the personal relevance of the text emerges when it is allowed to function as a 'stimulus'.

2.3. The Speculative Reader.

The Speculative Reader is able to adopt a detached viewpoint and to set up a range of propositions or hypotheses which can be quickly and easily disregarded in favour of more plausible interpretations. This reader is likely to be philosophical and has an outlook characterised by more depth than most other readers, engaging easily in metacognition and rather introspective reflection about his or her own reflections. The Speculative Reader derives considerable satisfaction from complexity or ambiguity in a poem and may enjoy the most obscure and challenging works which many other readers find impenetrable. Difficulty and complexity in poetry is enjoyed by this reader who has a great tolerance of confusion, ambiguity and incomprehension. The Speculative Reader is 'laid back' and is totally unperturbed by poems which do not yield up their meanings easily. Such a reader delights in ambiguity, seeing it as a sign that the poem has a significant message. The difficulty of the poem may be taken as proof of the cleverness or depth of the poet and is therefore respected and appreciated. The demanding poem's resistance to closure simply increases this reader's pleasure and more simple or straight forward poetry is often disliked as it does not provide a sufficient challenge. This reader enjoys poems

which require the adoption of a sustained active stance and may dislike poems which are too didactic or simplistic.

The Speculative Reader tends to focus on meaning rather than form or literary techniques. On first approaching the poem, interpretation of meaning is considered to be the prime objective. The content or subject of the poem is important to this reader but being provided with an opportunity to engage in a speculative reading process is even more important than the theme or content of the work. However, this reader does, in keeping with their philosophical leanings, enjoy poems where the content is considered to be profound where ultimate questions about the nature of the human condition, for instance, are examined.

The development of the Speculative Reader's response over time is contrary to Bleich's view that interpretation is 'predicated on response' (Bleich, 1978: 104) because, for this reader, subjective and personal response only emerges as a secondary stage through contact with a reader who is operating within a contrasting style. The focus in initial journal entries and annotation is on 'blueprint' or interpretation and only later do 'stimulus' or more personal responses appear. Only after a poem has been interpreted to some degree, does the Speculative Reader make associations between their life experience and the text, demonstrating the ability to synthesise information and experiences from different sources, to generalise, to theorise and to engage in speculation.

2.4. The Affective Reader.

The Affective Reader tends to judge a poem predominantly on its affective impact. Both in life and in reading, this reader focusses on emotions and in their journal entries, feelings and moods are often referred to. The Affective Reader's argument with other readers may often be quite passionate and may be motivated by keenly felt opinions.

Although the Affective Reader may dislike poems that are depressing initially, the sort of emotion that a poem generates is not as significant as whether or not a mood is evoked. Generally, any mood is better than no mood at all. This should not be confused with a poem that is *about* an emotional experience. Poems tend to be disliked if emotions are not evoked in the reader. The Affective Reader

sees a poem as a text that has been created as a result of an emotional experience on the part of the poet. Consequently, it should be apprehended through feeling.

Early on in the development of the Affective Reader, an over-dependence on immediate emotional impact may be evident. However, as this reader matures and becomes more active and less passive, poems may be appreciated which do not initially evoke a mood but which evoke feelings with further study. Understanding the meaning or theme of a poem is crucial for the Affective Reader when a lack of understanding prohibits a mood being evoked. For the Affective Reader, theme and subject are more important than form and, like the more philosophical, Speculative Reader, themes of profound significance to the human experience are appreciated, especially if they make the reader 'feel'. Poetic techniques and the skill of the poet may only emerge from subsequent encounters with more analytical and less emotional readers.

2.5. The Cognitive Reader.

The Cognitive Reader enjoys interpreting a poem and tries to understand the poem in relation to their own life and the world in which they live. Finding the relevance of the poem for their day and age is an important task and a lack of relevance may be sufficient reason to dislike a poem as it lacks significance. This reader is, however, more detached and less emotionally involved than the Affective Reader. More than the Associative Reader, this reader enjoys the cognitive challenge of active reading and appreciates texts which require some effort to understand, revelling in the process of constructing meaning rather like the Speculative or Investigative Reader. Like them, this reader tends to focus on content and meaning. The Cognitive Reader enjoys thinking and takes pride in the ability to use logic, imagination and lateral thinking. The desire for intellectual stimulation results in obvious and straightforward poems being disliked. Focussing on the Poet is not a dominant feature of this reader's activities in initial encounters with a text as gaining and understanding of the poet's message is considered to be of prime importance. The Cognitive Reader may be more socially aware than the Associative Reader and works are appreciated if they inform issues that have social relevance. Yet, a thoughtful, analytical reaction, rather than any emotional response, tends to be

produced. The Cognitive Reader enjoys the mental process of interpreting poems but also appreciates the message or content of a work having social significance.

2.6. The Passive Reader.

Whereas the previous five types of reader are, in their own idiosyncratic ways, potentially keen readers of a range of classic, pre-twentieth century poems, the Passive Reader demonstrates clear antipathy towards the entire genre and to more challenging works in particular. This is largely due to their failure to engage in the active construction of meaning. The Passive Reader has a generally negative attitude to poetry but may enjoy immediately accessible, straightforward and humorous poems. It seems this reader's development has been arrested at the early secondary school level and tends to enjoy entertainment poetry such as limericks. There is little hope of generating a positive attitude to poetry in such readers unless they can be shifted from passive to active mode. A fundamental transformation is required concerning what this reader thinks poetry is, if keen reading is to occur.

In the journal entries of the Passive Reader, 'difficulty' appears as a recurrent theme and a failure to achieve a plausible interpretation is a constant source of frustration. Enjoyment is related to literal comprehension more than in the case of any other reader. The Passive Reader is similar to an illiterate person when it comes to poetry; they are unable to read and are humiliatingly dependent on others, often being convinced that there is a deeper meaning in the poem which they just cannot see.

The Passive Reader has simple tastes and may appreciate and identify straightforward structural features of a poem such as rhyme and rhythm which may be related to the cleverness of the poet. Holland (1975a) has noted the difficulty of altering reactions when readers are 'locked out' and negative or 'locked in' and positive. The Passive Reader is 'locked out' and although their appreciation of poems can be increased with greater understanding, as a result of input from their peers or teacher, the negative experience of not being able to decipher the poem independently upon an initial encounter with it, seems to colour all subsequent encounters. The Passive Reader constantly struggles to understand not only the individual poem but also the very nature of this type of discourse.

3. From Personal to Social Transaction.

After an individual connection between reader and text and the initial growth of text into poem, in order for the text to mature into a fully developed poem and for a student to become a more mature reader of the work, social interaction is required. This is clearly a Vygotskian perspective because the development of learning is seen as a social activity (cf. Chapter 2). Although the starting point is a reader who has made some personal connection with a text, it must be remembered that this is often a very weak connection in terms of motivational keenness. The degree of intellectual keenness may be even weaker because pupils have received no teaching or specific information about the text. Although some degree of 'connection' between reader and text is present, the bond needs to be strengthened. Keith Hurst has noted that the intensity of a reader's response can increase through collaborative activity and comments:

It is significant to see how this creation of the poem through common experience can enter a more intense level in which the reader comes to own or possess the poem as poet as well as the poem as event (Hurst, 1988: 189)

During an initial positive encounter with a text, a reader enters a pathway towards a fuller aesthetic appreciation of a poem which always conforms to his or her own 'identity style' (Chapter 4). Different readers necessarily therefore 'transact' with texts in very different ways. For example, it has been shown that the Affective Reader responds primarily to the mood the work evokes whereas the Associative Reader seeks content of personal significance. One reader's initial response may focus predominantly on text as 'blueprint' while another responds to text as 'stimulus'.

While each reader retains their characteristic 'identity style' throughout the reading encounter, this must be supplemented and enhanced by the responses of readers who operate within different styles if a developed aesthetic experience is to occur. In a sense, other responses and interpretations are required to fulfil one's own. John Donne's words 'No man is an island' with their emphasis on human relatedness are singularly appropriate here; we live in a social world and art is socially

apprehended. A full response is unlikely to be privately achieved by adolescent readers as they need their own characteristic vantage point to be enhanced by contrasting vantage points. To illustrate this, the Speculative Reader, Anna, in her first encounter with a text exhibited an almost exclusive emphasis on text as 'blueprint'. She did not read the text as a 'stimulus' or allow it to produce memories of life or literature. Only when she engaged in discourse with the Affective Reader, Josie, did Anna begin to focus on events in her life that related to the poem. Yet, once she encountered another perspective, articulated by a different reader, Anna related the poem to personal events to a prolific extent and also considered the mood evoked by the poem. Similarly, the Affective Reader, Josie, engaged in more perceptive and sustained interpretation and attention to text as 'blueprint' when she was with the Speculative Reader, Anna. The text was not fully realised as a 'poem' by one reader working individually as readers require the opportunity to have their characteristic strength, embodied in their own 'identity style', enhanced by the differing styles of their peers.

Only by bringing a range of personal styles together can a developed aesthetic appreciation and interpretation be achieved. For instance, when the six readers met as a group to discuss 'The Latest Decalogue' (Appendix C), Josie's insistence on reading the text as a 'stimulus' for personal relevance and the mood it evoked was supplemented by Steve's emphasis on the relevance of the text. Such collaborative activity fuelled both readers' intellectual understanding and affective response.

The model being presented here is of keener reading through social intercourse. Bringing readers with different personal styles into contact with each other enhances and supplements a particular reader's characteristic way of reading by supplying an alternative emphasis. The value of having to define and justify one's ideas to readers with a different perspective is extraordinarily beneficial. Judy Dunn (1988) notes that justification and argument lead to rapid learning.

In the model outlined here, the poem initially exists through the evocation of a personal response and subsequently this is developed through interaction. However, as Hurst (1988) observes, knowledge of poem as 'poet' is often undeveloped in initial encounters. Poem as Poet can be apprehended through contact with an 'Educated Reader'. The teacher provides yet another identity style with which pupils should come into contact. While the Cognitive Reader's appreciation

may be increased through social intercourse with the Affective Reader, both will have their perspective broadened by contact with an 'Educated Reader' who has a knowledge of the social and cultural context of a work and a greater understanding of its style and form. In this way, 'the reading of literature becomes a collaborative venture in the re-making of meaning through personal, and shared, responses to a text. Those responses are perceptual, affective and aesthetic as well as intellectual' (Webb, 1992: 101). For response to develop in all of the areas listed by Webb both teacher and other pupils are required to contribute to the reader's understanding. Although there is evidence, contrary to Hurst's, of the poem emerging as 'poet' in individual encounters (such as Rob's) and paired conversation in my fieldwork, essential information on the poet and the social and cultural context can be valuably imparted by the teacher so that a fuller appreciation of poem as 'poet' emerges. Style is another case in point. Hurst reports:

It is, however, rarer to find evidence (in discussion groups or as isolated writers) of students' conscious assessment of the effects of imagery and diction, particularly when it comes to the strands, or recurring families, of imagery which occur in some of the texts (Hurst, 1988: 94).

Clearly, the teacher is required to lead readers into a deeper understanding of the style of a writer. Indeed, Rosenblatt has noted that the teacher can help the reader to re-evaluate both text and his/her reaction to it to foster understanding of both text and the reading process (Rosenblatt, 1968: 224). It can be added that readers who are encouraged to become aware of their 'identity style' may become keener as a result because they are more aware of the process of responding (Chapter 9).

The order in which readers encounter different styles is, of course, important. Individual response comes first to enable a reader to function freely within their own individual way of working and reading, their own 'identity style'. Subsequently, encountering one other differing style is valuable as a simple exchange can occur with each reader learning something from the other. After this, contact with many different styles and perspectives can be profitable. Only later is the input of the 'Educated Reader' likely to be fully appreciated. After a reader has experienced a personal transaction with a text according to his or her 'identity style', he or she must experience transactions with the same poem via the consciousness or identity styles

of other readers. A social transaction between readers is required, after a personal transaction with a text, if a developed aesthetic experience is to be achieved.

4. The Diachronic Transaction.

A specific requirement of the model described in this chapter is to illustrate the reception of pre-twentieth works by late twentieth century readers. Although the concept of the transaction has been retained, the transaction between writer and reader across time is different, in certain special respects, from a transaction in which author and reader are contemporaries. The work of Hans Robert Jauss, a famous proponent of 'Rezeptionsästhetik' informs the aspect of my model which deals with the 'diachronic transaction'. Jauss' project has been described as one which:

aims to develop a new mode of literary history based not on a simple positivistic acceptance of received tradition but rather on an investigation of the literary reception of canonical works, and on the ways in which the experience of the literary work by its readers mediates the relationship of past and present (Freund, 1987: 135).

Both Jauss' texts and those used in this study are 'canonical works' and the reception of such works usually entails a relationship between past and present. Furthermore, pre-twentieth century canonical works have a special status which often influences the way they are read. The particular focus on readers in this study is entirely congruent with Rezeptionsästhetik which is subtly different from 'response'. Whereas response theory is anchored 'in the text' a theory of reception 'arises from a history of readers' judgements' (Iser, 1978: x). My longitudinal study is, in a sense, a brief literary history of adolescent readers' encounters with texts from a different time and culture to their own. A further reason for Jauss' usefulness here is that although he did not study adolescents, he did not only examine theoretical readers such as Iser's 'implied reader' or Fish's 'informed reader'. Jauss' focus is on the 'actual reader' which, undeniably, my adolescent readers are. However, Jauss makes assumptions about the 'actual reader' that are not true for the 'actual adolescent reader' whose naivety and irreverence about great literary figures can be refreshing. The less well known ideas of Rosenblatt concerning literary

history and response to pre-twentieth century literature also inform conclusions drawn here. Iser's better known concept of 'indeterminacy' is also related to readers' reading of works of the past.

It is expedient to begin an explanation of the 'diachronic transaction' by evaluating Iser's notion of 'indeterminacy' which facilitates aesthetic reading. Iser's own definition is a useful starting point: 'the indeterminate sections or gaps, of literary texts are in no way to be regarded as a defect; on the contrary, they are a basic element for aesthetic response' (Iser, 1971: 9). In a sense, the indeterminate areas of a text are the habitation of the reader. By definition, it is because literary texts are indeterminate that these works, in particular, invite some kind of involvement or, as Iser puts it, 'indeterminacy is the fundamental precondition for reader participation' (Iser, 1971: 10). A literary text occupies the halfway position between the external world of objects and the reader's world of experience. It does not reside entirely with the reader's own experiences. Iser's definition of what a literary text *is*, is especially significant when the sort of objections some writers have to classic literature in schools, reported by Grimes and Belote (1994), are considered. For Iser, a literary text is different to any other form of writing because it 'neither constitutes nor describes real objects'. A literary text, by definition 'diverges from the ordinary experience of the reader in that it offers views and opens up perspectives in which the empirically known world of one's own personal experience appears changed' (Iser, 1971: 7). One charge laid against pre-twentieth century literature (Gabler and Gabler, 1982; Davis, 1992) is that it perpetuates anachronistic values and prejudice, being a mere tool in the hands of governments wishing to engineer social cohesion. A second charge is that its relevance to the lives of young people is limited (Grimes and Belote, 1994). However, the reason my six readers often preferred a pre-twentieth century text to a twentieth century one lies in the text 'outlasting its historical genesis' (Iser, 1971: 29). Iser argues that literary texts are resistant to the course of time 'because their structure allows the reader to place himself in the world of fiction' (Iser, 1971: 29). In other words, indeterminacy allows the text to be experienced and re-created in the present. It may be that some of the claims Iser makes for literary texts may be especially true of pre-twentieth century texts. The greater indeterminacy of such works when compared with less demanding twentieth century works in the GCSE anthology, allowed readers more

opportunity to move around inside the text and consequently provided a more satisfying aesthetic experience for them. This could be why five out of six of my readers actually preferred pre-twentieth century works. Rob explained:

I prefer the pre-twentieth century poems ... I think it's more of an aesthetic response ... With pre-twentieth century poems you have to go into them and try and find things, get really into the poem and see what the poet is trying to say. ... Twentieth century poems seem to be more just text on the page, there's nothing to go into (Appendix B).

One can almost see Rob disappearing into a gap or an area of indeterminacy within the poem and moving around inside it. Clearly, Rob reports that this happened to him more with pre- twentieth century texts than twentieth century ones. Some pre-twentieth century poems were more valuable to modern adolescent readers than many twentieth century poems in the GCSE Anthology, because they possessed a greater degree of indeterminacy or space for the reader to inhabit. Arguably, once adolescents became 'keen readers' and enjoyed active, exploratory reading, pre-twentieth century texts offered more of challenge and greater opportunities for pupils to explore themselves as readers and to consider human experience in other times.

Iser notes:

one of the chief values of literature that by its very indeterminacy it is able to transcend the restrictions of time and the written word and to give people of all ages and backgrounds the chance to enter other worlds (Iser, 1971: 30).

The 'diachronic transaction' can, therefore, be potentially richer than a synchronic one because it emancipates modern adolescent readers from the transitory concerns of the present age and leads them to focus on issues of time transcending worth.

The reason five of my readers, upon maturation, after two years of exposure to a wide range of poetry, despised some twentieth century texts, is that such works offered only minimal indeterminacy to enable their 'identity style' to flourish. Although it would be unfair to some modern texts to equate indeterminacy exclusively with older works, it would appear that in the NEAB GCSE Anthology studied by my readers (which was the same for all candidates and enabled GCSE grades G to A* to be awarded) the older texts did contain greater indeterminacy as they were included, one supposes, to challenge the more able candidates. Iser notes:

Texts with such minimal indeterminacy tend to be tedious, for it is only when the reader is given the chance to participate actively that he will regard the text, whose intention he himself has helped to compose, as real (Iser, 1971: 10).

Iser has proposed that gaps exist at three different levels (syntactic, pragmatic and semantic) and defines the third of these, semantic, the generation of meaning, being the reader's foremost task. In contrast, I believe that gaps or indeterminacy are filled, primarily, at one level: the 'identic'. Readers enter gaps differently in accordance with their own personal 'identity style'. It is not sufficient for Iser to argue that the gaps are in texts while simultaneously arguing that texts do not 'mean' until readers activate them, for then, the gaps can be said to be in readers. Arguably, the transaction is one where the shape of the gap or entrance is determined by the shape of the reader who enters as well as the text. Different readers cause the gap to adopt different shapes. Consequently, a highly flexible and malleable indeterminacy is being proposed in which reader and text adapt themselves to each other, where subject and object interact.

In Jauss' theory, a great deal is made of the reader's expectations and Jauss is probably best known for the term 'horizon of expectation' (Jauss, 1982: 25) because he considered the reader to read any text with a knowledge derived from all that he or she has previously read. These expectations are also subject to 'continual modification' (Iser, 1971: 27). Yet, in general, adolescent readers, do not read the poem as historically situated in their first encounter with it. Iser argues, 'when reading words of past ages, ... we are actually transported back into those times and move in historical circumstances as if we belonged to them or as if the past were again the present' (Iser, 1971: 5). Yet, for adolescent readers, meaning is usually sought in their present situation. They are not 'transported back' into the past to 'move in historical circumstances' as if they 'belonged to them' (Iser, 1971: 5) by the poem. Readers may only be transported into the past through contact with other people in the present after a personal transaction is established. They do, however, often read 'as if the past were again the present' (Iser, 1971: 5) and tend to read, apply and respond to texts in the present. It is only a later, secondary response to seek information about the author or age in which the poem was created. The

movement is 'from interpretation of the text to author's life' (Rosenblatt, 1968: 117). The recourse to history and literary biography only occurs when a transaction of sufficient quality exists in the present to sustain movement into the past. Indeed, this transaction has to provide motivation for further exploration. Consequently, 'a major criterion for the usefulness of background information' is that 'it will have value only when the student feels the need of it and when it is assimilated into the student's experience of particular literary works' (Rosenblatt, 1968: 123). The initial transaction may cause the reader 'to acquire various types of knowledge - literary and social history' (Rosenblatt, 1968: 124). What is also interesting is that while adolescent readers are reading literary history, they are also making literary history, in Jauss' terms, as readers of the work.

In attempting to define literature, Iser is surely right in his emphasis upon our experience because:

we recognize in literature so many elements that play a part in our own experience. They are simply put together in a different way - in other words, they constitute a familiar world reproduced in an unfamiliar form (Iser, 1971: 7).

An instance of the experience of reading as a re-ordering or shaping of the work to the reader's own familiar world is Adam's interpretation of the conflict between speaker and foe in Blake's 'A Poison Tree', in terms of a rivalry situation in school. He fitted the poem to his familiar world. Similarly, Peter, adapted 'The Latest Decalogue' to fit his own moral views initially. As well as fitting a work into a present situation they also gained access to the work via their identity styles. Only subsequently did study of the author and historical situation of the work appear to be beneficial and valid. In this way, the study of prescribed pre-twentieth century poetry 'reflects and engages with the contemporary world with some vibrancy' even if the National Curriculum as a whole lacks dynamism (Davies, 1996: 55).

In concluding that adolescent readers always read texts as if they are in the present and that the gap or indeterminacy is filled in the shape of the reader's identity style, I am, of course, defining 'gaps' quite differently from Iser, for whom it appears that indeterminacy is more of an objective phenomenon which exists in the text. My view is that indeterminacy is more subjective and exists in the reader of the

text as well as in the text itself; what is indeterminate for one reader may not therefore be indeterminate for another. Indeterminacy is not, I suggest, fixed in the text as Iser would appear to suggest. Bleich's argument in Subjective Criticism (1978) is that 'it can hardly be the case that a text actually does act on the reader ... only subjects are capable of initiating action (Bleich, 1978: 110); although, in support of the transactive view, it can be argued that the poet is a subject who can, through the poem, initiate action. Bleich's point about a reader acting on a text and not vice versa does, however, lend support to my view that indeterminacy is adapted within the reader's unique and subjective 'identity style'.

Although the pre-twentieth century texts in the GCSE Anthology appeared to offer more indeterminacy and, consequently, greater freedom and opportunity, it must be remembered that it is possible for this gap to be too great with the result that the reader, operating within a characteristic and idiosyncratic style in attempting to enter the gap, does not come into sufficient contact with the poem. A transaction is prevented when indeterminacy is too great or as Iser put it, 'if indeterminacy exceeds the reader's limit of tolerance, he will feel overburdened' (Iser, 1971: 6). Clearly, this is what happened to Adam when he encountered all but a couple of pre-twentieth century works. It has already been reported that the pre-twentieth century works in the GCSE Anthology were actually more rewarding for pupils not because 'past literature has a formative social function' (DeMan, 1982: ix), but because such literature often possesses greater indeterminacy and forces, in Jauss' terms, horizontal change. Works that force no horizontal change are close to what Jauss calls 'culinary' or entertainment art because 'no turn toward the horizon of yet unknown experience' (Jauss, 1982: 25) is demanded. Such a work is only 'fulfilling the expectations prescribed by a ruling standard of taste' (Jauss, 1982: 25) which is determined, at least in part, by previous reading. Michael Benton has noted, 'responses to literature result from a matrix of cultural experience, imaginative insight, intertextual knowledge and linguistic ability' (Benton, M., 1995: 333). Evidently though, these will be different for adolescent readers compared to more experienced readers. In particular their 'intertextual knowledge' and 'cultural experience' will differ and it may be that, as T.S. Eliot states in 'Religion and Literature' (1935), 'our sensibility to poetry is keener in adolescence than in maturity' (T.S. Eliot, 1951 / 1935: 394). It may, however, be nearer the mark to say

that sensibility is not 'keener' but different in adolescence than maturity because a different cultural baggage in relation to pre-twentieth works is carried in adolescence. It has been suggested that, 'experienced readers tend to read a literary work against a background of literary history' (Kintgen, 1985: 138). Most adolescent readers, however, do not read works against this background. It has been boldly asserted that 'no reader of Keats, for example, approaches a poem of his without some sense of what it is to read a high Romantic poem (Paul de Man, 1982: x). Yet, this is, of course, precisely what adolescent readers do most of the time. They read Keats without even a vague notion of Romanticism which can be beneficial because it liberates readers to apply the work in the present and to relate it to their own lives. Uniquely, such a natural response is only possible from readers who can read Keats without being distracted by notions of Romanticism as they are not bound by critical opinion about what a work is supposed to 'mean'. Adolescents do not approach works looking for certain themes or techniques because they have little or no knowledge of literary history. Being able to read Keats without any conception of Romanticism may also mean it is easier for the work to inhabit the reader's present situation.

For a successful reading of pre-twentieth century poetry, a degree of openness to, or tolerance of, literature that is not immediately accessible is required. The adolescent reader must have a flexible rather than rigid 'horizon of expectation' if an aesthetic experience of it is to be possible. The reader must also appreciate that different rules apply to the appreciation of works of the past to some twentieth century works that are immediately accessible.

The chronological, social, cultural and linguistic distance between pre-twentieth century works in the NEAB Anthology and modern readers can be viewed as providing the 'aesthetic distance' which supplied a greater challenge and thus enabled the text to become the reader's own to a greater extent. Jauss defines 'aesthetic distance' as:

the disparity between the given horizon of expectations and the appearance of a new work, whose reception can result in a 'change of horizons' through negation of familiar experiences or through negation of familiar experiences or through raising newly articulated experiences to the level of consciousness (Jauss, 1982: 25).

Arguably, adolescents are peculiarly suited to benefit from the negation of familiar experiences and are more able to have their horizons changed in diachronic transactions than in synchronic transactions if they have a flexible horizon.

5. Cognitive and Affective Transaction.

In Thought and Language Vygotsky clearly saw that ‘every idea contains a transmuted affective attitude towards the bit of reality to which it refers’ (Vygotsky, 1986: 10). The detail in this system of meaning, which involves both thinking and feeling, can be related to Rosenblatt’s ‘blueprint’ and ‘stimulus’. In the analysis of transcripts it became clear that the category ‘stimulus’, while helpful initially, was insufficiently discriminating. Deeply personal and significant memories and experiences in the life of the reader and also simple recollections of an advert on television the previous night, come within the same category; this difference in intensity when a statement was categorised as ‘stimulus’ is not acknowledged in Rosenblatt’s model. The gradations of response that come within the category of ‘stimulus’ need to be acknowledged. There is a significant difference between simple memories and deeply felt, personal experiences and a range of recollections along a continuum between these two extremes exists. Further, uni-directional explanations of the relationship between thinking and feeling do not appear to account for the differences in readers, some of whom will respond initially with feelings and others with thoughts. Squire’s (1964) specific conclusions about the influence of the affective upon the cognitive, of emotions having an impact upon understanding with no mention of thoughts influencing emotions may be far too simplistic. Other writers, have, however drawn the same uni-directional conclusion. Andrew Stibbs has argued that ‘sensations produce perceptions and perceptions produce conceptions which attach to, enhance, and are enhanced by existing knowledge from personal memory and culture’ (Stibbs, 1996: 33). John Teasey’s interpretation of Elizabeth reading ‘Frogs in the Wood’ also indicates the view that feeling influences thinking: ‘because she is identifying with the man’s situation, she understands a stanza which the other readers found perplexing’ (Teasey, 1988: 48).

Yet, it is axiomatic that thinking influences feeling as comprehension is a prerequisite for a mood to be evoked. Josie, for one, who desired to respond affectively, required an understanding of a work to do so. It appears that to appreciate poetry, both feeling and experience are required, as well as verbal reasoning skills. The influence of enthusiasm and motivation upon results in GCSE English literature is highly significant. The notion of feeling influencing thinking appears simplistic and it appears more realistic to suggest that a genuine two-way exchange, a transaction, occurs between thinking and feeling within the reader. In contrast to Teasey and Stibbs, it would seem that a given reader approaches a poem according to a personal 'identity style', one in which emotion or thought may be more or less dominant. As Vygotsky suggests, the affective and intellectual unite within readers as they transact their readings with each other.

THE STUDY: PART B READING

Part B 'Reading' has a greater emphasis on the processes involved in reading than Part A. Although the division is artificial, these complementary parts provide clarity and an appropriate structure for elaborating my thesis. Part B is divided into three chapters. Chapter 8 'Aesthetic Teaching and Reading' considers the theoretical and practical nature of aesthetic teaching as it facilitates pupils' aesthetic reading. Chapter 9 focusses on adolescent readers' experiences of literary theory and their ability to engage in theorising about the nature and purpose of poetry. Finally, Chapter 10 explores the processes at work when readers learn through talking in pairs and small groups.

CHAPTER 8: AESTHETIC TEACHING AND READING.

What is meant here by reading is literary or aesthetic reading when pupils read poetry. Consequently, a special sort of teaching is required if the result is to be reading of this quality. In this chapter, such teaching and reading is considered both theoretically and practically. Firstly, the sort of teaching and reading required with this genre, is considered. Secondly, the practicalities of aesthetic reading and teaching are explored, including a description of the pattern of practical work the six readers followed. Finally, the reading of two pre-twentieth century poems is reported to exemplify the theory and practice previously outlined.

1. Theory.

Rosenblatt's definition of 'aesthetic reading' as an 'event' or 'lived through experience' was considered briefly in Chapter 1. Here, a more detailed examination of the sort of 'event' or 'experience' that aesthetic reading is and the teaching that can bring such reading about is undertaken. In 'The Origin of the Work of Art' (1934) Heidegger, like Rosenblatt, saw aesthetics as 'lived experience' (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 204), but considered that it opened up 'truth' so that full and true apprehension of a given subject was possible through art. This 'truth' content in art, and therefore in aesthetic reading, is an important concept and is central to understanding how aesthetic reading emerges. What Heidegger means by truth is, of course, what the Greeks meant by 'aletheia' or the 'unconcealment' of things, so that true or complete knowledge and appreciation is brought about in the aesthetic experience. For instance, Aristotle, in Poetics, considered poetry to be superior to history as the former dealt with truths whereas the latter only with specific events. Heidegger's memorable example, is to ask what the difference is between a pair of peasant's shoes and a Van Gogh painting of such shoes and why one is art and the other not. Addressing such issues about art facilitates an understanding of aesthetic reading and helps us comprehend why George Herbert's 'Jordan' became a poem, or art, for one of my readers and not for another. Heidegger's answer is that bringing oneself before the work is a necessary precondition for 'truth' to emerge as it is 'only

by bringing ourselves before Van Gogh's painting' that the 'painting spoke' (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 161). So then, for the 'truth' or aesthetic value of a work to be realised requires readers to bring themselves before the work. Aesthetic teaching is the art of enabling readers to bring themselves before the work of art. The relation between 'truth' and 'poetry' is inescapable for 'art, as the setting-into-work of truth, is poetry. Not only the creation of the work is poetic, but equally poetic, though in its own way, is the preserving of the work' (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 199). The development of Heidegger's logic here is interesting. Just as 'truth' is inherent in poetry, it is also part of the 'preservation' of poetry which must include the reading and teaching of it, when it is through such activities that the work continues to live. Such 'preservation' is the reading and recreating of art and also the teaching which facilitates such recreation. The 'aesthetic reading' encounter cannot be divorced from the 'aesthetic teaching' process for, following Heidegger, both teaching and reading are aesthetic as they perform the function of art which 'lets truth originate' (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 202). George Eliot's definition of 'aesthetic teaching' in a letter to her friend Frederic Harrison is helpful:

I think aesthetic teaching is the highest of all teaching because it deals with life in its highest complexity. But if it ceases to be purely aesthetic - if it lapses anywhere from the picture to the diagram - it becomes the most offensive of all teaching (George Eliot, 1967 / 1866: 9-10)

The picture is of greater value than the diagram, just as the poem is far superior to the text, because of the truth it creates which enables life, in its highest form, to be seen, 'in the widest sense of seeing' (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 184).

I now wish to develop Heidegger's notions of the 'truth' in poetry and in aesthetic response in relation to a specific poem and to answer the question with which I opened this chapter about the kind of 'lived through experience' or 'event' that the aesthetic reading of poetry is. Arguably, the 'truth' element in poetry, the opening up (aleitheia) of fuller and more perfect apprehension, dictates that the 'experience' or 'event' is both moral and spiritual although not in the narrow sense normally associated with these terms. A broad definition of 'moral' is preferred, 'a large sense is of course to be given to the term moral. Whatever bears upon the question 'how to live' comes under it' (Arnold, 1988 / 1879: 499).

Similarly, a broad definition of ‘spiritual’ as ‘sensitive awareness’ typified by ‘delicacy of appreciation for poetry’ (Hay, 1998: 11) is employed here. Reading a work of art is necessarily a moral and spiritual act because, as T.S. Eliot noted in Religion and Literature (1935), the value of the work cannot be considered by literary standards alone as its value lies in the spiritual and moral response of readers to it. For Eliot, the poet’s role is ‘to express and to criticize the culture in which he lives’ (T.S. Eliot, 1949 / 1945: 108) and more recently the point has been made that ‘all authentic art reconstitutes the present condition’ so we can ‘know again what can be overlooked’ (Webb, 1992: xvii). Both poet and prophet allow the reader to perceive in new ways, thus allowing greater truth to become visible, to be apprehended and to be acted upon. What I am proposing, therefore, is that ‘aesthetic reading’ is always a moral or spiritual event or experience.

This definition of ‘aesthetic reading’ leads us to consider the special sort of teaching referred to as ‘aesthetic teaching’ by George Eliot which is the ‘highest of all teaching’ because it ‘deals with life in its highest complexity’ (George Eliot, 1967 / 1866: 9) and leads to the revealing or disclosure of greater truth. Aesthetic teaching is typified by exchange rather than transmission because such pedagogy must be founded upon a reading of the work, the readers and their readings. Aesthetic teaching is demanding because, as a reader, the teacher must engage in the development of joint understanding and creation with both the poet and readers of the poet. If the term ‘aesthetics’ denotes ‘lived experience’ then it cannot be lived in isolation and is necessarily a communal activity. Aesthetic teaching is not concerned with implementing aims and objectives or with transmitting knowledge in the formal didactic sense; it involves leading the way into a tradition or a culture where a way of responding and reading exists through social exchange. It is clear that for teachers to participate in the bringing about of aesthetic reading, they must be engaged in an aesthetic experience of the work personally in order to meet readers in their reading. As a reader, the aesthetic teacher is a ‘preserver’ of the work in the Heideggerian (1934) sense of the word. Consequently, aesthetic teaching is just as moral an event as aesthetic reading, because it stimulates reflection about art and such ‘reflective knowledge’ is ‘indispensable preparation for the becoming of art’ (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 202). If it is through art that truth occurs, aesthetic teaching allows this to

happen. For Heidegger, art originates in art which is the case in my model of reading (Chapter 7) whereby full disclosure (truth) or greater aesthetic appreciation emerges only by exchanging the art one reader possesses with that of another.

By sharing readings, a reading with greater validity emerges. In The Psychology of Art (1971) it is asserted that ‘from the most ancient times art has always been regarded as a means of education, that is as a long range programme for changing our behaviour and our organism’ (Vygotsky, 1971: 253). Arguably, therefore, just as knowledge is socially determined, so too is art. Aesthetic reading is necessarily, therefore, a social enterprise that can develop only when readings are exchanged. Consequently, aesthetic teaching is concerned with allowing a sharing of responses and not the achievement of pre-planned aims and objectives. In practice, as the function of aesthetic teaching is to allow art to originate, the teacher’s activity is based upon, and responds to, the pupils’ responses. In other words, the teacher has to read each reader’s reading. It has been persuasively argued (Dixon, 1980; Benton, 1995) that the focus in literature teaching must be the pupils and not the teacher and towards the end of the present chapter, readings of two poems are reported to show what such an approach looks like in practice. It has been observed that ‘Reader - response criticism has taught us to base the act of teaching upon the act of reading’ (Benton, M., 1995: 336). Literature teaching must therefore entail ‘a careful attention to the talk and writing of the reader’ (Dixon, 1980: 195). Indeed, Squire’s seminal work (1964) on adolescents’ responses emphasises the necessity of teachers understanding the process of their pupils’ responses. The conception of teaching as a form of reading is useful because in any lesson constant re-reading and revision of both readers and their readings is undertaken by the teacher. The purpose of aesthetic teaching is to see pupils’ readings develop rather than to supplant these with the teacher’s reading. Those engaged in ‘aesthetic teaching’ nurture early aesthetic response and work from within the learner’s existing competence. The focus, initially, is on the individual reader’s reading, the first stage in the ‘personal transactional model’ (Chapter 7) because every reader is unique and participates in the literary transaction in a highly individual way; consequently, aesthetic teaching works with this uniqueness rather than enforcing conformity. Those engaged in aesthetic teaching know that aesthetic reading cannot be achieved through transmission and that readers should be encouraged to respond to challenging literary

works initially without the aid of the teacher because readers are able, if they adopt an appropriate stance, to achieve a personal aesthetic transaction and to evoke poems according to their own 'identity style'.

The notion of aesthetic teaching, fostering lived through experience is redolent of work by theorists from diverse backgrounds. From cognitive psychology, Edwards and Mercer, for instance, could be writing of the aesthetic encounter between reader and poem when they assert, 'children cannot learn things simply by being told; they need to be able to relate such principles to their own actions, experience and conceptions (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 95). For Rosenblatt (1978) encouraging a text to function as a 'stimulus' is a key activity in facilitating the reading of literary works as it is in such reading that readers present themselves before the work and make an aesthetic encounter possible. It has also been argued by curriculum theorists (Davis et al, 1996) that, unfortunately, a continuously enacted assumption across the school curriculum is that knowledge and learning 'can be considered apart from the identities of learners' and that the modern curriculum often has 'little to do with learners' lives' (Davis et al, 1996: 163). Such a situation militates against the creation of conditions which are conducive to aesthetic response as the learner's life experience is the resource that makes aesthetic reading possible. The 'cultural communicative' model of learning whereby children learn through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978; Doise, 1985; Bruner, 1986; Edwards and Mercer, 1987; Wood, 1991) is also valuable to our understanding of 'aesthetic reading'. It has already been suggested (Chapter 7) that, although an individual aesthetic transaction between reader and poem (Rosenblatt, 1978, Iser, 1978) is a first step, a fuller disclosure (aletheia) of artistic truth only occurs through the exchange of aesthetic encounters. Initially, the reader uses his or her own unique identity and experience, subsequently, other readings, produced through the expression of other readers' identities and experiences, are necessary for fuller disclosure and a developed aesthetic reading to emerge. The concept of the 'co-emergent curriculum' (Davis et al, 1996: 165) as the place for effective learning is entirely congruent with the 'personal transaction model' of aesthetic reading because education is seen as the development of 'joint understanding' (Edwards and Mercer, 1978: 36) where knowledge, including aesthetic experience, is 'found in our action and our interactions, shaping our perceptions and identities both collectively and

individually' resulting from our 'participation in a dynamic and responsive world' (Davis et al, 1996: 165). Clearly, such 'participation' is essential in any aesthetic reading and the teacher's role is to encourage such personal involvement. This participation necessarily involves the emotions as well as the intellect of the reader as aesthetic reading is not merely cerebral for, 'poetry however intellectual, has to do with feeling and emotion' (T.S. Eliot, 1949 / 1945: 112). By encouraging the expression of feelings in response to a poem, one is, therefore, fostering a fuller aesthetic response. It has also been noted that any reading of a work of the imagination is intended to influence us 'wholly, as human beings' (T.S. Eliot, 1951 / 1935: 396) and affects our 'moral and religious existence' (T.S. Eliot, 1951 / 1935: 396) in the broadest sense. For Rosenblatt, the hallmark of the aesthetic transaction is that the reader focusses on 'what he is living through during the reading event' (Rosenblatt, 1985: 38) which, it has been seen, involves the reader's spiritual and moral sense as well as their intellect.

Aesthetic teaching seeks to ensure an exchange of pupils' readings which normally occurs through conversation. Therefore, it is the readers who most need to be doing the talking in class so that they have ample opportunity to 'balance and reconcile different ideas and feelings through collaborative effort' (Bell, 1988: 93). It has been aptly noted that 'those who ask questions - teachers, texts, tests - are not seeking knowledge; those who would seek knowledge - students - do not ask questions' (Dillon, 1988: 197). Indeed, teachers' questions often produce ritualistic answers and not genuine learning because their questions do not arise from curiosity or promote enquiry (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 7). Clearly, such ritual is not 'the highest of all teaching' (G. Eliot, 1967 / 1866: 9) at work. In fact, any approach is inadequate which relies on 'systematic questioning' if pupils are left with the belief that 'paraphrasing is of prime importance' (Wade, 1981: 43). It appears unlikely that such questioning would produce aesthetic reading.

Aesthetic reading may, in fact, be more likely in the teacher's absence. Allowing pupils to talk as a pair without the teacher being present has numerous advantages and an important study has shown that when the teacher was not present, pupils spent significantly more time 'making judgements or interpretations, retelling and savouring the words and matching their own experiences to the poem' (Wade, 1981: 45). Others (Prisk, 1987; Cooper, 1993) have reached similar conclusions. In

aesthetic teaching, the teacher, as reader, is part of the communal aesthetic encounter and ‘participates with the students in the bringing forth of a world of understanding’ (Davis et al, 1996: 157). In aesthetic reading, pupils come to reflect upon their own reflections and engage in metacognition as such reflection is essential for art to be apprehended as a truly lived experience. Aesthetics is central to education because it engenders such ‘reflexiveness’ (Bruner, 1986: 361) which is of central importance as the ‘process of education consists of being able to distance oneself in some way from what one knows by being able to reflect on one’s own knowledge’ (Bruner, 1986: 127). The value of aesthetic teaching and reading lies, partly, in the vantage point it gives pupils from which they can read their own reading and themselves as readers. Such reading does, however, appear to be disappointingly rare for readers’ ‘lack of ability to see the significance of literature in relation to their own lives’ (Wade and Ball, 1983: b) is not uncommon.

2. Practice.

The point was made in the methodology section of Chapter 3, ‘The Research Project’, that for a variety of reasons, many pupils do not engage in aesthetic reading, particularly of pre-twentieth century texts. Indeed, many pupils are not even be reading independently, let alone aesthetically, and are simply repeating their teacher’s views in the examination room. However, findings from my study indicate that personal and aesthetic responses to pre-twentieth century poems are possible without teacher intervention and that more developed aesthetic responses are possible with the right sort of teacher intervention. The sequence of work carried out with each poem, beginning with individual annotation, completion of a journal entry and moving through paired discussion to whole class discussion has been related in Chapter 3. What I wish to illustrate here, by reference to pupils’ readings of just two poems, is how works written before 1900 assumed significance for my readers which resulted in personal response and even aesthetic reading. Readings were ‘keen’ in the sense of being enthusiastic when a poem matched the ‘identity style’ of the reader and overcame ‘the reader’s reluctance or inability to participate in the creation of meaning’ (Fleming, 1996: 40), thereby removing the likelihood of frustration and making aesthetic response possible. If ‘reading is not the discovering of meaning....but the creation of it’ (Benton, 1995:

334), allowing the text to function as a ‘stimulus’ enables readers to create meaning because an appropriate reading stance is achieved.

In Peter’s case, when he was motivated and reading with enthusiasm towards the end of his course, any incomprehension of odd lines or phrases did not result in frustration. Peter explained the process he went through in responding to a poem to my student teacher, telling her:

Well, first of all, I read it through the first time and as I’m reading it through the very first time I put down the first thing that comes into my head at the place where it is which later on in the poem might prove to be wrong or um might prove to be a bit obscure but then I read it through again and perhaps put down new meanings of things. I have a range of different interpretations as my knowledge of the poem increases (Appendix B).

The value of fostering readers who habitually allowed the text to function as ‘stimulus’ and did not regard such ‘obscure’ ideas as irrelevant, is that they often come to understand, like Peter, that no single correct interpretation of a poem existed because different readers interact with the same poem differently, according to their own individual past experience. Peter’s development is particularly pleasing when one considers that boys often engage in ‘efferent’ reading (Rosenblatt, 1978) or ‘reading for a particular purpose, to improve their golf, for example’ (Millard, 1997: 61). Peter’s emerging tolerance of ambiguity became evident as he revelled in the fact that he had a number of working hypotheses, knowing that some of these provisional interpretations could eventually be discarded. Such an understanding is crucial if reading poetry is not to become a comprehension exercise where frustration is caused by ambiguity and the difficulty of pinning down exactly what the poet means. This is overcome when meaning is no longer perceived as the sole province of the poet but the joint construction of reader and writer. Shifting the locus of control away from teachers and poets and towards pupils, and allowing them to experience the text as a ‘stimulus’, engenders readers who can ‘live with ambiguity’ and enables pupils to ‘realize a high level of competence as readers of poetry’ (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 50). The benefit derived from readers sharing very different responses is that they grasp ‘the notion of plurality of meaning’ (Fleming, 1992: 40) for the role of the teacher is ‘not simply to uncover the objective meaning of the text... but to help readers make their own subjective responses’ (Fleming, 1992: 33-34). Some such ‘subjective’ responses may well be aesthetic readings because the reader is ‘no longer a consumer but a producer of the text’ (Barthes,

1974: 4). Indeed, in aesthetic reading the whole notion of subjective and objective becomes meaningless for ‘art is the setting-into-work of truth ... truth is at once the subject and the object of the setting’ (Heidegger, 1993 / 1934: 202). By facilitating discussion based on text as ‘stimulus’, the teacher fosters the adoption of an appropriate stance which gives the adolescent reader the confidence to make ‘subjective’ and even ‘aesthetic’ responses, secure in the knowledge that subjectivity is not eschewed but necessary to the creation of the work. After these responses have been established, responsive teaching can build on this foundation. This is best illustrated by considering readings of two poems from the NEAB GCSE Anthology.

3. Two Poems.

Teaching and discussion enhanced my pupils’ appreciation but did not extinguish the personal element in their responses because they modified their views in the light of further information and their peers’ views. Only after a pupil had been encouraged to explore the personal relevance of a poem by allowing the text to function as ‘stimulus’, were further details provided by the teacher. Teaching about the social, cultural and historical background of a poem, the author’s life or about form and style was provided to enhance pupils’ responses. Indeed, the work carried out with these adolescents which may be termed ‘aesthetic teaching’ followed closely the teaching and learning process advocated by Rosenblatt where the reader is encouraged to respond subjectively initially, is then made aware of alternative viewpoints, in this case through paired and whole class discussions, and then, as a result of reflection, seeks additional information, ‘concerning the work, the author and their social setting’ (Rosenblatt, 1968: 225).

Despite many pupils having developed subjective and personal interpretations of ‘The Latest Decalogue’ in the initial response sequence they could not have been left with their original interpretation of Clough’s purpose without being disadvantaged in the examination. The question is: How can personal response exist alongside the teaching of accepted interpretations without sending contradictory messages to our pupils, especially when the accepted interpretation differs from their own personal response? The key appears to be to teach from a reading of pupils’ own readings and to use pupils’ interpretations and not the teacher’s notes or the ideas of critics as the

starting point. This pedagogic focus upon the act of reading rather than the text or a received critical opinion of what the text means is precisely what happened in this study. Readers' responses rather than the teacher's questions were used to stimulate discussion in class.

Perhaps the most dramatic development of pupils' responses was to 'The Latest Decalogue' where considerable teaching about form and historical context was required. The initial response sequence with this poem took place in the summer term of Year 10 and one week (about three hours) of lesson time was devoted to it. The sequence from individual to paired and then whole class discussion enabled readers to try their ideas out on a partner before expressing their views more publicly. The value of paired work, where 'demand is continuous', and where 'there's nowhere to hide' (Benton, 1995: 336), was valuable because pupils clarified their ideas by communicating with each other (Barnes and Todd, 1977) and were encouraged to relate their own experiences to the poem. It has been observed that if Vygotsky is right and we learn by talking 'then pupils not teachers need to do the talking' (Carre and Howitt, 1987: 50). These lessons, on pre-twentieth century poetry, were not therefore dominated by teacher-talk. Peter, in particular, valued the discussion. He explained to my PGCE student, 'discussion work brings in other people's opinions using their experiences so you can pool all the thoughts and get a really good interpretation down - occasionally you disagree so it's quite interesting' (Appendix B). Peter's reflection about class discussions includes the observation that other readers' 'experiences' as well as their 'opinions' were brought to the poem and that he found disagreement of value. The sharing of readings, as described in the 'personal transactional model', outlined in Chapter 7, is essential in aesthetic teaching for, without it, fuller aesthetic reading is unlikely to emerge. The teacher did not halt proceedings to correct pupils' readings he disagreed with and the discussion did not begin with the teacher firing questions about meaning at pupils but with the teacher asking, 'Okay, who's going to begin?' so that pupils' responses were the starting point for further exploration.

After the initial response sequence on 'The Latest Decalogue', the poem was left for some months but in November of Year 11 we returned to the poem to explore mood and tone as well as historical context. At this point, specific information about Victorian England and Clough's biography were introduced and mood and tone in Clough's poem were explored. After the re-engagement with the poem each pupil made

a third journal entry. Subsequently, the poem was again left for some months and further exploration of the poem did not occur until the end of March when pupils were revising the poem for their GCSE English Literature examination. An important part of the revision process entailed small group discussion of poems using sample examination questions as a focus. These discussions were tape recorded and the six readers in this study worked as a group, both with and without the teacher being present (Appendix C). The final evidence of the development of pupils' responses came from written GCSE examination scripts kindly provided by the NEAB. A comparison of pupils' readings made when they first encountered the poem with their final, more developed, and in some cases aesthetic reading of it fourteen months later is enlightening, as are the stages in between.

At the time he made his first journal entry, Peter thought Clough believed evasion of moral law to be acceptable. He wrote:

I found this poem very enjoyable as it is in common with many of my own personal views i.e. the Ten Commandments being a load of rubbish and there are better ways of getting through life. The author was probably an atheist and was probably greatly criticised by the church at the time, a bit like an old fashioned Salman Rushdie (Appendix D).

It is significant that although Peter misread Clough's views and did not distinguish the poet from the cynical, materialistic persona he had created, he did speculate about Clough's position in society and the role of the church. Even after paired and class discussion during the first week, Peter retained his original reading and wrote that Clough was 'blasphemous'. Yet, fourteen months later in his GCSE examination Peter wrote:

Clough parodies the Ten Commandments in his poem 'The Latest Decalogue'. This is a means to two ends: firstly it helps to convey the message of the poem and brings interest to a reader. Another literary device used is a persona. The character of the persona has totally differing views to the author. The persona is a hypocritical character.....A reader is intended to see the poet's point of view by looking upon the persona with contempt and scorn for their lack of moral fibre and ethics (Appendix H).

Peter's views also incorporated historical information essential to a full interpretation of Clough's poem as he went on to refer to Darwin's theory of evolution and the impact this had on the Christian belief system.

A similar self-correction of a first interpretation can be seen in the development of Anna's responses. In her first journal entry she summed up the message of the poem: 'the main reason for keeping the ten commandments is your own good'. Fourteen months later in her terminal examination she wrote:

It is clear here that the speaker is being cynical about the way the people seemed to follow the letter of the law but not the spirit or ethos of each. This interpretation of Victorian spiritual malaise causes the reader to look at themselves and the way they live. Clough is intending to correct human vice by showing up the immoral newest decalogue everyone seems to be following. I feel that in today's society we live in a more multi-cultural, pluralistic world, there is less hypocrisy as people are very frank and open about themselves (Appendix H).

Teaching and discussion enhanced these pupils' appreciation but did not extinguish the personal element in their response. This can be seen from Anna's reflection, relating Clough's views on hypocrisy to life in Britain at the very end of the twentieth century. Some readers refined their views earlier than others but eventually the changes and adjustments necessary to their own responses were made. Rob made his changes during the first week after only a relatively short period discussing the poem. At the end of his first week, after paired and group discussion, Rob wrote his journal, 'after re-reading the poem again, I think I have completely misinterpreted the ideas in the poem. I got the bit about hypocrisy right but um the wrong way.....the poet is talking about how people find loopholes' (Appendix D). Here Rob was the one modifying his response in the light of paired and whole class discussion, his enthusiasm had not been quashed, rather it had been enhanced by such interaction. Some knowledge of Victorian England and of Clough's own views about the materialism and hypocrisy he saw in society was essential to a fuller reading of the poem. When asked to consider the value of reading about the background to a poem, readers' replies were overwhelmingly positive and yet judicious. Josie explained, 'learning the history surrounding a poem and facts about the author is helpful but not the most important thing'. The 'most important thing', of course, is the lived through experience of the work as it is applied to the life of the reader. This was encouraging as considerable time had been invested in allowing

readers to respond subjectively before any teaching on social or historical context took place.

A similar aesthetic teaching methodology was employed with the poem 'What Is Our Life?' by Sir Walter Raleigh. Only after a pupil had been given opportunity for personal reading by allowing the text to function as 'stimulus', were further factual details provided by the teacher. The initial week in April 1997 on 'What is our life?' followed a familiar pattern where pupils annotated it, filled in a first journal entry, engaged in paired and class discussion and then filled in a second journal entry. Subsequently, the poem was left from April 1997 (Year 10) until November 1997 (Year 11) when the poem was studied again, some seven months after the initial week on it. Although, as with 'The Latest Decalogue', the teaching objective was to explore the poet's tone and the mood he intended to evoke in readers, the methodology was similar to that followed previously. This time, instead of the discussion being based on pupils expressing views orally, the written responses made in journals during the first week working on the poem formed the basis of discussion. A worksheet was prepared which included twelve anonymous extracts from journals, including entries made by the pupils in the case study. Pupils own initial readings were used in the next phase of reading and discussion. These twelve, often contradictory, readings of the poem were printed on the worksheet (Appendix J) and they ranged from 'the poem is quite depressing.....we laugh through our lives and it is a comedy but we die wanting more, not laughing' and 'he likens life to a comedy which is pretty useless and futile' to 'a play of passion.....maybe Raleigh was happy with life at the time of writing' and 'life is only short but it is good fun'. Pupils in the class did not need to know which reading was from which of their peers for it to facilitate learning about tone and mood through a discussion of readers' readings.

A brief examination of how Josie's response changed during this phase serves to illustrate the way a pupil's reading can mature without the teacher correcting what is considered to be misreading. Josie's journal entry, made during the first week of studying the poem seven months previously, was one of the twelve readings used to stimulate discussion. In April, Josie had written:

Raleigh is saying our lives are like a play of passion the word passion...to show all the emotions that we feel through out our lives... The poet called the play a comedy because...life is funny. Maybe Raleigh was happy with life at the

time of writing the poem....the reason I like this is because it is a happy and positive piece of poetry and I generally prefer poetry that doesn't depress me... life is a comedy (Appendix D).

This interpretation is contrary to the general consensus of critical opinion, which is that that Raleigh's poem is rather poignant. 'What is our Life?' is considered to be reflective and key points in the poem are that our brief lives are full of emotion but we die unfulfilled. The absence of purpose in life and the speaker's failure to find any deeper meaning does not leave the impression that it is a 'happy and positive piece of poetry' as Josie thought. By referring to life as a comedy, Raleigh appears to be asking if we are here only to amuse. Josie, however, was misled in her interpretation by the word 'comedy' and her own experience of acting. She obviously associated the word 'comedy' with laughter and enjoyment and her love of acting resulted in the thought of spending her life on the stage being an attractive proposition. After pupils discussed the twelve readings on the worksheets, Josie made a third journal entry which was very different to the first two. She wrote:

difficult to allocate a tone to this poem. I think either..... he's saying 'perhaps this is what our lives are actually all about' or he is speaking in a depressed, pessimistic and angry tone....Raleigh is questioning life, the mood for me is , in a way, deep and philosophical. It doesn't make me particularly happy or sad but makes me too question life. I think this poem is pretty good...and is quite clever (Appendix D).

In April 1997, Josie had thought that 'Raleigh was happy with life' but in November, after participating in a class discussion based on readers' responses, her response evolved significantly. After hearing the views of her classmates and engaging in argument with them, Josie generated two new interpretations and abandoned her previous idea that Raleigh was happy, based on the word 'comedy' and her own pleasurable acting experiences. Rather than considering Raleigh's poem to be a celebration of life, she now thought his tone was either reflective or pessimistic. What is important about the development of Josie's reading is that it is the development of *her* ideas and subjective response.

After encouraging pupils to re-assess Raleigh's tone and the mood he was seeking to evoke, pupils learned about Raleigh's life and times because they were curious about the experiences that led him to describe life in the way he did in 'What Is

Our Life?'. After gaining additional information in April 1998, Josie's reading developed still further and in May she wrote on her revision worksheet:

Sir Walter Raleigh had a very turbulent life and career; he had the extremes of very good fortune and very bad fortune....Despite his success he died in the tower, having written the poem "What is our Life?". Due to his roller coaster life, it is easy to understand why he was considering the meaning of life.

During the same month, in a timed essay, she wrote:

the poet is showing a theory about life and its meaning. The poet makes life out to be a meaningless, cruel and ironic play. We struggle to lead fulfilled lives when really life is unfair and when it's over we die, regretting the things we haven't done. When I read and interpreted this poem it made me think about my beliefs about life and I realised that I basically agree with him but the realisation of what life really is doesn't depress me. I think Raleigh is trying to warn us that life is short and you must be sure to do your best and enjoy yourself (Appendix H).

Each time Josie discussed the poem her enjoyment of it increased despite the fact that she altered her interpretation dramatically between her second and third journal entries. In Josie's first journal entry she had awarded the poem 7/10. After paired and whole class discussion, during the first week, her score had risen to 8/10. Seven months later, in November, despite changing her interpretation of Raleigh's tone, Josie awarded the poem a 9/10. She had become a 'keen reader' in both senses of the word.

CHAPTER 9: READING RESPONSE THEORY.

One strategy to promote intellectual and motivational keenness was to foster in pupils a clearer understanding of the genre they were reading and a heightened awareness of how readers respond to poetry. This chapter reports readers' understanding of response theory and their concepts of what poetry is and what it is for. It also demonstrates how such learning enabled them to come to terms with the processes involved in their own reading. Indeed, the negative attitudes expressed by many older secondary pupils can be ameliorated by tackling the tacit theories about reading poetry they possess; pupils can be helped to adopt an appropriate reading stance, so crucial in their reading of poetry, by explicit teaching and discussion of what active reading involves. Much of the frustration pupils experience when reading poetry can be removed by ensuring they have an adequate understanding of the process they are engaged in. The quality of these adolescent readers' reflections about response theory, applied to their own reading, demonstrates their capacity to engage in philosophical reflection about this aspect of literary theory and metacognition concerning their reading. A correlation is reported here between the pupils' more positive attitude to poetry and their evolution of a clear concept of the genre.

1. Adolescents' Perceptions of the Genre.

The following transcript of a conversation that my student teacher and I had with Steve serves to illustrate not only his antipathy to poetry but also his genuine puzzlement regarding the genre. It is probable that many adolescents share the views of fifteen year old Steve who wanted to do well in English but was quite baffled by the idea of poetry and found it far less rewarding than reading plays or novels. The conversation took place on neutral territory in the school canteen foyer during a morning break just after an English lesson in which some poems from the NEAB GCSE Anthology 1998/1999 had been discussed.

- Steve: Poetry is pointless - it's not like a novel, poems are too short.....I just think that anyone who sits at home reading poems can't have much to do!
- Teacher: But why aren't plays or novels pointless then Steve?
- Steve: It's just all in one short, few lines. I mean why? I can see the point of a book because you go back to it and it's a story and you find out what happened.
- Student: But what's the point of a picture?
- Steve: Well, it decorates a room and you look at it and like it.
- Student: So, isn't a poem an emotional picture?
- Steve: (shaking his head) A poem is in words though, it's just too concise.
- Student: But isn't that good?
- Steve: No, like I say - it's not like a book where you find out what happens next - you read a poem and it's all there - you've read it! (Appendix I).

Steve was concerned about two issues, the point of poetry and its brevity. The rationale for poetry and specific teaching about the genre were clearly lacking in Steve's experience, even though he had participated in a teaching and learning methodology which emphasised personal response and was founded upon response theory. The antecedents of Steve's attitudes deserve careful consideration as he is unlikely to be alone in possessing such views. Upon reflection, stimulated by this unplanned conversation, it became clear that we had never, as a class, attempted to discuss explicitly our understanding of the genre. In studying poems, we had not paused sufficiently to explore the nature of poetry. Clearly, pupils needed to come to terms with and accept the process of reading poetry if they were to become both perspicacious and motivated readers of the genre. Yet, formulating an academic definition of the genre seemed an unlikely way to alter pupils' attitudes whereas acquiring a 'feel' for the genre appeared to be more likely to influence the way pupils related to poetry. A lack of motivation in pupils is perhaps unsurprising when they do not really understand what it is they are doing or why they are doing it. The suggestion has been made that:

A prerequisite for reading poetry (and perhaps more importantly with seemingly simple poetry) is to have some sense of what it means to say one is reading poetry rather than some other type of written discourse (Fleming, 1992: 34)

Teachers need to consider whether pupils are encouraged to consider what poetry is, its purpose and why they study it. We should also discuss with pupils the processes that are involved when reading poetry so that pupils can adopt appropriate strategies in their reading. These issues are important but so too is the way they are addressed. In this enquiry, pupils were not pinned down to precise definitions of the genre as this would not have helped them to begin to appreciate poetry any more than before; rather they were stimulated to reflect. The issues Steve raised were addressed by teaching response theory (Appendix J) and encouraging pupils to reflect upon the process they engaged in to enable them to gain an awareness of the nature of poetry. The basic tenets of literary theory from New Criticism to Post-Structuralism (Tompkins, 1980; Freund, 1987) were taught, as was Rosenblatt's transactional theory of the literary work concerning the poem as "event" (1978). However, in elaborating the difference between New Criticism and reader response theory, pupils were encouraged to make up their own minds about the nature of interpretation and reception of a literary work. Although such ideas may be a more familiar part of the English curriculum at post-16 level, the experiment was to see if such ideas from reader response theory would be beneficial at GCSE. Pupils discussed efferent reading (to take away information) and aesthetic reading (to personally appreciate) and also the place of the reader in the reading process. The aesthetic concept of appreciating literature as art was also elaborated upon and none of this information appeared to be beyond the comprehension of these fifteen year olds as they engaged in dialogue about the nature of their reading experiences, readily assimilating terms from response theory into these discussions (Appendix B).

It may be that if questions about the nature of poetry are not directly addressed, pupils will continue to operate with an implicit notion of what poetry is which may not help them. In the initial conversation with Steve, a plausible concept of poetry, which would enable him to function positively in poetry lessons, appeared to be lacking as he was clearly mystified by the genre. Miscomprehension of this sort may be quite widespread. Fleming's study of 100 pupils from three city comprehensives in which teenagers classified a number of texts to see which they would describe as poetry, showed that they based their responses on 'some tacit personal theory' (Fleming, 1992: 38) that was consistently present however idiosyncratic their notions were. Rather than leaving pupils with their tacit theories,

enabling them to develop constructs of the genre is likely to facilitate their development as keen readers.

Directly addressing the personal theories of poetry held by pupils may be a significant foundation which would prepare the way for some positive reactions to poetry. Some pupils, like Steve, may find that a rationale for poetry eludes them. Others may see success in poetry being the skill of being able to 'repeat their teacher's opinions' (Cox, 1991: 78) or to find the 'correct' interpretation of a text rather like the correct answer in a comprehension exercise. Although teachers and pupils need to consider explicitly the process a reader goes through when reading a poem so that pupils do not expect it to mean in the same way as prose, some notion of the poem as art and of the way art is valued may prove beneficial to those pupils, like Steve, who wish to know the point of poetry. The benefit of making such theory explicit was that pupils could see where the process of discussion operating in their English lessons had come from and why their teacher refused the notion of a single correct interpretation of a poem. It may be that English teachers have underestimated the capacity of adolescents to engage in such philosophical questions or that such discussion has been deemed irrelevant to their needs at GCSE. The findings of this study substantiate Fleming's findings from research carried out with mixed ability Year 9 pupils and his conclusion that, 'most of the pupils were able to engage in conceptual questions about the nature of poetry itself' (Fleming, 1992: 39). What may be surprising is the level of sophistication demonstrated by the Year 11 pupils in my study in applying theory to their own experiences with texts. Students were given a worksheet (Appendix J) containing some of Rosenblatt's statements (1985) about the nature of the poem and the aesthetic transaction and were asked:

- Which poems in the NEAB Anthology became 'poems' for you ?
- Where did you engage in 'aesthetic reading' ?

One of the selected readers, Josie, had the following conversation with the student teacher who worked with her group. Evidently, Steve was not alone in failing to understand what the point of poetry was:

Student: Tell me about yourself and the poems that you read Josie

Josie: OK, well, my appreciation of poems has definitely increased very much recently - I never used to understand what the point of poems was - I always thought, well, why doesn't a person write simply what they mean instead of writing it in a way that confuses everyone (Appendix B).

Josie's later remarks show a marked increase in appreciation and her development of a clear concept of poetry as a genre. The change in Josie is attributable to the teaching of response theory and she even refers to Rosenblatt and her theory as the catalyst that caused her transformation:

Josie: it's kind of clicked recently that um.....a poem is about the poet writing down their feelings in a way that other people won't necessarily understand and that's what poems are - I was thinking about what Rosenblatt said about - that a poem is only a poem if the reader has an aesthetic response to it and I do agree with that to an extent, but I also think that in order for a poem to be good and to evoke an aesthetic response, the poet has to have written it through some kind of emotion (Appendix B).

Josie's view of the poet writing out of deeply felt emotion is characteristic of her personal 'identity style'. Yet, her emphasis on poetry working affectively as well as cognitively indicates that she was forming a coherent and discerning notion of what poetry is. She continued to share her discovery with the student teacher by relating a conversation about poetry that she had outside an English lesson:

Well, um one of my friends was saying to me how she's a poet and she writes all these poems and she was showing me them and she said "oh I can write one now" and he was scribbling down and *basically it was a piece of text that had rhyming words at the end..... I decided they weren't poems, that's not what poems are* because she didn't think about them, she didn't have any kind of emotion when she was writing them - it was just a case of finding words that rhymed - that's how I came to the conclusion - *it has to be created through an emotion"* (my italics, Appendix B).

Josie focussed on the power poems had to evoke a mood in her and expressed her belief that a poem is to be felt and not simply thought about. Josie's responses do not only illustrate how thought and feeling work together in the aesthetic transaction but that she was able, at fifteen, to reflect on this.

An important element in my overall thesis is that, in order to explore the developmental dimension, what poetry is must be discussed with the pupils who study it (Pike, 2000 b). It may be that pupils begin at an early age to read poems which generally amuse, and subsequently, at about the Year 9 stage, when serious poetry is studied, do not have a functional definition of what it is supposed to be or of its purpose. If it does not entertain they are mystified by the whole experience. Although discussions will vary, it is important that teachers and pupils explore some notion of aesthetics together, of the active part played by the reader in the creation of meaning and of a reading stance which fosters the love of a plurality of meanings. Such explicit discussion may be a crucial factor in ameliorating the negativity which has been so widely associated with adolescents reading poetry in school.

2. Adolescents' Understanding of the Reading Process.

Discussing response theory with pupils in Year 11, such as Rosenblatt's view of the poem as event, helped the young readers in this study to understand the process they engaged in when they read poetry. It has been noted (Chapter 1) that the development of metacognition in readers is stage six of Thomson's developmental model (Thomson, 1987: 360 -361), the form of understanding that results in an awareness of one's own position as a reader and 'reflexiveness'. The value of discussing literary theory where 'efferent' and 'aesthetic' reading (Rosenblatt, 1978) are defined is that pupils may realise the futility of reading poetry efferently and understand that attempting to read a poem, in the same way that one reads the label on a medicine bottle or a geography textbook, to take away information, results in disappointment and frustration (Dias and Hayhoe, 1988: 33). When, as a result of discussing response theory, young readers become aware that an 'efferent' stance is not appropriate with poetry, their knowledge of the process of reading has developed considerably. Currently, many pupils operate with a tacit notion of poetry and many teachers leave them this way. The requirements for successfully reading poetry should be made explicit so that pupils can get into the habit of allowing text to function as 'stimulus' as well as 'blueprint' and bring their own experiences to the text to read themselves as they read the poem.

Another benefit of explicit teaching about response theory is that the ‘forum’ (Bruner, 1987), put into practice by Trelawny-Ross (1998), may be more easily constructed in the classroom because the pupils’ dependence upon teachers to provide the ‘correct’ interpretation is removed when the teacher’s opinion is seen as just one view among many. In addition, teacher domination is more likely to be avoided if, in an open discussion of response theory, the teacher comes to be seen as one who has a view but not as the sole repository of truth. Similarly, pupils may engage more actively when they come to see that a poem is a personal event that only they can create using their own unique past experience. Knowledge of response theory can also boost young readers’ confidence in their own abilities and enable the teacher to adopt a ‘non directive, facilitating role’ (Benton, M., 1988: 35) thus reducing passivity. One way of encouraging pupils to respond independently is to explore the theory that emphasises the necessity of active reading to enable responses of an aesthetic nature to be generated. Pupils should not be abandoned and left to struggle ‘without any real awareness of the type of process in which they are engaged’ (Fleming, 1992: 34). An awareness of the process they go through as readers of poetry is beneficial because ‘it would seem desirable that specific consideration of the genre itself as part of pupils’ experience of poetry would enhance their understanding’ (Fleming, 1992: 40). This certainly seems the case with Steve, whose comments on the pointlessness of poetry opened this chapter. Two months after that unplanned encounter in the canteen foyer with the student teacher, Steve had the another conversation with her after exploring aspects of response theory:

Student:	So the way you get into a poem.... you’ve been doing a lot of work with Mr. Pike where you relate it to your own experience - you find that useful do you?
Steve:	Yeah, um, Rosenblatt’s theory of um, aesthetic reading um - I quite agree with it, when she says that a poem only becomes a poem when you apply your own experience to the poem, it’s not actually poetry when its on the page but when a reader reads it and thinks of events that have happened to him or her, it becomes a poem (Appendix B).

At least Steve was aware by then of how a poem came into existence which is of seminal importance. Discussing response theory with Steve appeared to have created

the conditions for an aesthetic response to emerge. Understanding the theory was relevant to Steve as he continued to explain how Clough's 'The Latest Decalogue' became a poem for him whereas Herbert's 'Jordan' did not. Steve incorporates Rosenblatt's theory in his explanation once again:

I agree with that (Rosenblatt's theory) because um, like the poem 'Jordan' for example, I can't relate to this to do with anything that's around me, which make it - I don't know - I just don't really like it, whereas with 'The Latest Decalogue' I can see what's going on around me and what's happening and people are avoiding the law and things like that and it's relevant which makes it a poem (Appendix B).

What Steve describes here is a process of assimilation, in Piaget's term, of making the poem, to some extent his own, rather than an alien object remote from his experience. Teaching reader response theory has a part to play in facilitating this process by making pupils aware of themselves as readers. Previously, Steve was not sure of what it was he was reading or how he was supposed to be reading it. It has been noted that, 'pupils could make progress as readers by an increasing conscious awareness of the particular reading requirements of different discourses' (Fleming, 1992: 40) which is confirmed by this study. The way pupils approach the reading of a text is crucial, yet teachers seldom teach this approach and young readers are often expected to somehow acquire the right approach on their own. Michael and Peter Benton assert that a love of poetry is not fostered by some 'mysterious osmosis' as a result of teachers simply reading poetry to classes (Benton, M. and Benton, P., 1998: vii) but that encouraging response, rather than line by line analysis fosters later critical understanding. This chapter reports that response is also encouraged by some explicit discussion of response theory.

A further benefit of studying response theory to emerge from this study was that adolescents gained an enhanced awareness of the relationship between reader, text and poet. Attention to the theory of the literary transaction helped readers to see themselves in relation to the writer. For instance, Rob reflected upon his own reading and noted that he appeared to have more aesthetic responses to pre-twentieth century poems and to consider more carefully the perspective of the poet in these works. This is evident from Rob's response to 'The Latest Decalogue' where making a connection with the poet appeared to be a hallmark of his response (Appendix B).

Rob did not experience the difficulties which arise from 'the reader's reluctance or inability to participate in the creation of meaning' (Fleming, 1996: 40) because he realised he was just as essential in the creation of the poem as the poet. If the teaching of response theory helps adolescents to consider the relationship which they, as readers, have with the author, it may hasten their development. Without explicit teaching of theory, some adolescents do not perceive their relation to the poet and the necessity of their involvement if aesthetic reading is to occur. Others could take considerably longer to reach this understanding without help. Studying the theory of response may encourage inexperienced readers to make judgements for themselves which is essential as many lessons have been justifiably criticised where 'pupils were in no sense left to create their own understandings' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 156). The value of response theory has always been to legitimate pupils' interpretations but the value of teaching such theory to pupils is that creative learning where pupils engage in independent thought is facilitated.

The advantages of exploring reader response theory with the pupils in my study were numerous. An enhanced understanding of poetry as art, and a far clearer idea of the processes they engaged in as readers, resulted from discussions about this aspect of literary theory. As a consequence of making the requirements for successful reading explicit, and focussing on the importance of a reader's stance, the conditions necessary for aesthetic reading to occur were fostered. Indeed, awareness of the poem as a personal 'event' (Rosenblatt) which only the individual reader was capable of producing, appeared to encourage independent thinking. Further, through an enhanced awareness of response, as a process, these fifteen year old readers acquired a much clearer understanding of their role and their relationship with the poet and text. Most significantly though, readers who explored reader response theory, engaged in 'keen' reading of some pre-twentieth century poems in both senses of the term and this keenness, as their comments show, can be attributed, in part, to their study of such theory.

CHAPTER 10: READING THROUGH TALKING.

The value of interaction and discussion between peers in learning contexts was noted in Chapter 2 and has been emphasised in a number of educational reports (Bullock, 1975; Cockcroft, 1982). More recently, the National Curriculum for English (1995, 1999) has made discussion mandatory for Attainment Target 1: Speaking and Listening. Further, in the latest National Curriculum 'group discussion and interaction' (DFEE / QCA, 1999: 31.33) forms a distinct area of 'Knowledge, skills and understanding' to be acquired by pupils. Similarly, for the assessment of GCSE English, teachers have to indicate that they have provided a number of opportunities for paired and group oral activity. Bruner recognised 'that most learning in most settings is a communal activity, a sharing of the culture' (Bruner, 1986: 127) which occurs, in part, through talking and Vygotsky considered that discourse enabled zones of proximal development to be traversed. How the more able peer or teacher leads the less able pupil through this zone of accelerated and especially productive learning, the ZPD, is the focus of this chapter. Yet, the value of such interaction for the more able pupil who scaffolds the learning of a weaker partner also deserves careful consideration. Although some writers have commented that literature texts can be ZPDs for children (Meek, 1985: 56) it seems that little specific work has been done on the way in which the talk of a teacher or peer can facilitate a learner's cognitive growth, specifically within literature education. An important element of the focus of my research was to investigate the ways this can occur and how a teacher or more able peer can 'facilitate developmental change' (Wood, 1991: 101). It has been argued that 'a child develops ... 'concepts' that are jointly constructed through interaction with those who already embody them' (Wood, 1991: 102) There is, however, a subtle, yet significant, difference between children growing 'into the intellectual life around them' (Vygotsky, 1978: 88) and becoming independent thinkers who truly understand the concepts being discussed, and those who merely repeat the right words, saying what the teacher wants to hear but not understanding the principles behind their answer.

Although the more advanced partner provides a vicarious form of consciousness or 'scaffolding' until a time when the learner can think independently,

the test of whether a ZPD has been crossed is if the less able partner has become independent and has understood the real principles or concepts being under discussion.

In this chapter, talk in three contexts is explored. Firstly, discourse between a pair of pupils is analysed. Secondly, a group discussion with the teacher present is considered. Thirdly, pupil-teacher discourse is examined. The concepts of ‘ritual’ and ‘principled’ knowledge (cf. Chapter 2) are drawn upon in this analysis.

1. Collaboration.

In this section, seven stages in a conversation between Peter and Adam about ‘The Latest Decalogue’ by Arthur Hugh Clough are analysed. Peter can be witnessed scaffolding Adam’s learning which develops from a lack of comprehension to principled knowledge. Each extract is followed by a brief commentary. The full conversation appears in Appendix C.

Sequence 1.1: Incomprehension.

Peter: ‘Swear not - for for thy curse thy enemy is none the worse’.

Adam: Yeah, that means like like if in a fight you’re no worse than your enemy like, you know like in a fight yeah, someone says they want a fight - you hit back sort of thing and that’ll make you no better ‘swear not at all for for thy curse, your enemy is none the worse’. Are you on the same sort of level as me?

Peter: No, I think (both laugh)

Adam: You don’t understand a word I’ve said.

Instead of interpreting ‘your enemy is none the worse’ to mean that the enemy is not worse off for being cursed, and is unaffected by verbal abuse, Adam thinks that ‘worse’ indicates that his enemy is not morally ‘worse’ than him if they fight. Here Adam has misinterpreted the phrase ‘thy enemy is none the worse’ and believes, ‘that’ll make you no better’; in other words, the speaker is on the same moral level as an enemy because ‘you’ are in fact ‘no better’ than the person being fought. Essentially, Adam interprets this line to mean that if he is in a fight, he is not worse or better than his enemy because ‘you’re no worse than you enemy’ and ‘that’ll make you no better’. Adam is obviously convinced by this interpretation. Peter is bemused

by Adam's interpretation, disagrees and prompts Adam to say, 'You don't understand a word I've said'. As the poem follows the pattern of a commandment being quoted followed by a cynical afterthought, there is good reason to believe that if Adam has not understood this line, he has not grasped the central message of the poem.

At the end of sequence 1.2 Adam says 'Yeah I see what you mean' although we do not know if he really does, but at the end of Sequence 1.3 when he says 'I understand this now' we may be more convinced that he does understand. What we witness in the next two stages of the conversation could be 'ritual' knowledge, simply saying the right words to give Peter the impression that Adam understands the poem.

Sequence 1.2: Ritual Knowledge

- Peter: No, I understand what you mean but it's sort of um, right, cos this is like words, like swearing like hitting, sort of it, you shout at someone and um just sort of swear at they're not any worse, you could deck them and then they'd be worse but swearing at them
- Adam: But this is supposed to like not encourage swearing isn't it?
- Peter: No, I thought right the whole poem was like is about
- Adam: What it's like today you mean
- Peter: Yeah rather than ten commandments thousand of years ago - you did not steal, you did not swear now
- Adam: The up-to-date one sort of
- Peter: Everyone tries to keep the same rules but they can't - they don't actually break the rules they just bend them
- Adam: About a hundred and fifty degrees
- Peter: Yeah - so I thought it was like don't bother swearing at them cos your enemy's not made any worse
- Adam: Yeah, I see what you mean.

At the start, Peter corrects Adam, explaining that swearing does not inflict damage upon an enemy but 'you could deck them and then they'd be worse', meaning that hitting one's opponent to the ground would cause them to be worse off indeed.

What Adam grasps here is that this decalogue is 'the up-to-date one' and after Peter has explained, 'they don't actually break the rules they just bend them' Adam's response of 'a hundred and fifty degrees' (he means one hundred and eighty degrees, of course) shows that he understands that people are going in the opposite direction

to the biblical injunctions. When, however, Adam says, 'I see what you mean' he may simply be elaborating Peter's comment and functioning ritually, rephrasing Peter's remark without understanding the principle or concept of evading God's law as Peter does. In the next section, Adam builds upon Peter's idea:

Sequence 1.3: 'Scaffolded' Principled Knowledge.

Adam: At church on Sunday to attend will serve to keep the world thy friend' I didn't really understand that
 Peter: I thought, sort of you go to church on Sunday not because you want to worship God and not because you really love God and want to worship him
 Adam: Just go to mingle with your friends sort of thing
 Peter: Yeah, just because if you don't, everyone'll go 'arr, that person doesn't go to church' and you'll become an outcast and then
 Adam: Yeah, just like The Latest Decalogue, I understand this now

It is evident that Adam has not understood by his remark at the start, 'I didn't really understand that' but when Peter suggests that people were not going to church to worship God, Adam contributes, 'just go to mingle with your friends'. It is interesting that Peter had not pointed out the social benefits of church attendance when Adam contributed this interpretation. Whereas in Sequence 1.2 Adam merely added the words 'a hundred and fifty degrees' to Peter's point 'they just bend them', here he can be seen to be contributing his own idea and thinking independently. When he says, 'I understand this now' we are more convinced he really does understand the principle or concept behind the line. He has been collaboratively inculcated into Peter's process of thought. However, in the next sequence Adam goes further and provides a correct interpretation before Peter has had a chance to articulate his.

Sequence 1.4: Independent Principled Knowledge.

Peter: Um, 'Honour thy parents, that is all from whom advancement may befall'
 Adam: Yeah, just like in your future, if you're good to them now, that is what I think - they could help you
 Peter: Yeah, yeah, that's what I thought, don't love your parents because you should do because they're your parents and they do stuff for you, only love them because...
 Adam: They'll help you succeed in life

Peter: Yeah - exactly that's what I thought

Adam: Get places

Peter: Not because you should love them because they're you're parents but because they'll get you places

Adam: Yeah.

Here, after Peter has read the line, Adam proffers an interpretation independently. He does not wait for Peter and then paraphrase what he has said. It is Adam who says of parents 'if you're good to them they could help you succeed in life'. Although he hasn't mentioned cynicism, it is clear he has grasped the pattern of self-centred statements. The scaffolding is coming down as Adam actually interrupts Peter, as he is in the process of erecting his own structure. In the next sequence, Adam's rephrasing of Peter's point 'you don't have to try too hard' with the words, 'Don't go out of your way' illustrates that he is still being scaffolded by Peter. Later in the extract he uses his intertextual ability to think independently.

Sequence 1.5: Intertextual - Principled Knowledge.

Peter: 'Thou shalt not kill but needst not strive officiously to keep alive' oh I thought, you know, you're not supposed to kill anyone but you don't have to try too hard to keep someone alive like ...

Adam: Don't go out of your way

Peter: If you don't actually kill them I mean like if you're walking by and see someone who's been mugged and stabbed and is gonna die and you can't actually kill them but don't want to get blood on your clothes, walk past

Adam: I see what you mean, yeah

Peter: So you don't have to be, don't have to strive to keep people alive

Adam: That's like that Bible thing where they all walk past that dying man

Peter: Oh yes - um - Good Samaritan Story

Adam: That's the one.

What proves Adam is developing an independent understanding of the message of the poem is his reference to the biblical parable of the Good Samaritan. Here, Adam introduces a singularly appropriate narrative as a comparison, showing an intertextual awareness, a mark of the maturing reader. After Adam heard Peter describe a mugging where the witness' reaction is to 'walk past' he ventures the comment, 'that's like that Bible thing where they all walk past that dying man'. Adam has fully understood Peter and is not responding with 'ritual' but 'principled'

knowledge. His interpretation of the line of the poem which began Sequence 1.5. has been scaffolded again by Peter. This scaffolding is again evident in Sequence 1.6.

Sequence 1.6.: Interpretative - Principled Knowledge.

Peter: There's a definite law you're not allowed to steal, but it's sort of, you can find a loop hole in the law about cheating, you can probably get away with that - so, so you might as well cheat - it's not gonna get you so much stuff so much money but you're not gonna get caught for it or arrested for it or something like that

Adam: Sort of moving the boundaries or something.

Here, although Adam only contributes 'moving the boundaries', the comment does indicate his sense that the Victorians, who Clough criticised, were engaging in precisely such shifting of moral boundaries. In the next sequence, however, there is clear evidence of Adam demonstrating 'principled' knowledge.

Sequence 1.7: Generalising - Principled Knowledge.

Adam: Right, co-vet, 'Thou shalt not covet, but tradition approves all forms of competition' um, covet um is, oh you're not allowed to be jealous, I think that's it, that's the one, jealous

Peter: Covet is being jealous I think

Adam: 'but tradition approves all forms of competition'

Peter: Yeah, that's another one where it's like bending it because um, you're allowed to be competitive

Adam: I see what you mean - jealous

Peter: To get what other people want but you're not really supposed to be jealous, but I don't know

Adam: Yeah cos jealousy is competition isn't it, you want what they've got

Peter: Jealousy and uh sort of wanting what other people want drives the world doesn't it cos you go to work cos you want more, a better car

Adam: Yeah

Peter: A better house, you want better stuff, all that, because someone else has got one yeah

Adam: Yeah cos I see yeah, they'll want competition so it is a list, the revised ten commandments isn't it

Peter: Yeah - so you can be competitive but not jealous, which is sort of the same thing but slightly different

Adam: It's sort of semi-contradiction - if you think - if people are looking after themselves all the time

Peter: Yeah, there's a lot of sort of contradiction like uh, you are not allowed to steal but allowed to cheat

Adam: Yeah.

Here Peter picks up Adam's point about shifting boundaries and it is Adam who perceptively sums up 'jealousy is competition' demonstrating he has understood the point of the poem. Adam proves he has engaged in principled learning and not mere ritual by making the connection from the specific phrase to the overall meaning and structure of the poem. Relating one of the parts to the whole he says, 'they'll want competition so it is a list, the revised ten commandments'. Adam also introduces the idea of contradiction and sums up the central theme of the poem about self-interest by concluding 'people are looking after themselves all the time' after Peter's remark, 'same thing but slightly different'.

Having established Adam's transition from dependence to independence, the factors which influenced this development need to be examined. An asymmetry between the two boys at the start existed and the more able peer, Peter, scaffolds Adam's learning. Yet, several strategies are apparent in this scaffolding. One of the processes of exchange between teacher and pupils examined by Edwards and Mercer (1987) known as 'cued elicitation' is of interest because it constitutes, in their view, a ZPD. Such interaction is also apparent in the conversation between Adam and Peter. Edwards and Mercer state that 'cued elicitations are IRF types of discourse in which the teacher asks questions while simultaneously providing heavy clues to the information required' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 142). IRF denotes a sequence of 'initiation, response and feedback' between individuals. The suggestion is that pupils engaged in such a process 'are being inculcated into what becomes for them a shared discourse with the teacher' (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 143). The conclusion drawn is that any discourse which falls into this category is a ZPD:

it falls neatly into the sort of educational process defined by Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' in which pupils' knowledge is aided and 'scaffolded' by teachers' questions, clues and prompts to achieve insights that the pupils by themselves seemed incapable of (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 143).

It must be recognised, however, that 'cued elicitation' does not always result in a ZPD being traversed because this can degenerate into the sort of guessing game criticised by Edwards and Mercer where pupils try to say what the teacher wants

them to without any real or ‘principled’ understanding. With this proviso, some of Peter’s scaffolding of Adam in the seven extracts just given can be viewed as ‘spontaneous elicitations’ which help Adam on his way to ‘principled’ understanding. These elicitations are certainly more realistic than the teacher dominated cued elicitations of Edwards and Mercer (1987). These are instances of Adam interrupting Peter, having understood what he has said, and finishing his sentences. In Sequence 1.2, Peter’s statement, ‘they don’t actually break the rules they just bend them ...’ is completed by Adam’s, ‘about a hundred and fifty degrees’. In Sequence 1.3 Peter notes, ‘you go to church on Sunday not because you want to God and not because you really love God and want to worship him ...’ and Adam adds, ‘just go to mingle with your friends’. In Sequence 1.4 Peter’s suggestion, ‘don’t love your parents because you should do because they’re your parents and they do stuff for you, only love them because ...’ is finished by Adam with, ‘they’ll help you succeed in life’. Here, in a much more naturalistic and collaborative way than that outlined in the teacher’s ‘cued elicitations’ of Edwards and Mercer, a ZPD is witnessed because Adam is being inculcated into the thinking of Peter. The example from Sequence 1.2 may well be mere ritual knowledge, where Adam is making a comment in line with Peter’s comment but not understanding why or what Peter really means. By Sequence 1.3 and 1.4, however, it is Adam who is adding the really salient points and providing the answers. He suggests the materialistic, self-centered Victorians’ motives for church attendance was to ‘mingle with your friends’ and also notes the cynical motive for being nice to parents as it may be advantageous for one’s future prospects. Yet, Adam’s provision of such information was not in response to formal questions by the teacher such as, ‘Why does the speaker say you should obey your parents?’ or, ‘What does the speaker say the real reason is for going to church?’. Peter and Adam are shown working collaboratively to help each other and are not going through what can be a charade, merely guessing the answer the teacher wants to hear. Although some of Adam’s first response, appears to have been ‘ritual knowledge’, he moves through this to ‘principled knowledge’ in a natural way.

Many different encounters caused Adam’s appreciation of the poem to develop and it must be acknowledged that questioning and argument facilitated Adam’s development as well as collaborative work. However, an important element

of scaffolding for Adam was the joint discourse he shared with another pupil rather than the teacher. Adam also developed in group discussion through argument and justification with Josie, shown in the next section which contrasted with the way he worked with Peter in general.

If we look back at Adam's conversation with Peter, it is clear that this was immensely beneficial to Adam but it does raise the question of the value it was to Peter. Whether it was a disservice to Peter to work with a less able student needs to be explored. To answer this question two sources of evidence are available. Adam's and Peter's initial transcript and also Peter's conversation about the same poem with another boy, Harry, who was much closer to Peter's ability than Adam. It is necessary to evaluate whether Peter benefited more from his conversation with Harry than he did with Adam. (The conversation with Harry took place first due to Adam's absence).

The opportunity for a pupil to help another is valuable because adopting this role demonstrates and consolidates the position of the pupil as independent, unscaffolded and competent. Having compared Peter's performance when working with Harry (Appendix C) with the first transcript examined here, when he was working with Adam, several conclusions can be drawn. Working with Adam seemed to be more beneficial to Peter. This was, of course, a natural pairing and the boys had become accustomed to working as a team whereas Peter and Harry, although good friends, did not normally discuss poetry with each other. It was simply not the case that Peter's progress was inhibited or slowed by a partner who was less able than he was. Peter had more responsibility with Adam and had to work harder to achieve success. Working with a less proficient learner brought out certain qualities in Peter because Adam's difference in understanding to his own forced him to justify and explain his assertions whereas there was a tendency for Peter and Harry to merely accept each other's opinions. Also, because Harry was a more accomplished and confident reader than Adam, he simply did not need the clarity of explanation that Adam required. It appears that pupils conform to the role given to them and giving Peter a more responsible role made him think more deeply and explain his views more cogently so that Adam understood. When working with Harry, it seems that Peter tended to rely too heavily on him. Recognising he was working with someone with more ability than his usual partner caused Peter to ask Harry questions in rather

a dependent and intellectually lazy way such as ‘What’s that sort of mean?’ after Harry quoted ‘let the lie have time on its own wing to fly’. This is not the sort of question Peter asked Adam in conversation because, although he often asked Adam for his views, he was the leader. Peter appeared to adopt a more subservient and less confident position with Harry. In contrast, with Adam, he was responsible for generating answers and explanations, which he was not with Harry. Peter also seemed less willing to challenge Harry’s views and accepted incorrect interpretations because he was not thinking for himself. He would reply to one of Harry’s erroneous interpretations with ‘Oh right, right, um yes’ through not reading actively himself. Although working with Adam was good for Peter, he also spent time working either in a small or large group where he received challenging interpretations from other readers. This was necessary because although Adam could prompt Peter, he did not often surprise Peter with valid, alternative interpretations. It does seem that having a weaker partner, Adam, forced Peter to compensate and be stronger intellectually.

It is no coincidence that a ZPD has been illustrated by reference to Peter and Adam as a pair because it is based upon ‘asymmetry’ or difference between the two individuals who collaborate. There was, in fact, a greater difference in ability between Adam and Peter than between the partners in the other pairs. Despite the success of this partnership, the teacher is of immense value, not only in engineering pairings such as that of Peter and Adam but in interaction with groups of pupils. Oral interaction gives a pupil more immediate feedback than a teacher’s marking at the end of written work. The opportunities for such oral exchange need careful consideration as a teacher will only interact one to one with a pupil to a limited extent in our overpopulated classrooms. Paired work of the right sort is therefore especially valuable.

2. Argument and Justification.

In this section, the focus is again on a discussion about ‘The Latest Decalogue’ by Arthur Hugh Clough. This time, however, all six readers as well as the teacher were present. Although the following transcript (Appendix C) is edited in the interests of clarity, the order of extracts has not been altered. The full transcript is included in Appendix C. I began by attempting to get the pupils to allow the portion of the text

about adultery to function as ‘stimulus’. Initially, the aim here was to enable pupils to see the personal relevance of a portion of the text that, if interpreted literally, did not apply to them. The focus of attention was also to explore the motivation for the behaviour depicted in ‘The Latest Decalogue’ and Clough’s views of this behaviour.

Sequence 2.1: Text as Stimulus.

- Teacher: Right, but what I was saying to you - is um how it’s relevant to you, how is this bit about adultery relevant to you okay
- Josie: Well because - it can even be seen as cheating on your friends, like if you’ve got a best friend - going and talking about them and slagging them off um saying nasty things about them behind their back um that’s like um committing adultery on one of your friends almost and in the end your best friend will find out and she’ll not like you for it so that

...

- Teacher: But how does Arthur Hugh Clough feel about that motivation you know, that you’re not horrible to your friend because you will lose out
- Josie: Yeah
- Teacher: Well how does he feel about that as a motive for being nice to your friend?
- Josie: Well, he’s saying that um , you should be nice to your friend because it’s better , you’re a better person if you do that

Having established the idea that ‘adultery’ can be interpreted as unfaithfulness of any kind, I began to probe about motivation and Clough’s views. Having introduced the idea of motives, I again attempt to get the pupils to allow the text to operate as a stimulus and Adam returns to the theme of motivation.

Sequence 2.2: The Poet’s Views.

- Teacher: Right Adam, anything in there that stands out to you, that’s either relevant to society today or relevant to you own life?
- Adam: Oh, uh, s’pose that slagging off thing about your friends but then again sort of like you’re always doing it for your own personal gain aren’t you so it will make you feel good if you haven’t sort of done it
- Teacher: And how does Arthur High Clough feel about that?

- Adam: Well, I think, he thinks it's in every person, like everyone does something for their own personal gain, despite it might not look like that
- Teacher: So what, can you sum up the message of the poem for us then?
- Adam: Well, despite people trying to be all good and everything, everything is for their own personal gain- I think anyway
- Teacher: Right, so he's
- Adam: It's like - I'll be nice to my mate, it's really to make you feel good sort of thing

As Adam's views on humanity agreed with Clough's perception that people put themselves before others and are essentially selfish, such cynicism is challenged by Josie's idealism as she wanted to clarify whether these really were Adam's views.

Sequence 2.3: Clarification of Argument.

- Josie: Do you not think that anyone ever does something for anyone else?
- Adam: Not, no, not thinking of it, I don't
- Josie: Well
- Teacher: So you're saying Arthur Hugh Clough is absolutely spot on then?
- Adam: Spot on, yeah because everything's for someone's personal gain I reckon

In the next sequence, the argument about altruism is applied to motives for gaining employment in the medical profession. Adam's cynicism counters Josie's idealism. Adam suggests that doctors do their job for somewhat selfish reasons, because they derive satisfaction from it and are well paid.

Sequence 2.4: Argument and Justification.

- Anna: What about doctors - why do people?
- Peter: Self centred people make the world go round
- Adam: Cos they get a lot of money
- ALL (everyone talking together)
- Josie: NHS doctors don't
- Adam: But what I'm saying is they've saved a life, it makes them feel good, it's for them
- Josie: How do you know they're not doing it because they love the job?
- Adam: They *love* the job

At the end of this sequence, Adam recognises the inconsistency in Josie's argument and simply repeats 'they love the job' emphasising 'love' to show the personal satisfaction derived from such employment. This supports his argument that doctors work because 'they get a lot of money' and 'it makes them feel good'. In Sequence 2.5, the argument develops and Josie gives charity workers as an example of people who are unselfish. Adam counters this with the suggestion that charity workers feel better about themselves as a result of charity work, again challenging Josie's altruism.

Sequence 2.5: Argument and Justification.

Josie: That's saying - what about people who work for charities and don't get anything out of it for themselves?

Adam: Cos it's making them feel good (all talk)

Before Sequence 2.6 below, Josie proposes a hypothetical situation, asking Anna whether she would give her kidney for her disabled sister, Emma, if she ever needed it. Adam, in his summing up, refers to this 'kidney malarkey', asserting that any sacrifice of Anna's part would not be entirely altruistic because Anna would gain satisfaction from this action.

Sequence 2.6: Reiteration of Argument.

Teacher: Let's just let Adam sum that one up, Adam actually brought that one up and it kind of got people going

Adam: I thought I already did - everything's for your own personal gain despite what you do, despite what it looks like - that's what I reckon anyway

Teacher: You believe life is like that?

Adam: Yeah

Josie: Even if you

Adam: Because you'll just feel bad otherwise - you were just going on about the kidney malarkey yeah then - you'll feel bad if you didn't give it

It is interesting that for the first 20 minutes of this conversation, Adam was conspicuously silent. In fact, he only spoke when I specifically asked him a question by name to draw him into the conversation. Later, however, at the end of the

discussion when I asked for personal relevance, it was Adam who volunteered personal associations:

Sequence 2.7: Personal Application of the Argument.

- Teacher: Anyone - personal, kind of - associations - you think yeah that's happened to me
- Adam: Helping mum and dad with something - if you don't do it, oh you - you don't want to do it it's just you do it to make them think "he's a good chap" sort of thing
- Teacher: Yeah
- Peter: Good one
- Josie: But don't you ever do something because you see someone who's really upset and you want to make them feel better
- Adam: But then you'll feel good because you're making them happy
- Josie: That may be one reason you're doing it but you're also doing it
- All: (talking)
- Adam: Okay but it's not in every single reason then, that's what I'm saying
- Anna: (indistinct)
- Josie: I know what you're saying, I totally agree that it's not just there's always selfish reasons for things but I think that you also do things
- Rob: Yeah, but then again, the reason behind the ten commandments is so that if you follow them you get to heaven which is
- Adam: Personal gain as well, yeah.
- Anna: God being selfish, I want you to do all this
- Teacher: Okay over to Steve, Steve was making a point
- Rob: (indistinct) That God being selfish thing - could actually apply - who would be at the expense of two - well the first God would (indistinct)
- Anna: Cos he wants everyone to worship him
- Rob: Yeah anyway
- Steve: What is our life?
- Rob: Selfish hang on
- Anna: What is our life?
- Steve: Leads us nicely on to a poem that is also called 'What is our Life?'
- Rob: Ha ha ha
- Teacher: You've got about um five minutes and don't forget you've got to discuss at least three poems
- All: (gasps)
- Josie: I always disagree with people on this poem as well

Adam allowed the text to function as 'stimulus' and applied it to his home situation only after a pattern had been established of seeing the contemporary and personal significance of this pre-twentieth century poem within the group. In the next section, Sequence 3, Adam works with Rob, rather than his usual partner, and the teacher.

3. Elicitation.

In the above group discussion, most of the questions were realistic and not the artificial classroom questions which questioners knew the answers to. In this sense it was therefore real communication. Yet, explicit, even artificial questions and overtly ‘cued elicitations’ did play a part in Adam’s development and should not be rejected entirely although Edwards and Mercer (1987) have drawn attention to the problems associated with ‘cued elicitation’ when it produces ‘ritual’ rather than ‘principled’ knowledge. In a transcript (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 144, Sequence 7.7.) of a lesson about pendulums the teacher managed to elicit the right answer from pupils, in this case ‘twenty swings’. However, when the children were asked afterwards why ‘twenty’ was the correct answer, none of them knew, suggesting that only ‘ritual’ knowledge and not ‘principled’ understanding had been achieved. Edwards and Mercer conclude:

It is here that we can see plainly the problematical nature of cued elicitation. It is difficult to avoid the impression that the pupils were trying to read all the signals available in a guessing game in which they had to work out, more by communicative skill than by the application of any known principle of measurement, what it was that the teacher was trying to get them to say (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 145).

Clearly, if ‘cued elicitation’ leads to ‘principled’ knowledge and shared discourse where pupils actively participate in a joint construction of knowledge, then a ZPD can be traversed using this technique. However, where ‘cued elicitation’ produces only ‘ritual’ knowledge, although shared discourse may have taken place, understanding has not. Edwards and Mercer note:

The important point is not which pupils understand the principle and which did not, but that the discourse and activity of the lesson did not promote such understanding. The danger of cued elicitation is that, until it is examined closely, it can give a false impression ... of the extent to which pupils understand ... it can easily mask rather than bridge the gap between teacher and child that is the basis of Vygotsky’s developmental process and can lead therefore to the sorts of ‘procedural’, ‘ritual’ understandings that we identified (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 146).

In the following examples of elicitation, where I worked with Adam and Rob, again on 'The Latest Decalogue', it is useful to examine whether Adam's understanding has developed through interaction with the teacher. Again, the full conversation appears in Appendix C. This discussion occurred after the sequence at the start of this chapter, where Adam and Peter worked as a pair and before the group discussion, where Josie challenged Adam after I had drawn him into the discussion and elicited his views. A range of strategies can be seen in this transcript but initially only 'cued elicitation' will be focussed on. Clearly, there are many different types of cued elicitation which are not dealt with at all by Edwards and Mercer (1987). At the most simple level, questions may be open or closed, eliciting one word answers or statements or prompting more exploratory talk. Both open and closed elicitations are used by the teacher with Adam.

Elicitation was used as a means of achieving my teaching objectives which were to revise the concepts of mood and tone and apply them to this poem, enabling pupils to identify and describe the point of view of the poet with greater accuracy. The commentary follows the extract.

Sequence 3.1: Conducted Open Elicitation.

- Rob: Well he's sneering at people and by doing that he's saying that's wrong, you shouldn't be doing that
- Teacher: That's wrong
- Rob: Yeah
- Teacher: Adam?
- Adam: Yeah, I reckon, he's saying it's like bad what they're doing because he says like one of the ten commandments and then it's like being sarcastic giving all the exceptions and everything. I don't reckon he likes it being like that.
- Teacher: Right ... (said slowly and thoughtfully as a prompt as if I want Adam to say more)
- Adam: Saying how much we've strayed from the commandments.

In this exchange, what is striking is how little the teacher says. In fact two words from the teacher produce fifty from the pupil, Adam. These are very open, unfocussed prompts for Adam to talk and are remarkably productive given that Adam was a rather silent individual who was lacking in confidence. Arguably, the

words ‘Adam?’ and ‘Right’ cannot be the sole power behind Adam’s response; the culture and context of the encounter and pupil-teacher history provide the answer.

In an enlightening chapter, ‘How to understand conversations’ Barnes and Todd (1977) suggest that any dialogue in the present cannot be adequately interpreted without considering the past history of a group. They propose that ‘content’ and ‘interaction’ frames govern every utterance an individual makes. In other words, a conversation is not merely guided by the content or subject of the discussion (content frame) but also by the social relationships which are shaping the discourse (interaction frame). The dialogue with Adam worked as it did because he had built up an image of his teacher as a listener who was rarely satisfied with one-word answers and did not like playing guessing games where pupils attempted to guess what he was thinking. In fact, the peculiar nature of teacher questions and the ‘guessing game’ routines that went on in school had been explicitly discussed by this group. More importantly, pupils had come to realise that in English lessons, particularly in discussions about poetry, their views were valued and the object of the exercise was not to guess what the teacher’s view were. In Sequence 3.1, the interaction frame was more powerful than the content frame. The content of the poem was not found to be very enjoyable by Adam initially. Before talking to Peter in a pair, Adam had a negative reaction (3/10). After discussion with his partner he found the poem ‘ok’, (5/10) (Appendix D) but after this conversation with the teacher he awarded a 7/10, indicating definite enjoyment (Appendix E).

What produced this response from Adam may be explained in terms of the interaction frame. The teacher was not firing off a string of direct questions which could have caused Adam to ‘close down’ and would have inhibited any expression of his views. The fact that the teacher was fully in listening mode cannot be underestimated. Arguably, saying more as a prompt would have been unwise and unnecessary. It has been observed that, ‘the prevalence of direct questions in teacher talk would on the face of it appear to be counter-productive to the aim of getting pupils to articulate their thoughts’ (Edwards and Mercer, 1987: 46). It may be that the less obvious and more subtle the prompt is, the more pupils say, if a culture has been built up which encourages pupils to articulate their views.

The other salient feature of Sequence 3.1 is that the teacher was virtually ‘conducting’ in the way a conductor draws out various instruments in an orchestra at

different times, hence the term ‘conducted elicitation’. Many good teachers practise conducting in their classrooms and achieve principled rather than ritual learning as a result. It was not, of course, the teacher’s two words alone that produced Adam’s response but the fact that Adam had been listening to Rob express his views. Rob had just summed up what he perceived to be Clough’s view, ‘he’s saying that’s wrong, you shouldn’t be doing that’ and I had repeated, ‘that’s wrong’ to signal that this was an area we could develop in our discussion. This point, Clough’s criticism of his self serving compatriots, is the one taken up by Adam who signals his agreement with Rob, ‘he’s saying it’s, like, bad’. If Adam had said no more we would be justified in assuming that only he possessed ‘ritual’ knowledge. Yet, it is clear that Adam is demonstrating intellectual keenness or principled knowledge because he uses the word ‘because’ and gives an explanation of the reasons for his view, giving an explanation by reference to Clough’s tone and the structure of the poem (although he does not use these terms). Adam’s justification of the view, ‘it’s like bad what they’re doing’, is perceptive. He continues, ‘he says like one of the Ten Commandments and then it’s like being sarcastic giving all the exceptions and everything’. Adam notices the difference in tone in which the loopholes are given and defines these as ‘sarcastic’ and also notes the poem’s structural pattern of commandment followed by evasion. As one of the teaching objectives was to focus on tone and mood and on audience reaction, I decided that we needed to construct a joint understanding that was more precise than ‘sarcastic’ and also felt the need to ensure that the boys could write about the speaker or persona in the poem as distinct from poet. Sequence 3.2 follows immediately after Sequence 3.1. Adam’s last statement, in Sequence 3.1, is where Sequence 3.2 begins.

Sequence 3.2: From Open to Closed Directed Cued Elicitation.

- Adam: Saying how much we’ve strayed from the commandments.
Teacher: So what he’s doing then is setting up a speaker, right, who is cynical, who is sarcastic, and then we react to that don’t we because we think, well what do we think when we hear those statements?
Adam: It makes us realise that we have strayed from the commandments, like how much we’ve differed from them, I think.
Teacher: So what sort of person is speaking in this poem? (pause) He’s being cynical so he’s a ...?
Adam: Hypocrite - cos he does it I’m sure.

Teacher: Yeah he's hypocritical.
 Adam: Yeah.

Edwards' and Mercer's views about teacher-talk reducing pupil-talk is borne out here; the more the I talked, the less Adam talked. Yet, this is still a shared discourse, the notion of hypocrisy is elicited from Adam and the teacher introduces the idea of a persona or speaker as distinct from poet, a concept many pupils have difficulty with. Clearly, the first question is more open than the second. 'What do we think?' is followed by 'So he's a ...?' to elicit 'hypocrite' and Adam's replies decrease in length and detail as one would expect.

It is, however, apparent from Sequence 3.3, where Adam's reply 'hypocrite' is developed, that it is valid for teachers to 'close down' in order to elicit a specific response, possibly a single term, that enables them to 'open up' the conversation subsequently. Hypocrisy is a central theme in 'The Latest Decalogue' and eliciting the word 'hypocrite' was deemed to be important as it moved Adam on from his description of the speaker as 'sarcastic'. Arguably, Adam displayed principled knowledge rather than engaging in a ritualistic, formulaic 'guess what the teacher is thinking' type of activity because he gave a reason for his answer 'cos he does it I'm sure' which is taken to mean that the speaker finds and exploits the loopholes being articulated. In addition, by asking how 'we' think or react, I am encouraging Adam to step into the role of the audience that the poem is aimed at. This works because Adam replies, 'it makes us realise how much we have strayed'.

In attempting to 'scaffold' Adam's understanding and to inculcate him into my thinking, one teaching objective was to enable Adam to perceive the difference between speaker and poet. A focus on the speaker as a 'hypocrite' was a means to this end and is taken up in Sequence 3.3 which follows on consecutively from 3.2.

Sequence 3.3: Direct Questioning.

Adam: Hypocrite - cos he does it I'm sure
 Teacher: Yeah, he's hypocritical
 Adam: Yeah
 Teacher: Right, so Arthur Hugh Clough shows us a speaker who's a real hypocrite, yeah?
 Adam: Yeah.
 Rob: Yeah.

- Teacher: So, are the views of the speaker in the poem different to Arthur Hugh Clough's views?
- Adam: Yeah, they are (very authoritative, definite).
- Teacher: They are, aren't they?
- Adam: Yeah.
- Teacher: Good, now we're getting a breakthrough - go on, why Adam?
- Adam: Because, like 'Thou shalt have one God only' he says or 'no graven image may be worshipped' then the second speaker 'except the currency' exception all the time.
- Teacher: Right, or the same person.
- Adam: Yeah, could be, yeah.

In this extract, the place where I think a breakthrough is about to occur is where I was expecting Adam to move from 'ritual' to 'principle' in his understanding. He seemed very certain that Clough and the speaker are different but may only have been agreeing with me when he said 'Yeah, they are' so emphatically. The move to seeing poet and speaker as separate entities is only partially successful as Adam seems to think there may be two voices in the poem, a believer and a cynical hypocrite. Success has been achieved, however, in that Adam understands that Clough was not the speaker in the cynical afterthought following each command. Rob followed this by emphasising that Clough really did believe in the commandments and was trying to show his readers the error of their ways. After this, I engaged Adam in conversation once more:

Sequence 3.4: From Closed to Open Cued Elicitation.

- Teacher: So, what's the mood of 'The Latest Decalogue'? Where is mood? Is it in the writer or the reader Adam?
- Adam: It's in the reader.
- Teacher: Okay, so what can we say about mood? ... Any idea? How do we react to his person that's speaking? How do we react to what is being said about um - yeah how do we react to all of the evasion and all of the, you know, the finding of loopholes and the following the letter of the law and not following the spirit? How do we react to all of that? Is it disturbing?
- Adam: S'pose it is, it is a bit disturbing.
- Teacher: Why?
- Adam: Well, there's things you notice if you say you're a good Christian you might you know, think 'oh yes I do all this and yeah all the good things' and then you notice like, like the currency, you worship things like currency as well as it says no graven images may be worshipped.

Teacher: So you realise that your God might be money?
Adam: Yeah, Yeah
Teacher: Because you're materialistic.
Adam: Hmm.

This sequence begins with Adam having a good chance of getting the right answer by saying mood is in the reader. My objective, which could certainly have been handled better, was to get Adam to describe the mood that Clough might have created in his readers. Although I provide 'disturbing' rather than eliciting this response, it is pleasing that Adam is able to explain why the poem might disturb the complacency of those reading. The best question of all, 'Why?', elicits this fuller explanation.

It is apparent that there is an ebb and flow, or up and down movement, in this conversation between open and closed questions, between teacher explication with little pupil comment and very little teacher talk with detailed explication by the pupil. This may be quite necessary and natural. On occasions, certain words such as 'reader' in this transcript to indicate where mood resides or 'hypocrite' in the previous extract, need to be elicited through direct, closed questioning. Subsequently, justification and the reasons for this being the correct answer can be explored. Although cued elicitation is employed, it can be seen here as an essential element in the Vygotskian ZPD because Adam is being inculcated into the thought of the teacher and Rob, a more able peer. The conversation continues in the next sequence, where, at the end, Adam expresses personal appreciation of a particular line due to its contemporary relevance.

Sequence 3.5: Eliciting Personal Response.

Teacher: So, he's looking at people's motives isn't he?
A+R: Yeah.
Teacher: It's quite painful isn't it, because you look at your motives and you think, well I might be doing the right things, but what are my reasons like for doing the right things? What do you think Adam?
Adam: Well, yeah, I agree with that, yeah.
Teacher: Why?
Adam: Well, as you say about the adultery - it's only cos you become worse off but you might really want to commit adultery.
Teacher: Yeah.
Adam: Hmm.
Teacher: Which is quite disturbing. What about all these loopholes? You know, you shouldn't covet, shouldn't want what someone else has but, hey,

competition is all right, nobody is criticising competition. What about that? Or just another line. Well what's the best line in it chaps or the best couple of lines in it for you?

Adam: I reckon 'No graven image may be worshipped except the currency' because that like is the thing that everyone works for, isn't it, the money?

Again, ample evidence is provided that pupil talk decreases as teacher talk increases. It would also appear that direct questioning, the most obvious form of elicitation, is often not subtle enough to produce the best results. Sequence 3.1 shows how two words produced far more lengthy responses from Adam than those in Sequence 3.5. However, when Adam articulated the view that selfish motives can exist for marital fidelity, he is repeating a view the teacher expressed before this extract, shown at the beginning of the transcript (Appendix C). He is, however, being inculcated into my way of thinking and is expressing an example of my view about people behaving well but for the wrong reasons, often due to selfishness. In this transcript, Adam appears to be 'shadowing' my views which may be a necessary step on the way to independent interpretation. Really, what is shown in the sequence is not a teacher attempting to elicit truly personal views as in Sequence 3.1 but attempting to transmit views that the pupil may choose, as Adam does here, to adopt as their own. Arguably, Sequence 3.5 shows that the teacher could have done more to help a pupil to cross a ZPD by talking less. The object was to convey the teacher's views and the teacher often simply articulates these views. The emphasis is on teacher-talk and not pupil-talk and this sequence is less successful than the example of conducting in Sequence 3.2. The quality of intellectual development fostered in Adam, appears to deteriorate between Sequence 3.1 and Sequence 3.5. Opportunities were missed as I moved from 'conducting' to 'transmission' and moved out of guiding discovery and into stating my own opinions. However, what we see in these transcripts is how shared conceptions and joint discussion enabled Adam to be inculcated into the thought of another reader, sometimes more actively than at other times. Yet, he was always involved in the discussion and his contributions were elicited both to agree with and also to develop my ideas. In the sequences above, the objective has been to show how Adam progressed intellectually and to evaluate the progress made. The next sequence shows that Adam's increased understanding of the poem led to a

significant increase in his appreciation score. It is also interesting that he refers back to my reasons for liking the poem and adopts these as his own.

Sequence 3.6: Transfer of Appreciation.

- Teacher: which I think is quite clever to be able to do it in such a short space, but Adam?
- Adam: Yeah, I give it about 6 or 7 cos first time I read it I didn't understand it that much but I understand it a lot more now. I like the way he does all of it, like you say, it's real punchy and no waffle.

In this sequence, one of my stated reasons for enjoying the poem (for its impact and brevity) have been adopted by Adam as his own. Also, Adam's growth intellectually has fostered enjoyment of the work. By involving Adam in the expression of views and thoughts which were not originally his own, the words he has actually spoken have made the learning his own. Allied to the transfer of appreciation was the growth of shared vocabulary acquisition.

In my discussion with Adam about 'The Latest Decalogue' an extension of Adam's working vocabulary about this text was achieved. In fact, the stated aims at the start of the conversation with Adam and Rob (Appendix C) was to explore 'mood' and 'tone', terms that I, as the teacher introduced. Other words Adam acquired, or was reminded of, were 'persona', 'speaker' and 'hypocrite'. Sometimes these words were spoken by the teacher, on other occasions, as with 'hypocrite', they were elicited from Adam. What is important, is that Adam's range of vocabulary, the words he possessed to talk and write about the poem increased. This process continued and in Adam's exam script (Appendix H) he used words and phrases such as 'materialistic', 'Victorians', 'satiric ridicule' and 'butt of the satire'. Often if a term, such as 'sarcastic' was deemed insufficient, time would be taken to develop his vocabulary and to elicit 'hypocrite' for instance. On other occasions I asked Adam to define terms he used to ensure he had fully grasped the concept in question. The next sequence shows how the teacher shaped a shared understanding of the poet's activity.

Sequence 3.7: Reconstructive Recapping.

- Rob: I think what he's saying is people are making these loopholes and then deliberately forgetting about them so they still think they're, you know, good Christians
- Teacher: So they're conning themselves - self delusion and he's kind of rubbing away that self delusion.

Reconstructive recapping is where the teacher sums up points made and recaps on them but also reconstructs them to ensure a particular interpretation is attached to particular lines. Just as pupils often use teachers' concepts, here the teacher uses a pupils' notion of the poet exposing 'loopholes' to develop a revised interpretation of the poet's activity being to allow readers to perceive 'self delusion'. The teacher sums up and pupils share ownership of the teacher's summing up of their joint understanding. This is a powerful tool by which interpretation can be shaped with those being scaffolded. Periodic recaps where previous stages in the conversation become joint interpretation is a useful tool for teachers.

One of the simplest ways of prompting an adolescent reader to develop their views is simply to listen and repeat a key phrase that has been said. Normally nothing else is needed to provide a stimulus for greater elaboration if an appropriate interaction frame is in place. This is shown below:

Sequence 3.8: Unconstructive Repetition.

- Rob: he's like, looking at them and laughing, sneering at them
- Teacher: sneering at them
- Rob: Yeah, like saying you should do this but you actually do this.

Here, simply repeating a phrase from Rob's comment, prompts him to develop his idea. At another time, simply repeating Rob's phrase 'that's wrong' in Sequence 3.1 caused another reader, Adam, to elaborate on Rob's point. An essential 'conducting' device is for the teacher to pick out the key phrase in a pupils' statement. Skilfully highlighting salient remarks is much less intrusive than direct questioning and can be seen here to help pupils talk easily and at greater length. Barnes and Todd (1977) argue that strong content frames characterise school interactions, whereas weak

content frames are common in informal conversation. The advantages of weaker content frames that resemble informal conversation seem to be particularly productive for Adam in these sequences.

In this chapter, a range of interactions (collaboration, argument and justification, elicitation) have been considered in different contexts (pair, group of seven, group of three). These illustrate the final phase of the ‘personal transactional model’ (Chapter 7) where a reader transacts their personal transaction with a poem, with other readers’ personal transactions.

CONCLUSION.

The main research question that this action research enquiry set out to address was: How can keen adolescent readers of pre-twentieth century poetry be fostered? Subsidiary questions addressed in the research concerned the role of the teacher and of oral and written response, germane to the central question of how readers can become both intellectually and motivationally 'keen'. In the first part of this conclusion, the substantive findings of this enquiry, in respect of the main and subsidiary research questions are addressed and the implications for classroom teaching are reported. Subsequently, the advantages and limitations of my fieldwork method are considered and recommendations for further research are made.

1. The findings of this enquiry in relation to the research questions and implications for classroom teaching.

In this thesis numerous 'keen' readings of pre-twentieth century poems, evoked by adolescents, have been recorded. Given the starting point of the six readers studied, in terms of motivational and intellectual keenness, it is unlikely that such 'keen' readings would have occurred were it not for the implementation of the range of strategies specifically designed and implemented in order to foster their keenness. The significant improvement in pupils' performance (Appendix G) can be attributed, in part, to their enthusiasm for selected pre-twentieth century poems which they wrote about in their terminal examination. The six readers' readings of pre-twentieth century poems indicate the success of the pedagogic strategies (Chapters 7 - 10) within the 'personal transactional model' (Chapter 7) which were developed in this action research investigation. Conclusions can be drawn concerning the value of these strategies.

The Initial Response Sequence (IRS) that was carried out in the first week a poem was read, provided appropriate pace and structure and a range of contexts in which response could develop. Working individually, as pairs and in a group, and engaging in a range of discussion and writing, ensured sufficient variety so that an individual who did not respond well in one context could do so in others. Such

diversity was not limited to the contexts of response but was also a characteristic of the poems themselves. A wide range of pre-twentieth century poems was studied throughout the course as a narrow range would have denied pupils access to works they did, ultimately, respond positively to. Frequent reading increased readers' familiarity with such works and also reduced their strangeness. Consequently, the range of contexts in which texts were experienced ensured there was 'something for everyone'. Readers had the freedom to respond according to their own 'identity style' or characteristically individual pattern of reading and the relevance of works of pre-twentieth century poetry to learners' lives became apparent as they responded to text as 'stimulus' as well as 'blueprint'. Dialogue between readers who operated within contrasting 'identity styles' ensured that a fuller aesthetic appreciation of the literary work developed through social transaction. The design of the IRS also contributed to an image of poetry lessons as active rather than passive and group discussion, in particular, was enjoyed by readers. Teacher domination and pupil passivity were reduced through such pedagogy and also as a result of the explicit consideration of response theory whereby pupils came to understand the process of reading poetry, the notion of aesthetic reading and the need to adopt an appropriate stance. The majority of readers easily grasped concepts such as aesthetic reading and the role of the reader in co-creating meaning with the author which further fostered their active and independent reading.

Pupils' reading journals facilitated aesthetic and responsive teaching as they allowed the teacher access to a reader's 'identity style' and enabled texts, to which pupils had positive reactions, to be chosen for study in greater depth. Once texts had been identified which appeared to offer the most potential for 'keen' reading, teaching about form or social and historical context offered readers the perspective of the 'educated reader' and ensured even keener intellectual reading. Providing a progressive challenge so that pupils continued to learn and were stimulated to think during encounters with works that had become familiar, created conditions conducive to pupils' encountering successive ZPDs in poetry lessons. In this later work on a poem contexts and strategies, both with and without the teacher (Chapter 10), were experienced to facilitate 'principled' learning. In work with the teacher, an appropriate 'interaction frame' (Barnes and Todd, 1977) encouraged active and independent learning as well as the sharing of personal and aesthetic responses.

Some conclusions regarding the role of the teacher as language user, curriculum manager, educated reader and aesthetic teacher, have already been reported. Yet, one conclusion concerning the role of the teacher is easily missed. While it was not necessary for the teacher to be a poetry expert, certain expectations the teacher possessed are likely to have influenced the generation of 'keen' readers. The question posed was, 'How can keen readers be fostered?' rather than, 'Can keen readers be fostered?' which betrays the belief, on the part of the researcher, that adolescent readers can find pre-twentieth century poems relevant and rewarding even when they are not particularly keen on poetry in the first place. Pre-twentieth century poems were not expected to pose problems in the classroom. Indeed, the assumption was that with the appropriate approach, informed by reader response theory, keen responses could be fostered because of the time-transcending appeal of great works of the literary heritage. Arguably, if pre-twentieth century poetry is 'seen in anticipation to present problems' (Atkinson, 1995: 50), teachers may create self-fulfilling prophecies in their classrooms. The teacher-researcher in this study was informed of classroom research into the teaching of poetry, which led to less direct teaching and teacher domination than would have otherwise occurred and the change in the teacher's approach, between Year 9 and Year 10, took place after an extensive reading of reader response theory. Undoubtedly, readers were required to be more proactive and were given greater freedom to discuss poetry without the presence of the teacher as a result of the teacher becoming more familiar with research findings.

Conclusions regarding the role of oral and written work are also valuable. The usefulness of journals has already been noted. They also enabled readers to write a personal statement, evaluating their journal responses, which helped pupils to understand themselves as readers and to become aware of their preferences. Formal essays illustrate the development of intellectual keenness and analysis over six months, from the first to the seventh poetry essay, showed improvements in social and cultural knowledge, vocabulary and awareness of form and style. Whether such improvements were *caused* by written essays is more difficult to discern. It appears that essays 'fine-tuned' the expression of literary transactions for the requirements of the examination. The major developmental encounters occurred through discourse. Oral work such as that depicted in Chapter 10 played a significant role in the maturation of readers' responses and a range of contexts for group work provided

readers with opportunities to challenge as well as to collaborate, to elicit as well as to evoke. The value of the discussions about poems which were carefully organised by the teacher, some with the teacher's participation and some without, ensured an active approach. Combined with independent essay writing and teaching tailored to pupils' needs, 'keen' readings were fostered. Indeed, aesthetic reading as well as intellectual keenness emerged as a result. From this study a number of specific recommendations can be made for the teaching of poetry. We must ensure that:

- A positive image of poetry is created.
- Teacher domination and pupil passivity are avoided.
- An active reading stance is adopted by readers.
- The process and stance required for successful reading is understood by readers.
- The relevance of poems to readers' lives is perceived.
- A wide range of poems is provided to ensure positive reactions to some works.
- A constant and progressive challenge is provided.
- There is frequent reading of poetry so it is not consigned to a section of the year.
- Oral work is sufficiently represented and written work not over-represented.
- A range of contexts for oral work is provided.
- A range (informal and formal, short and extended) of writing is undertaken.
- There is appropriate pace and structure within each lesson.
- Teachers believe pre-twentieth century poems can generate enthusiasm, be responded to independently and be relevant to learners' lives.
- Teachers create suitable interaction frames for discourse in their classrooms and are aware of findings of research.
- English teachers become aware of reader response theory and relevant classroom research.

The substantive conclusions reported so far have been pedagogic but theoretical conclusions to emerge from this research are also pertinent to the main research question. Keen readers can only be cultivated if an understanding of the reading process is acquired which is appropriate to these readers and their reading. Current formulations of the reading process (Rosenblatt, Iser, Jauss, Holland) have

been built upon to take account of real adolescent readers' experiences with classical texts. Significantly though, concepts about how readers read have been derived from a synthesis of psychological learning theory (Vygotsky, Edwards and Mercer, Davis et al) and reader response theory. Synthesising these two areas of research into a coherent position enabled a model of keen reading to be constructed and implemented that was informed by findings across the curriculum. Of course, the model also owes a great deal to fieldwork in the classroom. The nature of the reading encounter as a unique and idiosyncratic process which occurs according to a reader's 'identity style' has been understood through a development of Holland's work. Attention to the social as well as individual elements of the literary transaction have also emerged from a development of the work of Iser and Rosenblatt. However, indeterminacy is perceived differently in this thesis from Iser's textual concept; and Rosenblatt's notion of stimulus is considered to be insufficiently discriminating to facilitate research into motivational keenness. Jauss' model of the reading of canonical texts has also informed the development of the personal transactional model of reading, although adolescent readers generally have little or no knowledge of literary history.

The understanding and application of the 'personal transactional model', informed by Vygotsky's notion that learning is social, which fostered keen readers in the classroom, counters the government's current emphasis on direct teaching, both in the National Curriculum for English (1999) and the National Literacy Strategy (1999), typified by the ubiquitous phrase 'pupils will be taught'. Teaching *and* learning in response to an individual 'identity style' that is related to a learner's life, including his or her emotional and intellectual make-up, are the ways to encourage keen readers. Direct teaching, that takes insufficient account of the learners, is ill advised. This research suggests that acknowledging individuality and ensuring that teaching and learning are finely differentiated and take into account the 'identity style' of each reader, are most likely to foster keen readers and, arguably, keen learners in other areas of the curriculum. The key to fostering keen readers of pre-twentieth century poetry appears to be to focus on the subjects (the pupils) as well as the subject (English) which Gemma Moss (1989) saw as a defining feature of English prior to the introduction of the body of knowledge required by the National Curriculum.

2. Advantages and limitations of my fieldwork method and recommendations for further research.

The advantages and limitations of my fieldwork method necessarily derive from the nature of action research as well as my implementation of this form of investigation. This action research project was specific to a certain situation which necessarily meant that the sample was narrow and restricted. Further, the complexity of the social situation in teaching and learning rendered the manipulation of independent variables impossible. It has been argued that with studies such as this one, 'findings are not generalizable but restricted to the environment in which the research is carried out' (Cohen and Mannion, 1994: 193). Contrary to Cohen and Mannion, I consider the limited generalizability of conclusions from this study be possible and consider the very criticisms of an action research project, such as this one, to constitute its characteristic strength. The assertion of Cohen and Mannion (1994) regarding generalizability can be questioned as there is a sense in which knowledge of finite cases, however large or statistically representative, never allows researchers to infer with total certainty about a more universal claim. A basis for 'induction' through logic has never been achieved (Popper, 1959). Therefore, as in all research, we relinquish the notion that a claim has to be proved beyond all conceivable doubt before it is considered to be valid and operate by evaluating whether claims are, to a greater or lesser extent, likely to be true. Such an approach is more pragmatic than the quest for ontological truth. Clearly then, the claims of Cohen and Mannion (1994) that the small-scale, restricted, qualitative, action research case study prohibits generalisations, cannot be proved. We can, therefore, theoretically infer that the range of strategies depicted in this thesis that resulted in 'keen' readers being fostered in one school, would be likely to work with other teachers and pupils in other schools. Replication of this enquiry in other contexts would test the validity of its claims. In any case, this research does not exist in isolation and adds to the sum of knowledge drawn from previous studies about the causes of adolescents' antipathy to poetry. For instance, negative attitudes to poetry were recently observed in a case study where the 'range of poems studied was very limited, was too often restricted to light verse, and subject matter too close to pupils' own experiences' (QCA, 1998: 14). In this thesis positive attitudes are attributed, in

part, both by the pupils themselves and the teacher-researcher, to the wide range of challenging poetry read. Indeed, numerous instances of the relevance of pre-twentieth century poems to the lives of modern readers have been reported.

The advantage of the qualitative case study method used in my research is that more data has been obtained on each case as a result of there being fewer cases than in a large scale survey, for instance. While the latter may provide a better basis for empirical generalisations, the advantage of the case-study method adopted here is the detail it has provided and the insights it has given into the processes of teaching and learning. While all research relies upon the testing of ideas in practice, this is often a separate and distinct stage from the generation of hypotheses. In contrast, my action-research investigation, while it may have been less focussed in terms of the manipulation of variables, enabled testing to be 'more continuous and more long term than is possible in other forms of research' (Altrichter et al, 1993: 201). This is, of course, particularly true of a longitudinal study such as this, where the researcher spent over four hundred hours in the classroom with the readers. A further methodological merit of this study lies in the suitability of the research tools, given the focus of the research; essentially, the right tools were used for the job. The suitability of action research to 'curriculum research and development' and in particular to the study of 'teaching methods' and of 'attitudes and values' (Cohen and Mannion, 1994: 194) render it appropriate for the investigation of teaching and learning that fosters 'keen' readers of pre-twentieth century poetry. This is especially so as processes and pupils' perspectives were being investigated. A wide range of data sources, from journals to interviews, enabled a detailed understanding of readers and the processes at work within them to be built up.

The study of six readers enabled strategies to be developed and implemented fairly rapidly that brought about innovation in the teaching of pre-twentieth century poetry. Unlike most previous studies in this area, the method used was non-reactive and took place in a realistic setting and used ordinary GCSE work as data. As action research is a method of bringing about change, the detailed recording of changes in my readers and the perceived causes of improvement were monitored. Clearly, a disadvantage of my fieldwork method was that more readers could not be studied to ascertain how comprehensive my typology of readers is. Also, the sample only gave insight into how readers in the middle to upper ability range read.

Measuring changes in readers' intellectual keenness in relation to poetry was more difficult than assessing changes in attitude. Upon reflection, taking an overall, quantitative assessment of intellectual attainment did not fit well with the overall qualitative ethos of this study. Similarly, although pupils produced perspicacious examination essays in Year 11, evidence of pupils' writing about texts that provided a similar challenge in Year 9 is not available. Even if it was, comparison would be difficult, because readers study texts in greater depth for GCSE than at KS3. No two poems are the same and therefore one cannot compare like with like. What is clear, from comparing reactions to the same poems such as 'The Latest Decalogue' and 'What Is Our Life?' over time, is that significant improvements were brought about, both in terms of pupils' attitudes and their intellectual insight. This is also more realistic than pre- and post- testing in a rigid scientific manner because it corresponds with the process of studying texts in increasing detail throughout a GCSE course that occurs in the majority of classrooms. Pupils' own perspectives concerning the development of their reading and the reasons they saw as causes of this development are considered to be particularly useful and could only have emerged from an action research study such as this one.

The criticism that action research has no control of independent variables is partly true of my study, although, we do know, for instance, that learning about literary theory proved to be a decisive influence upon Josie and oral work on a wide range of challenging poems facilitated the emergence of Peter as a keen reader. Although their development cannot be attributed solely to these strategies, by their own admission, such factors were influential. Lastly, although appropriate interaction frames (Barnes and Todd, 1977) were constructed through the evolution of a distinctive culture, with regard to poetry in the classroom, describing fully how it was constructed with reference to what the teacher said and did is not elaborated in as much detail as is desirable in this thesis. This could have been improved if more of the teacher's words and actions had been recorded. It is unlikely, however, that this would have been possible while maintaining an ordinary, realistic and non-reactive GCSE course and research project.

Like all research, this study has generated further questions. Recommendations for future research are therefore that:

- The Personal Transactional Model and typology of readers should be evaluated as a result of other readers' reading.
- The effects of learning about literary theory (especially response theory) on readers' reading should be evaluated.
- How to shift readers (such as Adam) out of a passive and into an active reading stance should be investigated.
- More studies of how Vygotskian ZPDs can be traversed in group or paired discourse about poetry should be investigated.
- Studies of the teacher's management of whole class discussion (omitted from this study) should be undertaken with the support of video recording facilities.
- Assessments of pupils' talk and writing about pre-twentieth century poems of similar difficulty in Year 9 and Year 11 should be made, so that comparison can be undertaken before and after responsive teaching methods.
- Studies similar to this one should be used to track students' development as keen readers into post-16 education.

APPENDIX A

GCSE COURSE INFORMATION

Heinemann



NEAB Anthology



1998

English

English Literature


 Heinemann


NEAB Anthology

1998 English English Literature

Introduction

This *Anthology* contains texts for your GCSE English and English Literature examinations. It is divided into two sections. The first section is for use in the English examination. It contains poems by three different poets and a selection of poems from around the world.

The second part of the *Anthology* contains seven short stories and thirty poems clustered in five groups. These short stories and poems are for use in the English Literature examination.

You may not have to study all of the stories or all of the poems. Your teacher will decide how many you will study.

Remember you must bring the *Anthology* with you when you sit the examination so make sure you do not lose it. It is your personal copy to work with. You may annotate the *Anthology*. Annotation means brief handwritten notes in the margin, underlinings, highlightings and symbols. You will not be allowed to take additional notes or prepared answers on loose sheets into the examination.

Note to teachers

Detailed guidance for teachers regarding the *Anthology* will be available separately.



1998 GCSE English/English Literature Anthology

This *Anthology* is for students who are preparing for 1998 GCSE English and English Literature examinations.

The selections in this *Anthology* cover a range of twentieth century prose and both pre-twentieth and twentieth century poetry. The selections were made by a team of senior NEAB examiners and moderators (who are mainly practising teachers) to exploit fully the various requirements arising from the revised Key Stage 4 Programmes of Study as they appear in *English in the National Curriculum* (January 1995).

The selections attempt to engage readers beyond those who are being prepared for the NEAB examinations. As such, it is hoped that this *Anthology* will help to encourage an informed and critical response to reading, with samples of poetry and prose which will both engage and stimulate.

Support materials for this Anthology are available from Heinemann Educational.



Northern Examinations and
Assessment Board
Devas Street
Manchester M15 6EX



Heinemann Educational
Halley Court
Jordan Hill
Oxford OX2 8EJ

Contents

		<i>page</i>
 English Part 1: Poets		
William Blake	The Tiger	7
	The Lamb	8
	A Poison Tree	8
	London	9
	The Human Abstract	9
Gillian Clarke	Wil Williams (1861-1910)	10
	Jac Codi Baw	10
	No Hands	11
	Sunday	11
	The Field-Mouse	12
Seamus Heaney	Follower	13
	The Early Purges	14
	Storm on the Island	14
	Mid-Term Break	15
	Digging	16
English Part 2: Poems from other Cultures and Traditions		
Chinua Achebe	Vultures	18
Valerie Bloom	Wha Fe Call I'	19
Edward Kamau Brathwaite	Limbo	20
Pierre Coupey	Study No. X	21
Po Chü-I	Lazy Man's Song	22
Fred D'Aguiar	From Letter from Mama Dot	23
Nissim Ezekiel	Poverty Poems – 2	23
Nissim Ezekiel	Night of the Scorpion	24
Grace Nichols	For Forest	25
Taufiq Rafat	Sacrifice	26
Anne Wilkinson	A Cautionary Tale	27
Alice Walker	Poem at Thirty-Nine	28
English Literature: Prose		
Margaret Atwood	There was Once	30
Penelope Lively	The Darkness Out There	32
Brian Moon	Visitors	42

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Henry Slesar	45
Dylan Thomas	48
Claudette Williams	54
Charlotte Perkins Gilman	62
English Literature: Poetry	
Hearts and Partners	
William Walsh	70
Grace Nichols	70
Simon Armitage	71
Sir Edward Dyer	71
Liz Lochhead	72
W H Auden	73
The Way we Live	
Steve Turner	74
Sir Walter Raleigh	74
Maya Angelou	75
Paul Dehn	76
Judith Viorst	78
Arthur Hugh Clough	79
Caught in Conflict	
Tony Harrison	80
Teresa Hooley	81
Anon	82
Valerie Bloom	82
Wilfred Owen	83
John Clare	85
Words'Worth	
Merle Collins	86
Vernon Scannell	88
George Herbert	88
D J Enright	89
William Wordsworth	90
Carol Ann Duffy	91
Dancing in the Breeze	
William Wordsworth	92
Adrian Henri	93
William Blake	94
Ted Hughes	94
Gillian Clarke	95
Norman Nicholson	96



The Way we Live

Daily London Recipe

- Take any number of them
you can think of,
pour into empty red bus
until full,
5 and then push in
ten more.
Allow enough time
to get hot under the collar
before transferring into
10 multistorey building.
Leave for eight hours,
and pour back into same bus,
already half full
Scrape remainder off.
15 When settled down
tip into terraced houses each
carefully lined with copy
of *The Standard* and *Tit Bits*.
Place mixture before open
20 television screen at 7 p.m.
and then allow to cool
in bed at 10:30 p.m.
May be served with
working overalls
25 or pinstripe suit.

Steve Turner

What Is Our Life?

- What is our life? A play of passion.
And what our mirth but music of division?
Our mother's wombs the tiring-houses be
Where we are drest for this short comedy.
5 Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is
Who sits and marks what here we do amiss.
The graves that hide us from the searching sun
Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
Thus playing post we to our latest rest,
10 And then we die, in earnest, not in jest.

Sir Walter Raleigh

PRE 1900



The Way we Live

Life Doesn't Frighten Me

Shadows on the wall
 Noises down the hall
 Life doesn't frighten me at all
 Bad dogs barking loud
 5 Big ghosts in a cloud
 Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Mean old Mother Goose
 Lions on the loose
 They don't frighten me at all
 10 Dragons breathing flame
 On my counterpane
 That doesn't frighten me at all.

I go boo
 Make them shoo
 15 I make fun
 Way them run
 I won't cry
 So they fly
 I just smile
 20 They go wild
 Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Tough guys in a fight
 All alone at night
 Life doesn't frighten me at all.
 25 Panthers in the park
 Strangers in the dark
 No, they don't frighten me at all.

That new classroom where
 Boys all pull my hair
 30 (Kissy little girls
 With their hair in curls)
 They don't frighten me at all.

Don't show me frogs and snakes
 And listen for my scream,
 35 If I'm afraid at all
 It's only in my dreams.

I've got a magic charm
 That I keep up my sleeve,
 I can walk the ocean floor
 40 And never have to breathe.

Life doesn't frighten me at all
 Not at all
 Not at all
 Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Maya Angelou

Gutter Press

News Editor: Peer Confesses,
 Bishop Undresses,
 Torso wrapped in Rug,
 Girl Guide Throttled,
 5 Baronet Bottled,
 J. P. Goes to Jug.

But yesterday's story's
 Old and hoary.
 Never mind who got hurt.
 10 No use grieving,
 Let's get weaving.
 What's the latest dirt?

Diplomat Spotted,
 Scout Garrotted,
 15 Thigh Discovered in Bog,
 Wrecks Off Barmouth.

Sex in Yarmouth,
 Woman in Love With Dog,
 Eminent Hostess Shoots Her Guests,
 20 Harrogate Lovebird Builds Two Nests.

Cameraman: *Builds two nests?*
Shall I get a picture of the lovebird singing?
Shall I get a picture of her pretty little eggs?
Shall I get a picture of her babies?

25 News Editor: No
 Go and get a picture of her legs.

Beast Slays Beauty,
 Priest Flays Cutie,
 Cupboard Shows Tell-Tale Stain,
 30 Mate Drugs Purser,
 Dean Hugs Bursar,
 Mayor Binds Wife With Chain,
 Elderly Monkey Marries For Money,
 Jilted Junky Says "I Want My Honey".

- 35 Cameraman: *"Want my honey?"*
Shall I get a picture of the pollen flying?
Shall I get a picture of the golden dust?
Shall I get a picture of a queen bee?
- News Editor: No
- 40 Go and get a picture of her bust.
- Judge Gets Frisky,
 Nun Drinks Whisky,
 Baby Found Burnt in Cot,
 Show Girl Beaten,
 45 Duke Leaves Eton –
- Cameraman: *Newspaper Man Gets Shot!*
May all things clean
And fresh and green
Have mercy upon your soul,
 50 *Consider yourself paid*
By the hole my bullet made –
- News Editor: (dying) Come and get a picture of the hole.

Paul Dehn

Where Is It Written?

Where is it written

That husbands get forty-five-dollar lunches and invitations
to South America for think conferences while

Wives get Campbell's black bean soup and a trip to the
firehouse with the third grade and

Where is it written

- 5 That husbands get to meet beautiful lady lawyers and
beautiful lady professors of ancient history and beautiful
sculptresses and heiresses and poetesses while

Wives get to meet the checker with the acne at the Safeway
and

- 10 Where is it written

That husbands get a nap and the football game on Sundays
while

Wives get to help color in the coloring book and

Where is it written

That husbands get ego gratification, emotional support, and
hot tea in bed for ten days when they have the sniffles
while

Wives get to give it to them?

And if a wife should finally decide

Let him take the shoes to the shoemaker and the children to
the pediatrician and the dog to the vet while she takes up
something like brain surgery or transcendental meditation.

- 15 Where is it written

That she always has to feel
Guilty?

Judith Viorst

The Latest Decalogue

- Thou shalt have one God only; who
 Would be at the expense of two?
 No graven images may be
 Worshipped, except the currency:
- 5 Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
 Thine enemy is none the worse:
 At church on Sunday to attend
 Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
 Honour thy parents; that is, all
- 10 From whom advancement may befall;
 Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
 Officiously to keep alive:
 Do not adultery commit;
 Advantage rarely comes of it:
- 15 Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
 When it's so lucrative to cheat:
 Bear not false witness: let the lie
 Have time on its own wings to fly:
 Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
- 20 Approves all forms of competition.

Arthur Hugh Clough

PRE 1900

GCSE English Literature

Prior to starting the course, centres must inform the NEAB of their intention to enter candidates.

1

Introduction

This syllabus is consistent with relevant requirements for En2 Reading in the Programmes of Study for Key Stage 4 in *English in the National Curriculum* (January 1995) leading to assessment in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). It also presents distinct and complementary demands, detailed in para. 3 below.

The syllabus provides a structure for the integration of the additional study of GCSE English Literature with GCSE English for candidates following both NEAB syllabuses (see para 5.3). GCSE English Literature may, however, be taken as a separate qualification if desired.

2

Aims

A course of study based on this syllabus enables candidates to explore their literary interests and encourages them to develop

- 2.1 the ability to read, understand and respond to a wide range of types of literary texts, to appreciate the ways in which authors achieve their effects and to develop the skills necessary for literary study
- 2.2 an awareness of social, historical and cultural contexts and influences in the study of literature
- 2.3 the ability to construct and convey meaning in speech and writing, matching style to audience and purpose.

3

Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives are consistent with both relevant aspects of the Programmes of Study and the *GCSE Subject Criteria for English Literature* (January 1995).

Candidates must demonstrate their ability to

- 3.1 respond to texts critically, sensitively and in detail, selecting suitable ways to convey their response, using textual evidence as appropriate
- 3.2 explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations
- 3.3 explore relationships and comparisons within and between texts, selecting and evaluating relevant material
- 3.4 show their understanding of literary tradition and appreciation of social and historical influences and cultural contexts.

4

Content

A course of study based on this syllabus must provide opportunities for the study of a substantial and diverse range of literary texts of sufficient substance and quality to merit serious consideration, most of which were originally written in English (some works in translation may also be included).

Candidates must show evidence of assessment in the following six categories of literature:

- Pre-20th century Prose
- 20th century Prose
- Pre-20th century Poetry
- 20th century Poetry
- Pre-20th century Drama
- 20th century Drama

A GCSE ENGLISH / ENGLISH LITERATURE COURSE
YEAR 10 2nd SEPTEMBER 1996 - 23rd JULY 1997.
(5X45 MINS PER WEEK)

AUTUMN TERM (1996) 2/9/96 - 20/12/96	SPRING TERM (1997) 6/1/97 - 26/3/97	SUMMER TERM (1997) 14/4/97 - 23/7/97
Wide Reading Literature Course <u>The Mayor of Casterbridge</u> by Thomas Hardy (novel and video)	Shakespeare Literature Coursework <u>Macbeth</u> by William Shakespeare	15/4 - 17/4/ 'What Is Our Life?' by Sir Walter Raleigh Language coursework Media Assignment
HALF TERM HOLIDAY 25/10/96 - 4/11/96	HALF TERM HOLIDAY 7/2/97 - 17/2/97	HALF TERM HOLIDAY 23/5/97 - 2/6/97
Wide Reading Literature Coursework <u>To Kill A Mockingbird</u> by Harper Lee (Racism in 1930's USA, novel and video) Channel 4's <u>Murder in Mississippi</u> (film) Poems on theme of race 4/12 - 5/12 'Telephone Conversation' by Wole Soylinka 11/12 'The Little Black Boy' by William Blake 18/12 - 19/12 'Sonnet 132' by William Shakespeare	4/2 - 28/2 'London' by William Blake Shakespeare day in London: am: Globe, pm: backstage tour of the Barbican, evening: RSC production: <u>Macbeth</u> 3/3/ - 6/3 'A Poison Tree' by William Blake Completion of <u>Macbeth</u> coursework 10/3 - 19/3 Year 10 examinations	9/6 - 13/6 'The Sick Rose' by William Blake 11/6 - 13/6 'The Latest Decalogue' by Arthur Hugh Clough 16/6 - 17/6 'The Tyger' and 'The Lamb' by William Blake 23/6 - 27/6 'The Human Abstract' by William Blake 30/6 - 11/7 Work experience - 2 weeks 15/7 - 23/7 Mock essay on five Blake poems
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY	EASTER HOLIDAY	SUMMER HOLIDAY

A GCSE ENGLISH / ENGLISH LITERATURE COURSE
YEAR 11 3RD SEPTEMBER 1997 - 22ND JULY 1998.
(5X45 MINS PER WEEK)

AUTUMN TERM (1997) 3/9/97 - 19/10/97	SPRING TERM (1998) 5/1/98 - 3/4/98	SUMMER TERM (1998) 20/4/98 - 22/7/98
<u>A Man For All Seasons</u> by Robert Bolt 20th Century Drama Coursework 25/9 - 29/9 'The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall' by Sir Edward Dyer 12 30/9 'The Despairing Lover' by William Walsh 13 <u>A Man For All Seasons</u> 7/10 'The Daffodils' by William Wordsworth 14 <u>A Man For All Seasons</u> 16/10 'Nuns Fret Not' by William Wordsworth 'Jordan' by George Herbert 15 22/10 'I am' by John Clare 'Twa Corbies' by Anon 16	Media English Language Coursework Completed 18th January either VW car adverts or British Red Cross. Anti-landminers adverts. PERSONAL WRITING COURSEWORK: A SHORT STORY Poems from other Cultures and Traditions Seven to be studied in depth after all are read. PERSONAL WRITING <u>To Kill A Mockingbird</u> by Harper Lee Revision for English exam	Revise: 'The Way We Live' Revise: <u>To Kill A Mockingbird</u> Revise for English examination.
HALF TERM HOLIDAY 27/10/97 - 31/10/97	HALF TERM HOLIDAY 16/2/98 - 20/2/98	HALF TERM HOLIDAY 25/5/98 - 25/9/98
<u>A Man For All Seasons</u> Completing 20th Century drama Coursework Revising Blake for mock focussing on 'A Poison Tree', 'The Human Abstract' and 'London'. Revising 'The Way We Live' with introduction of 'mood' and 'tone' <i>November 25th Year 11 Mock Exams</i> 2x2 1/2 hours BLAKE ESSAYS (LANG) 1x1 hour POETRY ESSAY (LIT) 'The Way We Live' including Clough's 'The Latest Decalogue' and Raleigh's 'What Is Our Life?' 8th December - 18th December Media Coursework started QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT READING	<u>To Kill A Mockingbird</u> revision for examination Revise: English. Revise: BLAKE POEMS	ENGLISH AND ENGLISH LITERATURE NEAB GCSE EXAMINATIONS
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY	EASTER HOLIDAY	SUMMER HOLIDAY

APPENDIX B

PUPILS' POETICS INTERVIEWS

APPENDIX B

PUPILS' POETICS INTERVIEWS - EXPLANATION.

In this appendix the full transcripts appear of interviews with each of the six readers carried out in April 1998, one month before the end of the GCSE course, on the subject of 'You as a reader of poetry'. Peter's interview lasted 17 minutes, Rob's interview lasted 12 minutes, Josie's interview lasted ten minutes, Steve's lasted 16 minutes, Anna's lasted 13 minutes and Adam's lasted 9 minutes. In total the transcripts represent an hour and a quarter of talk.

At the time the research was carried out I was mentoring a mature student on a two year PGCE course with the Open University. She conducted the interviews in the English department office next door to my classroom while I interviewed other pupils from the group who were not ultimately part of the research. This fitted neatly into my student's PGCE course as she was finding out about the six readers' course and their responses to the texts we had studied. She had also witnessed the initial response sequence (IRS) and knew the pattern of work these pupils had followed with poetry. She was also familiar with my emphasis on text as stimulus and personal response and asked pupils about their reactions to this teaching method in the interviews. I devised all of the areas for questioning and discussed these with my PGCE student beforehand although the precise wording is her own.

For the pupils, these interviews were an integral part of their GCSE course. The Speaking and Listening component of GCSE English required that pupils' marks were submitted for an individual, paired and group oral activity. This interview provided marks, therefore and pupils were keen to do well, knowing that all three orals, of which their interview about reading poetry was one, constituted 20% of their marks at GCSE. A worksheet (included in this appendix) gave the pupils guidance about what they would be asked so they could prepare in advance.

GCSE SPEAKING AND LISTENING ASSESSMENT

(overall, oral work is worth the same marks (20%) as all your written GCSE English coursework put together - a considerable percentage of the final grade awarded)

MAJOR INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT.

SUBJECT: YOU AS A READER OF POETRY.

Dates of activity: Thursday 26th March.
Monday 30th March.
Wednesday 1st April.
Thursday 2nd April.

On one of the above dates you will spend 5-10 minutes with either Mrs. Szchumski or me talking about yourself as a reader. Each interview will be tape recorded and assessed by me later.

You need to prepare thoroughly and Wednesday 25th March (Homework) is devoted to this.

AREAS FOR TALK

- The process you go through as a reader of a poem from the time you first encountered it. Look at the attached sheet. You should perform this sort of analysis for your own annotations of poems.
- Conclusions you can draw about the sorts of poems you respond to well and those you like less.
- Reference to particular poems in the NEAB anthology that you like and are enthusiastic about.
- What you respond to in a poem.
- Do certain thematic areas (e.g. Hearts and Partners or Caught in Conflict or The Way we Live or Words'Worth or Dancing in the Breeze) appeal to you more than others? Why?
- How important is the style of a poem to you? (E.g. rhyme, poetic devices, rhythm, form).
- Do you respond differently to pre-twentieth and twentieth century poetry? What are the good and bad points of pre-twentieth century poems? Refer to specific poems.
- How do you prefer to study poetry in school? How do you feel about (i) individual, silent response/annotation, (ii) paired discussion, (iii) small group discussion, (iv) whole class discussion?
- Do other students you have worked with respond differently to you? How?

- Which pre-twentieth century poems were, in your view, the best and which the worst?

How does the mood you are in influence your response to a poem? Give examples.
- Are poems capable of changing your mood?
- Evaluate the poetry of Blake, Clough, Raleigh, Wordsworth, Herbert, Clare, Dyer and Walsh.
- Out of all the Blake poems you have read which were your favourites?
- How do the NEAB pre-twentieth century poems compare to the NEAB twentieth century poems?
- Do you consider yourself to be a perceptive and intellectually acute reader of poetry? Why? Which poems?
- What is your assessment of your own skill of INTERTEXTUALITY - seeing links between poems and comparing and contrasting them. Do you enjoy linking poems? Give specific examples.
- Do you consider yourself to be a motivated and keen reader of any poems?
- When responding to poems, you have been encouraged to use memories of your own past experiences of life and literature. These memories and associations are produced at times when you encounter poems. How do you feel about using your own experiences when responding to poems? Do your recollections help you? Why? Give examples of poems that have prompted you to recall personal experience.
- Any other responses about yourself and poems?

BE HONEST AND SINCERE. HOW YOU RESPOND TO POEMS (IF YOU FIND THEM IMPOSSIBLE OR EASY, LIKE OR DISLIKE THEM) WILL NOT ALTER YOUR MARK IN THIS ORAL. YOUR EXPLANATION, HOW YOU EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS, THE REASONS YOU GIVE WILL INFLUENCE YOUR MARK.

Final small group GCSE oral: Tuesday 31st March.
(Monday 30th March HW is to prepare).

Exam question to be addressed in your discussion will be issued on or before Monday 30th March. Prepare thoroughly. THIS IS IMPORTANT.

Tape 57 4/4/1998: PUPILS' POETICS - ADAM INTERVIEWED BY STUDENT TEACHER.

- A1: Adam ...
- T1: Right Adam, are there any poems in the anthology you like or dislike?
- A2: Uh, there's quite a few I dislike.
- T2: Do you want to talk about them then.
- A3: Oh, ok. then, 'Jordan', I really didn't like 'Jordan' cos I found it so hard to understand really.
- T3: Yes.
- A4: That's the main reason why I don't like poems, I find them hard to understand.
- T4: Right.
- A5: Yeah.
- T5: So, when you're in class how d'you to look at a poem, um, do you say refer to discuss it in say pairs or
- A6: No, I prefer like whole class discussion because more things are said then and the teacher helps and he shows you what it's meant to be
- T6: Yeah
- A7: And in groups like if someone just like me and doesn't understand, they don't get very far you see.
- T7: Yes, so looking at 'Jordan' on page 88, can you tell me what particularly you found difficult about that. Lots of people found that difficult.
- A8: Well, firstly when I started reading it, it's just, I had to read it loads and loads of times just to remotely get an idea of what was going on. I really couldn't get to grips with it
- T8: Yes
- A9: All the little verses, I couldn't understand what they were going on about, I couldn't make any sense to me.
- T9: So, are there some poems you could understand better than that?
- A10: Yeah, I understand 'The Latest Decalogue', I thought that was okay actually, that wasn't that bad and 'Gutter Press', I liked that one, cos that was pretty funny, yeah.
- T10: Yes, so, do you want to look at those two and say a bit more about them?
- A11: All right then, yeah, 'The Latest Decalogue'
- T11: 'The Latest Decalogue'
- A12: Yeah, well I mainly liked this cos it was fairly easy to understand, I needed a bit of help with it but then all the verses were just very easy to understand what they're going on about, I, it deploys the many people doing the Ten Commandments for their own personal gain as they're sort of changed them, to get stuff out of it, not to help other people.
- T12: So, do you feel that says something about the society of the time?
- A13: Well, sort of, I don't think it's all the time, I see what he's trying to say but I don't think all of it is true, uh, let me see, like 'Honour thy parents; that is all From whom advancement may befall' I don't think that's true, I think you genuinely do like your parents, not because you want to get something out of them.
- T13: Do you think he might be saying that because some people do regard their parents

- A14: Well, I do think the majority of people do like their parents and they don't use them for advancement and don't use them for advancement in their life.
- T14: So, perhaps in that poem, would you say, he was trying to point out the wrongs of society?
- A15: Yeah, yeah, yeah, with most people, for most people I don't think that one would apply to, all these other things especially 'No graven images may be worshipped except the currency' well, everyone works for money don't they and so even the most hardened Christian, sort of thing, could say like I'm a Christian but he sees the currency and he works and he gets money so I thought that was pretty good.
- T15: You mentioned the 'Gutter Press' as well. Do you think there's a link between 'The Latest Decalogue' and 'Gutter Press'?
- A16: Yeah, it's all sort of the same, in 'Gutter Press', the writer of uh newspaper doesn't care who he harms, he wants to get somewhere in life, get loads of money, it's not for, to help other people cos he normally puts other people in it, doesn't he, by exposing stories just to help himself, so it's similar in that sort of sense.
- T16: So, do you find uh that interesting, that intertextuality, comparing poems like that, do you find that difficult or
- A17: I do find that's the only one that I can actually like link together; cos when we were doing it in class I could find any links with any other poems I do find it fairly hard yeah.
- T17: Would you say you prefer the pre-twentieth century poems to the modern poems?
- A18: I prefer the modern poems because they actually make more sense. A lot of William Blake poems, they're hard to understand especially like 'Tyger', I found it hard to understand, that one but things like 'Gutter Press' and um 'Fast' uh, can't remember the name of it, the daffodils one, the new version of 'Daffodils', that was pretty good, I liked that one.
- T18: Do you want to speak to me about that one?
- A19: Okay then.
- T19: Tell me about
- A20: Well, I liked that because it was easy to understand, I could see 'Daily London Recipe', that's the one, no, no, forget the Daffodils, it was 'Daily London Recipe', that's the one it's sort of um, it's very easy to understand, in a recipe, I just like the way he did it as a recipe, it's all like, he's attacking society just like 'The Latest Decalogue' as well because he doesn't like the way all in a, a system he doesn't like the way everybody just, sort of, what's the word?
- T20: Being controlled?
- A21: Yeah, yeah, like controlled, all in like a rota sort of thing, they get up, go to work, by getting the bus, come home, watch T.V. and every single day that's the same.
- T21: Yes, they don't seem to
- A22: Yeah
- T22: Have much
- A23: There's no change
- T23: Choice about it.
- A24: Yeah.
- T24: So, were there any particular sections in the anthology you preferred?

- A25: I preferred 'The Way We Live', cos I, all the other poems are a lot more harder to understand. 'The Way We Live' is very easy, like these ones 'Life Doesn't Frighten Me', I did understand the majority of poem in 'The Way We Live'.
- T25: So, what is it, would you say, that actually gets you to respond to a poem?
- A26: Respond to a poem, it's sort of like the rhyme, I enjoy it like when the rhyme say at the end of each line, that makes it flow, I like it when it flows, that makes It easy to understand. The ones with deeper meaning, that sort of puts me off a bit.
- T26: Right, so what about Blake? Going back to Blake, you mentioned him earlier.
- A27: He goes into the poem a bit much I reckon for me. I don't like his poems much at all.
- T27: Was there any particular one that you got into even if you didn't like it?
- A28: 'Poison Tree' I thought that was all right.
- T28: Yes.
- A29: Cos I understood that fairly well.
- T29: Can you tell me [indistinct]
- A30: Yeah, well, it's mainly because the poem's easy to understand, cos it's about a person who was angry with his enemy and he didn't tell it and his anger grew up and he sort of like, I interpreted as he let his vengeance fly on his foe and hurt him and that wasn't that bad that poem, the only William Blake poem that actually thought was pretty good.
- T30: Given the choice of a play, a poem or a novel to read, which would you prefer?
- A31: I prefer reading novels much because you don't have to sort of like with a poem, interpret it and read it through many times to understand it, I enjoy novels much more, you can get into those much more.
- T31: Yes and how did you feel bout Rosenblatt's theory of uh poetry only [indistinct] ?
- A32: Didn't understand that at all.
- T32: The way Mr. Pike has been getting you to read poems by bringing your own experiences to them.
- A33: Yeah, yeah, that helps I think cos it can relate to you, you can understand it more I feel, cos it's an experience you've experienced yourself sort of thing.
- T33: Yes, right, well I don't want to keep you too long ...

Tape 56 1/4/1998: PUPILS' POETICS - PETER INTERVIEWED BY STUDENT TEACHER.

- T1: Okay, say your name.
- P1: Peter...
- T2: Peter, which poems are your favourites in this anthology?
- P2: Probably the ones in 'The Way We Live' um, uh, 'What Is Our Life?' and 'The Latest Decalogue' mainly cos it shows um like what life is and what society is like and it really tries to perhaps, perhaps criticise society or perhaps to motivate society to become better than it is.
- T3: Are there any other reasons why you particularly like those? Do you like the form that they're written in or?
- P3: I quite like some of the, I like a poem with a bit of rhythm or rhyme like 'The Latest Decalogue' has a two line rhyme scheme um, so it sort of flows rather than being very um stop start. I prefer like a more, a more uh, fluid structure rather than like lots of punctuation and things otherwise it gets a little bit too much like a prose text.
- T4: Um, do you feel that you enjoy pre-twentieth century poems more than others?
- P4: I don't discriminate, discriminate between particular poems and when they're written cos society doesn't actually change that much over time, for example, 'What Is Our Life?' and 'The Latest Decalogue' were written pre- uh twentieth century, but they are very, very relevant now as they were a hundred years ago so
- T5: Is that what you would say you like about poems?
- P5: Yeah, yeah.
- T6: So, you were saying you don't discriminate between pre-twentieth century and more modern poems.
- P6: No, I find it is quite, it is quite difficult to tell between poems of different dates apart from perhaps the language that is used and perhaps reference to technologies that have come in quite recently, apart from that, it's very much the same, the rhythms an structures have stayed the same over hundreds of years so they're quite the same.
- T7: And so, what exactly is it that appeals to you in a poem do you think?
- P7: Um, probably something that doesn't, it doesn't, the immediate meaning doesn't just, doesn't just pop out at you, something that you have to read into. I especially like poems that you, that there are a few interpretations of it, things that you can um discuss over and have different views cos sometimes there's a clear cut sort of um meaning to it like you say this is about something or this is about another thing, there's no sort of in-between that you can go on.
- T8: So, what kind of process do you go through when you first look at a poem? Do you prefer to read it in your own and annotate it on your own and then discuss it as a group or with individuals or
- P8: Well, first of all, I, what I usually do, I usually read it through the first time and as I read it through the very first time, I like to put down what I very, the first thing that comes into my head at the particular place where, where it is which later on down the poem might prove to be wrong or a bit obscure but

then I'll read it through again and perhaps put down new meanings of things so I have a range of different interpretations of it as my knowledge of the poem increases, this sort of, with some poems there are three different things I can do to solve poems, there's logic and creativity and experience, so especially with established poets like William Blake, you can use a lot of experience like perhaps if you've read poems of his before you, there's a strong religious background and writes poems perhaps with religious meanings so you can use that to try to interpret the poem. Logic rarely works with poetry as it's more of an expressive than a scientific art really and creativity usually plays a lot in um discovering what's going on about poems, it's a lot of just using just uh unorthodox methods to get different meanings out of it.

T9: Yes, so do you extract quite a lot of meaning on your own?

P9: Yeah.

T10: Before you discuss?

P10: Although sometimes I tend to sort of go off a bit of the poem I go off and explore other things rather than stick right to the poem so discussion work brings in other peoples opinions using their experiences as well as my experience so you can pool all the thoughts and get a really good interpretation of the poem down.

T11: Yes.

P11: Occasionally you disagree so it's

T12: Yes

P12: So it's quite interesting.

T13: Yes, so sometimes it will modify your opinion of a poem, the discussion

P13: Yeah, yeah

T14: The discussion and other times it might not

P14: Hmm.

T15: So does your mood affect the way you read a poem or does a poem affect your mood?

P15: Um, I suppose mood affect is a little bit especially 'What Is Our Life?'. There are, there are different ways of looking at it, there's the positive side, it's supposed to motivate you and get you to do things with your life as it will soon be over or you can look at it as the negative side, as in there's life, there's birth, then there's a bit of life and then there's death and then that's the whole meaning of life so if you're in quite a good mood it might, might, you might look at poems in a completely different way.

T16: Are there any particular poems that you don't like at all?

P16: Um, not really, there are a few, there are a few poems that seem a bit short and like 'The Sick Rose' is quite a short poem, I prefer a longer poem that perhaps you can get into and you can read through different bit of it. I also dislike poems that tell sort of a one sided view, poems like 'The Latest Decalogue' sort of leave things quite open um whereas some poems are quite closed and opinionated.

T17: So, you like poems that you can read your own experience into. So what do you think of Rosenblatt's theory?

P17: Well, um, it's quite an interesting theory, but I tend to disagree because I disagree with a lots of things, I think it's uh the fact that it's only a poem in the reader, I think it should be thought of as a poem if it's a poem to the writer, if the writer thinks that what he / she has written is good and it has a

- meaning as a poem, it should be accepted as a poem because it has, brings personal emotion from one person.
- T18: So when you read a poem are you trying to uncover what you think the poet intended?
- P18: Yeah, yeah, very much, it's very much sort of whether you think the poet wrote it because they wrote it for themselves just to express anything or whether they wrote it for other people, perhaps to tell a story or uh with a purpose.
- T19: Yes, um so there, although you bring your own experience to the poem and that helps you to interpret it um, what you're saying is, is that you're also trying to uncover what the poet intended so you're taking lots of things into account aren't you, um.
- P19: Getting background knowledge on the poet was, helps as the poets experience is going to be a large part of what goes into the poem and explaining it is which was the poet wrote it from their experience.
- T20: What about poems like 'Jordan' which most people seemed to find quite difficult?
- P20: Well, I think, huh, one of the confusing things about 'Jordan' is the title, it does seem a little um abstract, it's I don't think it's that confusing. Where is it, um page 88
- T21: Thank you
- P21: I think the basic thing about 'Jordan' is that its all about um, the beauty of simplicity and why um literature and art has to be so complicated, things that are simple always seem to be the most outstanding things like just simple. just very simple things will last hundreds of years without being changed whereas complicated things tend to break down and get changed over time.
- T22: Do you find it quite a straightforward poem then?
- P22: Um, well, well in some ways you can, you can, I think you can know what the poem's about but by only picking up little, well bits of it. There are some, some lines sort of you might not understand but guess that they're to do with the meaning of the poem.
- T23: Hmm, quite a few people say that um George Herbert's particularly guilty of making sense for the reader and putting it 'at two removes' you know, like that line, that's interesting, you're not put off by that poem as quite a few people have been.
- P23: No, I, I, much prefer a poem like this than a poem that is um just is straightforward.
- T24: Hmm, so do you consider yourself to be a perceptive and intellectually acute reader of poetry?
- P24: Um, I, I don't really know, not really cos I don't have that much experience of poetry um but then again that might be an advantage because sometimes knowing too much and reading too much into a poem defeats the point of, of the poem being there, the fact that you, you read into something so much you lose the point of what the poet um really means, sometimes you can read into a poem so much, you can write a whole huge essay and give it to the poet and the poet probably wouldn't really be able to relate to it too much because you've just read into it far too much.
- T25: So you don't think that's a legitimate thing to do.
- P25: No, not always, it's good to explore all the different possible meanings of it but not to go really too deep. there's a level with, with certain poems as to where you can go and where, there are some poems that you can go really

- deep into and you can really analyse really deeply whereas other poems are just there to be just read and not necessarily unpicked apart.
- T26: So, uh, um, forgotten what I was going to say, no actually what about intertextuality, finding links between poems, comparing and contrasting them, do you enjoy that?
- P26: Um, well sometimes, it depends what the poems are, connecting poems gives you something to compare, compare two things so you can compare different opinions and different views but some poems the link between them is quite weak so you can't connect them too much.
- T27: No, um, do you have any favourite poems? Do you like Blake?
- P27: Blake, um not really, I don't really seem to be able to connect with things Blake does, um, some of his more famous poems, 'The Lamb' and 'The Tyger' I don't really like them, I don't know why, I can't really explain a lot of things, it's just the way the poem presents itself. It's just some poem you can like read through once and say I like it and another poem you read once and say I don't like it.
- T28: Is it because you find them inaccessible in some way?
- P28: Um.
- T29: Anything to do with them being far removed from
- P29: No, well, not really, I think they've, I don't really know why I don't like them, it's just, I think it's a lot to do with the experiences of the poet it's, there's some poets you can relate to, especially perhaps modern poets that you can really relate to, but other people, Blake, you can't really [turns pages]
- T30: Right at the beginning they are.
- P30: Although I do like a few of these poems, like 'A Poison Tree'.
- T31: Yes, is there a reason why you like that?
- P31: Um, well it's, well I can actually relate to this poem, it's, it's something that um I, that won't change, it was written hundreds of years, well a hundred years ago and things like emotions and relationships, making enemies and friends never changes, so you can, I can sort of relate to this quite well. I also like the rhyme scheme as well, I think that's quite important in a poem, something you can roll with.
- T32: Yes, do you find it helps with meaning?
- P32: Uh, yes, some, some poems do some poems you can read into the meaning quite well and some poem not as much, it all depends on the poem really.
- T33: Hmm, so, if you were given a choice of reading a poem, a play or a novel which would you choose and why?
- P33: Um, probably, um, I don't know, novels are very straightforward and, well, perhaps not straightforward but they've, you always get the meaning in a novel that, perhaps the novel starts off in mystery and then you always get, you always get revealed and there's nothing to really think deeply about in most novels whereas poems you have to really get into and have to explore them, um.
- T34: And is that what you like doing?
- P34: Yeah, yeah, I like being able to make my own views and opinions and interpretations.
- T35: So what about plays, where do they come in?
- P35: Um, I'm not really sure, um, plays are quite interesting cos you, you can see well, people's actions as well as their speech and emotion um but again with plays you usually get an ending with the play so you don't really get to explore it very much.

T36: Right, okay, well I think you've done very well, ...

**Tape 57 4/4/1998: PUPILS' POETICS - ANNA INTERVIEWED BY
STUDENT TEACHER.**

- A1: Anna ...
- T1: Right, do you like poetry, Anna?
- A2: Um, I didn't used to but I like the poems in the anthology probably because um I'm forced to read them
[A + T laugh]
so I find stuff out about them and I think about them which probably, when I was younger I used to like reading children's poems, that's when I did elocution lessons.
- T2: Right, so you say you, you didn't used to like them but now maybe through what you've been doing in class you've grown to like them, how has that happened do you think?
- A3: I just like thinking about them and um I've got more understanding of why people might write poems and also that they are quite deep a lot of them and they're not just people trying to rhyme and stuff.
- T3: No, right, have you got any particular favourites?
- A4: Um, I like 'What Is Our Live?' a lot, I think it's a really nice poem.
- T4: Right, would you like to talk about that?
- A5: Well, I think a lot of people think Raleigh wrote it when he was depressed or something which I think can be true but I think he was more in a thoughtful mood and ,well, I suppose he could have been depressed but I think it's a nice way, it makes me feel that life is really simple and that it's sort of in um Louise Rosenblatt's aesthetic views on poems and stuff, it is a bit like that because I can see how if you're in a depressed mood it could make you feel more depressed because you're thinking: oh life is just a play and that's all it is, which isn't very nice because it doesn't sound like it particularly means much but then I think it's nice because it makes life sound so simple and then I don't have to worry about anything cos it makes it easier.
- T5: So, there are two sides, the way that you've been reading poems in class, bringing your own experience to them, have you found that?
- A6: Um, I think in some of them, because I like performing, and performing arts and stuff, I like that one cos it's about a play but I think some of them do have a New Criticism idea or them they do have a right and wrong answer, because when someone writes a poem, they're writing about something a lot of the time and so then I don't agree with the aesthetic view.
- T6: Right.
- A7: Did that answer the question?
- T7: Yes, what you're suggesting is that there has to be a balance, you have to weigh up what experiences ...
- A8: I think obviously some poems - someone could write and say it means that for me but, yeah, I can understand how it means that for you, but the author could say 'well, no it doesn't mean that'.
- T8: So, what you're saying is you don't entirely agree with Rosenblatt's theory it depends on what poem you're reading.
- A9: Yeah it does.
- T9: Do you prefer the earlier poems in the anthology - the ones pre-twentieth century?
- A10: I think I probably do actually.

- T10: Why?
- A11: Um, I prefer the language plus 'Daily London Recipe' and 'Wouldn't Thank You for a Valentine' and stuff, they don't seem so deep and like they mean what they're saying so much.
- T11: Superficial.
- A12: Yeah, and the language in pre-twentieth century seems more romantic.
- T12: So, do you imagine what it was like then?
- A13: Uh
- T13: I often if the poems would seem to the people of those days like the poems seem to us now.
- A14: Yeah, I suppose so, I don't know.
- T14: How do you feel about intertextuality, comparing poems?
- A15: Um, well, the only poem I've got for that is the uh, 'The Lowest Trees Have Tops, The Ant her Gall' and 'The Latest Decalogue' in that 'The Lowest Trees have Tops, The Ant her Gall' is saying that, well one idea is that it's saying, people who are in love don't always wear their hearts on their sleeves, they don't, and the the loudest people who shout about how they feel and stuff don't necessarily feel it as deep as the quiet ones and in 'The Latest Decalogue', the really religious people who make out that they're really religious might not be as true as the ones who just go to church and do everything right.
- T15: So do you quite enjoy comparing and contrasting poems like that?
- A16: Well, I never thought about that before until Mr. Pike mentioned it cos I wouldn't have thought that poems written by different people could have much to do with each other because they're both written about different things but I can see how we can compare them as they're written on the same lines and they can have the same sort of meaning even though 'The Lowest Trees have Tops, The Ant her Gall' and 'The Latest Decalogue' are about different things they can
- T16: Cross over. So how did you feel about the poems of Blake, did you have any you particularly liked?
- A17: I like the, I can see how, cos he's the same person that wrote 'The Tyger' and 'The Lamb' I like the way they contrast although I don't like 'The Lamb' because I think that's too religious and I think it sounds too praising the Lord and stuff which I think is a bit pointless but I like the way they contrast and 'The Tyger' there's a lots you can get out of it and I think it's clever how it is he is talking about the industrial revolution although his talking about, it means all different stuff, this stuff all onomatopoeia and juxtaposition all hidden in here, although Mr. Pike said it seems simple when you first read it, I don't think it seems simple.
- T17: No, I think the rhythm perhaps makes you think it's a child like poem.
- A18: In Year 7 in Art we had the first couple of verses and we had to do a painting on it which made me think about it then but the painting is more about, it was like tiger draw tiger
- T18: Image
- A19: The forest, draw the forest, it wasn't really what it was but what the images were. I like Blake poems because he does have a lot of imagery.
- T19: Yes, so is that what makes you respond to poem?
- A20: Yeah, I think it does but also if I can imagine how they're feeling or what they're thinking and stuff.

- T20: What else have we got here. The process you go through as a reader from the time you first encounter a poem. Could you talk to me a bit about that?
- A21: I, some, a couple of poems where I think I've completely got the wrong end of the stick - like in the anthology, in our journals - I don't really know how I read them. I usually like the ones that are confusing cos then I think there's more work to be done and there must be some deep meaning to it - like 'Jordan', I like that one cos it's all confusing and metaphorical um I don't really know the process I go through. I just read it and I like listening to what other people think about it and arguing with them about them what I think.
- T21: So you find it quite useful to have group discussion?
- A22: Yeah.
- T22: And class discussion?
- A23: Yeah.
- T23: Do you prefer to read it individually and annotate it first and then
- A24: Yeah I do, cos then everyone does their own individual thing and then everyone discusses it and you think yeah, they're probably right.
- T24: Yes, so you've brought your own ideas to it as well so that's good. Do you consider yourself to be a perceptive and intellectually acute reader of poetry?
- A25: Probably not, I don't know, I don't, I wouldn't say that I don't, I never, I'm not the one who comes up with the big words and stuff about what it all means and back to process, I don't actually, I don't actually look at the uh form of it particularly and also imagery and um juxtaposition, I don't notice that usually, I'm more just straight in there trying to find out what they mean and not looking at that's juxtaposed with that and that's um personification, I don't think about that.
- T25: That doesn't help you to get into the poem.
- A26: Well, it does after someone else mentions it!
[A + T laugh together]
- A27: Then I think oh yeah!
- T26: Yes, yes and that's where the discussion comes in. So are you a motivated and keen reader of poetry would you say now?
- A28: I think probably after I've done GCSE cos I don't normally have the time to sit cos I do actually like analysing and I think if I just picked up a book and wanted to read it I'd probably find it a bit boring because there'd be no one to discuss it with and it'd be a bit pointless.
- T27: Yes.
- A29: And I don't just like hearing my views on it, I do enjoy listening to other people, what they think, it's more interesting.
- T28: It helps, yes, so are there certain thematic areas you prefer to others?
- A30: I probably would have said 'Hearts and Partners' first, but I think it is 'The Way We Live' because that
- T29: Most people have said 'The Way We Live'
- A31: Yeah, yeah, 'The Way We Live' with 'What Is Our Life?' and also 'The Latest Decalogue' which we have done a lot of work on that so
- T30: Going back to Jordan, you said you liked 'Jordan', would you like to talk to me about that because lots of people find it very difficult.
- A32: I haven't actually, haven't got any notes on it, um that, uh that also makes me think of performing arts really, like make-up people put on, they put on an act, that's like life in a way, people do put on, you put on make-up to hide stuff and um sort of people sort of a lie and they can say stuff and you can give impressions over that is not actually what you mean and and he's sort of

saying that if we were, if we, if we walked round, if everyone could see what we're thinking then he's like - is there not goodness in that? Cos people have, I know I have some really bad thoughts that I shouldn't be thinking about people and so if everyone saw it, saw what I was thinking or what I really looked like underneath all my make-up - it would - it's like he's saying - is there no beauty, no truth, no niceness in that? Cos nowadays people cover themselves up completely with lies - and make-up again, just all this stuff.

- T31: You feel he's trying to get back to the simple
- A33: Yeah
- T32: Things.
- A34: But it turns religious at the end.
- T33: Hmm.
- A35: I think he thinks that the, the way back to being um completely natural and right is to be as one with God which I don't agree with.
- T34: Right.
- A36: But he thinks that's right and what we're here for and what we should be.
- T35: Yes, so do you think poems can change your mood - can a particular poem, can it change your mood? Or if you're in a certain mood, can it affect your reading of the poem?
- A37: No, unless, it depends, I don't know um, if someone read, it depends, if someone who I knew wrote a poem it might, but because I don't know any of the people they don't really affect me cos if it's really sad, I can say, well that's sad but it doesn't affect me cos I don't feel for that person that's written it so I don't think: oh poor them, oh I've got to try and do something to help them or something I just think: oh that's sad.
- T36: Given the choice of reading a poem or play or a novel which would you prefer and why?
- A38: I don't know, I don't know, I've read more novels and I think novels are better than plays because novels - you can see people's thoughts, what they're thinking and why they're doing stuff whereas plays you have to work it out for yourself like in drama, you just get what they say and their movements.
- T37: Hmm.
- A39: But I think poems are a bit, they're always, although you can get a lot out of them, they're always a bit, sort of, I can't think of the word, you don't the full story with poems, you don't get why they wrote them, what they're doing, what they're thinking when they wrote them, where they wrote them or anything like that, whereas novels you get the whole situation usually.
- T38: Yes.
- A40: So you get loads of images in your mind, what someone looks like and stuff with poems you can't find out what they look like or anything.
- T39: Yes, so if you're reading a book, written a long time ago
- A41: Like Thomas Hardy
- T40: Yes, what you're saying is you know more about him, you know more about him as an author, is that what you're saying?
- A42: Well, I don't, novels are different, cos they're stories aren't they and um
- T41: You just read them for their own sake. that's what you mean, is it?
- A43: Yeah, with poems, the poems normally are about the author, usually their experiences and what they're thinking whereas the novels are about the characters which is different, sort of contradicts what I
- T42: I think that's it ...

**Tape 56 1/4/1998: PUPILS' POETICS - JOSIE INTERVIEWED BY
STUDENT TEACHER.**

- T1: Okay then, speak your name.
- J1: Josie...
- T2: Tell me about yourself and the poems that you read, Josie.
- J2: OK. Well, my appreciation of poems has definitely increased very recently - I never used to understand what the point of poems was - I always thought, well why doesn't a person write simply what they mean instead of writing it in a way that confuses everyone but it's kind of clicked recently that um, apart from the fact it'd be totally boring doing that, poems is about the poet writing down their feelings in a way that other people won't necessarily understand and that's what poems are and um, I was thinking about what Rosenblatt said about that poem is only a poem if um the reader has an aesthetic response to it and I do agree with that to an extent but I also think that in order for a poem to be good and evoke an aesthetic response, the poet has to have written it through some kind of emotion and, shall I tell you why I think that?
- T3: Yes, that would be brilliant.
- J3: Okay, well, um, one of my friends was saying to me how she's a poet and she writes all these poems and she was showing me them and she said, oh I can write one now and was scribbling down and basically it was a piece of text that had rhyming words at the end, and um after reading it, I'm not be nasty to my friend or anything, but I decided they weren't poems, I don't think that's what poems are because she didn't think about them, she didn't have any kind of emotion when she was writing it, it was just a case of finding words that rhymed and so that's how I came to conclusion, it has to be *created* through an emotion. And um, relating that to poems in the anthology in the one 'What Is Our Life?' I think that Sir Walter Raleigh must have been having some sort of um feeling, philosophical mood about what life is I think, possibly he's depressed and um I think perhaps something bad had happened to him where he thought that's just typical things were going right that had to happen and um because this has been a very popular poem in our class, most people have liked it and related to it I think that's because the poet was going through some emotions when he wrote it and um, it doesn't necessarily make me feel depressed which everyone doesn't understand, they think I should feel depressed about it but I don't because I agree with him [laughs] and that's what I've always thought so it doesn't really depress me.
- T4: That's very good, Josie, very good, so how do you like to study poetry in school?
- J4: Well, I think the way we've been doing it has been very effective, um, us writing down our initial responses and then discussing it and doing it again because I've noticed a lot of change from when I first read and then after we've discussed it - it helps me to listen to other peoples ideas.
- T5: So you had those forms, didn't you, where you just responded.
- J5: Yes, the journals, logs, yeah, I think that was quite a good way of doing it though a lot of the time when I read a poem for the first time, I didn't understand it and found very little to write about.
- T6: So, do you prefer group discussion, or class discussions or paired?
- J6: I think class discussion has been quite good.

- T7: You get a lot more
 J7: Yeah
 T8: Ideas
 J8: I get a lot more out of it.
 T9: So, do you think you respond differently do you think to pre-twentieth century poems than you do to the more modern ones?
 J9: Personally I prefer the pre-twentieth century poems, I think that they're, they seem to be, they seem to have a lot more emotion in them, I think that a lot of the twentieth century poems, a lot of the twentieth century poems, I don't know, they just don't seem to be so deep and thoughtful, some of them are just like pieces of text that rhyme and they don't make me feel anything, so I don't if they don't evoke an aesthetic response, I don't really enjoy them so much.
 T10: So you're saying really then that you respond to something that's deep.
 J10: Yeah.
 T11: That's got some depth to it.
 J11: Yeah, there's an emotion behind it.
 T12: How important is the style of the poem to you? The rhyme, the poetic devices?
 J12: I don't think that's very important at all. I think it's what the poem's saying I really do, um, I think that can add to it and it depends on the person totally, some people just prefer poems that rhyme and have a more interesting form but personally I don't mind as long as it has some meaning behind it.
 T13: Right, so are there any thematic areas in the Anthology that you particularly like?
 J13: I like 'The Way We Live' because they're, they're quite philosophical about life, obviously 'The Way We Live' I find this a lot more interesting, I personally think that a lot of poems about 'Hearts and Partners' get a bit boring after a while, a lot of people talking about how sad they are and I think that I like philosophical, meaningful poems.
 T14: How does your mood affect your response to a poem? Does it affect it or?
 J14: Um, I think it could do in a way, I'm not sure I've ever been in a bad mood when I've been in an English lesson really but um, I think, I'd been really upset when I'd read 'What Is Our Life?' I might have found that um, a bit depressing, it would have added to my mood and also um, 'The Latest Decalogue', um I thought that 'The Latest Decalogue' is the poet being very cynical about human nature and society at that time and I think that would have added to my mood, I would have agreed with it and
 T15: Kind of changed your mood, but your mood doesn't necessarily change your response to the poem?
 J15: No, I don't think so.
 T16: No, so do you consider yourself to be a perceptive and intellectually acute reader of poetry?
 J16: I think so, I try to take in everything that is there, I think that, um, what Rosenblatt said about the poem has to evoke an aesthetic response to be called a poem, some people, the reason I don't totally agree with that is because some people will just think oh I have to read a poem, they'll just follow it with their eyes, they won't take any of it in and they'll say, well that didn't mean anything to me so it isn't a poem and I, I think you have to, I mean obviously that can't be right, you can't dismiss something because you weren't interested in taking any notice of it so um I definitely try to take it all

- in and understand what the poet's getting at.
- T17: Right, and what is your assessment of your own skill at intertextuality, seeing links between poems
- J17: Uh
- T18: Or contrasting them?
- J18: Well, I think I'm able to do this. We were looking at um the poems 'Nuns Fret Not' and um 'Jordan' and we were relating the criticism of society and I think that that is easy to do but have to be open to other peoples ideas about poems to do this, because I don't know what, what exactly is right, according to the poet, so if you think about a wide range of um meanings behind it, then it's a lot easier to relate it to other poems.
- T19: Hmm, right, yes, um, yes, you've given specific examples. So are you a keen, motivated reader of poetry?
- J19: I think I am more now. I think when we first started doing poems in Year 10 and in Year 9, I didn't enjoy it so much, I kind of thought oh God, I've got to read a poem but that was because I didn't understand then and I didn't know how to bring out meanings and things behind them but now due to the practice we've had, I think I can a lot easier now.
- T20: So, that responding to poems with your own experiences has helped you, would you say?
- J20: Yeah, I think so, yeah.
- T21: Oh, what about, looking at the poetry of Blake, you've mentioned Clough's poem, haven't you, I think, didn't you?
- J21: Yeah, I did.
- T22: And you've mentioned Raleigh, Wordsworth, How about Clare, Dyer and Walsh, would you like to say anything about any of those?
- J22: The only other poems, do you mean out of these sections at the back or or the William Blake poems?
- T23: Well, you can either comment on the William Blake poems at the front or any of those I think.
- J23: I think I liked the William Blake poems a lot more than the poems in some of the sections at the back
- T24: Uh huh
- J24: Definitely more than most of the twentieth century poems because I think these have a lot of meaning behind them and we did a lot of work on them and um, like say 'London', after doing so much classwork on that I can really see the meaning behind it and understand it so yeah I quite liked the William Blake poems.
- T25: Right.
- J25: I think that to appreciate them you have to find out some background about the poet as well to understand what he's getting at.
- T26: Yes, right and just to finish then, if you had a choice of reading poems, a play or a novel, what would you do and why?
- J26: Ha, that's difficult because I've read plays before that I didn't particularly enjoy and same with all of the three genres but um, I'm not sure, it would have to depend on what the poem were about or what the play was about or the novel, I can't say I 'd like one better. A while ago I would have definitely said novels or plays over poems but no, as I'm starting to get more interested I just don't know, ha.
- T27: That was absolutely brilliant, well done, I don't want to keep you too long ...

Tape 57 4/4/1998: PUPILS' POETICS - STEVE INTERVIEWED BY STUDENT TEACHER.

- T1: Is it going round?
- S1: Yeah wait for the tape ... oh Steve, oral stuff.
- T2: Right Steve, do you want to tell me about some of the poems you like or some of the poems you don't like.
- S2: There aren't many poems that I like actually um one that I did find myself um slightly grabbed by was 'The Latest Decalogue', um I was quite intrigued by the way Clough was, was critical of his society by um using the hypocritical tone for example taking, taking one of the commandments and then giving a, a satirical response to it, he's very cynical I mean but um, not many poems that I like really.
- T3: So, what you say made you respond to that poem?
- S3: The Latest Decalogue?
- T4: Hmm
- S4: Um, it's cos I can actually understand what it's all about and even though it was written pre-1900 it was um, it's still very relevant today, the way people find loopholes in the law um, they follow the, what it says but they're not following in the spirit of the law um for the reasons behind it um, most of it is done for self gain really, like shouldn't steal 'it's an empty feat when it's so lucrative to cheat' just sums up society really in general which is why it appealed to me a bit.
- T5: So, would you say in general the late, the pre-twentieth century poems or do you prefer the modern ones?
- S5: I prefer poems which are relevant to things that are going on around me um, I mean, for example 'Jordan', the poem 'Jordan', seems to me ludicrous, it has no real purpose as a reader when I go through it I can, I can apply no knowledge or anything that has happened to me to this poem because it's very um confusing which is why I don't really like it that much.
- T6: Right. what is particularly confusing about it? Can you put your finger on it?
- S6: Um, I suppose it's because he's talking about a certain subject, George Herbert, but it's, the whole poem is imagery which makes it very hard to see what the poet is talking about um he's talking about fictions being 'onely and false hair becoming a verse', um and then he goes on talking about winding stairs and then - a chair and he just, very confusing for me as a reader.
- T7: So that line where he talks about 'Catching the sense at two removes'
- S7: Yes.
- T8: Would you say that was appropriate to him as well even though he's trying to write
- S8: Yeah, yeah
- T9: Clearly
- S9: Yeah, yeah, it's just not very readable, well it is readable, I mean you can go into this poem and come up with umpteen different explanations as to what it's about but to me it seems a bit silly.
- T10: So the way you get into a poem, you've been doing a lot of work with Mr. Pike where you relate it to your own experience - you find that useful do you?
- S10: Yeah, um, Rosenblatt's theory of um aesthetic reading um - I quite agree with it, when she says that a poem only becomes a poem when you apply your own experiences to the poem, it's not actually poetry when it's on the page but

when a reader reads it and thinks of events that have happened to him or her, it becomes a poem - I agree with that because um, like the poem 'Jordan', for example, I can't relate this to anything to do with anything that's around me which make it - I don't know - I just don't really like it, whereas with 'The Latest Decalogue' I can see what's going on around me and what's happening and people are avoiding the law and things like that and it's relevant which makes it a poem I suppose.

- T11: So, how do you like to discuss poems in class? Well, how do you like to study them? Do you like to go through them as an individual and annotate them or group discussions or individual discussion, paired discussion not individual discussion.
- S11: I think class discussions are interesting to say the least cos you get different views put forward about each poem which is where um the aesthetic reading comes in, because different readers have had different things happen to them so they can apply it differently to the poem which is again backing up Rosenblatt's theory, when working in pairs it's quite the same, you can have different views to other people which gives you a broader understanding of the poem cos people are giving you different ideas and you begin to think about these and extend them and then think perhaps it's not about that, it might have been about this.
- T12: So are there any thematic areas like 'hearts and partners' or 'The Way We Live', were there any particular areas that you prefer to others?
- S12: Um yeah, I think, as I've been saying, my preference section is 'The Way We Live' because it's all relevant to the way we live, things happening around us, I find it very hard to understand the section uh 'Dancing in the Breeze'
- T13: Yes
- S13: Okay, so it's about flowers and stuff but there's got to be a deeper, some deeper theme to it than just flowers cos you've got poems like 'The Daffodils', 'The New, Fast, Automatic Daffodils', 'Sick Rose', 'Thistles', 'Miracle on St David's Day' and 'Weeds', it's got to be more than about just flowers but I can't see it, so I like 'The Way We Live'.
- T14: Right, so going back to uh 'The Sick Rose', Blake, what did you feel about that or any of the poems in the front of the book?
- S14: In the front of the book?
- T15: Blake's poems.
- S15: I found it very interesting to read 'The Tyger' and 'The Lamb' and to be able to compare them um because Blake is talking about the same God, talking about one God, but in 'The Tyger' which is from the Songs of Experience, he's talking about a very um how do you say it? - vengeful God, um very um strong and strict in a way by using a primitive form of rhythm and um things that are, sounds that are redolent of the industrial revolution, which was around him at the time and then you go to the poem 'The Lamb', which is from the Experience section and he's talking, Innocence section, sorry, and he's talking about opposing forces, this is the difference between 'The Tiger' and 'The Lamb', is his theme of opposing forces about um the God being a loving God, and kind of um a shepherd, as God is often portrayed as a shepherd in life this is, 'The Lamb' seemed quite appropriate, lambs being little and cuddly and stuff. This is the softer side of the God, that was quite interesting.
- T16: Caring. So how do you feel about intertextuality- comparing poems or contrasting them, relating them?

- S16: I suppose, when, 'The Lamb' and 'The Tyger' were written as a pair weren't they, they were, they are opposites to each other, this was done deliberately by Blake.
- T17: Yes, he wrote this first, didn't he, 'The Lamb' first, he wrote the Songs of Experience later.
- S17: Yeah, but, but for each of the Innocence there's an equivalent in Experience, but when you talked about comparing poems which aren't meant as pairs, like 'A Poison Tree'
- T18: Which you've just got on its own
- S18: Doesn't say who it's by, oh yeah it's Blake, 'Poison Tree' and 'The Human Abstract', they're both from the innocence section
- T19: Hmm
- S19: But they both use the imagery of trees like watering the tree with fears or tears to let it grow. Blake obviously liked um trees and nature which is um, figurative language.
- T20: Out of all the Blake poems you read which was your favourite?
- S20: Umm - I think it was 'A Poison Tree'
- T21: Oh huh.
- S21: Because again you can apply that to yourself and people around you and what's happening with the extended metaphor of the tree growing and then bearing this fruit of um kind of anger and then the victim taking the fruit and that's it, just like gone, it's what's happening around us, people do it all the time, which is, makes it interesting.
- T22: So, is that what you like about poems - uncovering
- S22: Um
- T23: The deeper meaning?
- S23: Yeah, I also like simple poems though, I particularly like um 'Daily London Recipe'
- T24: Yes
- S24: It's quite amusing, but it's still getting over the um the message really well by using the metaphor of the recipe and um dehumanisation of people in London and busy towns, by um activities that, ways of transporting them, for example you've got transferring, pouring, scraping, they're all terms used for a mass, a group of something, so it's kind of grouping everyone together and taking away the individuality which is, you can clearly see that from what it says on the page unlike 'Jordan'.
- T25: Yes, they're controlled ... so do you consider yourself to be perceptive and intellectually acute when reading poetry?
- S25: Um, what like seeing the meaning?
- T26: Yes.
- S26: Yeah, apart from poems like 'Jordan'!
- T27: Yeah.
- S27: Normally, normally I can look into a poem and see the deeper meaning in it um depending on how the meaning is put across to the reader, um cos you've got poems where the form of the poem is very, is used a lot to put forward a meaning to the reader, like um, just trying to find it, one of those poems that's all over the place, just trying to find it
- T28: This is one of the more modern poems
- S28: No, can't find it, but it's all over the place there's lines all over the place, everywhere, it doesn't make that much sense to me.
- T29: Is it towards the front or the back?

- S29: Yeah, Study Number X.
The poem, just by looking at it down on paper - you can see that it's kind of a frantic poem because it's all over the place, the lines don't start in the same places, the punctuation is very mixed, um, you can just by looking at it without even reading the words, you can see this poem is about something which is not restricted, it's like all over the place but it gets more difficult to find the deeper meaning of it once you actually read the poem because the words don't make that much sense.
- T30: I must admit I haven't actually read that one, that's very interesting, oh, what else do we need? Do you feel poems are capable of changing your mood?
- S30: No, no I don't, no um.
- T31: Does your mood affect the way you read a poem?
- S31: Um, yeah, I suppose it does, if I'm not in any good mood then I just won't read a poem anyway, full stop.
- T32: So that covers the question of um whether you're a motivated and keen reader of poetry.
- S32: Not at all, no, no, uh my personal opinion is that they're quite pointless and I'm sure I'm the only person in the world that thinks this, I don't think they serve a purpose.
- T33: I'm sure you're not. But you obviously got quite a lot out of some of them.
- S33: Yeah, because we have to sit there and read them, but yeah
- T34: But you wouldn't do it voluntarily?
- S34: No, no.
- T35: So, last of all, given a choice of reading a poem, a play or novel, which would you rather do and why?
- S35: A novel I suppose because it just, you just have to read it, it's there in front of you, plays can be tricky, tricky to read into because you don't know what's happening all the time and poems just don't really appeal to me at all because they're kind of pointless but whereas a novel is a story, something that happens and it carries you all the way through telling you what's happening whereas with a poem it doesn't.
- T36: Like with 'The Latest Decalogue'. Would you still say 'The Latest Decalogue' is pointless then?
- S36: Yeah, I mean, it was one of my more favourite poems out of the lot but it still doesn't mean I like it that much.
- T37: No, but was it pointless?
- S37: Haaaa
- T38: You've contradicted yourself because earlier you were saying that there was a point to it.
- S38: There's a point to it from the poet's point of view, the poet has a point, there's obviously a point to the poem cos the poet actually wrote it in the first place but it doesn't really serve a purpose.
- T39: It draws your attention to that kind of thing going on.
- S39: Yes, if you like reading that sort of thing anyway. If you like reading the poem, then you're going to read the poem anyway which is going to draw your attention to it but if you don't want to read the poem you're not going to read the poem so it's not going to draw your attention to it so it's not really purposeful, I wouldn't read poetry in my spare time.
- T40: Right okay, I'll let you go, Steve.
- S40: Okay, cheers.

**Tape 56 1/4/1998: PUPILS' POETICS - ROB INTERVIEWED BY
STUDENT TEACHER**

- R1: Rob ...
- T1: Okay Rob, which are your favourite poems, can you talk to me about them?
- R2: Um I'd have to say my favourite poems are 'The Way We Live'. I prefer the pre-twentieth century poems to the twentieth century poems and that's general kind of feeling as well but overall my favourite poems are 'The Way We Live'.
- T2: So, what is it then about the pre-twentieth century poems that you particularly like? Can you put your finger on it?
- R3: Yeah, I think it's more of an aesthetic response because twentieth century poems seem to be more of um the words put on the paper directly you know saying what they want to say um with pre- twentieth century poems you have to like go into them and try and find things, have to, try and get really into the poem to see what the poet is trying to say.
- T3: Right, so is there a particular poem that you'd like to talk about?
- R4: Um, my favourite out of that section is probably 'The Latest Decalogue' um I think it's, it's, it was written, it's a pre-twentieth century poem but it's still, I think it's very applicable today, it's still, it's lasted, from when it was written, it's also very true to life, I think, it's got a very strong, strong meaning behind it.
- T4: So, what exactly is it that you respond to, would you say, in a poem?
- R5: Um, probably things like um literary devices, things like um imagery or personification um rhyme, rhythm, um anything like that really that you can um investigate, go into, kind of look at more in depth.
- T5: Right, so you find that the form speaks to you as much as your words?
- R6: Yeah, very much so.
- T6: Yes, um, what about Blake? Were there any Blake poems you particularly liked?
- R7: Um, yes, there were, uh I think uh, probably 'A Poison Tree', 'London' and 'The Human Abstract' I quite liked. I didn't really like 'The Tyger' and 'The Lamb'. I didn't really see that there was much to, I couldn't really understand what the poet was trying to say, what he was trying to convey to the reader whereas with 'A Poison Tree' and 'London' and 'The Human Abstract' it was quite easy, it was quite easy to see what the poet meant.
- T7: What he was drawing your attention to?
- R8: Yeah.
- T8: Yes, what do you think of Rosenblatt's theory?
- R9: Yeah, I agree with quite a few aspects of it, I think, with me, it's more aesthetic with um pre-twentieth century poems, you have to get into them to see what the poet is saying whereas twentieth century poems seem to be more just um text on the page, there's nothing to go into, I mean there are a few exceptions - in both cases - but yeah I do agree with her theory.
- T9: Right, do you consider yourself to be a perceptive and intellectually acute reader of poetry?
- R10: Um, I wouldn't really say so, no.
- T10: Why wouldn't you say so? You seem to be to me.
- R11: Um, it's not something I really enjoy, really get into, but some poem I can enjoy and they really stick with me, but other poems just we'll be discussing

- them in the English lesson and then that'll be it, they won't really stay with me.
- T11: How do you like to study a poem? Do you like to do it on your own, individually or in a pair or group?
- R12: Pairs, I prefer to do it in pairs and group, if you don't have ideas there's always someone else who you can get ideas from or compare ideas with and then maybe change your own ideas and thought.
- T12: So, are you a motivated and keen reader of poetry would you say?
- R13: Um, well, I have, the reason I read poems is because I have to but sometimes I can really get into the poem and I can really like it.
- T13: Would you read poetry at home?
- R14: No, probably not.
- T14: What about intertextuality, seeing links between poems, comparing or contrasting them?
- R15: I, I,
- T15: Do you find that
- R16: I prefer to find my own links rather than an exam question which says link a certain poem to another poem. I'd rather read the poem myself and find my own links rather than trying to make them up.
- T16: Does your mood affect your response to a poem?
- R17: Um, yeah, occasionally, there's one particular poem, 'What Is Our Life?' that I felt could be interpreted in a number of different ways depending on what mood you're in, it could be seen as a happy poem, which is reflecting all the good things in life or as a sad poem, saying we'll always regret what we've done and want to have done more.
- T17: Can you pinpoint what it is in the poem that makes you feel it can be interpreted in different ways?
- R18: There's one particular line about life being a short comedy, um, I think that can be taken in two different ways, it can be taken as comedy as in like um laughter and fun and humour and generally having a good life or it can be seen as comedy as in strange to the people who are watching, you know, we go through everything in life and then we end up with nothing, it's just quite strange.
- T18: Perhaps a bit ironic.
- R19: Yes, very ironic.
- T19: What about the poem of Clough, Raleigh, Wordsworth, Herbert, Clare, Dyer, Walsh, do you have anything you'd like to say about those?
- R20: The Clough, Clough's poem is one I particularly like, 'The Latest Decalogue' which I've mentioned, um
- T20: What about Wordsworth?
- R21: Wordsworth poems, I didn't really enjoy those poems. I thought they were a bit too deep; there's kind of a line between what I can see and interpret and read into a poem and then there are other poems which are, they seem to be really simple but they can be really deep and there can be so many meanings and things that can be interpreted that it can be confusing which I don't really like in a poem
- T21: No, given the - sorry
- R22: No, I was just going to say I prefer it if there are just one or two things you can find in a poem, one or two meanings that the author is trying to get across rather than seeing lots of things and just becoming confused with the poem.

- T22: So, was there a poem that you didn't particularly like at all or you thought was perhaps the worst poem in the whole book?
- R23: I think the worst poem had to be um 'The Sick Rose'. Um I didn't think there was anything to interpret, anything to see into it, it was so short and you, there was nothing to read from it, there could really be any interpretation and you could say well yeah that could be right and it was difficult to find something in such a short poem.
- T23: That you could relate to?
- R24: Yeah.
- T24: So, given the choice of the reading a novel or a play or poetry what would you prefer to do and why?
- R25: Um, it would really depend on what, um, which play and which novel and which poem, I mean if it was say a novel such as The Mayor of Casterbridge which I didn't really enjoy when we did it for our GCSE and a choice between pre-twentieth century poems, then I'd probably choose the poetry. But if it was a more modern novel such as To Kill A Mocking Bird, then I'd prefer that to the poems.
- T25: So why did you prefer To Kill A Mocking Bird ?
- R26: Um, I think it was just easy to understand. In the Mayor of Casterbridge there was a lot of historical context which you had find out about and had to really relate to and I found that quite difficult and also some of the language as well, which was used was you know quite old and you didn't know what the character or the author was trying to say.
- T26: And what about plays? How do you feel?
- R27: Yeah, I do enjoy most plays, I took Drama GCSE as well so I enjoy um, one aspect I enjoyed was getting an extract of a play and then trying to set it, that I'd never seen before and trying to work out where it was set, when it was set and what the characters were like which was useful.
- T27: Quite exciting.
- R28: Yeah.
- T28: Well only, I think we've already covered most things. You've already said you preferred the poems in 'The Way We Live'.
- R29: Yeah.
- T29: And we've discussed style, right that's about it then, thank you very much, Rob.

APPENDIX C

**TRANSCRIPTS OF SELECTED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT PRE-
TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS**

TAPE 16 A POISON TREE - WILLIAM BLAKE - ANNA and JOSIE.

- J1: 'A Poison Tree'
 A1: A Poison Tree indeed.
 J2: What did you think of this poem, Anna?
 A2: I thought it was better than the last one because you can also like for this one, cos the other one, 'London', was more like what it was about at the time but this one can be, can't think of the word, put to any time sort of thing cos I was angry with my friend and all that lot because it happens because if you're angry with someone and you tell them, it usually goes away.
 J3: I think it was about murder!
 A3: Do you?
 J4: Yeah.
 A4: What 'My foe outstretched beneath the tree'.
 J5: I think, I thought that the anger grew and grew until it made an apple, it grew and grew loads of anger and then in the night with, I don't know, cos when it says 'When the night had veiled the pole' and 'In the morning glad I see' - I think he didn't know what he was doing but his anger drove him to murder.
 A5: I thought um, written here, oh I didn't finish my thing, yeah if you're angry with someone and don't tell them it just gets worse and worse and worse, unless of course sometimes it doesn't and then you just forget about it but anyway in this one it obviously got worse, anyway I was thinking 'My foe outstretched beneath the tree' right, if his anger, obviously it's not going to be a real tree or a real apple cos it's
 J6: I thought it was a metaphor
 A6: Yeah, it is a metaphor for his anger so my 'Foe outstretched beneath the tree' could either mean he's dead or that um
 J7: My foe's outstretched under the anger
 A7: Like uh, I can't think of how to put it, it was because of his anger that it wasn't - not like literally dead, but he'd be like punished by his anger sort of thing.
 J8: Do you think that the friend and the foe were the same person or two separate people?
 A8: Two separate people
 J9: Because I thought, just an idea but um
 A9: Obviously
 J10: Something about talking about it as well, talking about what's on your mind because 'I told my wrath, my wrath did end' but when he was angry with his foe he didn't tell
 A10: Yeah
 J11: And things got worse
 A11: Got worse
 J12: About getting your problems out in the open.
 A12: I think the last verse is the most significant to all of it because the other ones are fairly self explanatory, aren't they.
 J13: I didn't know what, why, what is that apple bright that was born, what was that?
 A13: You know like anger climax sort of thing, it got so bad that it just like made an apple [laugh]
 'And into my garden stole', well when he's talking about 'apple bright' and everything 'And into my garden stole' then he's talking about the foe at night

and he's found out about this, William Blake's anger say and gone into his garden or Blake's privacy sort of thing, his garden and tried to do something sly to be horrible to him and the night had veiled the pole, veil like a mask or disguise so as to get himself into the garden, I don't know what the pole has to do with it veiled the pole, what a pole has to do with an apple tree I've no idea, anyway, a Poison Tree cos basically William Blake was thinking such poisonous thoughts cos he hated this man and was really angry with him and everything, when my foe outstretched beneath the tree, cos he was punished, if like when the foe had stolen the apple and taken a bite of it like in Snow White, he got killed, like the apple was the amount of all Blake's angerness

J14: Angeriness?

A14: Angeriness - concentrated in this apple, and so when the friend, the foe rather picked it and took a bite of it, he got punished and poisoned.

J15: It's like Adam and Eve.

A15: Well, yeah, that as well but also Snow White.

J16: I think there are a lot of interpretations for this poem. don't you.

A16: That's what makes it a poem [unclear] yeah, also 'My foe outstretched beneath the tree' the foe could be like, if it was a completely different story, the foe could be like bowed down, worshipping, begging for forgiveness for some reason

J17: Yeah, but when I read that I somehow instantly thought he was dead.

A17: Yeah, I did as well.

J18: I just assumed dead, just assumed he was dead.

A18: Yeah.

J19: So, ok really we've got different ideas about what this means

A19: No, not necessarily.

J20: Doesn't matter, we can both be right.

A20: Oh yeah, 'And he knew that it was mine' that bit. I don't really get that bit, whether it's the foe finding out and he but then he says he knew that it was mine, he could be saying that the foe knew that it was um William Blake's fault or that he knew or that he knew

J21: What was William Blake's fault?

A21: The reason he was angry was his fault cos 'he knew that it was mine' but I don't or that Blake was going to win, that it was his turn to win.

J22: I'll be interested to see what everyone else thinks of this cos I reckon that I totally interpreted it in a different way to everyone else.

A22: Read your thing.

J23: Can't remember what I wrote.

[Reads first journal - all of it!]

... so I don't think it was a positive thing to say so I think ending with that line made it a really depressing poem. What did you write?

A23: [Reads all of first journal - bit in journal - find difficult to understand]

J24: Uh, huh, so, we're kind of decided the foe had done something bad, we don't know what and the person, William Blake, thought that um, he didn't say anything about it and it kept on growing and growing and went through all the stages of anger with tears and fears and smiles and soft deceitful wiles. That's another thing that made me think that it might be something to do with murder because if it's soft deceitful wiles it's like he was up to something you know.

A24: Yeah.

J25: Planning his strategy.

- A25: Planning what to do to the foe.
 J26: So that's another reason I thought.
 A26: It could literally mean that in the end he decided to poison the apple and give it to him and say how good it was to his foe so that his foe would come along and nick it and then die.
 J27: Um, huh
 A27: Then it would be really simple
 J28: Well, no but, it could be couldn't it
 A28: And it grew both day and night till it bore an apple bright - 'my foe beheld it shine / And he knew that it was mine' so
 J29: Getting jealous
 A29: Yeah [laugh together]
 J30: Well, we know what we mean don't we - so he ??? into the garden.
 A30: Yeah.
 J31: He tried to do something really underhand and deceitful and ended up dead because of it
 A31: Which is basically William Blake getting back at this foe he didn't like
 J32: Yeah, I still think this has got a lot of meanings
 A32: [unclear] as Phoebe would say [unclear] got suspended yesterday
 J33: Anyway um, have you got anything you wrote around the outside
 A33: Yeah, um

...

Tape 20: WHAT IS OUR LIFE? - SIR WALTER RALEIGH - ANNA and

JOSIE.

- A1: I like this poem, I think it's really cool.
 J1: I liked it as well because
 A2: Because I think it's a really nice way of describing life because, probably because I like acting and everything and I think it's nice that this person is saying that all our life we're on the stage as I love being on the stage.
 J2: I think it's good and also I could interpret it quite easily.
 A3: Yeah
 J3: Or I think I could anyway.
 A4: It sort of explains itself and it's not that hard a read.
 J4: No it's not, I, it was a nice easy going bit of poetry that you could enjoy reading.
 A5: Yeah.
 J5: OK.
 A6: And I can relate to it.
 J6: OK right in the first line it says a play of 'passion'. I thought that him using that word 'passion' was because um of all the emotions we have during our lives and that word sums up all the emotions really, doesn't it.
 A7: Yes, it does and also another thing I thought it might be, is a play of passion describing the amount of love one person can have in their life and many people spend their whole lives looking for love sort of thing.
 J7: Yeah - this next bit about um our mother's womb and that
 A8: And, and our mirth being music of division, our happiness is like only part of life like music is only part of a play.
 J8: Yeah.
 A9: It sort of divides up the scenes
 J9: Yeah I didn't get that bit
 A10: It divides up the scenes and like music divides up the scenes and so happiness divides up the sad bits in our lives sort of thing.
 J10: It's quite a positive poem really, isn't it.
 A11: Yes it is - I know what I said, it's sort of opposite to what Macbeth says.
 J11: Yeah, I wrote that as well.
 A12: Yeah, he's pessimistic about it being like a play.
 J12: Yeah, he says it's a tragic play but that's obviously because of his state of mind at the time, he was a wreck and um because he says this is a comedy, it's like he was in a good state of mind, quite happy probably.
 A13: Yeah.
 J13: That's what I thought.
 A14: Cos when you think about it, all the little anecdotes that people have and all the little things that go wrong in their lives that people can laugh about after the event has happened, it's sort of like that for someone watching.
 J14: Yeah.
 A15: And you think about what's happened.
 J15: In, in comedies, like 'Friends' bad things do happen don't they but we still find them funny, like in 'Friends' people die and that and we still find them funny and um

A16: Laughs

J16: And also he could be saying life's ironic and funny in that way.

...

J17: And this about 'Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is'

A17: Is like God watching our lives, like the audience watching the play.

J18: I wrote that our lives were being watched from heaven and it says they take down marks so deciding whether you go to heaven or hell.

A18: Well, yeah, yeah that bit, but when you, you sit and watch a play even if you don't like sit and give marks you sit and criticise it

J19: Criticise it

A19: And you, you think about what it means and what you like about it

J20: And you judge the characters as well and think I like him

A20: Yeah, judge

...

A21: I don't quite get 'the searching sun' but I did understand that when the curtain draws at the end of the play that

J21: Well I got that bit I thought it was

[interruption - voice 'we're recording for our English orals']

J22: That's annoying.

A22: 'The searching sun' is obviously the spotlights.

J23: Well no, can I just say what I thought it was

- A23: Yeah sure

J24: Thank you, I just assumed that it meant it was showing the similarities between the grave, when we're dead um, were, the graves hide us from the searching sun and the graves hide us

A24: Why does he?

J25: What were you going to say?

A25: He's just asking a question all of that isn't he? What is our Life? That's, he's, he's saying

J26: Yeah, is he saying it's a play of passion or maybe that's just one idea, he's just saying could it be a play

A26: The only question marks

J27: So do you think this is what the poet believes or just one idea that life could be about?

A27: I don't know whether he believes it, it's the same as he's

J28: May he was in a good mood and thought he

A28: Yeah but, but

J29: It's like Sophie's World really, isn't it

A29: No, but you can write a poem and not necessarily believe it but the way you write it would sound like, like that you, someone *could* sit here and say yeah he believes that or could sit here and say

J30: Don't you think this reminds you of Sophie's World, you know 'What is our Life' and all that?

A30: Yeah.

J31: It does cos I've just finished reading it.

A31: I don't reckon he does believe it, it's the way, like someone talking like about heaven, hey don't necessarily believe it, he doesn't believe it, he's just saying, is it like this? saying it could be, we don't know

J32: I mean he could have gone on with another verse or is it a play of tragedy

A32: Or he could have just said is it people being alive, not in a play at all.

J33: O, we agree on everything, that's annoying.

A33: OK, I'll say something I don't believe in and I'll argue with you.

J34: No, that's pointless.

J35: So this poet had quite a positive outlook on life.

A34: Yeah.

J36: We've said that a few times.

A35: Well, he definitely believes that once you're dead, you're dead..

J37: Oh no, but he says 'heaven'.

A36: I know, but - he says when the play is done

J38: Yeah, you go to heaven, when you die

A37: Yeah, but at this point in time in his life he doesn't believe in ghosts or anything or he might he just decided

J39: No, well, you still die, even if there's a ghost you still die don't you, if you believe in ghosts you still die.

A38: That works, we're having an argument now.

J40: Were you doing that on purpose?

A39: Yeah.

J41: I thought so you might be.

A40: Um, um, well, he definitely means that you die and you just die and then you go to heaven.

J42: Well, no he doesn't and you know that's not true because, because you just do, no I'll tell you why, it's because he says the play is done, that means our life is over, when our life is over, we die, he's not saying there are no ghosts, he's not saying that you don't go to anything after life

A41: But yeah he is because then there would be a play of ghosts

J43: No

A42: And then that would be another life.

J44: No, no he's just talking about our lives.

A43: Once you begin a ghost, you begin another life.

J45: No, because you're not alive when you're a ghost, you're a spirit.

...

J46: And also he says 'Heaven' and Heaven is something where you go after life.

A44: D'you think you begin another ... what happens after Heaven d'you just live forever ... surely Heaven would get overcrowded.

- J47: I have no idea, I have, I really don't know about any of that, my Dad reckons when you're dead you're dead but that's a horrible way to think.
- A45: Worms
- J48: I don't like to think about it like that I think people should believe what they want to believe.
- A46: I think Heaven's just something people make up cos they're scared of dying.
- J49: Well, I think that's very likely but, well that's fine isn't it, there's nothing wrong with that.
- A47: It's because we don't know.

...

- J50: And what about people who um really swear they've spoken to ghosts and seen ghosts cos Verity has seen a ghost and I know she wasn't lying ...
- A48: Well, I believe in ghosts.
- J51: Well, I've always been like really um ...
- A49: I'd like to be a ghost
- J52: Sceptical about things like that, I have to have proof.
- A50: Yeah
- J53: But Verity she wasn't lying, I can tell when she's lying when she was talking about it she was too serious about it all.
- A51: Hmm
- J54: So I believe her.
- A52: I think we should read 'Sophie's World' as a class book and do essays on that, that would be so much more interesting.
- J55: Except for the philosophy bits, they do drag on
- A53: They do, if you read them
- J56: It's really heavy going
- A54: But it's like if I read them properly, cos when I read 'Sophie's World' it was like late at night before I went to bed, if I read them properly and like tried to understand them better, because before I um just reading the most important bits to try and get along with the story of the book
- J57: Yeah
- A55: Cos I did find them interesting they just went on a bit
- J58: Uh huh, I just wanted to find out what was happening and why she was getting all these letters.
- A56: I think I missed one whole bit of philosophy out once just to get onto the actual story

[‘Amazing story’. Discussion of ‘Sophie’s World’. Really takes you in. She starts reading his story of her.]

- A57: Reading about her life, reading about her life.
- J59: Anyway, back to the poem.

Tape 23: THE LATEST DECALOGUE - ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH -

ANNA and JOSIE.

- J1: OK. 'The Latest Decalogue'. What did you think of it then Anna?
- A1: I gave it 8 out of 10 as well but I didn't like it that much, I thought it was a bit boring
- J2: What did you think it was about? What did you think? [indistinct]
- A2: I thought he was a bit sort of making fun of the Ten Commandments really
- J3: Yeah, that's exactly what I wrote
- A3: And basically saying if there is a reason for keeping the Ten Commandments, it's for yourself
- J4: Yeah that's exactly what I got
- A4: Anyway so
- J5: I've written that I think the poet is saying he agrees with the Ten Commandments but for different reasons and he thinks other people do as well, he, I think he's saying people follow the Decalogue for selfish reasons, he's changing the Decalogue for selfish reasons, he's changing the Decalogue slightly- he's showing irony in there isn't he?
- A5: I put the main reason for keeping the Ten Commandments is to help yourself to a better life so you'll be better off
- J6: Yeah like I mean it says um 'Thou shalt not steal when it's so lucrative to cheat' he's saying don't steal, that's pointless if it's even more lucrative for you to cheat and stuff - you get more out of that
- A6: Hmmmm
- J7: And 'Honour thy parents, that is all from whom advantage may befall'
- A7: OK I didn't get that
- J8: I've written that ... honour your parents because it's in your best interests to do so because you need them to help you and
- A8: Well, I got to be nice to your parents cos they'll help you get on in life - cos they do, cos parents always like give up stuff for you anyway
- J9: Yeah, I mean they're on your side- so you may as well use them and get everything out of them you can (laughs)
- A9: And then 'Thou shalt have one God only' is just making fun out of it cos it's saying yeah why would anyone want two? Cos like - saying having to listen to what two of them are telling you, sticking to all their rules when you may as well just have one
- J10: Yeah, so people stick to that one because they can't be bothered to have two gods and it's too much hassle
- A10: And no graven images may be worshipped except the currency because nowadays money, it seems like money's the most important thing
- J11: Yeah that's totally sarcastic yeah 'No graven images may be worshipped' (in sarcastic tone) 'Except the currency'
- A11: Yeah
- J12: This is saying that although the Decalogue says there must be no graven images, people still seem to worship money more than anything
- A12: Yeah, this currency thing is like people who take drugs don't think pot is a drug - except you can't take drugs and can't take pot (laughs)

- J13: Oh, okay 'swear not at all for for thy curse thy enemy is none the worse' well that's saying don't swear cos it doesn't hurt your enemy
- A13: Yeah it doesn't hurt them anyway, there's no point you bothering
- J14: Yeah it's not gonna hurt you
- A14: Yeah
- J15: Right 'On Sunday at church to attend will serve to keep the world your friend'
- A15: Yeah it's more like um what what the world thinks of you and if you go to church they'll think you're a nice religious and helpful person
- J16: Yeah and you'll get more out of it
- A16: And people will think you're nicer
- J17: So basically this poem's about people putting on a front and doing good things just for selfish reasons. Do you think that people actually do this? I mean I've written it's a bit cynical saying that people only do good things for their own sake but I reckon a lot of the time they do
- A17: Well well they do, a lot of people, priests do and stuff you know, if you don't go to church and believe in God then you're going to go to Hell
- J18: Hmmm
- A18: That is, that's being selfish - it's like they're saying I don't want to go to Hell, they do and like go to church and everything, it's just cos they don't want to go to Hell
- J19: (laughs)
- A19: So they go and like go to church and everything, it's just because they don't want to go to Hell
- J20: Well and also, I mean, a lot of the time if someone sees someone in trouble, they think it would look really good if I helped these people but then other times, there are people
- A20: What about those people that get called heroes and say well I didn't think about it
- J21: Speak louder
- A21: I just went and did it and didn't think about it and stuff they get called heroes and stuff
- J22: Cos I can't hear you on the phone so I doubt he can hear you
- A22: Which is, sort of like, I've forgotten what I was talking about now
- J23: Um, people being heroes and saying they didn't think about themselves when they did it
- A23: And didn't think about it
- J24: Well sometimes that's true, I'm sure I've helped people before and
- A24: Haven't given it a second thought
- J25: Yeah, I mean I'm wonderful me - no I don't mean it like that, no I just think that a lot of the time people do - this is way too cynical
- A25: Yeah
- J26: People do, there are loads of organisations, people that really rally care and don't just do things for their own benefit
- A26: Umm
- J27: And don't just do things for their own benefit, okay, 'Thou shalt not kill but needst not strive officiously to keep alive'
- A27: It's like, you shouldn't kill anyone but if someone's dying and you don't really mind them dying then you don't have to bother, to work too hard to keep them alive, I mean, this like

- J28: Yeah, I mean this is totally - don't kill but don't help someone live you don't need to help
- A28: Yeah
- J29: That is so
- A29: Like euthanasia and stuff you know like they're, doctors can't kill anyone but they're allowed to take away their food supply and their drink and everything and let them die naturally
- J30: Well it's like Doctor Death putting people in a garage with carbon monoxide coming out of a car to kill them because they're in pain so that one is totally, that is murder
- A30: Yeah but thing is that's not relevant is it- euthanasia
- J31: Well no but it's still killing someone
- A31: Yeah, I know it's killing someone
- J32: But he's got their permission to do it
- A32: Yeah so it's a bit different but it's
- J33: But I mean doctors do, don't they? They really do work, really hard to try to and keep people alive and it's not for their own benefit, well except for the money
- A33: Yeah well if you become a doctor I wouldn't have thought it was necessarily for the money it's because doctors will usually, ninety nine percent of them just want to help people
- J34: Yeah, so they're not doing it, not really doing it for their own benefit
- A34: Well lots of doctors don't get paid very much
- J35: No, not doctors in this country anyway
- A35: Hmmm
- J36: So they do it for something they love, I think this is way too cynical
- A36: Uh huh
- J37: Um 'Do not adultery commit, advantage rarely comes of it'
- A37: Well that's because only usually like there's no - you don't get anything out of it in the end
- J38: Yeah you get a bit more fun maybe. It just causes you a load of hassle. 'Thou shalt not steal' oh we've done that one 'Bear not false witness, let the lie have time on its own wings to fly' oh what does bear not false witness mean?
- A38: Don't know
- J39: Don't know don't care ha
- A39: False yeah - don't lie
- J40: So do not lie, let the lie have time on its own wings to fly
- A40: Yeah if
- J41: So let the lie develop itself
- A41: Yeah, well you know don't
- J42: You don't want to get caught lying
- A42: Yeah
- J43: Just wanna
- A43: Don't bother saying anything but help it along
- J44: Yeah
- A44: Yeah
- J45: Stir basically, conniving little people
- A45: What does covert mean?
- J46: Covet um
- A46: That's it isn't it?
- J47: Oh yeah oh thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's arse - ass sorry

- A47: Um yeah, don't be jealous of what your neighbour's got
 A & J 48: 'but tradition / Approves all forms of competition'
 A49: But we're competitive aren't we?
 J49: What makes you say that?
 A50: Cos we are
 J50: In what though? cos I always thought we're competitive but we've never talked about that
 A51: I don't know but my mum says "you two are very competitive" and I go "oh that's nice"
 J51: What made her say that? What had you been saying?
 A52: Oh that was ages ago
 J52: D'you think we're competitive?
 A53: Well probably but I think most people are
 J53: Yeah but we don't do it because - I don't think I've got to do better than Anna or anything
 A54: No cos we are, but then again Mum says I've always been competitive anyway, I am in dancing
 J54: You just don't want to, I mean because we're close and everything you just don't want to come last - well I don't want to come last all the time, that's probably
 A55: Don't know
 J55: But we do better than each other in different things don't we?
 A56: You're better at music than me
 J56: Not very much, you're better at dancing than me. OK, um what else is there?
 A & J (laughing together)
 A57: You could have said, yeah but you're better at this than me, yeah but you're okay right we'll shut up now
 J57: No but it says if a poem triggers off a memory or something talk about it or write it down or whatever so
 A58: Yeah, we've talked about it now
 J58: Yeah I'm just saying though there's nothing wrong
 A59: Thou shalt not covet - or whatever it is, well that's competition approves all forms of competition
 J59: We just kind of went 'yeah' didn't we about that?
 A60: Well don't be, don't make me jealous but you can compete with your neighbour to get better stuff than him, they're talking about assess and stuff - my ass is better
 J60: Yeah, my ass is better than yours - look at the size of my ass, it's bigger than yours (laughing together) Okay this is stupid yeah in everyone he's said one of the Ten Commandments hasn't he (counting together)
 J61: Yeah, he has, he's said them all and then he's like added a bit just to make it show you know show irony and just to show that
 A61: Yeah
 J62: I didn't write my full journal but I'll tread out what I did write "I liked this poem, I had a lot of ideas about it, I think that, what is it Clough
 A62: What?
 J63: His name
 A63: Clog, no it is Clough
 J64: Is being ironic about the Decalogue and showing that people are selfish and only do nice things for their own good, I've written rubbish here because I

was in a hurry to get to music- this is a bit - oh no - I suppose that's a bit of a stupid thing to say

A64: What?

J65: Mr Pike, sorry my work's not very good but I'm in a hurry to get to music

J & A: (laugh together)

J66: It'll make him stop us having lessons even more - um - where was I? Oh, this was a bit cynical but a lot of what he says is probably true for everyone of the Ten Commandments, he says that people actually follow the Commandment...what? oh yeah okay that's not actually making sense - so people are following the Ten Commandments for their own, cos it's in their own best interests to do so - this doesn't make sense- the way I've written it

A65: Um what else? I think the poem is saying one of the main reasons for keeping to the ten commandments is for your own good. By doing this you make your life easier for example lines five and six, there's no point in calling anyone names or blaspheming sort of thing because they don't mean anything and you won't gain anything from it then I've got there is no point

J67: Okay

A66: I dig that idea

(J: laughs)

A67: You know what I'm talking about, cos I've done it um there is no point in calling anyone names because they don't mean anything and you'll never gain anything from it, there is no point

A & J: (laugh together)

A68: This poem also

J68: You don't just have to read it

A69: This poem also explains that although you should not kill you don't have to follow any rules about keeping someone alive, you don't have to work hard to stop someone from dying, he makes the fact that it is someone should only have one good he says

J69: One good?

A70: One God, he says who would want two anyway?

J70: Yeah who would want the expense of worshipping two gods,

A71: I gave that 8 out of 10. You'd have more to do

J71: I gave it 6 out of 10 but that was how much I liked it. One of them I gave 5 out of 10 cos I didn't like it and 6 out of 10 cos I did like it - tight really I don't know

A72: But talking about being selfish and everything like priests who spend their whole life doing stuff like that - I mean why do they do that? Is it because they don't want to go to Hell? cos of it

J72: No, a lot of blokes, priests and stuff, a lot of people are really really into the church and really believe in the Bible and believe

A73: Yeah I know. That's why they do it.

J73: They want to let other people hear the word and follow the Bible because that's the best way to live and you're gonna have eternal life well go to Heaven because of it and a lot of them really believe it

A74: Hmmm

J74: But the thing is God said

A75: So what if they believe in it, why do they have to go to church all the time?

J75: Well to make other people believe in it, spread the word cos that's what God said didn't he, spread the word and everything - so they're just carrying out God's will

- A76: But why do they have to go to church?
- J76: Well, that's the way to do it isn't it, they'll spend their lives preaching to other people to let them know but um God said that people people shouldn't follow God for their own best interests and everything, and then priest and anything, they make loads of money, don't they
- A77: Probably, I don't know
- J77: They used to, in olden times to live better than everyone else, like people going people saying
- A78: If you don't, sorry, if you don't um believe and stuff then you're gonna go to Hell and stuff- like one certain teacher
- J78: Said to us once! Are you christened Anna?
- A79: Yeah
- J79: Well it's okay for you. She said, if we weren't christened, we were going to Hell and me and Lara were sitting there going ahhhhh- we were only in the first or second year, we were well scared (laugh) My mum said we must have misheard but she did say that
- A80: Yeah
- J80: We didn't mishear
- A81: I think it's stupid that but people anyway believing and stuff so they'll get a better life when they die. I mean what's the point of that? Spending it all doing stuff and missing out doing other stuff
- J81: Yeah people are, I mean yeah you can say people are spending their whole lives thinking about when they die and what's going to happen to them then and while they're doing that they're missing out
- A82: Yeah, they're not having so much fun and stuff (laugh together)
- J82: But um yeah well this is talking about a Decalogue
- A83: We could say some things now about um laws that we think
- J83: Okay out of these Ten Commandments I think about the only ones that I think are all right are 'Honour thy parents' well no actually, you've got to love at least one parent
- A84: Honour thy mum
- J84: Yeah honour thy mother and then do not kill and do not commit adultery and do not steal and.... I mean lying okay, what do they mean? Do they mean white lies or do they mean all lies?
- A85: They mean all lies I would say
- J85: But a lie
- A86: But they probably mean more like um
- J86: Ones that matter
- A87: Yeah but a lie
- J87: But that's a bit stupid cos it says bear not false witness - a lie is saying something that's not the truth isn't it
- A88: Yeah
- J88: And I mean I go up to customers at work and I say 'oh your food's just on its way' and it's not, they haven't even taken it out the freezer, I mean that's a lie but should I go to Hell for saying that or something
- A89: Yes Josie
- J89: I know but that's how stupid it is
- A90: Yeah
- J90: And all the time you lie but you just say little white lies to make people feel better
- A91: Don't do that one about my hair again (laugh together)

- J91: Well I was only joking
 A92: No but I meant like to teachers
 J92: And your parents and that, I mean I don't lie to my mum cos I want to hurt her or anything, I just lie for her own best interests (both laugh) I mean it is, I just don't want her to worry about me so I lie
 A93: Yeah (laughs)
 J93: I mean what you don't know doesn't hurt you
 A94: Yeah, unless they do find out and then get very cross
 J94: And upset and worried and sad and everything
 A95: And then they think, they lied about that, they lied about lots of other things
 J95: Yeah but then I mean there's just a little
 A96: With Tom (her brother) there's no point in lying cos we always know when he's lying because he never backs it up so it's like um "Where've you been?" "I been around Pete's" "Where's that?" "In Walkcross" "Oh I saw you earlier running along Christway by pass" "Yeah I was" "weren't you at Pete's?" "yeah" (both laugh) it's stupid he doesn't back his lies up so then that's a pointless lie
 J96: Julia tries her best to lie (laugh)
 But I know, like things to your parents, like "Josie are there going to be any boys at this party?" "No mum how can you say such a thing, it's just us girls having a girls night in"
 A97: Yeah I think there's a limit to this
 J97: Josie, why's the ticket so much when it's for under 18's - um cos lots of people want to go - but anyway
 A98: Yeah I'm not gonna have a party
 J98: These are just protecting our parents, aren't they
 A99: Uh huh
 J99: So I don't think there's anything wrong with that but
 A100: But you couldn't have your parents so disappointed in you they just didn't want to know you
 J100: But they aren't, at the moment my mum doesn't know much about me but and she thinks oh Josie's, great, she works hard, she's such a good girl and if she really knew about me she probably wouldn't like me - I'm not saying there's anything really bad about me just all the little white lies I tell my mum and dad, we all do I mean she may really not like me so I may as well, I suppose it's my best interest isn't it to lie so
 A101: Yeah
 J101: So we're saying this poem is right
 A102: What is those things on those folders
 J102: They're always there
 A103: What is the point of them?
 J103: For effect
 A104: Okay
 J104: So what other ones um thou shalt not covet, you shouldn't be jealous because basically if you're jealous then it gets really annoying for you
 A105: Yeah but jealousy can cause a lot of problems as well, I mean um say, I can't think of an example, say a bloke's jealous - sees his girl talking to someone else
 [indistinct]
 A106: Yeah - or like The Sick Rose
 [indistinct]

- J105: Or like if one of their friend's was getting too close to that friend's boyfriend then the first friend would get jealous of the second friend and probably not trust her and would cause a lot of problems
- A107: Yeah then they wouldn't be such good friends anymore
- J106: Yeah
- A108: So whose fault would it be? The boys or the girls?
- J107: What girl? The second girl?
- A109: The second girl
- J108: It wasn't my fault! (laugh together)
- A110: The the girl who was getting too close to the boy is the first girl or second girl?
- J109: Second
- A111: Let's call her girl A (laugh together)
- J110: Okay okay this is pointless - jealousy is bad because it causes a lot of problems so I think that - but you can't help it though because that's an emotion and you can't help feeling jealous
- A112: Emotions are invisible worms
- J111: You can shut them out can you?
- A113: No, if you feel jealousy you can't stop it
- J112: Yeah you can try and ignore it and just think she's not doing anything wrong and everything or he's not or yeah he or she or it or whatever
- A114: Or thou or they or it
- J113: Anyway
- A115: Is it wrong to have your best friend's boyfriend sleeping around your house?
- J114: don't know
- A116: Ex- boy friend
- J115: Well only for two days okay well anyway God um oh sorry I just blasphemed, d'you think that's wrong?
- A117: Well for the point that everyone does it
- J116: I mean would you be really offended if whenever anything went wrong people said "Anna" (both laugh) drop something on my foot "Oh Anna"
- A118: I'd laugh
- J117: Dropped something on my foot "oh Anna"
- A119: I'd be rather
- J118: It's like you're blaming the person isn't it
- A120: No - it sounds like you're going - well most people say oh God you say oh God, it's like you're asking him for help, I'd quite like it actually, I wouldn't be able to do anything but there'd be lots of different names for me and everybody all over the world would know me I think that'd be rather cool
- J119: Well at least people are saying his name everyday - millions of times
- A121: Yeah (laughs)
- J120: I used to have a habit of saying oh God all the time (both laugh)
- A122: Oh God, oh God
- J121: Yeah - someone would say something to me and I'd say oh God, oh god, oh God, just carried on
- A123: People do nowadays and none can stop it and you can't really punish people for it cos it would be pointless cos there wouldn't be anyone good
- J121: Well yeah - you can't help it now, it's just a habit but I suppose if we trained ourselves not to say it and someone whacked us every time we did you know or what about?
- A124: It is pointless because it doesn't hurt anyone it doesn't upset anyone

J122: It might upset god if there is a God

A125: Don't let's get into that - but um well I don't reckon there is a god - well I don't know

J123: Don't you?

A126: What's it called, someone who doesn't believe there's a god, is that an anarchist?

J124: No, it's an atheist

A127: Atheist (both laugh) what's an anarchist?

DOOR OPENS - STEVE APPEARS

A128: Hi Steve

S1: Hi Anna

J125: Didn't you read our message on the door? [Keep out]

S2: Yeah, that's why I came in

J126: Close the door, we're recording by the way

S3: Yeah that's okay, oh sorry

A129: What's an anarchist?

S4: Um don't know. Why?

A130: Just wondering it's what we're talking about

S5: It's not even in the poem

A131: So we were talking about atheists and I said

S6: That's a devil worshipper isn't it?

A132: An atheist is someone who doesn't believe in God

S7: I'm not gonna go and see him because um

A133: Do you want to put the things in?

BELL RINGS TAPE OFF

Tape 24: THE LATEST DECALOGUE - ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH -

STEVE and ROB

- S1: I'll let you read this one cos I did the last one
 R1: OK 'The Latest Decalogue' (reads it through)
 S2: By?
 R2: Oh, by Arthur Hugh Clough....would you like to start?
 S3: I'd just like to start off by saying that when I read this poem the very first thing that came into my mind was the whole poem is about self-gain, it's not about the Ten Commandments that were originally given, it's ways to get around these Ten Commandments
 R3: Yeah, I thought it was about people like being hypocritical saying they're like Christian and following the Ten Commandments but really they're breaking them
 S4: Yeah, yeah (sounds surprised/convinced)
 R4: You know 'Thou shalt not covet' but everyone else in history's been doing it for years
 S5: Yeah
 R5: And everything else in the poem
 S6: OK then, well d'you want to kick off with the first line?
 R6: OK Well something else I noticed. Um, there's twenty lines so two lines for each um....
 S7: Commandment
 R7: Commandment
 S8: There's one line used for saying the Commandment and then the other one is how to get around it.
 R8: Yeah
 S9: Yeah
 R9: Right um, the title, first of all I thought it was the author's opinions on the Decalogue, you know, what he thought about it and you know the new version and then um first line, it's a bit like saying why have two gods when it would be easier to just have, you know, one God or whatever, I wasn't really sure about that
 S10: No, I didn't get the first couple of lines either because..... the rest of the poem I got but the first couple of lines....
 R10: Yeah, I knew what, you know, what the poem meant I just didn't know how to explain it um, what did you get for....did you get anything for 'no graven images shall ye worship'?
 S11: Um...
 R11: I thought that was like um something to do with money maybe?
 S12: Yeah
 R12: You know you shouldn't worship anything other than God but people are worshipping money doing anything to get their hands on it or whatever
 S13: Yeah I you, you , you're not allowed to copy someone and do what they do, but you're allowed to want all the money and riches in the world but you're not allowed to want, you're not allowed to copy somebody else which is a bit silly
 R13: Yeah, that also ties in to line 16 where he says it's so lucrative to cheat
 S14: Yes
 R14: So, you make money by cheating a bit like that really

- S15: Lucrative being money making
- R15: Ummm
- S16: So what did you get for line 3 and 4?
- R16: Just what I've said about you know the, worshipping graven images, people like don't exactly worship money but they always want it, they're always after it.
- S17: OK, lines 5 and 6 'swear not at all, for thy curse thy enemy is none the worse' um - that kind of relates in to the saying 'sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me' because words are just words, they don't do anything, they don't hurt you, well, they can but not swearing, it's just like nothing, it doesn't do nothing, it's quite pointless to swear because um it doesn't mean anything anyway
- R17: Yeah, I mean I sort of knew what he was on about but didn't know how to explain it, how to put it down in words but basically it was what you've just said cos it's not worth doing it cos it doesn't give you more an advantage or make it any better
- S18: Yeah good point
- R18: Probably makes you worse
- S19: OK
- R19: Uh next two lines, 7 and 8 'at church on Sunday to attend will serve to keep the world thy friend' he's saying like if you go to church, then everything in your life will you know be all right even if you're always breaking the, the Ten Commandments or whatever you know, no matter what you do, if you keep going to church then
- S20: For that I thought, there's almost a small sense of threat in their life, if you don't go to church the world won't be your friend and your life will be Hell or something like that because um....threatens....if you don't go to church you're going to get enemies, but, that's what I got for that
- R20: Yeah um , forgotten what I was going to say now
- S21: OK, d'you want to go on to the next one? 'Honour thy parents, that is all from whom advancement may befall' which is like saying honour thy real blood parents because that is all from whom advancement may befall - like they are your real parents, you came out of them - so you don't really have to honour your step parents or whatever it is
- R21: No, I didn't really get anything for that one - I wasn't really sure about that one.
- S22: Well, I thought about it and the punctuation in that makes a lot of difference, the fact that the comma is after the word 'is' , if that comma wasn't there it would read 'Honour thy parents that is all from whom advancement many befall' but as it is, there it says 'Honour thy parents, that is, all from whom advancement may befall' which emphasises the fact that it's only those people who are like thy real parents, who you've advanced from
- R22: Yeah, I wasn't really sure about that line at all. What did you get for the next two? 'Thou shalt not kill!' It says like um you don't kill but don't exactly struggle to, you know, to stay alive - you don't have to try as hard as you can, maybe because you're going to go to Heaven afterwards anyway or whatever so it doesn't really matter.
- S23: It says you're not allowed to kill but you don't have to go by the book or do everything officially to keep alive - so you're not allowed to kill but you're allowed to, you can do anything to stay alive but you're not allowed to kill so

- you don't have to go by the law to actually protect your own life but you're not allowed to kill.
- R23: Um, what about the next two lines 'Do not adultery commit'? I, I didn't really see anything deep in that. I just thought don't commit adultery because it doesn't do anything for you
- S24: Um
- R24: Doesn't make you stronger or anything
- S25: I, I, thought, for that line I put, it's not because it's unfair to your husband or wife - that you're um having an affair with somebody else - it's not because they might get upset, it's purely because there's nothing in it for you, if you have an affair then, you're not gonna gain anything from it. I think that's that's the reason they put it down here - not because it's gonna upset someone else, again we come back to the theme of self gain - there's not gonna be anything in it for you
- R25: Um, what about the next line 'thou shalt not steal? I thought um, it says in the commandments don't steal, but why do it anyway because it's easier - you're gonna get more money - like going back to what you said about self gain - if you just, you know, cheat
- S26: Yeah
- R26: To get money - like killing someone?
- S27: You're, you're not allowed to outwardly steal - like break into somewhere and nick a computer or whatever but it's OK to fiddle things so that people don't think they're being stolen from - but you're
- R27: They're being conned
- S28: Actually taking what actually isn't yours but they are willing to give it to you because they're being cheated, so it's OK to kind of bend the rules a little bit
- R28: Yeah
- S29: But it doesn't actually count
- R29: Yeah it doesn't say don't cheat in the Ten Commandments either which is...
- S30: Yeah, yeah
- R30: I didn't have anything before about the next two lines about 'bearing false witness' but I just thought that um it meant, something like, if you lie, then um you know you shouldn't admit to it because it's just gonna come out anyway and you're gonna get in big trouble if you do it in the first place - and you know, don't tell anyone
- S31: Well for that ... I got it said 'don't lie, let the lie have time on it's own wings to fly' um don't actually do it until you're absolutely sure that it's good to do it but if you leave it for a while and you have time to think about it, then as often as not you think of the consequences of lying and you you decide not to actually lie, which is like the lie flying away
- R31: Um
- S32: So you're actually dissuaded out of lying because you've had time to think about it and you've um decided that it's wrong
- R32: Um, next two lines 'Thou shalt not covet', I thought that was also hypocritical cos one of the Ten Commandments is sort of like saying not to be competitive and not to want you know the things other people have but since time began it's always been happening, you know, it's not gonna, you know people who say like they're Christians and following the Ten Commandments are always competitive and they always want something that other people have got - it's just been happening since time began, it's not something you can just say don't do

- S33: Yeah , yeah, that's what I got for it. It's human nature to want something better than what you've got already, I mean, there's always someone who's better off than you and you're always gonna want what they've got so it - you're not allowed to - but competition is what, what the world is about really because you've got so many companies all competing against each other and different sports teams and this kind of thing, it's all about competition
- R33: Yeah it's just hypocritical. I think the author of this, Arthur Hugh Clough, had very strong opinions on you know how um people don't really keep to the Decalogue, they more like they say they do but they don't, um, he just wants to express those views - in the poem
- S34: What did you give it out of 10?
- R34: 7 - I thought it was quite good really
- S35: I gave it a 9 cos it was a good poem I hate poetry but...
- R35: That's probably one of the best poems we've read
- S36: Yeah I mean I hate poetry but that's a good poem, it was all right
- R36: Yeah um there was only one other poem that was better that we've read this year
- S37: Was that um 'A Poison Tree'?
- R37: No... it was uh ... 'Little Black Boy' - the one about racism
- S38: Yeah? (sounds surprised) Um, I kind of liked 'A Poison Tree', cos that um good, that was about life, it's what 'The Latest Decalogue' was about
- R38: Yeah. How long have we got left?
- S39: No time - the bell's just about to go - So that's Steve and Rob.

Tape 25: THE LATEST DECALOGUE - ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH -

ADAM and PETER.

- P1: I got quite a lot for this one
 A1: Thou shalt have one God only - two- I thought that was one god's better than any other gods
 P2: Yeah, I sort of got that 'latest' Decalogue
 A2: That's like the newest one isn't it
 P3: The revised Ten Commandments, right um I sort of thought um, um, if it's, um, cos it says who would be at the expense of two
 A3: Yeah
 P4: Well there'd be two people at the expense of two like the person who was worshipping the god
 A4: Ummm
 P5: Would be at the expense of two because if they had to worship two gods, they'd have to worship twice as long and it'd take twice as much and they'd have to spend twice as long in church
 A5: Yeah I see what you mean
 P6: Or it could be that the original God would be at the expense of two because he's only get worshipped half as much, so it could go either way, it's a bit blasphemous
 A6: Blaspheme, no graven images may be worshipped except the currency, that means money doesn't it?
 P7: Yeah so you can't worship anything else apart from money
 A7: Yeah, yeah, cool - simple enough I think
 P8: 'Swear not - for for thy curse thy enemy is none the worse'
 A8: Yeah, that means like like if in a fight you're no worse than your enemy like, you know like in a fight yeah, someone says they want a fight - you hit back sort of thing and that'll make you no better 'swear not at all for for thy curse, your enemy is none the worse'. Are you on the same sort of level as me?
 P9: No, I think (both laugh)
 A9: You don't understand a word I've said
 P10: No, I understand what you mean but it's sort of um, right, cos this is like words, like swearing like hitting, sort of it, you shout at someone and um just sort of swear at them and stuff, they're not any worse, you could deck them and then they'd be worse but swearing at them
 A10: But this is supposed to like not encourage swearing isn't it?
 P11: No, I thought right the whole poem was like is about
 A11: What it's like today you mean
 P12: Yeah rather than like the Ten Commandments, like say two thousands of years ago - you did not steal, you did take the laws and you didn't swear, now
 A12: The up to date one sort of
 P13: Everyone tries to keep the same rules but they can't - they don't actually break the rules they just bend them
 A13: About a hundred and fifty degrees
 P14: Yeah - so I thought it was like don't bother swearing at them, cos your enemy's not made any worse
 A14: Yeah I see what you mean
 P15: So don't swear just deck em
 A15: Yeah but people can be offended by words

- P16: Yeah but everyone says sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me- that's not really very true
- A16: No it ain't
- P17: So that's what I thought, about that, it's sort of very selfish, it's sort of an overview of what people were like in his time, like people were selfish like two thousand years ago no one was selfish and everyone helped everyone else and you'd give people stuff but now everyone's just for themselves
- A17: Cos they play by the rules
- P18: Yeah, uh,
- A18: 'At church on Sunday to attend will serve to keep the world thy friend' I didn't really understand that
- P19: I thought, sort of you go to church on Sunday not because you want to worship God and not because you really love God and want to worship him
- A19: Just go to mingle with your friends sort of thing
- P20: Yeah, just because if you don't, everyone'll go 'arr, that person doesn't go to church' and you'll become an outcast and then
- A20: Yeah, just like 'The Latest Decalogue', I understand this now
- P21: Um, 'Honour thy parents, that is all from whom advancement may befall'
- A21: Yeah, just like in your future, if you're good to them now, that is what I think they could help you
- P22: Yeah, yeah, that's what I thought, don't love your parents because you should do because they're your parents and they do stuff for you, only love them because
- A22: They'll help you succeed in life
- P23: Yeah - exactly that's what I thought
- A23: Get places
- P24: Not because you should love them because they're you're parents but because they'll get you places
- A24: Yeah
- P25: 'Thou shalt not kill but needst not strive officiously to keep alive' oh I thought, you know, you're not supposed to kill anyone but you don't have to try too hard to keep someone alive like
- A25: Don't go out of your way
- P26: If you don't actually kill them I mean like if you're walking by and see someone who's been mugged and stabbed and is gonna die and you can't actually kill them but don't want to get blood on your clothes, walk past
- A26: I see what you mean, yeah
- P27: So you don't have to be, don't have to strive to keep people alive
- A27: That's like that Bible thing where they all walk past that dying man
- P28: Oh yes - um - Good Samaritan Story
- A28: That's the one. 'Do not adultery commit, advantage rarely comes of it'
- P29: Yeah
- A29: 'Do not adultery commit, advantage rarely comes of it' (both laugh)
- P30: I've got this is a lot like the other ones- sort of don't commit adultery, not because God says so and because it's wrong to commit adultery but because there's no point
- A30: What do you mean there's no point? I'm sure the person thinks there is
- P31: Yeah but 'advantage rarely comes of it' means that um they're not really um, they're not - it's not really gonna get you anywhere- well it might do - but it's just all selfishness really so it's like they're all in two different parts- one-two three four...six...yeah that's ten, right, so there's two types of ones yeah

- on on this, there's ones where you where it says you should do something but not do it because of the right reason
- A31: Oh yeah
- P32: Or there's the other type of one - don't do it just bend it so - the ones where he's just bending it are the um one about graven images but it's all right to worship money and uh, um, and thou shalt not kill - that's bending it really and then there's other ones like honour your parents which is
- A32: Yeah
- P33: You should still do it but only for selfish reasons- so which one are we on?
- A33: Fifteen 'Thou shalt not steal cheat' I looked up lucrative and it's like profiting from bad ways
- P34: Yeah
- A34: Cos I didn't know what it meant
- P35: Yeah, that's that's I mean like the one where you're bending it, you know don't steal just sort of cheat a bit
- A35: I'm not stealing I'm just sort of bending the rules a little bit - cheating - there are laws, laws about cheating, well it depends what sort of thing you're in, like cheating gambling you get a really heavy duty fine
- P36: There's a definite law you're not allowed to steal, but it's sort of, you can find a loop hole in the law about cheating, you can probably get away with that- so, so, you might as well cheat - it's not gonna get you so much stuff so much money but you're not gonna get caught for it or arrested for it or something like that
- A36: Sort of moving the boundaries or something
- P37: Yeah um I didn't get anything for this one 'Bear not false witness, let the lie have time on its own wings to fly'
- A37: False witness is lying yeah?
- P38: Yeah
- A38: 'Let the lie have time on its own wings to fly'
- P39: I thought it was like, don't lie, just don't tell them the whole truth
- A39: Yeah, half truths sort of
- P40: Deceive them - rather than lie - cos some people sort of appreciate rather than being lied to, appreciate just someone, you know like in a hospital, as I um saying
- A40: As you were saying before - don't tell them You're gonna die in five minutes my friend
- P41: Yeah so, I s'pose its
- A41: What's it mean 'have time on its own wings to fly'?
- P42: I don't know um, I s'pose it's sort of, to fly, I don't know, it's sort of to escape and be let loose, I'm trying to
- A42: Right co-vet,
- P43: 'Thou shalt not covet, but tradition approves all forms of competition' - um, covet um is, oh you're not allowed to be jealous, I think that's it, that's the one
- A43: Jealous
- P44: Covet is being jealous I think
- A44: 'But tradition approves all forms of competition'
- P45: Yeah, that's another one where it's like bending it because um, you're allowed to be competitive
- A45: I see what you mean - jealousy

- P46: To get what other people want but you're not really supposed to be jealous, but I don't know
[talk both at the same time]
- A46: Yeah, cos jealousy is competition isn't it, you want what they've got
- P47: Jealousy and uh sort of wanting what other people want drives the world doesn't it cos you go to work cos you want more, a better car
- A47: Yeah
- P48: A better house, you want better stuff, all that, because someone else has got one, yeah
- A48: Yeah cos I see yeah, they'll want competition so it is a list, the revised Ten Commandments isn't it
- P49: Yeah - so you can be competitive but not jealous, which is sort of the same thing but slightly different
- A49: It's sort of a semi-contradiction- if you think- if people are looking after themselves all the time
- P50: Yeah, there's a lot of sort of contradiction like uh, you're not allowed to steal but allowed to cheat
- A50: Yeah
- P51: Um, you're not allowed to worship anything
- A51: Except the currency
- P52: Except for money and um, um
- A52: And the last one, jealousy and competition
- P53: Yeah, basically he's sort of looking at people and how people have become less nice and less holy and things like that - in um
- A53: Today's world
- P54: Today's world
- A54: Well but
- P55: It's pre 1900
- A55: Pre is before isn't it?
- P56: Yeah
- A56: Oh well, it must have been like that then then
- P57: I would of if the language had been a little bit different
- A57: Yeah
- P58: Yeah, then I would have thought this was like a 1900s well no, sort of 1980s, 1990s
- A58: Yeah, sort of recent thing yeah?
- P59: Yeah, so
- A59: Uh, that seems like
- P60: Yeah, I think, I think
- A60: We've said everything really
- P61: Yeah
- A61: We've spent quite a long time on it haven't we
- P62: Yeah quarter of an hour.

TAPE 26: THE LATEST DECALOGUE - ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH -

PETER AND HARRY.

- P1: Yeah, it's probably recording now, shall we just do 'The Latest Decalogue' first, yeah, right
- H1: Peter do you like the poem?
- P2: [Laughs] Read any good books lately? No, I thought it was quite good actually, it was better than 'The Sick Rose'
- H2: Yeah, it was longer
- P3: I gave it about a 6 or 7 out of 10.
- H3: I gave it 5 cos all he did was copy out the Bible basically.
[both laugh]
- P4: I thought it was - Arthur Hugh Clough was a bit of an atheist sort of thing wasn't he.
- H4: He's taking the chronic
- P5: I know
- H5: a bit - he's like being ironic.
- P6: Hmmm, yeah.
- H6: Mint?
- P7: Oh, yeah, lovely, thank you.
- H7: Sminted.
- P8: See Mr. Pike I've got fresh breath now, ha ha [blows loudly into the tape recorder].
Right cos it would have been like before 1900 wouldn't it have been like, I thought you'd have been crucified for something like this, you know like not burnt at the stake but sort of
- H8: Like detached from society
- P9: Yeah, like a hundred years ago if you said God's uh sort of God didn't exist and all that and take the piss out of the Lord I thought you got - what?
- H9: You said (indistinct)
- P10: Did I?
- H10: Yes
- P11: Oh dear, sorry - I would of thought you'd have got quite an earful from the church
- H11: Well he's basically said what the Bible says y'know
- P12: Yeah I know but it's sort of
- H12: But on some of them he's added to them and been, probably a bit sarcastic about them, for instance - don't, there's one line that says thou shalt not steal - an empty feat when it's so lucrative to cheat (laugh together at line)
- P13: I thought that was a good line
- H13: Yeah - don't steal, just cheat instead
- P14: A lot easier - and um no graven images may be worshipped except the currency - doesn't rhyme but it is - don't worship anything except money
- H14: Yeah
- P15: So it's sort of - it's quite in line with some of my beliefs actually cos I don't steal, just cheat
- H15: It's actually quite topical for a poem that was written sort of like years ago, probably more than that actually
- P16: Don't know when it was written really

- H16: Just pre 1900
P17: This mint's very um
H17: Strong
P18: Um - if you put ten of them in your mouth at the same time and just crunched them
H18: So like, he puts thin lines between what's right and wrong you know
P19: Yeah
H19: Like, there's another one, like the stealing one - bear not false witness, let the lie have time on its own wings to fly
P20: What's that sort of mean?
H20: Uh I get the impression like don't lie, just forget about it, yeah you can like think false truths and everything you just can't say them to other people I would have thought
P21: Oh right, right um, yes, like cheating's not bad
H21: No but it is, could be, a form of stealing couldn't it
P22: Cos you get like um oh what is it when you steal money off your employer
H22: Embezzlement
P23: Embezzlement that's it yeah that's sort of cheating isn't it, like tax fraud
H23: Yeah if you're a tax blokey for the mob or something it's okay, you get your head stuck in a vice
P24: Ha ha
H24: And your eye pops out
P25: Lovely - did you see that on the Godfather or something?
H25: No Casino
P26: Oh right, right um, oh yeah, line five, well lines 5 and 6 it says 'swear not at all, for, for thy curse thy enemy is none the worse', which is sort of don't swear at them cos it doesn't do anything to them you may as well beat them
H26: Senseless
P27: Senseless, yes, so it's sort of
H27: It says 'honour thy' this is line 9 and 10 - 'Honour thy parents; that is all / From whom advancement may befall', what does that mean? Does it mean that um if you try and overdo your parents you know go further than them
P28: Hmmmm
H28: While they're probably still on the surface or make them seem not as good as you are - you will not get very far because you will not be learning from them?
P29: Oh I well, I sort of put that, since, going along with the theme of the poem which is sort of sarcasm and stuff like that um, uh, what is it,, 'Honour thy parents; that is all / From whom advancement may befall' it's like only honour them cos you really should, don't honour them because it's morally good but it's cos they can get you places
H29: Good one
P30: Cos um, advancement may befall
H30: Oh that's lovely, oh that's lovely you've got your 'Sick Rose' now?
P31: I put you, the only reason you should honour them is because they'll get you places
H31: Hmm
P32: Which is pretty selfish.
H32: There's actually a line here that is pretty straightforward though 'Do not adultery commit; / Advantage rarely comes of it'
P33: Yeah

- H33: That's the only pretty much straightforward thing you know, do not cheat on anyone you know do not cheat on your husband or wife, cos nothing good comes out of it you know
- P34: Yeah, that's another sort of that's another one, I think that's like the 'Honour thy parents' one because I mean, it's sort of saying, don't bother committing adultery because
- H34: Get nothing out of it
- P35: There's no point, cos there's nothing out of it for you.
- H35: Yeah, it's pretty cynical this poem isn't it.
- P36: Yeah, there's nothing sort of um
- H36: Like the title, like 'The Latest Decalogue' it refers to, like, as if there's new versions coming out all the time y'know like the latest action film or something
[both laugh]
- P37: This is more, this is sort of a lot like a 1990's poem, isn't it.
- H37: Yeah, like someone who's been reading Rory Bremner or s'thing and they have guest readers on
- P38: Yeah and sort of cos like everyone's getting crueller, like a hundred years ago you'd sort of do things for people wouldn't you, be kind, do favours for people but know no-one will do anything if there's nothing in it for them, which I think this poem's a lot about sort of like someone says 'will you do me a favour?' and they say yes
- H38: Scratch my back and I'll scratch yours
- P39: But it'll cost you or something, I'll only do it for you if there's something in it for me
- H39: Uh, yeah, actually that goes with this bit 'At church on Sunday to attend / Will serve to keep the world thy friend' so, go to church ... I dunno
- P40: Yeah, not because you want to but because you don't
- H40: You'll be
- P41: If you don't
- H41: You'll be
- P42: You'll be punished and stuff don't you, a hundred years ago it was law
- H42: Yeah, it would be in your best interest to go
- P43: Yeah, not to worship the Lord because that's the thing to do.
- H43: Yeah, a lot of people do that now actually
- P44: Just go to church to keep people happy
- H44: Yeah, just for the image
- P45: Hmm, like maybe the Pope does but I doubt it [laughs]
- H45: Oh come on now, that's going too far
- P46: Yeah, sorry, I was just, I'm gonna get struck down by lightening as soon as I step outside.
- [H46: laughs]
- P47: All right.
- H47: 'Though shalt have one God only'
- P48: Or attacked by doves or s'thing
- H48: 'Though shalt have one God only; who / Would be at the expense of two' who would be at the expense of two?
- P49: Oh, that's a, that's a sort of rhetorical. I just thought of this, cos I didn't put anything down for the first two lines, cos I got everything cos they're in 10 things
- H49: Yeah, that's right.

- P50: Um, this is one of the only one's I didn't get anything for. 'Thou shalt have one God; who / Would be at the expense of two'. God would be at the expense of two wouldn't he?
- H50: Hmm
- P51: Cos it's sort of - that's really, that's really blaspheming that it cos it's sort of only one God - it's making God out to be really selfish and sort of I s'pose he was really, y'know the Ten Commandments, God says you must worship only me, you must not make pictures of me, you must not worship anything that looks like me
- H51: Yeah
- P52: That's sort of - bit of a Michael Jackson really
- H52: It's like he's got bit of an ego trip
- P53: Yeah
- H53: God's on an ego trip.
- P54: Yep, that's what it is.
- H54: He created us just to serve him, yeah
- P55: Yeah and then he commands we should have one day devoted to him
- H55: Yeah
- P56: And like one seventh of our lives should be devoted to him.
- H56: But it says here, 'Thou shalt have one God only', God - it, he doesn't say it's the God we all know from the Bible and stuff but it's spelt with a capital G so maybe he's not an atheist - Arthur Hugh Clough is not an atheist because God is spelt with a large G.
- P57: Yeah, well, you'd
- H57: It says 'who / Would be at the expense of two?'
- P58: Well, it's, I thought it was just like, if there were two gods, then you'd probably worship half and half, like the original God as in God, God so the Christian God type of thing would only get worshipped half as much.
- H58: Make it easy - don't worship anyone.
- P59: That's my idea. I haven't been to church - I've never been to church since I was christened.
- H59: I've been to church but I got paid for it so
- [both laugh]
- P60: Oh no, I've been for weddings but that's about it.
um, um, oh yeah, 'Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive / Officially - Officially to keep alive' that's, I just sort of got that it was
- H60: Well, if you see someone lying on the pavement - in need of a paramedic or something - and don't help them basically that's what it saying
- P61: I thought it was, um
- H61: You know, don't kill him, don't smack him over the head with a baseball bat just don't bother calling an ambulance or anything.
- P62: Oh well, I sort of got like, thou shalt not kill but you should always try to keep yourself - because - officiously - like - officiously - is like - everything's official and sort of
They're Year 11's
- H62: Probably got some exams.
- P63: Oh my brother hasn't come in, lazy git, he was still in bed when I left, right anyway, uh but you shouldn't strive, be really official to keep yourself alive as in you can - bit there
- H63: What? Not be Mr. Goody Goody
- P64: Yeah, yeah

- H64: Mr. gonna help anyone.
- P65: Yeah um, it's sort of like, to keep yourself alive, to keep yourself all nice and rich and e' thing sort of, you can cheat a bit, do a bit on the side sort of thing - just to keep yourself alive - don't strive to be - keep it by the book.
- H65: Those were the two lines I underlined cos it was pretty hard to understand - those, those two lines
- P66: What, what 'Thou shalt not kill'?
- H66: Yeah, it can be taken two different ways you see - like we're
- P67: Yeah it's, it's sort of, I don't know, never mind.
- H67: Line - the one 'Thou shalt not
[together:] covet, but tradition / Approves all forms of competition'.
- H68: So don't be jealous but you can like
- P68: But you can be very competitive
- H69: So like your neighbour has a really nice new car and you think oh, I want that and go out and buy it just to annoy him.
- P69: Yeah.
- H70: And and so he gets his windows double glazed 'oh no I haven't got them' go out and do that and get your path done over with gravel or something y'know and think that looks nice
- P70: Yeah
- H71: And it's all just to annoy him.
- P71: Yeah, it's saying, like competition, like the only reason competition exists is really cos of jealousy, isn't it sort of thing
- H72: Yeah
- P72: The reason why people are really competitive is cos they want to be
- H73: Other people
- P73: Yeah, they want to be best sort of thing - right, oh, so we go onto 'The Sick Rose'. I think he said to flick the tape over or something.
- H74: Yeah?
- P74: Yeah, right, anyway here we go - Mr. Pike, we're about to flick the tape over - bye.

TAPE 31: THE HUMAN ABSTRACT - WILLIAM BLAKE - JOSIE and

ANNA.

- J1: 'The Human Abstract'
 A1: Shall I say what I thought about it?
 J2: Yeah.
 A2: Maybe, just like maybe, it made me think of um like Pandora's Box kind of thing
 J3: Yeah me too
 A3: But instead of that
 J4: And Adam and Eve
 A4: Yeah basically that - but when - maybe it's saying when Eve ate the apple from the tree of knowledge which she wasn't meant to, it allowed all the bad things like poor and mercy and cruelty and humility and mystery and deceit, you know all the stuff that's got capital letters, except Natures got a capital as well
 J5: So's caterpillar and fly
 A5: But anyway all like these bad things you could say generally the bad things - it let out all that stuff cos she ate and all that stuff is in every human because she ate that apple and everyone's a descendant from her, it's in all humans everywhere.
 J6: Yeah, I thought that too but I also thought it's like he's saying, Blake's saying religion and God can't do anything about the bad things, they don't have power over them.
 A6: Where does he say that then?
 J7: Well, all the gods of earth and sea um tried to find the tree, the root of all the bad things in the world
 A7: Well, no maybe he just meant that um, they realize there's something wrong and are looking for it but in actual fact it's just human nature
 J8: Yeah, no, no, no [very excitedly] what I was saying was I think - cos he's a religious bloke okay - we've already figured that out - he's saying that God can't do anything about these bad things, he can't stop, he can't stop them cos they're in everyone's nature, they're in everyone's mind.
 A8: Yeah.
 J9: And um
 A9: Okay
 J10: 'He sits down with holy fears' he was there before and everything was fine and then something happened, like I don't know you know the whole creation story.
 A10: Who's the 'He'?
 J11: He God, I took it to be
 A11: God, yeah
 J12: And um
 A12: But the 'his' there hasn't got a capital letter so then it can't be because he always put 'he' with a capital letter when he's talking about God.
 J13: Well.
 A13: But then that 'his' there could be talking about cruelty, personification

- J14: Anyway, I thought then something must have happened to make this, then like a tree grew over the world casting a shadow on it and all the bad things and I thought he was saying
- A14: Has he spelt caterpillar wrong, I'm sure it's not spelt like that, probably is, but it makes sense with 'Pity would be no more / If we did not make somebody Poor' if there was no one poorer than us we wouldn't have pity for anyone.
- J15: Yeah.
- A15: Cos when you think about that, there's always going to be someone worse off than you in some aspect of life
- J16: And I thought this with the same idea 'And mutual fear brings peace' well that's like, if everyone's as scared as everyone else and always are, then that's going to be their peace isn't it.
- A16: Yeah, if everyone's scared of dying then everyone'll say, well I can't kill him because imagine what it would be like if I died and I'm scared of it so then [unclear]
- J17: So he's also saying all the bad emotions grow from other ones isn't he and that brings back the idea of the tree again
- A17: Yeah and he's using it - did he write 'The Poison Tree'?
- J18: I can't remember.
- A18: Well, he's doing it all, 'Humility takes its root' saying root
- J19: The tree is an extended metaphor
- A19: And knits a snare which is kind of like planting seeds and um then 'root / Underneath his foot', which I keep reading underneath his foot cos it rhymes, that's what I don't get, some of the verses rhyme and some of them don't but I suppose that just happened when he wrote it anyway
- J20: Poetic licence
- A20: Root and then it's - dismal shade, and then it becomes tree, bears a fruit of deceit as an apple, the apple of knowledge off the tree of knowledge
- J21: Uh, huh
- A21: I don't really get what the caterpillar and fly have much to do with it and then
- J22: Well, the caterpillar and fly, they're things that eat off, caterpillars eat leaves don't they, they're things that live off the tree, maybe that's us, we're like the caterpillar and fly, we live off all the bad things - no we don't, we don't really.
- A22: Raven, ravens make nest in trees - tree of life
- J23: Yeah, that's
- A23: Why ruddy?
- J24: That's like saying the raven is a, is a cruel animal - because it's saying in the 'thickest shade'
- A24: Raven, not a nice name like Robin
- J25: Or Anna! that's a nice name
- A25: Apparently there's a flower called anna, Katie told me the other day
- J26: Um, Matt and Don were filling up balloon flowers for us
- A26: Well, I said, words with capital letters represent what the apple eaten has brought about.
- J27: What mark did you give this?
- A27: Uh 8.
- J28: I gave it 7 but I think yeah about that.
- A28: Stingy.

- J29: I am stingy with them I know. I don't know what a good poem would be to me.
- A29: I was going to give a 9 and then I thought I don't want anyone to think I like it, I'll give it 8.
- J30: No, I don't know if I could ever like a poem so much to give it 10
- A30: Oh, no way, yeah
- J31: For a poem this is ok.

[Interruption - Steve wanting something]

- J32: People are always nice to you when they want something aren't they? it's like 'The Latest Decalogue'.
- A31: Well yeah ... og yeah, there is a poem I could give 10 out of 10 to - it's the one off 'Four Weddings and a Funeral' and its [unclear] I love that poem, I've got it at home somewhere.
- J33: About tour Sunday best.
- A32: Hmm - the sun won't shine in the mornings and there'll be no more stars
- J34: Yeah, cos that's a really, a poem that affects you
- A33: Hmm
- J35: When he reads it in the film everyone cries and it's just like, yeah, that's a poem I could give 10 out of 10. That's what 's good about poems
- A34: Is that by William Blake?
- J36: That's what's good about poems, one's that affect you emotionally I reckon, I mean this is quite good
- A35: Yeah
- J37: It's got a lot of meaning. Scottish bloke at funeral.
- A36: He had a nice voice. I like Scottish accents.
- J38: That was a really nice poem, we should study that one.
- A37: I like the otehr poem.
- J39: Yeah, but that poem didn't have loads of meanings, it said what it meant and I suppose that's good too, you didn't have to analyse it, you could just listen to it.
- A38: Hmm. My other favourite poem, well it's not anymore, when I was about 9, it was called 'daddy fell into the pond'.
- J40: Was that a poem or a little rhyme?
- A39: It's a rhyme. It was from 'My Life in Poems', I've got it at home - something something the sky was brown ... [recites poem]
- J41: V. fell in the pond once, we've got a 6 foot deep pond.
- A40: That's irrelevant.
- J42: Yeah but - this is evoking memories in us - no it's not, you're just going off the point. I was going to say something else but I've forgotten because I was so enchanted by your poem about the pond [laughs].
- A41: [continues to quote - farmer slaps knee]
Anyway, yeah, come on, oh yeah, yeah
- J43: Back on the point - we were saying about caterpillars and flies feed on the mystery - that's part of the tree that they eat off of, but why is mystery bad?
- A42: Well, it is in the fact that there are murder mysteries that are bead which are bad but everyone works out who the murderer is so they're good and they're quite enjoyable to read.
- J44: Mysteries can be fun, can't they?
- A43: Hmm

- J45: Because people like thrills.
- A44: [mumbles]
- J46: What was that you were saying?
- A45: I don't know really, it's just I don't like, well I do like this poem I think it's quite good. I know I'll read my thing, I don't really know what it's about. Ok. You read yours.
- J47: Um, I wrote, I didn't have very much time because I was going to get through assembly. [Reads] 'I think this poem was quite good for a poem, it has a lot of meanings and metaphors and I think a person could get a lot out of this poem. I think that Blake is talking about religion and all the bad things on the earth, in the world. I think he is saying there is nothing God can do about the bad emotions, perhaps they are beyond his control, perhaps God only has control over the good things in the world. I think that his poem is quite good for a religious poem, 7/10.' I would have written more but I didn't have time.
- A46: That's what I thought, really.
- J48: [Pause] Read yours.
- A47: It's another one of where I write stuff and I don't actually mean what I write.
- J49: Oh go on then, read it.
- A48: [Reads] 'I like this poem as it's quite forceful and although it is about religion it is perfectly written and never starts preaching. In a way it sort of questions God, maybe it is referring to the apple Eve ate from the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, it's kind of like Pandora's Box. By eating the apple Eve has let all the words with capital letters (deceit etc) into the human mind, now they appear all the time. Humans have the tree of knowledge growing in the brain (last verse)' [laugh]
- J50: Oh yeah, you know, you know when Adam and Eve, well Eve and Adam took the - I said that in tutor and everyone took the mick - [laugh together] and it made them realize that they were naked and made them embarrassed.
- A49: Uh, huh, that's humility
- J51: Yeah that's what I was saying, I said to Katie, that's what humility is, isn't it? She goes 'ask someone in set 1' and I go 'you are in set 1' and she goes 'oh yeah' [laugh]. Anyway, that's off the point.
- A50: Ah, but it triggered off a memory!
- J52: So is that a bad thing then us realizing, I don't think that's a bad thing then, I mean us, God, everyone would be walking around naked!
- A51: It's only a bad thing I suppose for that God liked it.
- J53: The way God intended, you can get arrested for that nowadays [laugh together].
- A52: I have no idea why.
- J54: No, but is it a bad thing that we all know these things? We're too clever for our own good, that we have humility
- A53: Well, what I don't get, how long was it before Eve ate the apple, because if it wasn't that long why um didn't Eve, why um didn't Eve, why wasn't, didn't Eve have children before that? Why did they only have children after they'd been banished from the Garden of Eden?
- J55: Because she didn't feel like having kids, she didn't feel she was emotionally secure yet! [laughs - indistinct] Maybe she didn't realize she could.
- A54: Until she realized she didn't have any clothes on.
- J56: Yeah.
- A55: That makes sense. No, but why didn't God forgive her?
- J57: Yeah, God's meant to be forgiving, God, Christianity - it's all stupid.

- A56: It contradicts itself
 J58: Yeah, that's what I was looking for
 A57: It's um a hypocrite
 J59: Yeah, you must be forgiving
 A58: It's hypocritical
 J60: Ok say
 A59: Well, God's saying in the 10 commandments you must not be jealous and then but, you must not worship oterh gods because I am a jealous God but [laughing - indistinct]
 J61: What would the world be like without humility [sweet wrapper noise, J: hmm I like them - laugh] first of all, we'd all be walking around naked and you'd do really mad things
 A60: It'd be really cold
 J62: Yeah but we'd do really mad things and not feel embarassed about it.
 A61: Yeah, well I think the world would be a lot worser, worse off if we didn't have embarassment cos people would be doing stupid stuff all the time.
 J63: Well, I mean people would do grim things as well cos they wouldn't be embarassed or ashamed of it.
 A62: Yeah, but then, Adam and Eve might not have had children this is saying [indistinct]
 J64: No, listen, if they hadn't have eaten from the tree of knowledge d'you reckon they would've

[Peter interrupts - says into tape 'Hi, Mr. Pike, A: Didyou have fun? P: It was very much fun. O friend - they're still recording. A: Well, you'd better hurry up, back to the lesson cos the end of the lesson is only one minute away. Only one minute to go Mr. Pike! Bye. P: Bye]

- J65: Anyway, do you reckon they would have still had kids?
 A63: I don't know.
 J66: Because I mean, but surely, of course they would, because God wanted the human race to carry on so of course they would've, their kida would have worn no clothes. Well, it's not like Adam and Eve wore clothes, they just covered their parts of the body.
 A64: How can God expect us to be amazingly good when the people we started from, Adam and Eve, weren't even good enough to stay in the Garden of Eden?
 J67: Hmm
 A65: Cos he banished them, surely he would have realized that after banishing them, they had disobeyed him, so they can't
 J68: But [tries to get a word in]
 A66: God would have realized they weren't good enough. I know I'm repeating myself, anyway they weren't good enough to stay in the Garden of Eden so he banished them so can he think I know I'm repeating.
 J69: How can he think punishing is good because he punished Adam and Eve and the earth still ended up pretty rubbish, everyone's still doing loads of bad things so surely, oh, don't know God made a mistake
 A67: Who made God?
 J70: God made a mistake I think - Oh God this roof is going to fall on our heads [laugh together]
 A68: And, and yeah.

- J71: Anyway, that was fun, we've got to go now cos I've got to do stuff at lunch.
- A69: No, wait, wait where did Lucifer come from?
- J72: Lucifer oh no [unclear] I've forgotten that story.
- A70: Did God make him?
- J73: God made all the angles, didn't he?
- A71: Yeah, no, they're dead people, why don't we have an angel Eve and Angel Adam, where did they go when they died? They're just not important anymore when they die.
- J74: Maybe they're still alive.
- A72: Why didn't they go to Hell? Why isn't the Devil called Adam and Eve because they were so bad, surely that would make more sense?
- J75: Yeah, but they weren't that bad
- A73: Yeah, but they obviously were
- J76: All they did was eat a fruit. For God's sake, my mum's always trying to get me to eat more fruit [laugh together - unclear]
- A74: I mean and if he didn't want them to eat it, why did he make it?
- J77: Did you know that this is the one Mr. Pike's basing our grade on? [laugh together].
- A75: Well, just being philosophical- philosophical. If God didn't want them to eat the fruit, why did he make it in the first place?
- J78: Cos that was the temptation.
- A76: Why did they need a temptation?
- J79: He wanted to see if they were strong enough to resist it but obviously
- A77: well, why didn't he make someone who was?
- J80: Because, he's just not that great [laugh together].
- A78: Why did he make someone with free will? How could he expect someone with free will
- J81: D'you think God would be pleased with the way things are in earth now?
- A79: Well, he sees what it's like, it's not like he's dead or anything, well he might be
- J82: We don't even know if there is a God but anyway
- A80: Hey yeah, what if someone started saying, yeah, God died yesterday
interruption me
- J83: We're going to switch it off now.

TAPE 45: JORDAN - GEORGE HERBERT - ANNA and JOSIE.

- A1: Let's just go on to Jordan, I liked this poem.
- J1: OK. Well tell me, explain to me why you liked it I know it's because it's complex and deep and meaningful.
- A2: Well, but the first thing that I did 'not a true but painted chair' do you get that? Did you write about that bit?
- J2: Hang on what line - no [sounds depressed / bored] I didn't write about it.
- A3: [sounding triumphal] Well, a painted chair is not what it really looks like, it's got paint on it, it's like that table, too much varnish on it so people can't see what it's really like and so people 'who says that fictions onely and false hair / Become a verse?' It's like saying, I think, he says that a story and a couple of wigs and make up and costumes and stuff can become a verse, like a play or something, I don't know, and that, then 'Is there in truth no beauty' and uh um without the wigs and the make up and clothes and stuff is, he's saying is in truth how people really look [J: Hmms] is there no beauty in it?
- J3: He reckons people are hiding true beauty
- A4: Yeah, they're hiding behind all the make up and
- J4: Clothes
- A5: Clothes and stuff and um
- J5: 'Must purling' what about the second verse?
- A6: Well I got something 'Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves' I put another question, do big things need to happen to make people love each other - as I don't know what 'purling' means, 'purling streams'
- J6: I'll tell you why I didn't like this poem - I don't like poems where you have to, I don't enjoy poems, I don't enjoy sitting there and having to work out what a poem means, I like something that you can read and think 'oh my God, yeah!'
- A7: No, I prefer not understanding cos then it makes me think how clever the bloke is who wrote it and think, yeah he means something and he's being really difficult because like and he's saying I know what it means and you don't, and just basically annoying everyone who reads it cos they don't understand it straight away
- J7: Hmm
- A8: He's quietly being annoying but yeah 'must all be vail'd, while he that reads divines catching the sense at two removes' I don't quite get that obviously cos it's confusing 'while he that reads divines' - the truth can be written down, you can write it down and I put by reading you can imagine the pictures and see the truth in your head and read through the lines that um, if you read about something and someone describes something and you can read about people's feelings, if you, yeah, you can read about people's feelings and then you can understand how someone can feel by reading it so you can get the truth about someone by reading about them, how they feel and stuff if they write it down that's what lots of people do ... like my mum does, she writes letters to say how she feels because ... and stuff and anyway
- J8: What do you think the main point of the poem was? What do you think he was trying to get across? Why did he sit down and write this?

- A9: That, there are nowadays (well then because it was pre 1900) um well that people cover up the truth with different things not purposely, they try and make things better but they actually cover up the truth and things
- J9: Hmm
- A10: Like, like he is actually doing in this poem, he's covering up the truth cos he's writing it all funny, I don't know, perhaps that's the way he spoke, it might not be written all funny

PART 2 JORDAN

- J1: Maybe he believes that beauty is ...
- A1: He might be contradicting his point a bit by doing all that and so he's covering up the truth of what the poem is about.
- J2: Maybe he's doing it on purpose to show everyone does it and he's doing it himself.
- A2: Yeah, but then, [pause] 'Shepherds are honest people; let them sing: Riddle who list, for me, and pull for Prime' - Prime has got a capital P so it may be something about the Prime Minister [laughs] how Prime Ministers aren't truthful.
- J3: Yeah I noticed that prime had a capital P and I
- A3: Prime Ministers and MPs lie and hide the truth and stuff and put things over in different ways whereas shepherds are honest people because they're (well I don't know if they are) but people would say shepherds are simple people
- J4: So let the sheperds who are honest run the country and let the Prime Ministers shear the sheep
- A4: Shepherds are honest people, I don't know if they're simple or not, but you know they're not all conniving and sly whereas Prime Ministers might be
- J5: Maybe it's their occupation that makes them conniving and sly - well I know, this is really stereotypical, not all politicians are
- A5: Yeah I know
- J6: A lot of people say they are - Everyone says oh you know, politicians, they lie.
- A6: Yeah, I know, I don't think a lot of them necessarily lie, they just, they use all the, can't remember
- J7: They kind of miss the point, don't they
- A7: Positive advertising, they use the figures like
- J8: Like propaganda - they use things to put across a certain view
- A8: And they use like like figures of stuff saying something
- J9: In a positive light
- A9: In a positive way rather than in actual fact, another party could turn them round in a negative way
Yeah and say well, whatever um um 'I envie no man nightingale'...
- J10: Like, like, joke, how many politicians does it take to change the lightbulb? There is no problem with the lightbulb [laugh]
- A10: 'I envie no man nightingale or spring' I don't get that, when he says that does he mean one of water springs, like river or like a spring
- J11: Don't know, I'd think more of a river
- A11: Yeah, cos it's nightingale and they're both like natural, nature things and 'envie no man nightingale or spring' cos like well spouse, nightingales are

beautiful birds I think they are anyway, I assume they are, he doesn't envy them because he thinks the human being is beautiful as well.

Anyway I'll read my, I don't understand, 'Who plainly say - Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme / Who plainly say, My God, My King'?

J12: That's like 'plainly say' rather than cover it up with a load of imagery and everything.

A12: Yeah

J13: You know, about plainly saying, you know my Jesus, my King

A13: This is sort of religious actually, that's annoyed me now

J14: You don't like religious poems, no

A14: No.

PART 3 JORDAN

A1: Yea, hm oh that's a point, the nightingale and spring they're just like there, they're truths, that's what they look like cos streams, springs - don't look anything else except what they are, what they actually are, and they're plainly worshipping God sort of thing, they're just there and they're saying plainly that. Oh, I can't get it out, they're just plainly there basically.

J1: [Yawns] Anything else to say?

A2: Other than that nightingales and springs just say 'My God, My King' and humans are all complex and with all the stuff they do, they make it all difficult and all find it hard to say their feelings and stuff cos they're all complex and need to think about things whereas springs and nightingales just basically

J2: Do what they do

A3: Yeah - I'll read my journal entry 'I like this poem, as for a start there is no easy to explain reason why it is called Jordan' (unless it's about the River Jordan which is also religious) 'and the writer is being very metaphorical all the way through ... I don't understand half this poem'. ... end of 1st journal.

J3: So what mark did you give it?

A4: 9

J4: I gave it 5 cos even though I didn't particularly enjoy it, it was probably quite meaningful, still, it didn't make me feel anything [yawns] except for 'God, can't he write what he means?'

A5: Maybe he was, maybe that's what he meant but it was so confusing in his head, he just wrote it down and he meant stuff but so it was confusing to everyone else.

J5: Hmmm, it's like an insight into his brain

A6: Cos it was confusing to him as well and he thought if this is confusing to me I'm gonna make everyone else confused.

J6: Anything else to say?

A7: No.

J7: Me neither.

TAPE 48: I AM - JOHN CLARE - ANNA and JOSIE.

- J1: I am, I am, I am
 A1: I am
 J2: Miss G., what did you, what are your thoughts on this poem?
 A2: Umm
 J3: Did you like it?
 A3: [mumbles]
 J4: I thought, as you're not going to answer, I thought it was quite interesting and I liked it, I liked it for once, a poem ahhhh
 A4: I liked some of the lines but not the whole poem
 J5: I thought, I don't know, it sparked an interest
 A5: It's
 J6: It was ever so depressing which is good
 A6: It seems a bit, nicking ideas off other people
 J7: Really, like what?
 A7: Like, it seemed like the person that wrote it was saying for the first time all these questions like 'I am but
 J8: Yeah, she's probably changed her name from Clare John to John Clare. Oh sorry, Anna thinks this was written by a female, why did you think that?
 A8: Cos I reckon it is, more better
 J9: More better - good grade [laugh]
 A9: Yeah
 J10: Could be Clare John, John Clare but anyway, I think, I'll read what I wrote cos it really sums up what I think [reads] 'I like this poem although it's depressing. I am confused about it though' - should have put a full stop in there - 'John Cleese seems depressed'
 A10: John Clare
 J11: John, yeah, it's cos we were talking about him, he's the one off Monty Python, we were talking about him yesterday anyway, [continues to read] 'John Clare seems depressed, he thinks no one cares about him or understands him, he thinks that his life has become so full of sadness, worries and woe, he has become accustomed to it. He feels that if he went to Hell, he would fit in there but he doesn't want to, he wants to go to Heaven where it is different to how his life was and he wants to go somewhere where no one else will be, where he can be on his own.' As I enjoyed this poem I gave it 7/10 I don't know if Clare is talking about Heaven and Hell but that's the impression I got for it.
 A11: That's very good, Josie.
 J12: What about you, what did you write for it, Anna?
 A12: I didn't get as much out of it as you did. Um, I, I keep getting, it must be the kind of mood I'm in, I can't write anything, I can't write what I think, so I just wrote and it wasn't really very good.
 J13: Well, read it.
 A13: I couldn't think of how to write it down. [Reads whole of 1st journal entry in bored, disenchanted, or just tired voice - bit boring in places]
 J14: Yeah, I like dit more than you, I gave it 7/10.
 A14: I gave it 8, I'm just more kind.

- J15: I'm not, I'm very 'tight' with poems, I never like them that much. Um as I went through it, as I didn't have any ideas on it when I first started, as I went through it and started on the top line, I wrote what every single line meant, I um, I got an idea of what I thought it was about. Um, um, yeah, 'I am, yet no one, yet what I am no one cares or knows' that's like no one cares what he is or how he lives or anything about him.
- A15: I like
- J16: I think he just feels that no one cares.
- A16: I think the best line is 'Even the dearest' or the best two lines are 'Even the dearest that I love best / Are strange - nay, rather, stranger than the rest' because it's like as he's got to know them, he sees their characters and personality and then it's more deeper, is deeper - why do I say more deeper, more better? - is deeper than he first thought, so to him when you're looking at your friends or something, you can see that they're really deep people and confusing and all
- J17: It's like he's saying how complex humans are
- A17: Yeah complex, whereas if you look at a stranger you just see their first
- J18: First impression
- A18: Yeah
- J19: And you think this person's that, that and that. [Coughs] sorry, nearly choked, it gets a lot ... do you think his life is really as bad as that, nobody likes me, everybody hates me?
- A19: Maybe he's just in a depressed mood or maybe he made himself into a depressed mood by writing this poem.
- J20: Maybe he feels that people take him for granted, and um, maybe people do take him for granted so he thinks that no one cares when really if he went away everyone would realise how much they miss him something
- A20: Yeahhhh.
- J21: Shall I tell you how I got the Heaven and Hell thing?
- A21: If you like.
- J22: I don't know really, it says 'Into the nothingness of scorn and noise, / Into the living sea of waking dreams, / Where there is neither sense of life or joys' I wrote Hell? question mark, desolate, maybe he's imagining he's dead and he thinks that's what Hell's like and he thinks that that seems what his life has been like.
- A22: But 'the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems', all his self esteem has gone.
- J23: Yeah and 'the vast shipwreck' that's what his life has been like, it's like one big disaster after another and so that's why he feels that hell would be just like what his life is like but then it says at the end 'I long for scenes where man hath never trod / A place where woman never smiled or wept' he really wants to go to a place where no one has ever been, you know no one alive, no earthly person
- A23: Maybe he's saying that he doesn't think that 'I long for scenes where man never trod' he thinks that no human is good enough to get into Heaven.
- J24: Maybe
- A24: It's no man hath ever gone
- J25: Yeah, maybe he's talking about the whole human race and not just him
- A25: Yeah
- J26: Yeah, that's it [excited, shouting] maybe he's talking about, maybe that's what he thinks the life of humans is totally like, no one really cares for

- anyone else and everyone should go to Hell really but he wants to be better than that, he wants to go up to Heaven and he wants to
- A26: Yeah, he longs to go to Heaven and but it says 'where woman never smiled or wept' oh yeah, not even woman
- J27: No on'e been there
- A27: No one.
- J28: 'There to abide with my Creator, God' that's what made me think of Heaven really
- A28: Yeah, I ignored that bit.
- J29: God would be happy, finally a human, a son that he created was good enough to go to Heaven.
- A29: 'And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept, / Untroubling and untroubled' cos child's they don't think so much.
- J30: They're innocent and sweet.
- A30: Yeah, they don't think from one day to the next, really young children, so they can just sleep and not have any troubles.
- J31: Hmmm - and also it says 'childhood sweetly slept' where him, he's been in a place of a 'sea of waking dreams' and all this lot
- A31: He wants to be like a child again. What does 'forsake' mean?
- J32: 'Forsake' I'm not sure um but that line 'My friends forsake me like a memory lost' I thought it was like his friend he feels his friends take him for granted
- A32: Yeah and they've forgotten about him - treat him like a lost memory and don't think about him
- J33: Yeah
- A33: Cos you can't think about a lost memory cos you've lost it
- J34: Yeah [laughs] so that's basically what I think of this poem
- A34: And 'I am yet no one cares or knows' and the line before it goes on from that is no one he knows cares enough to bother to try and
- J35: Understand him
- A35: Try and understand him and find out what he's like and he says cos he feels he's not anything special to anyone
- J36: Hmm, he really needs some self confidence.
- A36: What, oh the two verses, the first two verses I feel like go together in like one paragraph, whereas the third verse is like a new paragraph was sort of explaining, after saying all this what he thinks life is about or his life or whatever, then he says, then he says, then he says 'I long for scenes' this is what I, this is what I want this is what I like and before in the first 2 verses, it's like this is like what my life is like and isn't it terrible.
- J37: Yeah, yup. Shall we go on to do the 'Twa Corbies'?
- A37: Yeah.

**Tape 52: THE LATEST DECALOGUE (TLD) - ADAM, ROBERT AND
TEACHER.**

- T1: We're just going to go through very quickly - thank you for helping me out chaps - it's mood and tone in TLD - if you have a seat - mood and tone in TLD and obviously the poet repeats the commandment and then follows it with a comment - statement what tone is that statement?
- R1: Um
- T2: So for example, where's the one about stealing because that's good? - talks about cheating
- R2: 'Thou shalt not steal'
- T3: An empty feat when it's so lucrative to cheat. What's the tone of those statements, comments after each commandment?
- R3: Being very uh critical of the way we live, he's saying
- T4: I agree he's being critical, what's the tone I think he's being very critical of the way people live but what's the tone of the statement?
- R4: Uh, very cynical as well
- T5: Cynical
- R5: Yeah.
- T6: What does cynical mean?
- R6: He's like, looking at them and laughing, sneering at them
- T7: Sneering at them?
- R7: Yeah - like saying you should do this but you do actually do this
- T8: Right so, you say Arthur Hugh Clough is being critical of our society or the society of his day
- R8: Uh huh
- T9: Well, how do you get from him having all these cynical comments in the poem to saying Arthur Hugh Clough is critical? You're saying Arthur Hugh Clough disagrees with these comments?
- R9: Well no, he's being critical of the way we live.
- T10: Yeah, so how does creating a person, a speaker or you know a poem where you have all these cynical remarks, how does uh that uh communicate his criticism?
- R10: Well, he's sneering at people and by doing that he's saying that's wrong, you shouldn't be doing that
- T11: That's wrong
- R11: Yeah.
- T12: Adam?
- A1: Yeah, I reckon he's saying it's like bad what they're doing because he says like one of the 10 commandments and then it's like being sarcastic giving all the exceptions and everything. I don't reckon he likes it being like that.
- T13: Right ...
- A2: Saying how much we're strayed from the commandments.
- T14: So what he's doing then, he's setting up a speaker, right, who is cynical, who is sarcastic and then we react to that, don't we, because we think - well, what do we think when we hear those statements?
- A3: It makes us realise that we have strayed from the commandments, like how much we've differed from them I think.

- T15: So what sort of person is speaking this poem? - (pause) he's being cynical so he's a ...?
- A4: Hypocrite - cos he does it I'm sure
- T16: Yeah he's hypocritical
- A5: Yeah
- T17: Right, so Arthur Hugh Clough shows us a speaker who's a real hypocrite yeah
- A6: Yeah
- R12: Yeah.
- T18: So are the views of the speaker in the poem different to Arthur high Clough's views?
- A7: Yeah they are (definitely)
- T19: They are aren't they!
- A8: Yeah
- T20: Good, now we are getting a breakthrough - go on Adam why?
- A9: Because, like 'thou shalt have one God only' then he says or 'no graven image may e worshipped' then the second speaker 'except the currency' - exception all the time.
- T21: Right - or the same person.
- A10: Yeah could be, yeah
- T22: You know - so he shows us the way a hypocritical person is so we think we shouldn't be that way - would you agree?
- A11: Yeah.
- T23: So Arthur Hugh Clough isn't cynical is he or is he?
- R13: It's a
- T24: Does he believe in the commandments or not?
- R14: Yeah I think he does and he's trying to point out where everyone else is going wrong.
- T25: Right, so how do you think everyone would have reacted to him writing this poem about the way they live?
- R15: Um, they would have been quite upset - cos they're saying we do this, you know, we worship only one God and we don't worship any graven images.
- T26: Uh huh
- R16: And then he's saying, well actually you do.
- T27: Right, so he's saying 'You're a bunch of hypocrites', that's what he's saying isn't it? Now you wrote, Robert, in yours that it sends you on a bit of a guilt trip - in your journal - why?
- R17: Uh well, you think it's just like anyone else who's reading it would think oh yeah yeah I do that, yeah, yeah, that's what's right and then realise maybe not, maybe I do something wrong, maybe I don't really do what I'm told to do - what people expect of me.
- T28: So, what's the mood of TLD? Where is mood? Is it in the writer or the reader, Adam?
- A12: It's in the reader.
- T29: OK, so what can we say about mood? any idea? How do we react to this person that's speaking, how we react to what is being said about um - yeah, how do we react to all of the evasion and all of the, you know, the finding of loopholes and the following of the letter of the law and not following the spirit, how do we react to all of that? is it disturbing?
- A13: S'pose it is, it is a bit disturbing

- T30: Why?
- A14: Well, there's things you notice if you say you're a good Christian you might, you know, think oh yes I do all this and yeah all the good things and then you notice like, like the currency, you worship things like currency as well and it says no graven images may be worshipped.
- T31: So you realise that your God might be money
- A15: Yeah, yeah
- T32: Because you're materialistic
- A16: Umm
- T33: So, d'you think people would have, you know, their eyes would have been opened by all this
- A17: Yeah
- T34: Like you know like Adam just said and they would have been thinking: Yeah, I don't worship other gods, yeah I just go to church and worship the Christian God, and then Arthur Hugh Clough comes along and says: ah, but you're worshipping money, aren't you!
- A18: Yeah, yeah.
- T35: That's really the number one. What you worship is what is number one in your life, isn't it?
- A19: Hmm.
- T36: You know the most important thing and he's saying, well if the most important thing in your life is money, then that's what you worship that's your God, yeah.
- A20: Hmm
- R18: Hmm.
- T37: What do you think Robert?
- R19: Uh, could make people like um reflect on what they believe, you know, they think they believe one thing and then he points out, well actually, you don't - that's what you believe in.
- T38: It's quite thought provoking, isn't it?
- R20: Yeah.
- T39: And it, I think it shocks people out of their complacency because it's very easy to think: oh I'm okay, I'm a nice person, yeah.
- A21: Hmm.
- T40: And then you read one of these lines - for example 'do not adultery commit advantage rarely comes of it' and he's saying, hang on, what's your reason for not committing adultery? Is it because you really love someone and are faithful to them yeah - or do you want to commit adultery - fancy somebody - but the only reason you don't is because you know you'll suffer, you know that advantage won't come of it so therefore your motives are all wrong, the only reason you're faithful to one person is because you know she would really make you suffer if she found out, kind of
- A22: Yeah.
- T41: So he's looking at peoples motives, isn't he? Yeah?
- A23: Yeah.
- R21: Yeah.
- T42: It's quite painful, isn't it, because you look at your motives and you think, well might be doing the right things but what are my reasons, like for doing the right things. What do you think Adam?
- A24: Well, yeah, I agree with that, yeah.

- T43: Why?
- A25: Well, as you say about the adultery - it's only cos you become worse off but you might really want to commit adultery.
- T44: Yeah.
- A26: Um.
- T45: Which is quite disturbing. What about all these loopholes? You know you shouldn't covet, shouldn't want what someone else has but hey, competition is all right, nobody's criticising competition. What about that? Or just another line. Well, what's the best line in it, chaps, or the best couple of lines in it for you?
- A27: I reckon no graven image may be worshipped except the currency because that like that is the thing that everyone works for, isn't it, the money.
- T46: Yeah.
- R22: Yeah.
- T47: That's quite cutting, isn't it? Don't you think?
- A28: Yeah.
- T48: Except the currency - it's just 3 words.
- A29: Yeah, cos everyone uses it.
- T49: Except the currency and you think: huh? Oh yeah, 3 words, punch, vicious - Robert?
- R23: Yeah, I agree with that, I think what he's saying is people are making these loopholes and then deliberately forgetting about them so they still think they're uh, you know, good Christians.
- T50: So they're conning themselves
- R24: Yeah
- T51: - Self delusion and he's kind of ripping away that self delusion, you know all these people going through life saying: I'm OK., I'm really good and they're actually believing it aren't they, they're believing they are really good um yeah, my favourite line is - about cheating 'Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat, When it's so lucrative to cheat' and also the one about the lie 'Bear not false witness; let the lie have time on its own wings to fly' because I know I can deceive people really well without lying - I just let them believe certain things, I kind of - they say something and I don't disagree with it - or I sort of hint at or suggest something
- A30: Yeah, yeah
- T52: And I haven't technically lied
- A31: Yeah, yeah
- T53: But I'm still deceiving somebody, yeah, haven't technically lied, but deceived someone just as well as if I had lied, yeah?
- R25: Yeah.
- T54: What is it? 'Let the lie...
- A32: ... Have time on its own wings to fly'.
- T55: Let it just happen naturally, let it do its own dirty work, but um, finally, what do we think of the poem, score out of 10 and then a statement, final statement from each of you and then you'd better be off but thanks very much for your time.
- R26: Um, I'd give it about 7 or 8 because it does actually uh point out a lot of things you wouldn't really think of.
- T56: In quite a short space of lines as well
- R27: Yeah

- T57: There's no waffle.
A33: Umm.
R28: Makes you think of what you do.
T58: Yeah, I mean, if I wanted to write a poem to communicate how bad I thought society was I'd probably end up writing page and pages of A4 and he does it in 20, he blows the whole thing apart in 20 lines, doesn't he
A34: Umm
T59: Which I think is quite clever to be able to do it in such a short space, but Adam?
A35: Yeah, I give it about 6 or 7 cos first time I read it I didn't understand it that much but I understand it a lot now. I like the way he does all of it, like you say, it's real punchy and no waffle.
T60: Yeah, well thanks very much. Have you got one of these, Adam?
A36: I think I have.
T61: Yeah?
A37: Yeah, there you go.
T62: Right I must have, I must have those in tomorrow and I need those A3 completed. Apologise to Miss P. for me.

TAPE 53 (PART 2): THE LATEST DECALOGUE - ARTHUR HUGH

CLOUGH - PETER, ANNA and TEACHER.

(First half of the tape, before this transcript, is a discussion of 'What is Our Life?' by Raleigh)

- T1: Can I just ask you to compare 'What is our Life?' with 'The Latest Decalogue', Peter talked about being didactic and teaching something. Is Raleigh or Clough trying to teach us something the most, you know, who's working hardest to teach us something?
- P1: I think Raleigh is because um, I think that the most important things in life are just to oh, it doesn't matter how you live your life
- T2: Who is the most critical of life? Who is the most critical of the way people are living?
- P2: Raleigh
- A1: Clough
- T3: Why? Why is Clough the most critical of the way we are living? Anna says Clough, Peter says Raleigh, (to Anna) Why is Clough more critical?
- A2: I'm saying he's the most critical, I didn't say he's teaching us the most
- T4: Right
- P3: I think Raleigh's most critical
- A3: He is (pointing to Clough poem) cos he's saying humans are hypocritical
- T5: Okay let's go on to The Latest Decalogue
- P4: Yeah but, that's just talking about the way people live whereas Raleigh's talking about, sort of, that's just sort of like different ways of living
- A4: He's just talking about the bit in the middle. Raleigh's talking about the beginning and end
- P5: Yeah but if a person goes by all the things in there, like all the bad things right then, they might have a really good life whereas if someone goes through, gets born and does nothing with their life and then dies, it seems a bit of a wasted life
- A5: Yeah but they don't, it's a play of passion
- T6: Okay The Latest Decalogue- what's the tone in The Latest Decalogue?
- P6: I think he's being critical
- T7: Of what or who?
- A6: I think
- P7: Just like people in general
- T8: Go on Anna
- A7: I think that he's narrating the um the ten commandments and then - to himself "who would be at the expense of two" he's thinking after each one
- T9: Right so what's his tone when he's thinking that "who would be at the expense of two"? What's his tone there?
- A8: Sort of amusement at the human race, how they can actually be
- T10: So you say his being amused at the human race and Peter says he's being critical
- A9: Well critically amused (laughs)
- T11: Well you either find something funny or you're dead against it surely?
- P8: Well

- A10: No, not necessarily! He just could be thinking about it I don't know if he actually cares that much about it, he's just realised that that is what humans actually do do
- T12: But does he think that's a good thing or a bad thing? that this is what humans do do what first, what do they do. They are what?
- A11: Hypocrits
- T13: Right they're being hypocrits so what does he think about them being hypocrits? Is he just amused by them being hypocrits?
- A12: Well he probably doesn't just think it's an amazing thing to be but he probably just
- T14: Because Peter says he's being very critical of them being hypocritical and you say he's amused
- P9: I think he's doing one of two things - he's either being critical of the way people live or critical of the Bible and the way the Bible teaches because some of the things in there are a bit stupid
- T15: Right
- P10: He might be thinking oh what's the point?
- T16: But is he for or against the ten commandments do you think? Is he saying it's a really bad thing that people are behaving so hypocritically toward them saying they're keeping them but not keeping them, they're finding loopholes
- P11: (unclear) because you can find loads of different interpretations of this and you can't really tell
- A13: Are all his poems about Christian stuff?
- T17: I don't know I haven't read many Arthur Hugh Clough poems
- P12: I think you'd have to look at others - some more of his work to work out
- A14: To work out if he's a complete bible person
- T18: What, whether he is criticising the fact that people aren't keeping them?
- A15: Yeah. I reckon he's just like reflecting life and what he
- T19: Just reflecting life?
- A16: What humans are like
- T20: Right
- A17: He's saying they're like this, aren't they stupid!
- T21: But that's what you said about 'What is our Life'? You're just saying in 'What is our Life' and 'The Latest Decalogue' he's just saying this is the way we are.
- A18: Yeah
- P13: Yeah but I don't see the point in one of those - in a poem - you can't really write a poem that just - that the whole point of the poem is just to tell just to show what's going on, you've got to have some other reason for writing it
- T22: Right so is, you think he's criticising do you?
- P14: I think he's either saying how stupid the Bible way of life is or how bad people in general are
- T23: So, either he's really cynical (cos that's someone who doesn't believe isn't it right) or he's set a speaker up, he's created a speaker to be cynical so that we see how this cynical person is and we don't approve of how cynical that person is - that's what you're saying isn't it?
- P15: Yeah
- T23: Yeah, either he's really cynical
- P16: Um

- T24: And he doesn't think the commandments are worth anything right or he's set up a speaker in the poem who's a cynic so we look at this cynic and we think cor we think it's really bad that people are that cynical
- P17: Yeah (emphatic)
- T25: Yeah
- P18: Yeah, that's what he's trying to do
- A19: No one's going to change because of it though are they?
- T26: I don't know
- P19: Might do
- T27: People at the time might or might not have taken a lot of notice of him
- P20: Depends if they're sheep or not really
- T28: But I mean, we're not really interested in the response of the population - we're interested in his tone
- A20: Okay
- T29: Why do you think his tone is Anna? Is he, is he being cynical and really attacking society or not?
- A21: Oh, I'll just go along with what you've said
- T30: Well no, this is Peter's idea, not what I said
- P21: (laughs)
- A22: They think, I don't really know, it could be lots of different things so I don't have one view on it, I could agree with lots of different things. I don't know
- T31: Okay, what about the mood, tell me about the mood in 'What is our Life' and the mood in 'The Latest Decalogue' and then we're done
- A23: I think that one (indistinct)
- T32: You think What is our life is what?
- A24: Oh no it's not optimistic, it changes, but I just think it's nice
- T33: It's nice (all laugh together)

**TAPE 55: TEACHER and SIX READERS DISCUSSING 'THE LATEST
DECALOGUE' (ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH) and 'WHAT IS OUR LIFE?'**

(SIR WALTER RALEIGH).

(A = Anna, AD = Adam)

Everyone talking together

T1: Okay so today we're doing question 31

J1: Have we started already?

S1: Can I have a copy of the question?

T2: It's the one you should have written out yesterday. Did you do that?

J2: Yeah, you did Steve

T3: Should be in your exercise book

J3: No, he didn't write it down he wrote it out for everyone

T4: Did you write it down?

S2: Yeah got it here, what are you on about silly woman - silly woman

T5: No sexist comments

J4: Yeah, I agree, did you hear any of the tape or not? [to me]

T6: No, I didn't, I'm hoping I can mend it [tape snapped inside cassette]
Yes sexist comments are banned

A1: What, snap your bra?

J5: No, if I say anything

P1: No sexual, sexist comments

J6: With any belief in it Steve will go "uhhhhhh handbag!"

[everyone laughs]

J7: He will

P2: D'you realise it's recording by the way

J8: Because I'm a girl I can't have feelings

T7: You can't have any feelings because you're a girl, is that it?

J9: Oh yeah, according to him

T8: Okay Steve, defend yourself, is this true or not?

S3: This is rubbish absolute rubbish

J10: So what is the reason

T9: What is the significance of the handbag?

S4: It is the incident in

T10: Steve is holding up a paper cut out of a handbag. What's the significance of the handbag Steve?

S5: The handbag comes from the um

P3: For the benefit of the tape

S6: From the Shooting Stars- Shooting stars um TV programme

J11: Oh so that's it then

S7: They go "ohhh handbag ohhhhhh"

P4: Because Sam is completely

A2: Obsessed

P4: Obsessed by television

S8: I just find it amusing that someone can come up with such a humorous act

P5: Somebody else and not yourself

- S9: Yeah
- T11: Okay I'm going to ask Josie to read out the question 31, everybody be looking at the question and then you'll begin - I will join in from time to time but mostly you'll be speaking, off you go
- J12: [Reads Q31] so, has anybody got any initial responses to that question on any of the poems
- S10: Yeah, I'll talk about 'The Latest Decalogue'
- P6: Just getting out my Anthology
- S11: One of the more interesting pre-twentieth century poems, *the* interesting pre-twentieth century poem
- R1: Page 79, Steve
- S12: I think that um Clough is being incredibly cynical about the um way that people in Victorian times when he lived um - were hypocritical about the Commandments, where they um followed the letter of the law but they didn't really follow the ethos behind the law, it wasn't very spirited yeah
- J13: Like they only well wasn't it well, we thought they only followed it because they wanted people to think they were all moral and Christian when really they were finding the loopholes in the Commandments and just living the way they wanted to
- S13: Yeah, he was exposing the materialism of his time
- P7: Perhaps he's saluting, he's actually, might be saluting society the way society has adapted to act with different things - but that's
- R2: How do you mean?
- P8: I mean that um uh, people are breaking away from what is accepted, like thousands of years ago like the Bible said, Jesus said, God said all these things and since then everyone's gone by these things - now people are starting to break away and he might be saluting the independence of people - away from the Bible and religion and Christian teaching
- T12: Is he really saluting the independence of the people? What do you think Arthur Hugh Clough's view is in that poem?
- P9: I don't know, it depends whether he's well really religious or not
- T13: Well, what sort of attitude does he seem to have to people finding these loopholes in the law?
- P10: I, he seems to be quite distressed by it - by the fact that so many people are uh going away from Christian teaching
- T14: Right , so if he's distressed by it
- P11: No
- T15: He's not saluting
- P12: It was just something to say
- T16: But I think it's interesting that you've, you've made the point that society changes over time and people's morals and values change over time and that this is a time when maybe there was a challenge to accepted morality - it's about hypocrisy isn't it?
- J14: Yeah, I think he's being cynical and criticising society for their lack of morals and that they're only following all these laws because they're supposed to... and really only just finding, they're getting things out of them themselves, they're doing it for their own benefit, like, um, the first line 'Thou shalt have one God only, who would be at the expense of two' well they've only got one God because it's, it's too much trouble to have two, it's much
- S14: Easier

- J15: Easier to have one
- T17: Okay can we look at the second the second bullet point in the question that asks you to think about the way that different writers persuade us that something is wrong okay because that follows on nicely from what you've just been saying doesn't it so *how*, you know, *how* - the different ways in which he writers persuade us that something they're observing is wrong, so in the case of Arthur Hugh Cough how does he persuade us that something is wrong?
- P13: Right, I think in 'The Latest Decalogue', Clough is not actively saying um what is wrong, well he's saying what's wrong but he's not actually saying um, exactly, what's bad about these things happening, he's just reflecting what society is coming to
- J16: I think that we can tell his tone is sarcastic - don't you think?
- All: Yeah [4/5 voices]
- J17: He seems sarcastic
- All: Yeah [4/5 voices]
- S15: Yeah he's got a cynic, a cynic persona actually, saying through a cynic's view so it's um, the person gives like one of the Ten Commandments and the second line after that is always a cynical comment about the line before it
- T18: Okay let's let's talk about the persona that the person speaking in the poem adopts - you've said it's cynical
- S16: Yeah
- T19: How, how does , how does that help to persuade us that something is wrong/ How does adopting that persona help to persuade us that the breaking of these Commandments and not admitting that these Commandments are being broken - the hypocrisy - is wrong
- R3: Kind of makes the reader feel um criticised, like someone's having a go at them saying you're wrong but they're not actually saying, not actually coming straight out with it, they're not actually saying this is wrong, this is what you're doing and this is what you should be doing - he kind of says it sarcastically and the reader's just - makes the reader feel angry and criticised, you don't really like to be criticised by anyone
- T20: How, how does the reader feel , how does the reader some to feel that and feel criticised - feel got at?
- A3: Because um some of the that he says, 'like honour thy parents that is all from whom advancement may befall' - people honour their parents anyway but um Clough, Clough or whatever his name is sort of - makes people like even though they honour their parents he's saying they're only honouring them for bad reasons when in actual fact they might honour them for perfectly good reasons, but he's saying that anything they do, they do not because they're Christian, or decent people, he's saying they're only doing it for, um selfish reasons
- T21: Right so, that's what he's saying about their motivation
- S17: He's talking about the the immorality of the um society following rules which they - made - changed the Decalogue and kind of made it the latest Decalogue which is like the newer version which they follow
- T22: Which has superseded the old version
- S18: Yeah
- T23: So do these things but for these reasons
- S19: Oh yeah yeah

- T24: So does - at a very simple level - you might think this is a strikingly simple question - does Arthur Hugh Clough agree with what the speaker in the poem is saying, the speaker in the poem is saying things like, um, 'at church on Sunday to attend will serve to keep the world thy friend' and the speaker in the poem is saying things like 'honour thy parents that is all from whom advancement may befall' and the speaker in the poem is saying things like 'Do not adultery commit, advantage rarely comes of it' Does Arthur Hugh Clough agree with what that speaker is saying?
- All : No no no [3/4 voices]
- R4: No, he's being sarcastic, I don't think the writer, the kind of persona doesn't agree with it, he's kind of saying it sarcastically
- T25: So, who is that persona typical of?
- J18: Society, the way that they, that's their excuses isn't it
- A4: I think he agrees with what the first half of each line, at church on Sunday to attend- he agrees with it and knows that in a perfect world that's what would happen and but I think he sort of understands that humans - like himself- he's probably gone against morals as well - and he probably understands that society can't always keep to it but he's saying that in a perfect world they should - and people shouldn't say that they should
- P14: I think, slightly going off the subject, he might be quite annoyed that people won't admit that they're doing things wrong the fact that they're not completely changing the rules of of - they're going away, it's like they're trying to deceive, well, partly themselves and partly other people um as to what they're doing, they're not not completely going away - they're not saying oh I'm breaking away from this religion and I'm not obeying these rules anymore, they're trying to deceive themselves and other people I think Arthur Hugh Clough would be quite annoyed about this
- T26: He would be quite annoyed?
- P15: Yeah - the fact that people won't admit to their uh their wrongs
- J19: He's revealed the loophole hasn't he - in the second line uh, after each um Commandment - he actually says what the loophole is doesn't he - so I think that his purpose is to um to show everyone to show the readers what society was like and what their reasons behind their actions were
- S20: Finding ways to evade Commandments
- R5: Yeah, but a lot of this is applicable today, y'know it's not like just when he was alive, cos it's y'know it's still
- J20: Only it's not so much to do with religion anymore, it's more that
- R6: Yeah
- J20: Um it's the law
- R7: Yeah
- T27: Okay that's really coming on to, um, two very important parts of the question that uh we'll ask Adam to read the poem to us and then uh we'll discuss these two parts of the question. In the first part of the question before the bullet points, it says um which poems in this group make you think about the rights and wrongs of life around you ... and then the fourth bullet point - 'what the poems make you think about in your life' which ties up nicely with what Rob has just said about - applicable - I think your word was applicable - but now the question is asking you to be quite specific about uh, what the poem makes you think about in your life and the poems in this group that make you think about the rights and wrongs of life around you - so maybe we can think about that while Adam reads the poem to us

- AD1: [Reads poem reading officially not officiously]
- S21: I think lines 15 and 16 had an impact on me, um because it sums up the whole nature of the poem really um 'when it's so lucrative to cheat', it's all about self gain don't you reckon?
- T28: Right, why did that make an impact on you?
- S22: Because it just
- T23: Is that relevant to your own life? I mean have you been a thief or cheated/
- S23: No, not relevant to me as a person but to society, yes because it is society's only interested in its own self gain
- T24: Okay can I bring us back a little closer to home - 'what do the poems make you think about in your life', I'm just trying to stick to the words of the question you see. What it makes you think about- the rights and wrongs of life around you - that's relevant what you've said about society, but this point about what the poem makes you think about in your own life okay
- J21: I think the one about 'bear not false witness but let the lie have time on its own wings to fly' applies today because there is no law against lying but we all know it's wrong yet still people - like at school people start off rumours because they think it would be more interesting, they don't just go up and automatically just say a lie, they'll just go up to someone and hint at something and say oh this is what I've heard 'and let the lie have time on its own wings to fly'
- S24: Yeah I think
- J22: So I think that's relevant in today's society cos that's how rumours start
- P16: That's a great personal association Josie
- J23: Thank you
- ALL [laugh]
- A5: And also 'honour thy parents' because we're all still living with our parents at this age and like it's a good thing to show respect to your parents because they're the people that take care of you who look after you and give you money - it's sort of saying that if you want good things from your parents and stuff, you should honour them just for selfish gain and not just because you're told to
- J24: Yeah, so when we move out it's all right to be nasty to our parents isn't it
- S25: Ah, but that's exactly what he's saying
- J25: Yeah I know, that's why I said it
- ALL [laugh together]
- S26: I was complementing you
- T25: So you've got to oh - are you saying Anna that you're nice to your parents now because you know that they'll be more generous towards you and you know
- A6: No no
- T26: You'll get an extra tenner out of them if you're nicer to them
- A7: Basically, basically, that um people should, it's a good reason to be nice to them because you're gonna get something out of it rather than people are pretty respectful to their parents anyway because they're grateful and stuff
- J26: I don't think Anna you meant that you meant that's how you are, that's how - she was just saying that's how the poem is
- A8: It's saying even if you don't feel you should be respectful to them, you should be anyway because you're gonna get something out of it
- T27: Right but do you ever, do you ever find yourself, Anna, um
- A9: I didn't actually think about it - if I feel like scrounging I will anyway

- T28: You will anyway
- J27: I don't know, I'm sure if I really wanted a tenner out of my dad I'd go up to him and say "Daddy" [baby voice, laughs]
- A10: I can understand if you're more respectful and you honour your parents more - then
- P17: So there's nothing personal in there at all, you love your parents but you just
- J28: Well yeah I do, I'm just saying
- A11: I'm not respectful to them because I want money out of them - in fact, I'm probably not very respectful at all [laughs]
- P18: Ohhhh
- R8: That's why you do respect them in the first place isn't it? Because they give you stuff, they feed you and
- A12: They bring you up
- R9: If they didn't you wouldn't really respect them
- A13: And then also, 'do not adultery commit, advantage rarely comes of it', it's just, pretty obvious, but it's saying people shouldn't commit adultery because um, they don't get anything out of it anyway, they're usually going to found out or something
- T29: But how's that relevant to you Anna, you're not married!
- [laughs]
- J29: She almost is
- T30: But is there, is there a message in there for you even though you're not married, about
- A14: Well there is for anyone, if they have a relationship with someone
- T31: Yeah
- A15: It's just, they shouldn't break it
- J30: Because it's wrong!
- A16: It's wrong
- T32: They shouldn't be what?
- A17: Well, they shouldn't commit adultery because it's wrong and it says so in the Bible that it's wrong - but they shouldn't do it anyway regardless of what it says in the Bible because they're usually gonna get found out and then they're going to be worse off for it
- T33: Right, but what I was saying to you - is um how is that relevant to you, how is this bit about adultery relevant to you okay
- J31: Well because - it can even be seen as cheating on your friends, like if you've got a best friend - going and talking about them and slagging them off um saying nasty things about them behind their back um that's like um committing adultery on one of your friends almost and in the end your best friend will find out and she'll not like you for it so that
- A18: So basically, regardless of what the Bible says you shouldn't do it for your own self, which is again for self gain because it, it keeps you
- R10: You don't actually gain anything from it
- T34: But how does Arthur Hugh Clough feel about that motivation you know, that you're not horrible to your friend because you will lose out
- J32: Yeah
- T35: Well how does he feel about that as a motive for being nice to your friend?
- J33: Well, he's saying that's wrong, that's , that's not right, he's saying that um , you should be nice to your friend because it's better , you're a better person if you do that
- A19: [indistinct]

- T36: Right, Adam, anything in there that stands out to you, that's either relevant to society today or relevant to you own life?
- AD2: Oh, uh, s'pose that slagging off thing about your friends but then again sort of like you're always doing it for your own personal gain aren't you so it will make you feel good if you haven't sort of done it
- T37: And how does Arthur Hugh Clough feel about that?
- AD3: Well, I think, he thinks it's in every person, like everyone does something for their own personal gain, despite it might not look like that
- T38: So what, can you sum up the message of the poem for us then?
- AD4: Well, despite people like being all, trying to be all good and everything, everything is for their own personal gain- I think anyway
- T39: Right, so he's
- AD5: It's like - I'll be nice to my mate, it's really to make you feel good sort of thing
- J34: Do you not think that anyone ever does something for anyone else?
- AD6: Not, no, not thinking of it, I don't
- J35: Well
- T40: So you're saying Arthur Hugh Clough is absolutely spot on then?
- AD7: Spot on, yeah because everything's for someone's personal gain I reckon
- R11: Didn't we have this argument last time
- ALL [voices together] I s'pose he's saying
- P19: I think I won
- A20: I s'pose he's saying if you're nice to someone then they're going to be nice back to you and then you've got
- AD8: Exactly, so you're and then you're - it's all coming back to you
- A21: What about doctors - why do people?
- P20: Self centred people make the world go round
- AD9: Cos they get a lot of money
- ALL [everyone talking together]
- J36: NHS doctors don't
- AD10: But what I'm saying is they've saved a life, it makes them feel good, it's for them
- J37: How do you know they're not doing it because they love the job?
- AD11: They love the job?
- P21: No it's [all talking]
- T41: My friend's an NHS surgeon, he gets paid eighty thousand a year
- P21: Yeah [All talk]
- T42: He loves his job but he gets paid quite a lot
- P22: He would, I'd do anything for eighty thousand a year [all talk]
- J38: That's saying - what about people who work for charities and don't get anything out of it for themselves?
- AD12: Cos it's making them feel good [all talk]
- A22: Because it makes them feel good
- AD13: Exactly [sounds exasperated] there you go
- A23: They get something out of it
- J39: Yeah but they're also doing it
- R12: But if they didn't do it they'd feel guilty
- J40: Yeah
- AD14: Exactly and that would be bad
- J41: So d'you feel guilty, because you don't work for a charity?
- R13: No

- P23: Yes, I do
 AD15: It affects some people
 P24: Guilt, nothing would happen without guilt, like you know you always walk past the person who
 J42: Okay okay, who?
 P25: Walk past the person who's collecting for little orphaned children and things like that
 R14: Cross the road
 P25: Put your hand in your pocket and then just walk past
 AD16: Yeah you do
 T43: And that's just conscience alleviation, just to make you feel better?
 P26: Yeah
 T44: So it's not so you want to do something good to them it's because when you go away, if you know you've put some money in the tin
 P27: You think
 T45: You feel better about yourself
 ALL: Yeah
 J43: Okay, I've got an example, I used this one with Anna - if Elle [Anna's disabled sister] needed a new kidney and she was going to die without it, would you give her a new kidney and would it be because you'd feel bad otherwise or because you wanted her to live?
 A24: Both, if, if, you'd have if, if
 J44: Yeah but that's my point
 A25: If my kidneys were acceptable, I s'pose I'd I'd get something out of it, the fact that she'd live longer
 J43: Yeah, but you'd also be doing it because you don't want your sister to die, you want her to have a life but I'm just saying
 A26: I do agree that a lot of it is for personal gain but there are exceptions
 R15: Yeah but if you said
 P28: And I don't think you'd be the most popular person in the world if you said no
 J44: No she wouldn't no she wouldn't
 R16: If you said no [indistinct]
 P29: Oh yeah, Anna's the person who wouldn't give away one kidney to save somebody's life' she's gonna be real popular
 J45: But she wouldn't be doing it just for that
 ALL [talking together]
 A27: But even if you, even if you do something and you think it's completely for, for unselfish reasons
 J46: You're all selfish and I'm not okay
 S27: We've still got two other poems to do, What is our Life?
 T45: Let's just let Adam sum that one up, Adam actually brought that one up and it kind of got people going
 AD17: I thought I already did - everything's for your own personal gain despite what you do, despite what it looks like - that's what I reckon anyway
 T46: You believe life is like that?
 AD18: Yeah
 J47: Even if you
 AD19: Because you'll just feel bad otherwise - you were just going on about the kidney malarkey yeah then - you'll feel bad if you didn't give it

- T47: Right, any examples from your own life though, I mean are there things you do and you think hey hang on I do this not because I'm a decent person, I do this to make myself feel better, to make me feel a better person
- AD20: Not straight off the top of my head no
- T48: Anyone - personal, kind of - personal associations - you think yeah that's happened to me
- AD21: Helping mum and dad with something - if you don't do it, oh you - you don't want to do it it's just you do it to make them think "he's a good chap" sort of thing
- T49: Yeah
- P30: Good one
- J48: But don't you ever do something because you see someone who's really upset and you want to make them feel better
- AD22: But then you'll feel good because you're making them happy
- J49: That may be one reason you're doing it but you're also doing it
- ALL [talking]
- AD23: Okay but it's not in every single reason then, that's what I'm saying
- A28: [indistinct]
- J50: I know what you're saying, I totally agree that it's not just, I agree there's always selfish reasons for things but I think that you also do things
- R17: Yeah, but then again, the reason behind the ten commandments is so that if you follow them you get to Heaven which is
- AD24: Personal gain as well, yeah.
- A29: God being selfish, I want you to do all this
- T50: Okay over to Steve, Steve was making a point
- R18: [indistinct] That God being selfish thing - could actually apply - who would be at the expense of two - well the first god would [indistinct]
- A30: Cos he wants everyone to worship him
- R19: Yeah anyway
- S28: What is our Life?
- R20: Selfish hang on
- A31: What is our life?
- S29: Leads us nicely on to a poem that is also called 'What is our Life?'
- R21: Ha ha ha
- T51: You've got about um five minutes and don't forget you've got to discuss at least three poems
- ALL [gasps]
- J51: I always disagree with people on this poem as well ...

...

AUDIO TAPE CATALOGUE.

DATE	NO	POEM / INDIVIDUAL ORAL	NAMES
26/2/97	12	London	Anna and Josie
	13		Steve and Rob
	14		Peter and Adam
	15		Whole Class
5/3/97	16	A Poison Tree	Anna and Josie
	17		Steve and Rob
	18		Peter and Adam
	19		Whole Class
17/4/97	20	What Is Our Life?	Anna and Josie
	21		Steve and Rob
	22		Peter and Adam
10/6/97	23	The Sick Rose	Anna and Josie
+	24		Steve and Rob
12/6/97	25	The Latest Decalogue	Peter and Adam (<u>only</u> The Latest Decalogue, The Sick Rose on tape no.33)
	26		Peter and Harry
16/6/97	27	The Tyger	Anna and Josie
+	28		Steve and Rob
17/6/97	29	The Lamb	Peter and Adam
	30		Peter and Harry
25/6/97	31	The Human Abstract	Anna and Josie
	32		Steve and Rob
	33		Peter and Adam (<u>includes</u> The Sick Rose)
	34		Peter and Harry
25/9/97	35	The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant	Josie and A. (boy, Anna absent)

		her Gall	
	36		Steve and Rob
	37		Peter and Adam
29/9/97	38		Anna and Josie
30/9/97	39	The Despairing Lover	Anna and Josie
	40		Steve and Rob
	41		Peter and Adam
7/10/97	42	The Daffodils	Anna and Josie
	43		Steve and Rob
	44		Peter and Adam
16/10/97	45	Nuns Fret Not Jordan	Anna and Josie
	46		Steve and Rob
	47		Peter and Adam
22/10/97	48	I am The Twa Corbies	Anna and Josie
	49		Steve and Rob
	50		Peter and Adam
18/11/97	51	What Is Our Life?	Steve, Josie, Adam, Rob and teacher
19/11/97	52	The Latest Decalogue	Adam, Peter and teacher
19/11/97	53	What Is Our Life? The Latest Decalogue	Peter, Anna, Steve, Josie and teacher
24/3/98	54	The Latest Decalogue What Is Our Life?	Josie, Peter, Rob, Steve and PGCE student (repaired, broken tape)
31/3/98	55	The Latest Decalogue What Is Our Life?	Josie, Steve, Anna, Rob, Peter, Adam and teacher (Q31)
1/4/98	56	INDIVIDUAL ORAL	Josie, Rob, Peter and PGCE student
4/4/98	57	INDIVIDUAL ORAL	Steve, Anna, Adam and PGCE student

APPENDIX D

READER RESPONSE JOURNALS AND ANNOTATED POEMS

15 PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS - ANALYSIS OF INITIAL ANNOTATION

The first column on the left below shows that, for instance, across all fifteen poems, Anna made 201 annotations around the poems compared to Adam's 88. The table also indicates the percentage of each reader's annotations devoted to story, form and poet as well as the number of references to other texts. Further details about, for instance, the specific aspects of form commented on, are given in this appendix. Pages 11-27 give representative extracts from each reader's journal on the poems. The remainder of the appendix contains pages from pupils' journals and annotations. The quality of some photocopies is poor, especially where readers wrote in light blue ink.

	total numbered annotations	total interpretation / story	total style / form	poet	intertextuality
Adam	88	82 (93%)	5 (6%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Peter	121	106 (87%)	14 (13%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Anna	201	174 (86%)	10 (6%)	10 (6%)	5 (3%)
Josie	121	69 (57%)	16 (13%)	35 (29%)	1 (1%)
Steve	192	179 (93%)	10 (6%)	2 (1%)	1 (0%)
Rob	157	137 (87%)	19 (12%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)

INITIAL ANNOTATION ANALYSIS: ADAM.

London	1-6
A Poison Tree	1-10
What Is Our Life?	1-4 1. Imagery 2. Imagery 3. Imagery
The Sick Rose	1-6
The Latest Decalogue	1-7
The Tyger	1-6
The Lamb	1-5 4. repetition
The Human Abstract	1-9 2. personification
The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall	1-6 6. The poet is trying to get the message across that nothing is how it seems on the surface.
The Despairing Lover	1-10
The Daffodils	1-7 7. describing the daffodils as if they were human.
Nuns Fret Not	1-5
Jordan	1
The Twa Corbies	1-3
I am	1-3

INITIAL ANNOTATION ANALYSIS: PETER.

London	1-7 1. repetition 2. imagery
A Poison Tree	1-7 4. juxtaposition 5. imagery
What Is Our Live?	1-6 4. simile
The Sick Rose	1-6 1. symbolism 4. symbolism
The Latest Decalogue	1-10
The Tyger	1-9 1. rhyme 9. repetition
The Lamb	1-8 1. personification
The Human Abstract	1-11 1. two countries - balance of power 3. personification
The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall	1-4 3. like Sir Thomas More
The Despairing Lover	1-12 4. irregularity of rhyme 8. double meaning
The Daffodils	1-7 5. juxtaposition
Nuns Fret Not	1-6
Jordan	1-5
The Twa Corbies	1-15
I am	1-8

INITIAL ANNOTATION ANALYSIS: ANNA.

London	1-15
A Poison Tree	1-19 11. Blake's fault. - Blake was going to win. 16. The foe wanted what Blake had.
What Is Our Life?	1-12 11. simile 12. more optimistic than speech in V.v of Macbeth
The Sick Rose	1-21 14. imagery
The Latest Decalogue	1-12
The Tyger	1-18 12. Repetition, makes this verse stronger. 13. Blake wrote this verse - then the rest to elaborate
The Lamb	1-12 6. Repetition - like song with verse and chorus. 8. Blake = child 9. Quoting from Bible.
The Human Abstract	1-18 1. Personification 4. Capital letters for main words 14. the Bible 15. Imagery 16. Bible - Tree of Knowledge - Eve 17. Eve ate from the tree.
The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall	1-15
The Despairing Lover	1-11
The Daffodils	1-11 2. rhyming couplet 3. summing up lines of verse 4. inspiration to write a poem 5. imagery 9. A poet like himself was moved to write a poem, which made him happy. 10 he cannot think of anything to write 11. he can think of these daffodils and feel happy
Nuns Fret Not	1-11 6. his job as a poet 10. when he was out of work
Jordan	1-8
The Twa Corbies	1-8
I am	1-10

INITIAL ANNOTATION ANALYSIS: JOSIE.

London	1-8 1. repetition 2. repetition
A Poison Tree	1-7 1. tree as a metaphor 7. mood and atmosphere
What Is Our Life?	1-7 1. symbolising ... emotions 2. imagery - Raleigh is using 5. the poet 6. Raleigh is saying 7. the poet is saying
The Sick Rose	1-10 1. Blake using metaphor 2. word 7. Blake talking about man
The Latest Decalogue	1-8 1. Clough's views of the 10 commandments 3. sarcasm (tone) 5. poet agrees with 10 commandments poet shows irony - why he's changed 10 commandments
The Tyger	1-10 2. contrast - colours - an image 5. Blake is using the image 6. I have the image of a tiger's paw - clasping neck 8. same as 1st verse Blake has been through the dangers. uses word 'dare' - emphasis 11. comma - in last verse but not first
The Lamb	1-11 1. William Blake is saying 6. this is a religious poem 7. Blake is obviously implying 8. Blake is talking about God 9. Blake is saying
The Human Abstract	1-7 1. Blake is talking about God. 2. Blake is referring to 3. Blake is saying 4. metaphor 7. Blake is saying
The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall	1-7 6. The poet is saying 7. Just like Thomas More in <u>A Man for All Seasons</u>

The Despairing Lover	1-8
The Daffodils	1-6 1. about Wordsworth's escapism, when he needed to cheer up he thought of daffodils 2. he imagines 3. daffodils reminded him of rhyming couplets at the end of each stanza 4. brought a 'wealth' to him
Nuns Fret Not	1-5 1. Wordsworth is trying to say 2. Perhaps he is saying 5. Perhaps he is saying This is a sonnet
Jordan	1-4 2. Herbert is saying that 4. Rhyme scheme
The Twa Corbies	1-11
I am	1-10 1. John Clare is saying that 2. friends forgotten him 3. He is the only person 4. His woes 6. He does exist 7. He is imagining 8. this life 9. He wants 10. He thinks

INITIAL ANNOTATION ANALYSIS: STEVE.

London	1-15
A Poison Tree	1-22 21. image of the tree ... relates to creation story 22. imagery
What Is Our Life?	1-12
The Sick Rose	1-10 6. pun - bed
The Latest Decalogue	1-10
The Tyger	1-15 14. repeated for emphasis 15. only difference from could / dare (vocab.)
The Lamb	1-12 2. Writer shows authority over lamb, 'little' 8. repetition 9. emphasis
The Human Abstract	1-15
The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall	1-14
The Despairing Lover	1-17 17. juxtaposition
The Daffodils	1-10 5. Dancing metaphor again 6. happy that he's something to write about
Nuns Fret Not	1-10 1. Appears to be a sonnet 2. only 2 lines that don't have 10 syllables
Jordan	1-8
The Twa Corbies	1-12
I am	1-10

INITIAL ANNOTATION ANALYSIS: ROB.

London	1-10 6. Juxtaposition (marriage - hearse)
A Poison Tree	1-15 1. imagery 7. imagery of tears / fears watering his tree / anger 9. Apple imagery for the physical way he portrays his hatred for his friend 14. A lot of imagery is used in the poem - tree - hatred - apple etc.
What Is Our Life?	1-15 14. Are <u>like</u> drawn curtains - simile
The Sick Rose	1-13 3. ! used to emphasise point. stands out. very important 7. Imagery of rose used for person. Roses are very pretty. 11. weather symbolises his feelings 12. Does the rose symbolise a person that he loves
The Latest Decalogue	1-9 1. The Author's opinions on the decalogue.
The Tyger	1-12 4. Repetition of 1st verse for effect. 7. Comparing the tiger to a fire.
The Lamb	1-11 9. Repetition 11. 'making all the vales rejoice' makes lamb sound very special. 12. Repetition
The Human Abstract	1-12
The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall	1-9
The Despairing Lover	1-13
The Daffodils	1-11 2. metaphorically dancing 4. uses the dancing metaphor again 10. Rhyming scheme ABABAA last two lines stand out from rest of stanza
Nuns Fret Not	1-9 4. The prison imagery for how we entrap ourselves 6. This poem is a sonnet (+ some interpretation of scanty sonnet)
Jordan	1-7
The Twa Corbies	1-5
I am	1-6 6. Rhyming Scheme

SEQUENCE OF 1ST READINGS (I.E. 1ST AND 2ND JOURNAL ENTRIES)
OF PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS.

Y10 = Sept. 1996 - July 1997; Y11 = Sept. 1997 - July 1998

1.	February 26th 1997	Y10 Spring Term	London - Blake
2.	March 5th 1997		A Poison Tree - Blake
3.	April 15th-18th 1997		What Is Our Life?- Raleigh
4.	June 10th-13th 1997	Y10 Summer Term	The Sick Rose - Blake
5.	June 10th-13th 1997		The Latest Decalogue - Clough
6.	June 16th 1997		The Lamb - Blake
7.	June 23rd-27th 1997		The Human Abstract - Blake
8.	July 14th 1997		The Tyger - Blake
9.	Sept. 22nd 1997	Y11 Autumn Term	The Lowest Trees - Dyer
10.	Sept. 30th 1997		The Despairing Lover-Walsh
11.	Oct. 6th-7th 1997		The Daffodils-Wordsworth
12.	Oct. 15th-16th 1997		Jordan - Herbert
13.	Oct. 15th-16th 1997		Nuns Fret Not- Wordsworth
14.	Oct. 21st-22nd 1997		The Twa Corbies-Anon
15.	Oct. 21st-22nd 1997		I am - Clare

London - William Blake

26th February 1997

Adam	1st 4	pretty hard to understand ... I don't like it when the poem's paragraphs don't have any meaning to me.
	2nd 5	I can appreciate it more because I understand a lot more of it ... meant to be very depressing ... didn't have any effect on me.
Peter	1st 5	very confusing ... quite powerful with the repetitions of 'every' in verse 2. I feel a sort of pity for the people in the poem, the crying infants ... reminds me of articles in the news on starving homeless refugees or other war victims (civilians) because they are weak, woeful + crying or even homeless people today in London.
	2nd 5	makes more sense to me now. Now I know more about it, it has not made me like it much more. The poem (now explained) is a lot more powerful to me, it provokes a very affective response, from the soul / heart rather than just from the brain. Vocab used makes the poem more powerful ... the picture of the manacles ... contrasts in the poem help with the strength of the poem.
Anna	1st 5	don't actually understand what this poem is talking about. It may be about the fact that the government was worried about a revolution taking place and filling London with soldiers (line 11)? full of sad words ... very metaphorical ... I don't think it has a story to it or anything.
	2nd 6	doing these jobs as a last resort ... 'chartered streets' is saying how all of London is owned + controlled by the government ... No-one else has a say.
Josie	1st 7	the problems of London ... blaming these problems on the government. I found interpretations for most of this poem, but the last line confused me. This poem made me feel quite depressed.
	2nd 7	I am now even more depressed by this poem than I was at the start of the week. I now understand what the 'mind forged manacles' are. It means the people are trapped.
Steve	1st 4	reminds me of film extracts of towns after they were hit by bombs in the second world war. The poem doesn't really trigger any emotions in me, I don't know why. Line: 'The mind forged manacles I hear' is interesting.
	2nd 4	After working as a class, I can now see that it has nothing to do with the Great Fire of London. Incredible sarcasm is used in the first verse, repeating chartered ... marriage and hearse are placed together.
Rob	1st 7	the poem was quite good but I find the whole poem is very depressing - people crying out, weakness, woe, fear etc. The poem reminded me of a film about chimney sweepers where the backstreets of London are shown. I like the phrase 'mind forg'd manacles'. They are so trapped in these streets that they cannot think for themselves. I felt a lot of pity for the people in the poem. They are in pain, afraid, starving + it is like a comparison with cardboard city today. It makes you realize how lucky you are. The first time I saw the poem I thought it would be really rubbish ... after ... a few times ... I started to see more in it.
	2nd 8	

A Poison Tree - William Blake

5th March 1997

Adam	1st 8	I thought this was the best poem we have done so far. I enjoyed it because the poem flowed so well because each two lines ending rhimed with each other. This poem wasn't hard to understand unlike all the others we have done. I liked this poem because although what's happening to the person is not very funny, the ending 2 lines were pretty funny. I thought this poem was cleverly done. I enjoyed reading it because it was a nice flowing poem.
	2nd 8	I understand the poem more. I have seen more ideas. I think that the tree is a metaphorical tree and so is the apple. The apple is full of all the spite and hatred of this kid towards the foe.
Peter	1st 9	I like this poem, it is fairly easy to grasp. The rhyme and the twist in the tale of the poem made it more fun to read. I can quite easily relate to this poem. If I have an argument with someone and don't resolve it, it grows until that person becomes the worst person in the world in my eyes. It is a bit like the feuding families in Romeo and Juliet that probably ... started over a petty argument and led to each wanting to murder the other.
	2nd 9	I can relate to this poem as I can recall times when an argument with someone has grown into hatred so much that I wanted to kill them.
Anna	1st 9	by telling a friend about something they had done that had made him angry, his anger ended ... I think this statement / verse is very true, if you do not tell someone something is wrong they will not know and therefore not be able to change anything.
	2nd 9	This imagery of his anger growing is shown by a tree - it grows from a seed (?) till it produces an apple. An apple was used maybe because of the religious Adam and Eve story when Eve ate the apple of knowledge etc. ... no evidence that the anger with his foe was much different to the anger he felt with his friend.
Josie	1st 6	I have found this poem more difficult to understand than previous poems, probably because there is a lot of imagery and there could be many meanings. ... a person's anger growing until they were driven to murder ... This poem was depressing.
	2nd 6	this poem isn't teaching a lesson because, in the end., he was 'glad to see' that his foe was dead ... the poet is saying that revenge is good. This poem didn't work for me because I just couldn't get into it and it didn't emotionally affect me.
Steve	1st 8	This poem I liked quite a lot. It reminds me slightly of arguments that I sometimes have with my parents. When I go to bed still thinking about it. It also reminded me of a passage from the Bible "Don't let the sun go down on your anger". The line that I found interesting was the way he "watered it with fears"
	2nd 7	The poem is didactic in teaching us that we should make up with people quickly ... Each time I read the poem it appeals to me less; it gets boring. The tree is metaphorical, the apple is the product - violence.
Rob	1st 6	Didn't enjoy this poem as much as the other two although it was still quite good. I thought the poet used imagery well. As I re-read the poem I began to understand the imagery ... I quite like the title of the poem ... makes you want to read it ... Although sometimes I did find the poem a bit boring.
	2nd 8	I like it more because I know what it's on about ... I like the way that William Blake uses the apple ... We are not told what the apple is supposed to represent ... I feel that the imagery used in the poem is a very good way of ... getting his point across ... Blake is holding a mirror up to life because everyone feels this way sometimes.

What Is Our Life? - Sir Walter Raleigh

15th - 18th April 1997

Adam	1st 3	The poem wasn't that bad, it was easy to understand. I saw straight away what it was about, it was making out that life was like an actor's performance on stage, just like what Shakespeare was doing in Macbeth. At the end of each 2 lines the words rhymed which made the poem flow better. I would give this poem a score of 3 because poems have to be very very good to appeal to me. It wasn't awful because I could understand it easily.
	2nd 3	My views have not changed since last time at all. I haven't discovered much new. I've now noticed that each part of the poem is like in order of our life, being born (dressing for play) + dying (end of play). I would not change the score, I'd still give it 3 because we haven't looked at it in depth in class for me to see any parts that there could be other views on.
Peter	1st 7	this poem was very similar to macbeth's speech in Act 5 of Macbeth as it too uses the imagery of life being a play + every person is an actor. The poem is quite depressing ... we laugh through our lives + it is a comedy but we die wanting more, not laughing ... could division (line 2) mean diversion we laugh to disguise life's truths.
	2nd 6	Not a lot more has been explained to me about this poem ... Also line 9 is a bit confusing. What is a 'playing Post'. Latest Rest could mean Raleigh believes in reincarnation ... rhyme scheme ... God is depicted like a teacher who marks down the mistakes we make and judges us on that not noting what we do right.
Anna	1st 9	He is saying that finding happiness or happiness itself is only part of life (like music in a play ... He calls life a short comedy that is watched over by God or 'heaven' and is marked like a spectator watching a performance. The poem is very metaphorical, saying life is like someone doing their part in a play ... I think it is more optimistic than pessimistic ... I like this poem, it is very meaningful.
	2nd 9	'A play of Passion' describes metaphorically that our lives are full of emotions ... grave, it is dark, like the stage when drawn curtains cut out the light from the stage. At the beginning of the poem birth is spoken about - at the end death the poem dies. Each line below rhymes with the line above makes the poem seem lighter hearted.
Josie	1st 7	Raleigh is saying our lives are like a play of passion ... the word passion ... to show all the emotions that we feel throughout our lives ... The poet called the play a comedy because ... life is funny and ironic in that way. This is the opposite view of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Macbeth describes life as a tragic play ... Maybe Raleigh was happy with life at the time of writing the poem. I don't actually think that is true though as I really think Raleigh was calling life ironic. I have given this poem 7 out of 10 as I think I can interpret it quite easily.
	2nd 8	After discussing this poem ... I have decided to change the rating to 8 ... as I did quite like this poem. The reason that I like this is because it is a happy and positive piece of poetry and I generally prefer poetry that doesn't depress me ... Life is a comedy ... Raleigh is saying that the only serious part of our life is death ... The poet uses the metaphor of a play for our lives. Raleigh calls it a play of passion to show all the emotions that we feel during our lives.
Steve	1st 2	reminded me greatly of Macbeth's speech in the play Macbeth where he relates life to a play and himself as an actor 'strutting and fretting'. The poem uses a great deal of figurative language to describe life and its contents. Heaven as a 'sharp spectator'. Personification. I didn't rate this poem much. It was almost as if it had copied Macbeth's speech. It had a very 'down' appeal, gloomy, dull.
	2nd 3	Poem questions the meaning of life - Macbeth style comparison.
Rob	1st 6	This poem was a little bit boring, but I liked the way in which it was written. Showing life as a play. Different aspects of the play are given different aspects of life. I liked the way the poet says there is only one spectator and he sits in heaven and he can see everything that goes wrong, like he is a critic. The author used a lot of imagery in the poem which is probably why I can write so much about it. There was a lot written in the poem that I could really get into and I could understand what the poet was saying and what he meant.
	2nd 5	Only thing that I did get other than what I already had is the fact that the only serious part of the 'play' is the death at the end. Death is also mentioned in the last line, death of the poem ... Rhyming scheme ... After reading it again it just got more boring.

The Sick Rose - William Blake

10th - 13th June 1997

Adam	1st 3	It wasn't that bad because I thought it was fairly easy to understand. It was about a disease that injected a rose and killed it. It wasn't hard to understand and I wrote about nearly every line.
	2nd 3	After my discussion about it hasn't got any better. ... I found out the Rose could be a person.
Peter	1st 2	My first reaction ... it is very short. At first I got the impression that Blake was writing about a rose ... but I soon realized that Blake is writing about a poem called Rose and the invisible worm is a germ that is making her sick ... The bit about the howling storm and it flying in the night I don't get perhaps it has a deeper meaning.
	2nd 2	I still think this poem is very odd and can be interpreted in many different ways. Rose ... prostitute ... references to real things and darkness. Rose could be a woman who gets killed by a jealous lover, his dark secret love kills her.
Anna	1st 8	When I first read this poem I thought it might be about a woman (Rose) who is loved by a man who can't have her and because of this is practically 'stalking' her and upsetting her emotionally. When I read it again ... maybe it was about Rose's husband / lover who had an affair with someone else 'his dark secret love'. To a rose a worm is quite dangerous and to the woman the secret emotions she did not know about are dangerous to her, they are 'destroying her'. The 'howling storm' could represent the rows the couple had ... the emotions 'flies in the night' were a sudden shock to her that smothered her.
	2nd 5	Another response could be about prostitution. A man goes to a prostitute 'has found thy bed', 'crimson joy' ... prostitute in that time wear a lot of red. - Red light district. It is a 'dark secret' to the man as he doesn't want anyone to know about it. Lines 3-5 could be about a disease making Rose sick.
Josie	1st 5	I think that this is a poem about love ... He is calling an upset and depressed woman a sick rose ... a man was in love with a woman but she didn't love him, she was happy with someone else, 'has found out thy bed of crimson joy' ... because he could not have her ... he is making her suffer 'Does thy life destroy' ... Author calls the man 'the invisible worm' ... to the woman he is invisible, she doesn't seem to notice him. I thought this poem was alright but it was a bit sad and depressing.
	2nd 5	still think this poem is about a forbidden love. As he cannot have her for himself, he destroys her life. Another interpretation was the poem being about prostitution. I think my idea fitted the lines of the poem much better and made more sense. I still think that this is quite a depressing poem, I didn't like it at all.
Steve	1st 3	I didn't like this poem because hardly any of it was exactly what it seemed like on the page. Everything was in riddles of imagery. For example 'the invisible worm'. The poem has a very sad, dreary sound and is basically quite miserable.
	2nd 9	Prostitution! The woman is sick - STD's ... the invisible worm. The violent storms were the violent acts etc ... The direct reference to the bed talks about it being of crimson joy, red being the colour of the red light district. The dark secret love is one that is not public ...
Rob	1st 4	I didn't like this poem because I didn't understand very much of it at all I found I didn't understand very much of it at all ... it made no sense whatsoever I did find ... use of imagery ... poem was very strange and did not really remind me of anything or evoke any feelings about anyone or anything. This is probably the worse poem I have ever read. The bits I did understand did not fit in with anything else which spoiled the poem for me.
	2nd 2	- still find it boring and worse than last time - repeating it - just got more and more boring. Most interpretations still do not make sense. this poem has become worse.

The Latest Decalogue - Arthur Hugh Clough

11th-13th June 1997

Adam	1st 3	I did not think much of this poem at all, it was about the 10 Commandments. All I saw in it as, was a list of the commandments with a little explanation of each one as it continued. It didn't need any thinking in depth about what each part means although I don't like thinking a great deal about the meanings of poems - I just seemed to think it was too simple. The good thing about it was the rhyming parts at the end of each line.
	2nd 5	After my discussion, I thought this poem was better because I understood it a lot more. I didn't see the actual meaning or message of the poem. The latest decalogue is the 10 commandment, then giving an explanation which contradicts the commandment.
Peter	1st 7	I found this poem very enjoyable (for a poem) as it is common with many of my own personal views i.e. The 10 Commandments being a load of rubbish and there are better ways of getting through life. The author was probably an atheist and was probably greatly criticized by the church at the time a bit like an old fashioned Salmon Rushdie.
	2nd 7	The poem now makes a little more sense (I knew most of it already). The writer is being very ironic about the time he lives in ... He is almost blasphemous if you take my interpretation of the first line ...
Anna	1st 8	Some of the main reason for keeping the Ten Commandments rules is for your own good. By doing this you make your life easier ... lines 6+7 are saying there is no point in calling anyone names (e.g. blaspheming) because they don't mean anything + you will never gain anything from it, there is no point ... you don't have to work hard to keep someone alive.
	2nd 7	About people of his time bending the law. Doing what the 10cs say literally but finding loopholes in them. Hypocrisy e.g. people are going to church but not for the right intentions. The writer's tone is generally sarcastic. Made me feel sceptical about peoples' intentions for life. Latest equals newest dialogue.
Josie	1st 8	I liked this poem, I had a lot of ideas about it. I think that Clough is being ironic about the decalogue + showing that people are selfish and only do nice things for their own good. This is a bit cynical but a lot of what he said is probably true.
	2nd 8	This poem is about hypocrisy ... people say they follow the ten commandments but really they have found the loopholes ... and follow them for selfish reasons. Clough is being ironic about the time he lives in, he is saying that people don't care about anyone else, just themselves. I think it is a clever poem, I appreciate it in that way.
Steve	1st 9	I liked this poem. It was all about going around the 10 Commandments without actually breaking them. The whole poem was based on methods of self-gain. For example, you mustn't steal, but cheating is different + you're allowed to. It reminds me of DelBoy out of only fools and horses.
	2nd 9	The poem is very ironic of the life + times of the author ... the tone of the writing is that there is a high amount of hypocrisy in society. I thought that this poem was witty + clever ...
Rob	1st 7	This poem wasn't really too bad. I could get a lot of ideas from it. However some of these ideas were difficult to put down into words. You could understand what the poem meant but it was hard to explain + put into words ... Poet ... has very strong views on the decalogue + I think he is complaining about how hypocritical we are by saying we are Christians yet we are always breaking the most important laws. Some of the lines I did not understand but I got the general idea.
	2nd 8	After re-reading the poem again I think I have completely misinterpreted the ideas in the poem. I got the bit about hypocrisy right but in the wrong way ... The poet is talking about how people find loopholes. They take them literally + because of that they can find ways around it ... writer being ironic of the time he is living in. His tone is saying that people don't follow the 10 Commandments.

The Lamb - William Blake

16th June 1997

Adam	1st 1	I thought this poem was rather strange ... I didn't understand much at all from this poem. it seemed all nonsense to me, it didn't seem to have any real meaning. William Blake ... repeated some lines at the beginning and end of each paragraph for some reason. I did not enjoy reading this poem.
	2nd 1	After the tape recording session I have understood a bit more about this poem 'Innocence' in the title ... is what the little lamb is meant to be ... first paragraph ... making the lamb look innocent, in the second the lamb learns who made him. The way he was told, I couldn't understand ... This poem did not get any better so ... score stays at 1.
Peter	1st 3	This poem is similar to Tiger Tiger ... The Lamb and Tiger are depicted as completely different one being made in Hell by a devil or something in a forge ... whereas the lamb is made by God in heaven all happy and joyous (innocent). Both poems mention a creator a god or devil who made both the lamb and the tiger one a killer one a fluffy victim. The poem may have a deeper meaning talking about two different types of person.
	2nd 2	This poem was very easy to understand ... about God and the creation of the animals. I can't find a deeper meaning than that. The poem is a lot like the tiger as I thought before.
Anna	1st 4	I did not like this poem as I feel it was about what it was named ... was not metaphorical or anything. Also it ended up being religious which I don't like anything being about when it is called something completely normal and things about God etc creep into it ... asking the lamb who he thinks made him ... goes on to say that God did ... which introduces the belief that God is seen in the image of what you are.
	2nd 4	I still don't like this poem - some other people in the class do as they say it is happy and about the beginning of life ... It is very stereotypical of a lamb ... The innocence and experience together are meant to show the contrary states of the human soul.
Josie	1st 4	I don't like this poem at all. It doesn't stir up any emotions in me except boredom. All I get out of this poem is that William Blake is saying that a lamb is the most innocent animal ... Blake is relating the innocent lamb to God and Jesus. I don't think this poem is very good at all, it doesn't make me feel anything it doesn't hold my interest at all - 4 out of 10 ... may be generous. Perhaps one of the reasons I don't like it is because it's a religious poem and I am not a religious person.
	2nd 4	I really don't like this poem, it's boring. Blake is trying to convey religious ideas. I find it totally uninteresting ... I don't like it at all
Steve	1st 4	This poem is about God and the poem is explaining that God made everything such as lambs and humans. The first verse is questioning and second verse is answering. The sheep could be a symbol ... of new life e.g. white pure cleansed. There is repetition used in the first and last lines of each paragraph ... seemed very religious, I did not really enjoy the poem.
	2nd 3	innocence of lambs closely relating to Jesus incredibly religious poem
Rob	1st 4	Another poem which makes no sense to me at all. I couldn't really see a lot in the poem and it was quite confusing ... just seems to be about an innocent lamb but some of the language and the way the poem was written didn't really help me to understand it ... I didn't really like this poem because I felt I was limited in what I understood ... it didn't evoke any feelings in me or make me think of any past experiences ... which just went to making it more boring for me
	nd 3	The poem has not grown on me at all. It is too religious and boring ... it got more boring ... I had to keep on reading it when I didn't want to ... the stuff about religion was just being repetitive ... it just got boring as I went through it ... My rating of this poem has gone down.

The Human Abstract - William Blake

23rd - 27th June 1997

Adam	1st 5	This poem wasn't so bad because I wrote quite a lot down when I read it. It was quite similar to A Poison Tree ... a tree growing from the mystery from the earth but in A Poison Tree it was the wrath of a friend. The poem ... stages of the tree growing ... helped to by what was happening in the world ... rhyme helped it to be read with ease.
	2nd 5	'mutual fear brings peace' and 'till the selfish loves increase' ... could be an army in mutual fear of each other so they don't attack until one's greed increases. - score of 5 because it didn't get any better
Peter	1st 8	This poem is very good in my opinion. It is very intriguing, it leaves a lot unanswered so there is lots of room for personal interpretation. I think the poem is about a tree (a part of the brain) ... so deceit can be caused.
	2nd 7	My eyes have been opened to many new interpretations of the poem ... Blake is being didactic about the human race ... There is a similarity between this poem + other Blake poems such as the poison tree as they make references to trees + plants. Blake often uses these as metaphors. I like the line 'mutual fear brings peace' as it is very true even today.
Anna	1st 8	I like this poem as it is quite philosophical ... I feel it is cleverly written + never starts preaching. In a way it sort of questions God ... maybe it is referring to the apple Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden ... kind of like 'Pandora's Box'. By eating the apple Eve has let all the words with capital letters - Poor, Mercy, Cruelty, Humility, Deceit into the Human Brain ... they appear all the time. Humans have a tree of Knowledge growing in the Brain.
	2nd 8	'Thickest shade' = darkest place in society or in people's brain ... Gods cannot do anything about Humans evil ways because these badnesses are from the roots of the tree, and these are in the human brain, they cannot be removed. Abstract ... a sort of summery of human life ... Personification used in Cruelty etc.
Josie	1st 7	I think that this poem is quite good. It has a lot of meanings + metaphors + I think a person could get a lot out of this poem. I think Blake is talking about religion and all the bad things on the earth. I think he is saying there is nothing God can do. I think that this poem was quite good for a religious poem.
	2nd 8	After talking to the class I discovered that I was the only one who had the idea about Blake saying that God cannot control evil and the tree symbolizes the root of all evil ... could mean that there is something wrong inside every human (the tree of evil). [3 interpretations of title given] ... perhaps it is corect to interpret it as meaning all three. I do think this is a good poem, it is interesting + it has a lot of philosophical meanings.
Steve	1st 5	This poem greatly resembles another poem by Blake, A Poison Tree about planting seeds of ecil and deceit ... The tree bears the fruit of deceit. These are sweet to eat; we all like sweet foods so Blake is implying we all like deceit ... all the wrong in the world is due to this. He ends by saying it's all in the mind. This poem wasn't very interesting at all.
	2nd 5	The poem evoked in me a feeling of the need for self-discipline ... I get this because the poem begins by saying "Pity would ... somebody poor" ... it is our fault that all these bad things are happening ... caterpillars + flies ... pests that oppose humans ... I didn't really like this poem, it put me in a bad mood for the whole day.
Rob	1st 8	I wasn't expecting that much of this poem but I was fairly pleasantly surprized. It wasn't the best poem I have ever read but it definitely wasn't the worst. All other Blake poems ... quite boring ... about religion ... this was about a different subject ... I could interpret a lot about this poem ... how much I understood it and what I could get out of it, which made the poem good.
	2nd 8	I thought that this poem was very similar to A Poison Tree. Both "trtrees" contained fruits which were fruit of evil things. In The Human Abstract it was deceit + in A Poison Tree ... fruit from the tree caused ... death.

The Tyger - William Blake

14th July 1997

Adam	1st 2	I thought that this poem was pretty hard to understand, I had to read it through quite a few times to get any sort of ideas ... This poem just didn't make much sense to me, I couldn't understand it. I had done the poem before in Year 8 with Mr. Hart ... The rhyming at the end of each two lines didn't make me like it any more.
	2nd 3	After the discussion about this poem on the tape recorder I have found out more and it's made more sense to me now ... 5th paragraph ... could be in Hell because of the furnaces and hammer and chains ... I still didn't think much of the poem but I'll give it a 2 because I've understood it more than before.
Peter	1st 5	This poem is quite good as poems go and is quite easy to work out (I think, I hope). It talks about the creator who makes the tiger who is a killer ... it is not clear who the creator is either God or the Devil. Many things point to the maker of the tiger being a Devil as references to Hell are made e.g. Anvils, chains + hammers which symbolize a forge which is like Hell i.e. there are flames etc. + it is hot ... repetition is used of first paragraph ... I don't know why.
	2nd 4	Nothing new has been revealed to me ... a few new interpretations which I thought were complete nonsense such as the tiger is being chased by hunters. The Tiger + the lamb are two conflicting poems one being about God + fluffy animals, the other being about the Devil + a killer animal.
Anna	1st 5	I did not enjoy this poem at all, however, I think it must be very good as it is full of confusing metaphorical sentences + words ... first verse ... repeated at the end almost completely the same ... repeating this verse makes it seem more important to the reader ... maybe Blake is discussing someone's anger, it was a rage like a tiger + he is asking where it came from and why. Using imagery he is saying he is like a wild tiger.
	2nd 5	only a couple of people in the class actually liked this poem some thought it was to do with Hell + therefore religion. I still think what I thought before about this poem and I still don't like it much.
Josie	1st 7	I don't like this poem at all. I find it hard to understand + generally uninteresting ... Blake is basically talking about the danger of tigers. As I don't understand the poem it is difficult to write about ... Blake uses the imagery of fire to describe tigers ... if he isn't talking about a tiger he could be talking about an angry person.
	2nd 7	It just doesn't interest me. There are parts of it I don't understand and so it's difficult to give my opinion ... Blake is just describing the ferocity of tigers.
Steve	1st 3	aimed at protecting tigers by what bad things people do to tigers + how they are becoming endangered ... who could do such things to these innocent animals ... first paragraph is repeated at the end of the poem to really drum in this message ... only difference is the word 'dare' is used instead of could ... the poem has become angered by what people are doing to the tiger. Seems William Blake likes animals as a lot of his poems are based around them.
	2nd 3	The tiger is in great danger. The poet talks of hammer + chains. Chains of extinction + terror. 'Framing thy fearful symmetry' is about painting + replicating the tiger ... The being that burns these fires is in 'deeps' or 'skies'; heaven or hell? Found the poem interesting because of the descriptive writing, still didn't like it.
Rob	1st 6	This poem was o.k. but the poet just kept repeating things ... tended to make the poem long + boring + didn't really mean a lot to me ... Blake kept on repeating himself about the same subject i.e. the Tiger being killed ... I can't tell whether the poem is actually about a tiger or whether it has some kind of deeper meaning. There was a lot of imagery ... just served to make it more complicated.
	2nd 6	It doesn't evoke any feelings in me + I couldn't really find a deeper meaning in this poem. If anything it has got worse. I liked the comparison with the lamb.

The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant her Gall - Sir Edward Dyer

22nd September 1997

Adam	1st 2	I thought this poem was fairly hard to make sense of. I think it was trying to say that no matter how big or small - it can still have an affect on something and that nothing is how it might seem on the surface. I didn't enjoy this poem at all, it didn't effect me in any way.
	2nd 4	I have understood more about this poem now after the class discussion. The poem has more and deeper meanings ... I have understood virtually all the poem now which makes it better so I will give it a 4 out of 10.
Peter	1st 6	This poem is very confusing, it uses many unusual metaphors ... the poem has on main point ... all things big or small are equal ... The link with <u>A man for all seasons</u> could be in line 9 as more has very strong faith, he believes and trusts in God yet says little about it, he does not expect praise for his faith.
	2nd 7	The poem has become much clearer ... the links with <u>A Man For All Seasons</u> has become much more clear to me. I have come to appreciate the poem more now I understand it more. The line 'And love is love in beggars and in kings' is a very good line, it is very philosophical and is my favourite line in the poem.
Anna	1st 9	the 1st verse is about ... even small, insignificant things in our lives can love. The first line could translate that even the lowest people have ability to love ... love is the same in everything ... verse 2 tells how that the stronger the love the less rows etc are included in the relationship and that true love does not need to speak its feelings all the time but it should be just known.
	2nd 6	form of a poem ... very important to relate to the meaning of it. Last 2 lines of each stanza are both rhyming couplets. The rest of the verses aren't which makes these two lines stand out ... both these lines sum up the meaning what the rest of the verse has been about The second verse is more pessimistic ... love is ubiquitous ... can be crushed.
Josie	1st 7	I found this poem very difficult to interpret. I think it could be about the fact that everybody and everything is capable of feeling emotions like love ... This poem didn't really stir any emotions in me, which is probably because I didn't understand it! I'm sure it is a very meaningful poem. In how good I think it is, I'll give it 7 out of 10. But in how much I enjoyed it, I'll give it 4 out of 10.
	2nd 7	I now know this poem is mainly about two things: 1) ... you don't have to wear your heart on your sleeve to have deep emotions. 2) Everything and everybody is capable of feeling love and of being crushed. I think this poem is better than I did before because I now understand what it is about. The poet changes the rhyming pattern to make the last 2 lines of each verse stand out. They are rhyming couplets.
Steve	1st 4	The first time I read this poem it sent me into a state of great confusion due to the words in it ... the line 'the firmest faith is found in few words' had an effect on me. It made me think about people being ashamed to declare their true thoughts and beliefs due to the mocking of others.
	2nd 3	Poem about equality of the size of the thing. Saying they are equal even though they are relatively small.
Rob	1st 5	... some aspects of it I couldn't interpret that well ... things all have something to distinguish them no matter how small they are ... everybody ... can love. The last verse ... could be associated with <u>A Man For All Seasons</u> - it says of how true hearts, such as Sir Thomas More's, can only see and hear what is going on around them ... once they ... do what they think is right in their 'true heart' they are broken.
	2nd 7	I can see a much clearer connection with <u>A Man For All Seasons</u> I definitely like it more now.

The Despairing Lover - William Walsh

30th September 1997

Adam	1st 5	I thought this poem was fairly simple to understand about a man who was rejected from his love. He feels suicidal but calms himself down later. 5 out of 10 because it wasn't that bad.
	2nd 5	I will keep the score of 5 because I didn't discover that much about the poem that I didn't know before. Line 24 did stand out I discovered because it's the only one that didn't rhyme.
Peter	1st 8 1/2	I like this poem a lot as it's not too complicated and has a theme. The poem tells a short story of a man hurt by love ... tries to commit suicide but cannot bring himself to do it. With it being quite long I made lots of notes. I can make personal connections with the poem, not with the thought of suicide ... more a scheme I plotted in a rage but when I cooled down and thought about it, it turned out to be not such a good idea.
	2nd 7	Before I thought that this poem had a deeper meaning but now I'm not so sure ... The form of the poem and rhythm have made a few points in the poem clearer such as the will to live of the man line 24 not rhyming with anything else.
Anna	1st 6	Damon loved Phyllis very much and it seems that she did not love him back (he could not move her emotions to love him) ... wanted to kill himself ... realizes that by killing himself he has no chance of loving again or being loved ... decides not to commit suicide. I interpreted this poem completely wrong at first because I misunderstood the word 'precipice' which threw my understanding of the whole poem.
	2nd 7	suicidal ... cliff edge (precipice) in anguish and despair ... resolves to live line 24 the only line that does not rhyme and therefore stands out in form and content (meaning of poem) Juxtaposition despair -> calm etc.
Josie	1st 7	Although this poem is about an emotion, it was still a bit uninteresting ... on the surface it seems the poem is just about a man who was in love with a woman who didn't love him. The only way to 'finish his woes' is to end his life. Then he changed his mind ... The poem seemed a bit like a soap opera. I suppose it was quite amusing so I'll give it 7.
	2nd 7	This poem shows we shouldn't jump into things on the spur of the minute when we're all emotional as we're going to regret it ... Damon, like all people, changed after a crisis. By coming so close to death he scared himself and left even more willing to live before. Shows good things can come out of bad things ... 'every cloud has a silver lining'. I still think this poem's a bit shallow.
Steve	1st 5	... uses juxtaposition in a very strong literary sense. The lover goes to the cliff in despair, anguish ... leaves calmly wishing to live 'as long as he could' 'unconcerned' at thoughts of pain. The realization of death 'hit' the lover and made him think seriously about what he was doing. I do not think that this poem is using any imagery or figurative speaking.
	2nd 5	I now realize the poem is not about Phyllis dying, more about the rejection of the despairing lover ... Line 24 is the only line that doesn't rhyme. This is the style working in conjunction with the context to emphasize the importance of the preservation of life.
Rob	1st 8	My first impression of this poem were that it would be long and boring but in the end I quite liked it ... after reading it through a few times I was able to interpret and understand it. I particularly liked the 2nd stanza as it reminded me of part of a song. Some of this poem is very true to life. Sometimes we all feel like doing something rash ... then we realize it's not such a good idea.
	2nd 8	After further reflection, I did get somemore out of it ... The one line that doesn't rhyme - live - the way the poet made thsi stand out was very good and made me think aboyt the poet's feelings and how important he thought life was.

The Daffodils - William Wordsworth

6th and 7th October 1997

Adam	1st 4	I found this poem rather hard to understand in the way of a deeper meaning if there was one. All I think the poem is about is a person walking along seeing many daffodils swaying in the breeze. I don't think there was a deeper meaning, otherwise it's very hard to find and understand. I liked the rhyming scheme, every other 2 lines rhymed.
	2nd 5	I have understood a lot more ... the person's memory is of these fields of daffodils, when he's unhappy or something, he feels better by thinking of this memory ... the poem has got a bit better now I understand it more. A 5 because I understood very little first time round.
Peter	1st 2	This poem is very confusing. I can't find much of a deeper meaning. The daffodils must be a metaphor for something else but I can't work it out. The rhyme in the poem is quite interesting, 1,3, lines in each stanza rhyme as does 2,4 5,6 are also a rhyming couplet. I think this poem is like the Beatles song 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'. The similarities are that it is a 'happy poem'.
	2nd 1	This poem has not been made clearer to me ... no deeper meanings to be found. The poem is purely about memories how they can change your mood either making it good or bad. Daffodils are not a metaphor for anything, they are just the subject of Wordsworth's memory. The 'inward eye' is the brain or soul which no one else can touch or see into.
Anna	1st 4	saw loads of daffodils ... felt the need to write a poem about how this cheered him up. However, if it is twisted around a bit the poem could be about when this man swa a beautiful woman, fell in love and compared her to a field of daffodils, she was all he saw and she made him very happy.
	2nd 6	Poem about memories. The daffodils, when he remembered them his mood changed and he felt happier than beforehand. His 'inner eye' and 'solitudes' was his inner real self that no one else could get to or know - Not loner etc happy to spend time with himself and his memories.
Josie	1st 4	This poem is firstly about daffodils, but also it's about a man's escapism. How the simple sight of daffodils dancing in the breeze gave him the sense of tranquility and relaxation that he needs to escape. This poem also seems to be about memories. There isn't really much I can say about this poem.
	2nd 5	I now know that this poem is about memories. The 'wealth' that he gets from the sight of the daffodils is that whenever he thinks of that memory it will make him happy. Wordsworth's moods are affected by his memories. At least this is a happy poem.
Steve	1st 3	about a bloke who saw a field of daffodils ... so overjoyed ... he had to write a poem about it. I didn't really enjoy the poem because it was just the retelling of an event. The poem did not make obvious any hidden meaning (sub text).
	2nd 3	I know now that the poem is about memories being recalled ... memories that flash upon the inward eye, this being the soul of the person. Solitude is bliss because he is not on his own anymore because he has the thoughts of these times.
Rob	1st 2	I didn't really enjoy this poem as I couldn't find any form of hidden meaning in the poem ... just the poet talking about past experience of something remarkable he once saw. Any kind of meaning I did find was just muddled which made it very difficult for me to interpret I did notice the rhyme scheme ... last 2 lines stand out.
	2nd 3	I had already drawn most of my interpretations ... there was some extra interpretations ... it didn't really improve my enjoyment.

Jordan - George Herbert

15th and 16th October 1997

Adam	1st 1	I found this poem exceptionally hard to understand. I only wrote about one line of the poem. I think this poem is very complex ... it has a deeper meaning ... it has a lot of strange sentences I don't understand. The score out of 10 would be 1 because I understood very little about it.
	2nd 3	I now understand more about this poem ... the author is saying that has to be riddled to be beautiful ... I think he is contradicting himself here because to me the poem was full of riddles and complex sentences, although he might be doing that on purpose to prove his point.
Peter	1st 2	Herbert is trying to say that no-one ever writes a poem or sings a song about the truth, they always have to make something up to make it sound beautiful ... The poem is about writing poetry. That he is trapped into writing about fakehoods which are beautiful.
	2nd 3	The poem is very hypocritical as it is all about writing poetry plainly and straight forward. But the poem itself is a riddle with a complicated form. Herbert believes that all poetry should be written as fact not fiction.
Anna	1st 9	I like this poem as for a start, there is no easy to explain reason why it is called Jordan and the writer is being very metaphorical all the way through. The poem is done very well in like a code that unless you look very carefully you cannot decipher. I think Herbert is writing about how people put on false acts and false appearances(make up and wigs). He is asking what is wrong with showing the truth (i.e. Is there no beauty in truth?) I don't understand half this poem ... as it is confusing it must have a good meaning.
	2nd 8	1st verse: why do lots of poems have to be fictitious. 2nd verse - he doesn't like the riddled poems that are hard to understand, the meaning is 'vail'd' and the reader only begins to understand it after reading it twice. ... All he wants to say is simply God is his King. The poem is confusing which is contradicting what he is saying.
Josie	1st 5	This poem is very unusual - At first glance it seems to make no sense at all. After reading it closely I think it might be about lies. There is a rhyming pattern. In each verse lines 1,3,5 rhyme and lines 2 and 4 rhyme. I'm sure this is a very deep and meaningful poem. But I only think a poem is good if people can understand it. If it just seems like a load of nonsense, what's the point?
	2nd 5	The entire poem is about how Herbert doesn't like poems that are riddles, that rhyme and have hidden meanings. It is a poem about what type of poetry the poet likes. The strange thing is that the poet spends the whole poem saying how he likes poems that get to the point and don't have hidden meanings when really the whole poem is a riddle, it all rhymes and has hidden meanings.
Steve	1st 3	This is a prime example of a nonsense poem. Not one line made much sense to me. The only thing that I worked out was that perhaps line 8 is talking about stereotypes. Complete and utter rubbish.
	2nd 2	It is about the sort of poetry George Herbert likes to write. He does not like poetry that is made up of riddles. ... The poem is ironic because it is a riddle ... He just wants to write about God and the King.
Rob	1st 7	After reading this poem, I instantly thought of 'Nuns Fret Not'. The two poems are very similar in their message to the reader saying things do not have to be the best to be good ... I preferred this poem to 'Nuns Fret Not'. I could associate parts of this poem with things I had already read in the previous poem and I could also draw my own ideas from it.
	2nd 5	Maybe the poems are not as similar as I thought ... they are still vaguely related. If the poem is saying he doesn't like poems with hidden meanings why does he write one himself.

Nuns Fret Not - William Wordsworth

16th October 1997

Adam	1st 5	This poem wasn't too bad. I thought, the ending part of the lines rhymed which enabled the poem to flow. I am not very clear on the meaning behind the poem. I think it was about how people go to places of little luxury from a lifestyle they had because they weren't happy with everything ... a 5 out of 10 because it was alright.
	2nd 6	After class discussion ... I haven't learnt a lot more about it ... people who are happy with confinement ... breaks the rules of a sonnet, having 8 lines then 6 lines. It's a clever change of rhyme scheme by having the people's confinement in the first 8 lines then changes to his confinement in the last 6.
Peter	1st 3	I think that this poem is about death. Death is described as a final doom. The first half of the poem is about the people who are content with what they have e.g. nuns are happy to live alone in a convent ... hermits are content living on their own in the confines of a cell.
	2nd 4	I still don't like this poem but I do find it a bit more enjoyable now that I understand it more ... sonnet ... rhyme scheme. The poem is all about writing poetry for example Wordsworth thinks that he is restricted by what is accepted as poetry i.e. he must write a sonnet.
Anna	1st 4	I found this poem a bit boring ... many people such as nuns and hermits are contented with the lives they have chosen ... Unemployed people though have lots of freedom ... they are not happy when they are without work. Wordsworth tells the reader a job is not like a prison, but something the opposite as long as you enjoy doing what your job is.
	2nd 7	Now that this poem has been explained to me, I have realized it is very cleverly put together. Sonnet ... 8 lines (other people and where they are confined) and 6 lines (about himself) ... about writing poems and how having chosen to write a sonnet he no longer had to choose ... how many lines. Rhyme scheme changes between octave and sestet the style suits the meaning. If a person has too much liberty ... life can be more difficult.
Josie	1st 4	The only interpretation that I can get from this poem that being trapped in life or in an occupation is not always a bad thing, it's often comforting and protecting. I think he might be saying that freedom is scary and can be lonely. This poem is a sonnet, 14 lines, 10 syllables each line. There is also a rhyming pattern. Lines 1,4,5,8 rhyme and lines 2,3,6,7. Next lines 9,12,13 and so do lines 10,11,13. This poem is a bit uninteresting.
	2nd 4	I now know this poem is octave - sestet structured. In the Octave, Wordsworth is talking about examples of where confinement can be a good thing and in the sestet he is talking about himself. he is saying he is confined to a sonnet and likewise, confinement makes it easier as he knows his boundaries. Even though I understand this poem more now I don't like it any more than before.
Steve	1st 2	whole poem is saying that our mundane daily jobs are really our salvation. Although we may moan about them, they actually mean quite a lot to us. it reminds me of school, if we didn't have to go to school ... we wouldn't be as happy. Solace is comfort in times of distress. I didn't like the poem because I hate poetry.
	2nd 2	This poem, I have been told, is actually quite cleverly structured. ... octave - sestet poem ... rhyming scheme is different for the sestet. In the octave the poet gives examples of people who are confined. he is actually writing about poetry. As he has written a sonnet he has been restricted. Freedom not always good. Sestet about the individual poet.
Rob	1st 3	I didn't really enjoy this poem as I couldn't really draw that much from it ... one main message, people should be pleased with what they've got I got the basic prison idea but couldn't draw that much from that either.
	2nd 5	After hearing Mr. Pike's interpretation of the poem ... octave and sestet ... I still wasn't moved that much from my previous ground. Although I now have a much better understanding ... it still has not improved my view of the poem by a large amount as I still think the poem is not very good. ... the poem is very clever.

The Twa Corbies - Anon

21st October 1997

Adam	1st 2	I found this poem hard to understand. I only think I understood the part where his lady had taken another mate ... A 2 because I understood very little about it. I don't know what the Twa Corbies are.
	2nd 4	I still don't like this poem, I find it incredible boring and it doesn't appeal to me. I do appreciate the way the author has made the two crows talk together and only see the knight as food and materials ... a 4 because I understand it more and it makes a lot more sense but I still didn't like it much.
Peter	1st 5	This poem is quite easy to understand once you get the flow of the Scottish speech. The poem is about two birds probably something like crows that eat the corpse of a dead man. The poem doesn't seem to have any deep meaning.
	2nd 4	This poem is very simple to understand ... The use of crows to describe a death is quite unusual. I think that it makes the poem about injustice because ... a knight perhaps killed fighting for his country he had a hawk, a hound and a wife but they all left him to rot and be eaten by crows.
Anna	1st 5	About two corbies(?) who the poet overheard talking about what they would eat today. Nobody but his hawk, hound and girlfriend cared that in a field nearby a knight lay dead.
	2nd 6	two crows ... anthropomorphism. Simple poem but written from a peculiar perspective ... two crows talking ... dead knight ... like he is raw material ... removes all human emotions and feeling from the poem. It makes the poem more comical, comedy out of a tragic event.
Josie	1st 5	a person (the poet) seeing two corbies picking at the flesh of a dead knight. It seems to be fairly straight forward - some lines I can't understand mainly due to the wording 5/10 basic, boring, not very nice.
	2nd 6	This poem is basically as simple as it seems ... one interesting thing about the poem is the fact that it is written through the dialogue between the two crows. This is an unusual perspective. It makes all human emotion disappear. I think this poem is slightly more interesting than I did before.
Steve	1st 4	The poem looks to be about two vultures eating a bloke ... They will use his hair to make a nest. I don't really like poetry at all.
	2nd 5	By anthropomorphizing the 2 crows the poet removes the human emotion from the poem and turns a tragic event into a comical dialogue ... the poem is quite simple once the words are explained. I like the method that the poet has used.
Rob	1st 0	This bloke's a nutter. Oi! Nutter. Eh? What is the poem about. It's written in some kind of foreign language. Ye oldie Scottish I believe I couldn't understand what this bloke was saying. 0/10 I couldn't understand what the poet was trying to say and therefore couldn't give any other mark but 0/10. The poem was absolutely ridiculous: 0/10
	2nd 0	I still do not understand a word and therefore cannot rate it.

I am - John Clare

22nd October 1997

Adam	1st 2	I didn't understand much about this poem ... I sure it has a much deeper meaning it's just that I couldn't see it ... a 2 out of 10 because I haven't understood much about it, I'm sure it'll change after the explanation though.
	2nd 3	I never knew John Clare was in a mental asylum, it makes more sense now about him being the self consumer of his woes because they couldn't tell anyone or share his problems with anyone else ... this poem wasn't great, it didn't appeal to me.
Peter	1st 7	I think this poem was written by, or in the shoes of a man who is most definitely 'chewing on life's gristle' ... his friends have forgotten or let him ... loved ones have become 'strange' to him. The author wishes that he was back in his childhood when nothing can worry you. Love is not a thing you need to worry about.
	2nd 6	A ha my suspicions were correct John Clare is mad. he wrote I am whilst in a loon farm. The reason Clare is so depressed is that he has been shut away from his friends and family. The last line: The grass below, above the vaulted sky, this depict how simple life is when you are a child.
Anna	1st 8	No one knows where humans/people came from and why we are here and what we are doing. Why someone is like the way they are. ... All that goes on in the poet's life, all the woes and problems ... still live and life goes on ... there is nothing to be done about it or us. I like some lines of the poem but it is a bit boring in places.
	2nd 8	Written when he was in a mental asylum. Explains how and why he feels confused about life. He sounds depressed and like no one cares about him ... his family don't visit him ... they act cold towards him.
Josie	1st 7	I like this poem although it's depressing, I am a bit confused about it though. John Clare seems depressed he thinks no one cares about him or understands him. He thinks his life has been so full of sadness, worries and woe ... As I enjoyed this poem I give it 7 out of 10. I don't know if Clare is talking about heaven and hell but I get that impression.
	2nd 6	I now know that John Clare was in a mental asylum when he wrote this poem, which does explain a lot. I think he seems more depressed than mad.
Steve	1st 3	... about a man who wishes he could have his time again. He wishes he could turn back the clocks and rehearse all his childhood ambitions. Instead he turned out to be a bit of a loner and without many friends. Line 5 uses imagery. Poem was reasonably understandable therefore 3/10.
	2nd 3	Now that I know the bloke was in a mental asylum it has made me understand why the poem has such a depressing form. The poet was on a 'real low' and was questioning the meaning of life ... he wishes he was a child again with no worries etc.
Rob	1st 2	I am ... not a very good poet!!! I don't know what the poem is trying to say I think the poet is extremely sad and lonely and wants to kill himself ... the only thing that stood out to me was the rhyme scheme - in the first stanza the rhyme scheme is ABABAB, however, in the last two stanzas it is ABABCC to make the last 2 lines stand out to show what the poet really wants.
	2nd 2	I still do.

What is Our Life? - Sir Walter Raleigh**17th November 1997****(3rd Journal Entry - Before Tape Recording With Teacher)**

Adam	3rd 5	This poem I think is being very serious and most of all critical of the life we live. it's saying how short and meaningless our life is, how it is so simple. Our lives are like a play where we come on stage briefly then leave ... writer has intended this poem to be read ... forcefully to get his point across well. I'd give this a 5 because it wasn't a great poem, I didn't like how the poem was serious.
Peter	3rd 7	Raleigh's tone is didactic, he is trying to teach us that one day our life will end and we will not be laughing we will be wishing we had done more. 'In earnest not in jest'. Raleigh's tone in this poem is more a pessimistic than optimistic view of life as he is saying the majority of people do not live their lives to the full. The mood this poem evokes in the reader perhaps depends on their age or state in life ... if young ... motivates them to live a better life ... if older ... may make them feel regret about how they should have lived. The poem makes you feel your age?
Anna	3rd 8	I think this is an optimistic poem about a solemn subject ... metaphorical ... even though life is like a short comedy when we die it is no joke - brings out a wondering emotion in the reader - how nice a way to put our lives; a very complicated issue made to seem so light and so simple.
Josie	3rd 9	difficult to allocate a tone to this poem. I think the speaker is either speaking in a slightly confused but simple tone, as if he's saying 'perhaps this is what our lives are actually all about - or he is speaking in a depressed, pessimistic and angry tone. I think it is more likely that he is putting forward a theory about life ... Raleigh is questioning life, the mood for me is, in a way, deep and philosophical. It doesn't make me particularly happy or sad but makes me too question life. I think this poem is pretty good, it isn't too depressing and is quite clever.
Steve	3rd 3	The persona adopts a very sceptical tone ... achieved by the poem beginning with two rhetorical questions 'What is our Life?' The meaning of life is questioned here. A tone of confusion made apparent by line 10 'We die in earnest not in jest'. The juxtaposition here between the 'short comedy' of life and the 'earnest' of death emphasizes the personal critical tone. The poem evoked a mood of sadness in me because the poet has removed all of the detail and joy from life and just pictured it as a play to be 'marked' and then death.
Rob	3rd 7	the poet is being very serious about the way we live but using the extended metaphor of a play to describe life ... using simple language. Depending on how the reader looks at this poem it could evoke different moods ... could see the play as humorous and comical ... also ... in vain and not worth the effort. Give it 7 ... describes life in an abstract way.

The Latest Decalogue - Arthur Hugh Clough
(3rd Journal Entry)

17th November 1997

Adam	3rd 6	This poem is also criticizing today's society but not as seriously as 'The Way We Live' ... has a sarcastic element to it in the way that one of the 10 Commandments is read and there's an exception to it ... writer intended this poem to be read in a sarcastic way, not in a serious way, to make the reader see the way of the world. I'd give this a 6 because the sarcasm element was well done.
Peter	3rd 6	Clough's tone in this poem is one of criticism. he is condemning the way that people live. Clough may however be criticizing the way the Bible tells us to live. The mood that this poem may evoke in the reader may be one of guilt. Clough may want to make people change the way that they live ... An opposing mood that this poem may evoke is making the reader agree with him - it may make the reader realize how impractical the bible way of life is.
Anna	3rd 7	I feel the tone of this poem is half narrative and half the poet speaking to himself ... the poet is actually thinking to himself how ironic it is humans actually manage to bend these rules many swear to abide by. The mood this poem brings out in the reader is one of a humorous reflective type that makes the reader suddenly realize that this is what many humans actually do.
Josie	3rd 9	the speaker's tone is patronizing and slightly sarcastic ... the speaker is against the way society is and although the words to the poem suggest that the speaker is all for breaking the commandments, I believe the sarcasm comes through clearly I think the mood is slightly uncomfortable due to the sarcastic tone ... mood is uncomfortable because in some way we've all broken the commandments and we feel the poem is true to our own lives. I think this is the whole point of the poem. It's almost a guilt trip. I think Clough is trying to open our eyes to what we're doing. 9/10 A very clever poem, I like it.
Steve	3rd 3	The speaker adopts a critically satirical tone. He/She says 'Who would be at the expense of two' Gods. This is a selfish view of the commandment. Each of the 10 Commandments have an ironic after thought which creates a tone of selfishness and self gain, critical of the way we live. The poem created a mood of anger in me because the way we live is built around self gain ... mainly achieved by the poet downgrading each commandment with the general public attitude toward them.
Rob	3rd 8	The poet ... is being very critical and saying that we break all the laws we believe. He could also be described as being angry about life. It also evokes this mood in the reader, the reader may also become angry because ... they are being criticized by Clough ... given 8/10 because it makes the reader think about the way they live.

Here are some suggestions about how to use your Reading Log. The suggestions marked * are from 'Keeping a Poetry Journal' in Mike Benton's book Secondary Worlds (p.94, 1992). The other suggestions are my own.

1. If there is a poem you get to know really well, try to answer these questions:
 - What interests you about the poem? What does it 'say' to you?
 - As you reread it, how does your sense of the poem develop?
 - Does the whole poem work for you? Say what you like (and perhaps dislike) about it.
2. *What were your views about the text when you first read it or started to read it? Have your views about the text changed the more familiar you have become with it? Try to reflect upon and describe these changes.
3. Comment on the process you go through as an individual reader experiencing a text.
4. *Sometimes we are very moved by a poem that reminds us of a personal experience. If you like describe that personal association.
5. Often a text reminds us of something else we have read, something we have seen on television or a discussion we have had. If a text reminds you of something you have read, seen or talked about elsewhere, write down what the text reminded you of and why.
6. *Copy out the words and phrases that you like, and try to explain why you like them.
7. If you like give each text a score out of 10 to reflect how good you thought it was or how much you enjoyed it.
8. *Perhaps a title or a line or a feeling gives you an idea for a short story, or a scene in a play or a poem of your own. Write it.
9. If you get an idea for a piece of writing or oral work of your own as a result of reading keep a note of it in this log. One of the five pieces of coursework we do together can be based on this idea. In the past students have enjoyed writing poems, short stories and plays as GCSE coursework. Let me know if you have got an idea you would like to develop in this way.
10. Look back through your entries and try to draw some connections about the texts you have enjoyed as a reader.

INITIAL PREFERENCES OF SIX READERS
based on scores in first and second journal entries

Thematic Area	Pre-twentieth century poems	Eng Lit	Rank	Score out of 120	%	Equivalent Average Mark out of 10	Rank
HEARTS AND PARTNERS	Despairing Lover		4	78.5	65	7/10	2nd
	Lowest Trees have Tops		6	65	54	5/10	
THE WAY WE LIVE	What is our Life?		5	66	55	6/10	1st
	The Latest Decalogue		2	86	72	7/10	
CAUGHT IN CONFLICT	The Twa Corbies		12	46	38	4/10	3rd
	I am		8	57	48	5/10	
WORDS' WORTH	Jordan		9	54	45	5/10	3rd
	Nuns Fret Not		11	49	41	4/10	
DANCING IN THE BREEZE	Daffodils		13	42	35	4/10	5th
	The Sick Rose		10	51	43	4/10	

Thematic Area	Pre-twentieth Century poems	Eng	Rank	Score out of 120	%	Equivalent Average Mark out of 10	Rank
BLAKE	London		5	66	55	6/10	3rd
	A Poison Tree		1	93	78	8/10	1st
	The Human Abstract		3	82	68	7/10	2nd
	The Tyger		7	60	50	5/10	4th
	The Lamb		14	38	32	3/10	5th

The score out of 120 was derived from each reader giving two scores out of a maximum of 10 in their journal entries. With 93 out of 120, or an average journal score of 8 out of 10, A Poison Tree was clearly the favourite poem of my six readers. The second most popular poem was, however, The Latest Decalogue with 86 out of 120 or an average journal score of 7 out of 10. As the other pre-twentieth century poem in the thematic area The Way We Live also elicited a positive reaction, the decision was made to study the poems from this thematic area in greatest depth. This is an example of a curriculum decision being made in response to pupils' preferences. It has been noted that 'great care must be taken to match the text to the pupil' (Merenbon, 1994: 8) and the decision to work with an initially positive pupil reaction was part of the attempt to match readers and texts to foster keenness.

ADAM

24/2/97

Chartered = A document which gives rights and privileges to an organization or plan
 Awarded by the king to rich powerful people. Manacles = chains Harlot = prostitute
 Blights = spoils/wickets
 Forged = made

③ He can see in the people's faces they're unhappy & weak. They could possibly be the servants of rich people.

London

I wander thro' each chartered street,
 Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
 And mark in every face I meet
 Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

④ I think he is making out that the workers of London are scared of their Govt.

In every cry of every man,
 In every infan's cry of fear,
 In every voice, in every ban
 The mind-forged manacles I hear.

⑤ I think he means that the people are all being corrupted in the head by the Govt.

⑥ The soldier could be unhappy that he might have to fight his own people because of the revolution

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
 Every blackning church appals;
 And the hapless soldier's sigh
 Runs in blood down palace walls;

⑦ People will die in the possible revolution & deaths are counted in amount of blood shed.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
 How the youthful harlot's curse
 Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
 And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

⑧ I think the curse is Aids

mark = mark take note Hapless = unlucky, unfortunate
 soldier = Army brought in because Govt. was scared of possible revolution.

POEMS ADAMPre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: London Author: William Blake ~~Brooke~~

Date(s) when I read this poem: 25.2.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I ~~was~~ only understand certain parts or lines of this poem, I found it pretty hard to understand. I would have been virtually lost without the explanations at the beginning of the lesson. I don't like it when the poet's paragraphs don't have any meaning to me because they paragraphs don't seem to have any connection with them. Usually in poems I understand the first paragraph because it's the setting. I did in this poem but it seems as though the first ~~part~~ ~~of~~ paragraphs don't follow on from each other. I would give this poem at the moment a score of 4.

Date of this entry

Title: London Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem: 28.2.97

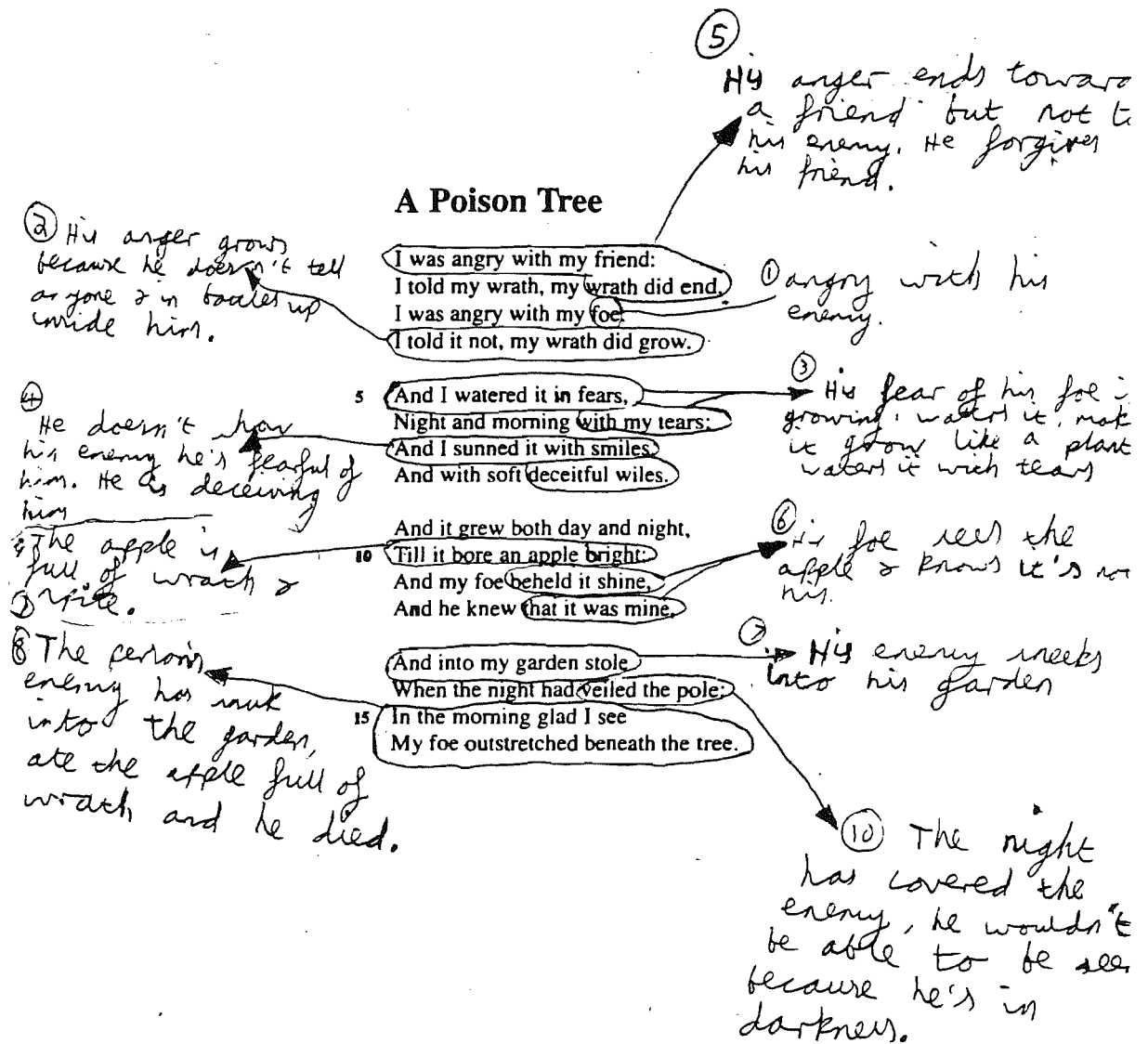
My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Now that I've heard more of the explanations of this I can appreciate it more because I understand a lot more of it, before it was a load of words. In the poem, the jobs that these characters had are very bad and the words included in the poem were meant to be very depressing, they didn't have any effect on me, they were just words just like any other. I would give this poem a score of 5 because I have understood the poem more.

Date of this entry 28.2.97

wiles = tactics

ADAM



POEMS

ADAM

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: A Poison Tree Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 4/3/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I thought this was the best poem we have done so far. I enjoyed it because the poem flowed so well because each 2 lines ending rhimed with each other. This poem I wasn't hard to understand, unlike all the others we have done. I liked this poem because although what's happening to the person is not very funny, the ending 2 lines were pretty funny. I thought this poem was clearly done. I enjoyed reading it because it was a nice flowing poem.

$\frac{8}{10}$

Date of this entry

Title: A Poison Tree Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 6/3/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Now that we have discussed the poem in class I understand the poem more. I have seen more ideas of what parts of the poem mean. When in the first verse, the person bottles all his anger up inside him because he doesn't tell anyone about it, this has happened to me on a number of occasions. I think that the tree is a metaphorical tree & so is the apple because I don't think the tree would actually kill someone, the apple is full of all the spite & hatred of this kid towards the Joe.

$\frac{8}{10}$

Date of this entry 6/3/97

ADAM

15/4/97

dressing room

① Imagery, mother's womb is described as a house where you prepare for a play. Life is like a short play.

What is our life? A play of passion.
And what our mirth but music of division?
Our mother's wombs the tiring-houses be
Where we are drest for this short comedy.

③ Imagery again of life is like a play. When play ends, your life has ended. closed curtains of play are next to represent graves.

Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is
Who sits and marks what here we do amiss.
The graves that hide us from the searching sun
Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
Thus playing past we to our latest rest,
And then we die, in earnest, not in jest.

Sir Walter Raleigh

② Imagery. Heaven is said to be the spectator they choose who dies, same way if audience likes actor he will act longer.

④ we die not knowing of what our ~~life~~ life was for or about.

POEMS

ADAM

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: what is our life Author: Walter RaleighDate(s) when I read this poem: 14/4/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem wasn't that bad, it was easy to understand. I saw straight away what it was about, it was making out that life was like an actors performance on stage, just like what Shakespeare was doing in *Macbeth*. At the end of each 2 lines the words rhymed which made the poem flow better. I would give this poem a score of (3) because poems have to be very very good to appeal to me, it wasn't ~~at~~ awful because I could understand it easily.

Date of this entry 14.4.97Title: what is our life Author: Walter RaleighDate(s) when I read this poem: 18.4.97

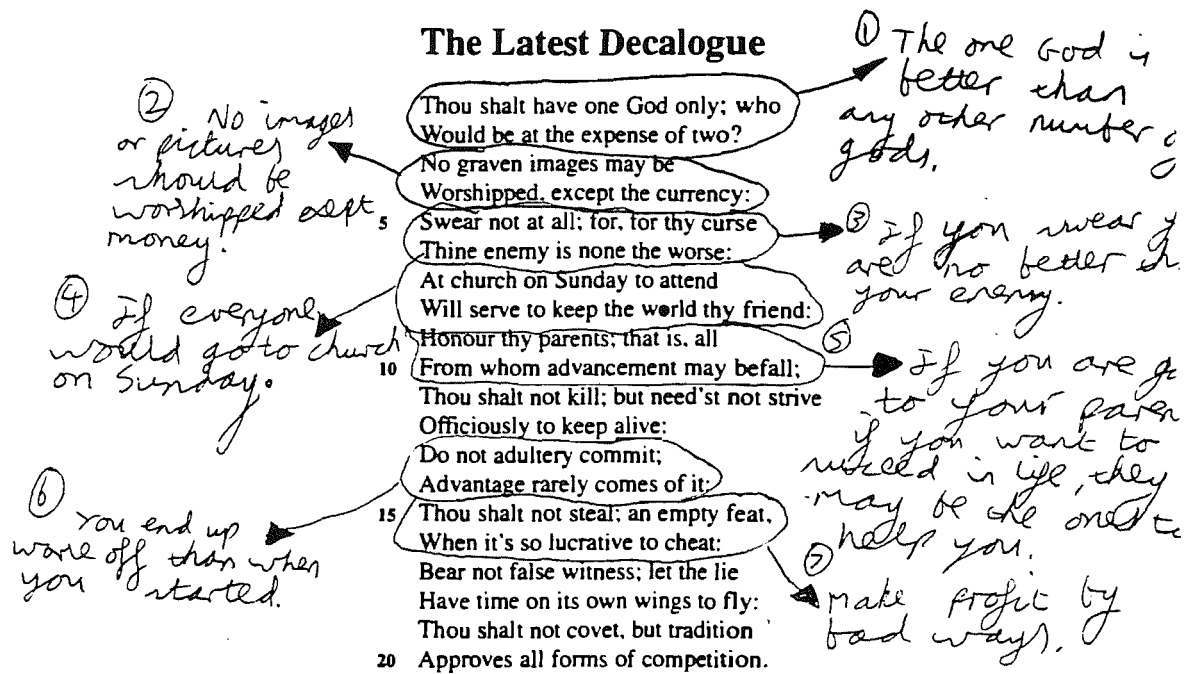
My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

My views have ~~at~~ not changed since last time at all because I haven't discovered much new. Although I've now noticed that each part of the poem is like in order of our life, being born (dressing for play) and dying (end of the play). I would not change the score, I'd still give it (3) because we haven't looked at it in depth in class for me to see any parts that there could be other views on.

Date of this entry 18.4.97

14/7/97

ADAM



Arthur Hugh Clough

Pri. 1900

POEMS

ADAM

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: THE LATEST DECALOGUE Author: Arthur Hugh CloughDate(s) when I read this poem: 14/7/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I did not think much of this poem at all, it was about the ten commandments. All I saw it as, was a list of the commandments with a little explanation of each one as it continues. It didn't need any thinking is depth about what each part means, although I don't like thinking a great deal about the meanings of poems. I just seemed to think that it was too simple. The good thing about it was the rhyming parts at the end of each line. (3)

Date of this entry

Title: THE LATEST DECALOGUE Author: ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGHDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/7/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After my discussion I thought this poem was better because I understood it a lot more. I didn't see the actual meaning or message of the poem. The latest decalogue is the 10 commandments at the present time. It always contradicts itself by saying a commandment then giving an exception which contradicts the commandment. (5)

Date of this entry

ADAM

2.10.97

The Daffodils

② describing himself
& his motions as
a cloud

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils:
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

① really, just
moving in the
wind

⑥ describing the
daffodils as if
they were human

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

⑦ described as
though they are
dancing, but
it's the wind.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
15 A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed – and gazed – but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

③ not meaning
wealth as in riches
but his ordeal has
pleased him.

⑧ nothing else
was on his
mind, etc.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
20 In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

④ when he's forced
the day right he can
comes back to him &
gives him pleasure.

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

POEMS

ADAM

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: The daffodils Author: will woodworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 7/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I found this poem rather hard to understand in the way of a deeper meaning if there was one. All I think of the poem is about is a person walking along seeing many daffodils waving in the breeze. I don't think there was a deeper meaning otherwise it's very hard to find & understand. I liked the rhyming scheme of the poem, every other 2 lines rhymed at the last 2 did of each verse throughout the poem

(4)

Date of this entry

Title: The daffodils Author: will woodworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 8/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After listening to the explanation, I have understood a lot more about the poem. The person's memory is of these fields of daffodils when he's unhappy or something, he feels better by thinking of this memory. I think the poem has got a bit better now & understand it more. My score will go up to a 5 out of 10 because I understood very little first time around

Date of this entry

16/10/87

ADAM

HARD TO UNDERSTAND

Jordan

Who says that fictions onely and false hair
 Become a verse? Is there in truth no beautie?
 Is all good structure in a winding stair?
 May no lines passe, except they do their dutie
 5 Not to a true but painted chair?

① I think
 he's trying to say
 that nothing is
 good, has it bad
 sides.

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
 And sudden arbours shadow course-spunne lines?
 Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves?
 Must all be vail'd, while he that reads, divines,
 10 Catching the sense at two removes?

Shepherds are honest people: let them sing:
 Riddle who list, for me, and pull for Prime:
 I envie no man nightingale or spring:
 Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme.
 15 Who plainly say, *My God, My King.*

George Herbert

PRE 1900

ADAM

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Jordan Author: George HerbertDate(s) when I read this poem: 16/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I found this poem exceptionally hard to understand, I only wrote about 2 lines of the poem. I think this poem is very complex in the way that it has a deeper meaning by the way it has a lot of strange sentences I don't understand. The score out of 10 would be 1 because I understood very little about it.

Date of this entry

Title: Jordan Author: George HerbertDate(s) when I read this poem: 21/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I now understand more about this poem and the way the Author is saying that had to be riddled to make it beautiful. But I think he is contradicting himself here because to me, the poem was full of riddles and complex sentences although he might be doing that in purpose to prove his point (3)

Date of this entry

16/10/97

ADAM

Nuns fret not

① It's saying don't worry about your life which will not have a lot of luxury.

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
 And hermits are contented with their cells;
 And students with their pensive citadels;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom.

② Just like the nuns, the hermits are contented with their small space

③ The jobs that they do, they are contented with

Sit blithe and happy, bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom

④ The place that the people live in might be thought of as a prison, but it is not.

Ourselves, no prison is; and hence for me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found

⑤ people who have had too much in life foundably like a nun's room or a hermit's cell to be simple! It is like a prison fairly compared to their previous lifestyle

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

ADAM

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Nurs fret not Author: will wordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 16/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem wasn't too bad I thought, the ending part of the lines rhymed which enabled the poem to flow.

I am not very clear on the meaning behind the poem, I think it was about how people go to places of little luxury from a lifestyle they had because they weren't happy with everything. I would give this poem a 4.5 out of 10 because it was alright.

Date of this entry

Title: Nurs fret not Author: will wordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 21/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After class discussion of this poem I have learnt a lot more about it. In the poem, he gives people who are happy with confinement like the nun & the hermit. He also talks about his own confinement and breaks the rules of a sonnet, having 8 lines then 6 lines.

It's a clever change of rhyme scheme by having the people's confinement in the first 8 lines then changes to his confinement in the last six.

Date of this entry

ADAM

I Am

Forgotten
him.

②

I am – yet what I am, none cares or knows;

My friends forsake me like a memory lost;

I am the self-consumer of my woes –

They rise and vanish in oblivion's host

5 Like shadows in love-frenzied stifled throes

And yet I am, and live – like vapours tost

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,

Into the living sea of waking dreams,

Where there is neither sense of life or joys,

10 But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;

Even the dearest that I love best

Are strange – nay, rather, stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man hath never trod

A place where woman never smiled or wept

15 There to abide with my Creator, God,

And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,

Untroubling and untroubled where I lie

The grass below – above, the vaulted sky.

John Clare

PRE 1900

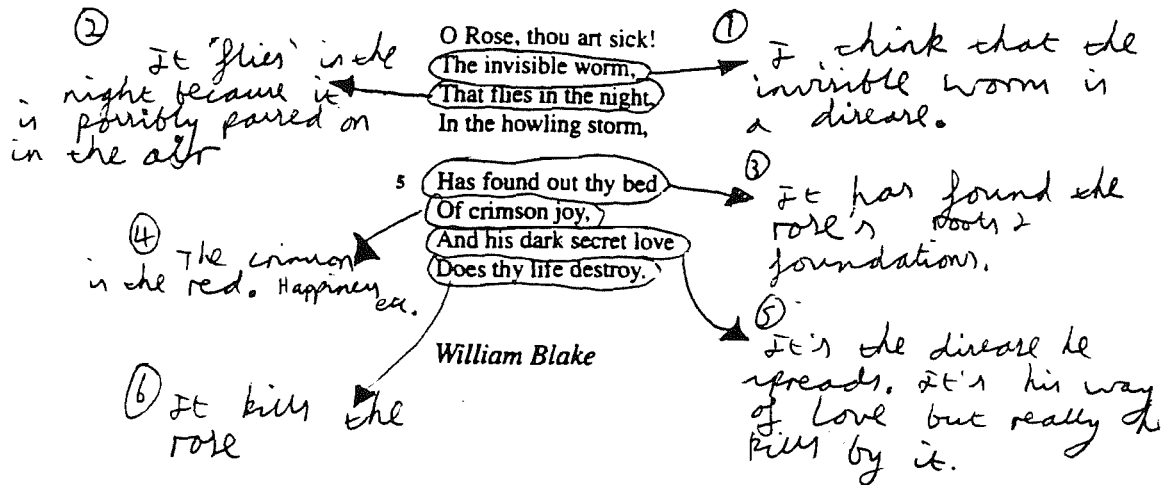
① I think he's
saying that
no one cares or knows
him.

③ possibly talking
about her.

14/7/97

ADAM

The Sick Rose



ADAM

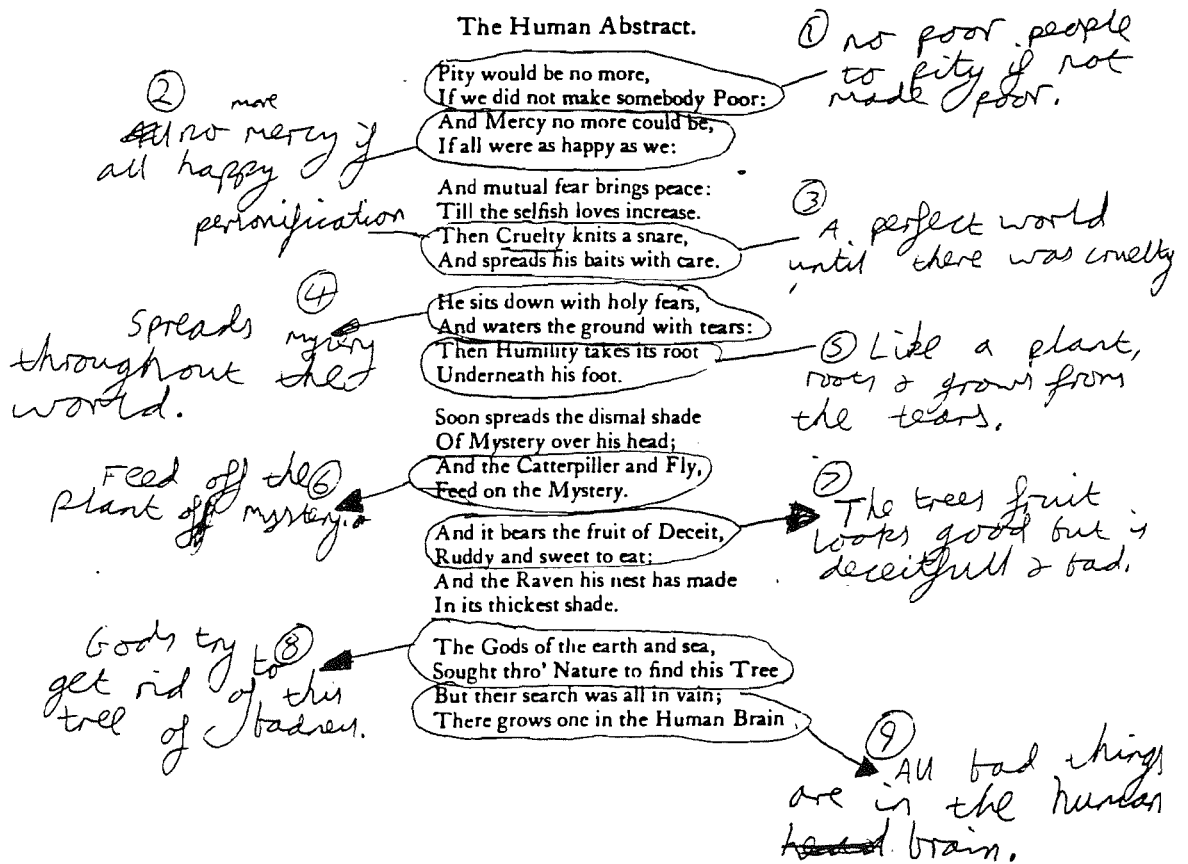
The Lamb

(Innocence)

Asking the Lamb does he know who made him
 1 Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?
 Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
 By the stream and o'er the mead?
 2 He was given life and food
 5 Gave thee clothing of delight,
 Softest clothing, woolly, bright?
 Gave thee such a tender voice,
 Making all the vales rejoice?
 3 He was given clothes which were bright & good
 10 Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?
 4 repetition
 Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
 Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
 He is called by thy name,
 For he calls Himself a Lamb.
 5 called by same name
 15 He is meek, and He is mild;
 He became a little child.
 I a child, and thou a lamb,
 We are called by His name,
 Little Lamb, God bless thee!
 20 Little Lamb, God bless thee!

14/7/97

ADAM



ADAM

14/7/97

The Tiger (Experience)

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

Deeps → as ravine &
low part of the
world.

5 In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

② Tiger isn't so
burning, no bright.

And what shoulder, and what art,
10 Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand, and what dread feet?

① I think it means
that humans
are pulling the tiger
to extinction.

③ I think it
means that
humans are
stupid for keeping
tiger in captivity.

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
15 What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears.
Did he smile his work to see?
20 Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

⑤ Bad to see
that tigers are
hurt. possibly
rain is the heavens
tears

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

④ I think it means
that the tiger
is powerful & great.
~~immortal~~

ADAM

'The Lowest Trees Have Tops,
the Ant her Gall'

The lowest trees have tops, the ant her gall.
 The fly her spleen, the little spark his heat:
 The slender hairs cast shadows, though but small.
 And bees have stings, although they be not great.
 Seas have their source, and so have shallow springs:
 And love is love, in beggars and in kings.

① The hairs may be small but they still cast a shadow

② Bees have a sting, but they aren't powerful

③ Seas are big but have source from something very small.

④ You don't have to be great or big to love

⑤ True hearts don't have to speak of love.

Where waters smoothest run, there deepest are the fords:
 The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move:
 The firmest faith is found in fewest words:
 The turtles do not sing, and yet they love:
 True hearts have ears and eyes, no tongues to speak:
 They hear and see, and sigh, and then they break.

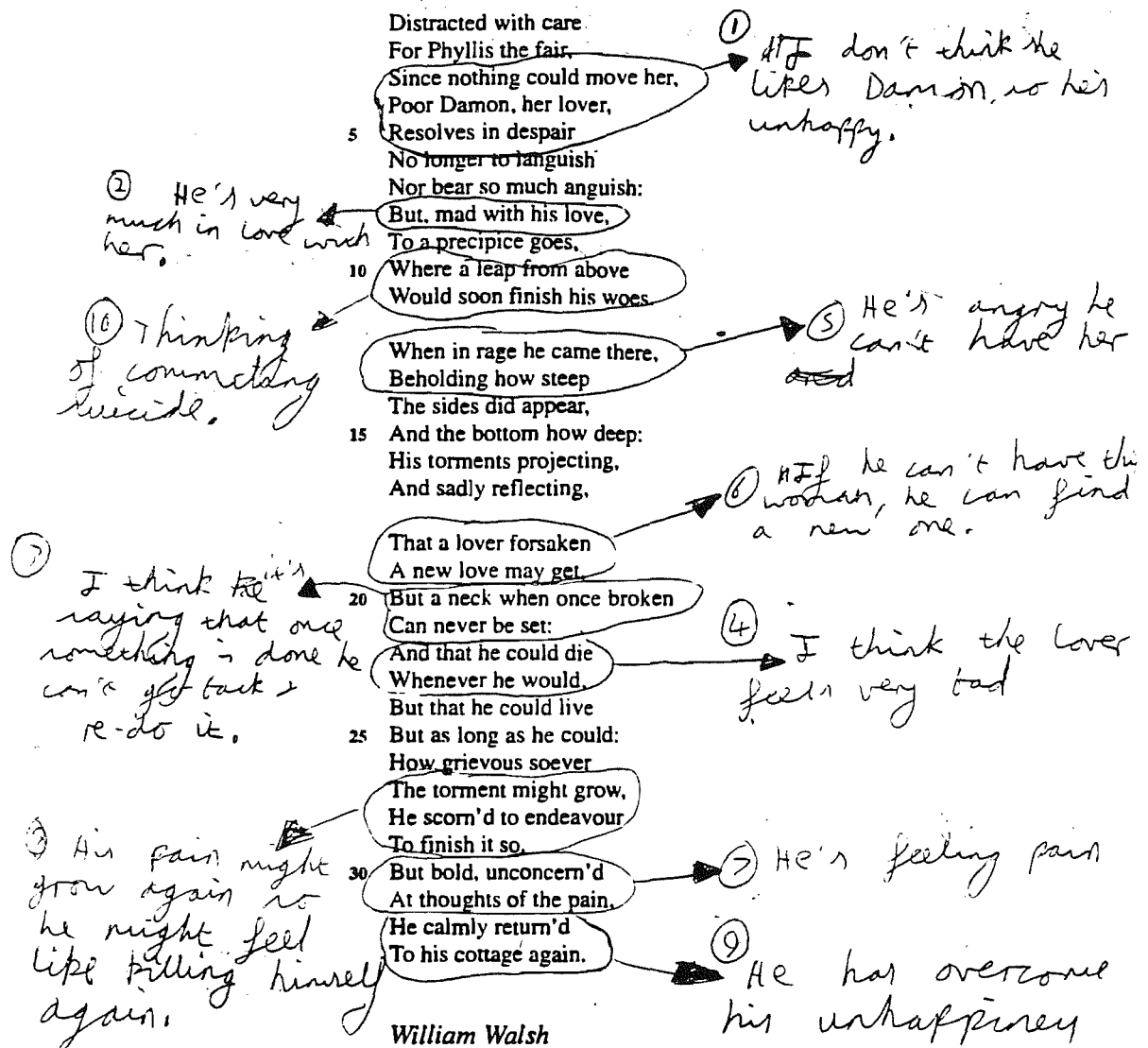
⑥ I think the poet is trying to get the message across that nothing is how it seems on the surface.

Sir Edward Dyer

PRE 1900

ADAM

The Despairing Lover



ADAM

The Twa Corbies

As I was walking all alane
I heard twa corbies making a mane:
The tane unto the t'other say,
"Where sall we gang and dine to-day?"

5 "— In behint yon auld fail dyke,
I wot there lies a new-slain Knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

"His hound is to the hunting gane,
10 His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's ta'en another mate,
So we may make our dinner sweet.

"Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,
And I'll pick out his bonny blue een:
15 Wi' ae lock o' his golden hair
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

"Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
20 The wind sall blaw for evermair."

Anon



② I think they'll
enjoy doing him
over.

① I think his
wife has found
someone else.

③ pick out his
eyes

24/2/97

PETER

⁴ Poem is all about
misery, war, fear,
crying, sadness

London

I wander thro' each chartered street,
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

⁶ picture of desperation

¹ Repetition of
Every

⁵ In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban
The mind-forged manacles I hear.

⁷ Churches are blackening
becoming less nice / more
holy

³ Imaginary manacles
made in the mind

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
¹⁰ Every blackening church appals;
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls.

² Imagery

⁹ Takes away the
innocence of the new
born baby

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
¹⁵ Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

Blights = Spoils / withers

Manacles = hand cuffs

Chartered = Document gives rights and privileges to a place/person
awarded by king College = University

Mark = look at take note of

Hapless = unlucky

Soldier = Army in London cos of fear of revolution

Harlot = Prostitute

PETER

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: London Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 24/2/17

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem is very confusing. I would like to know when it was written. The poem is quite powerful with the repetitions of every in verse two. Also the repetitions of the ideas of crying, poverty, misery, sadness. I feel a sort of pity for the people in the poem the crying infants etc. The poem reminds me of some articles in the News where they have stories on starving homeless refugees or other war victims (civilians) because they are weak, weak and crying or even homeless people today in London

(5)

Date of this entry 25/2/17Title: London Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem makes more sense to me now I now have an explanation of the last line. Now I know more about it has not made me like it much more. The poem (now explained) is not more powerful to me it provides a very affective response as a response from the heart/soul rather than just from the brain. Verbs used helps to make the poem more powerful eg Weakness, Woe, the picture of marbles, Blights, plagues and the Hearse. Contrasts in the poem also help with the strength of the poem eg Marriage Hearse

(5)

Date of this entry 28/2/17

PETER

A Poison Tree

¹ Talking about his anger / problem made it alright (like counselling)

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end,
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

² He did not talk about it so it got worse

³ Imagery, pictures of plants and gardening

⁵ And I watered it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears;
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

⁴ Juxtaposition these are opposites

⁶ Hatred is depicted as a seed to start but as he did not speak about it - grew and grew into a tree like an itch if you don't - scratch it

¹⁰ And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

⁷ The apple is the 'last straw' it is - the outcome of an on-resolved petty argument

Twist in the tale of the poem

And into my garden stole
When the night had veiled the pole:
¹⁵ In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

⁸ his foe is dead because he ate the poisoned apple of his hatred

Wile = Strategy

PETER

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: A Poison Tree Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem: 3/3/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I like this poem, it is fairly easy in
 as it has no really deeper meanings
 (I think). It is not depressing about emotions
 or war although it does have an element
 of tragedy. The rhyme and the twist in the tale of the
 poem make it more fun to read. I can quite
 easily relate to this poem as if I have an
 argument with someone and don't resolve it, it
 grows until that person becomes the worst person
 in the world in my eyes. It is a bit like
 the feuding families in Romeo and Juliet that probably started
 many decades ago over a petty argument and lead
 to each wanting to murder the other.

(9/10)

Date of this entry 3/4.3.97

Title: A Poison Tree Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Unlike the other poems the class talk did not
 really reveal another any deeper meanings
 or anything. I didn't understand as it
 was quite a simple poem. I can relate
 to this poem as I can recall times when
 an argument with someone has grown
 into a hatred so much that I wanted
 to kill them. It could also be likened to
 the feuding families in Romeo and Juliet as
 their disagreement probably started with something
 small and grew so much that they wanted
 to kill each other.

(9)

Date of this entry 6/3/97

15/4/07

PETER

³ life is Funny
comical

What Is Our Life?

What is our life? A play of passion.
 And what our mirth but music of division?
 Our mother's wombs the tiring-houses be
 Where we are drest for this short comedy.

⁶ the womb is depicted as
the dressing room where
you go to get ready for
the play of life

¹ the poem depicts
life as a play

⁵ Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is
 Who sits and marks what here we do amiss.
 The graves that hide us from the searching sun
 Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
 Thus playing post we to our latest rest,
 And then we die, in earnest, not in jest.

⁸ God watches our
people's mistakes

¹⁰ And then we die, in earnest, not in jest.

⁷ life is short
too short

¹¹ The picture of life being
funny ends here

Sir Walter Raleigh

Smile

POEMS

PETER

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: What is our Life? Author: Sir Walter RaleighDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/4/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I found that this poem was very similar to Macbeth's speech in Act 5 of Macbeth as it too uses the imagery of life being a play and every person is an actor. The poem is quite depressing as it ends with the fact that we laugh through our lives and it is a comedy but we die wanting more not ~~in~~ laughing. The poem sort of depicts the life of a person who rarely gets around to doing things so dies ~~soon~~ regretting all the things he has not done. Could division (line 2) mean diversion we laugh to disguise life's truths.

7/10

Date of this entry 15/4/1997Title: What is Our Life? Author: Sir Walter Raleigh

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Not alot more has been explained to me about this poem. I still have no idea why the sun is searching unless it is supposed to be god who is looking for you. Also line 9 is a bit confusing what is a playing Post? Latest Post could mean that Raleigh believes in reincarnation. The poem has a rhyme scheme every two lines are rhyming. God is depicted as like a teacher who marks down the mistakes we make and judges us on that not noting what we do right.

6/10

Date of this entry 18/4/97

PETER

The Latest Decalogue

4 revised 10 commandments

- Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:
- Don't swear because it doesn't harm your enemy 5 Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
- Only honor parent because they can do things for you only not out of love 10 Honour thy parents; that is, all
From whom advancement may befall;
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officiously to keep alive:
- Don't commit adultery not because it is morally wrong but because it doesn't do you good 15 Do not adultery commit:
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal: an empty feat.
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
- Be competitive but not jealous 20 Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.
- Worship nothing but God and money
Could mean people will flee/leave you if you go to church. It will keep people happy
Don't kill but be covert when your friend is in danger
don't steal just cheat

Arthur Hugh Clough

PRI. 1900

Must have been an atheist
and probably got crucified for
writing this

PETER

POEMS

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: The Latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh Clough

Date(s) when I read this poem: 11/6/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I found this poem very enjoyable (for a poem) as it is common with many of my own personal views i.e. The 10 commandments being a load of rubbish and there are better ways of getting through life. The author was probably an atheist and was probably greatly criticised by the church at the time. A bit # - like a modern old fashioned Salman Rushdie (having a pipe on his head)

⑦

Date of this entry 11/6/97

Title: Author:

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem now makes a little more sense (I knew most of it already). The writer is being very ironic about the time he lives in. People don't break the 10 commandments they just bend them a bit (alot). He is almost blasphemous if you take a my interpretation of the first line that you should only worship one God because # if you have two then God will have less of a following

⑦

Date of this entry 13/6/97

The Daffodils

The daffodils must
be something other
than just flowers

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

I've heard this line
before

Crowd = ugly disorganised

↓ substitution

Fluttering dancing = nice
and beautiful

Vege numbers
of daffodils

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:

Daffodils are
nicer than the
waves

15 A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed – and gazed – but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

Wealth = Not money
but a wealth of
memories and feelings

20 For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

When he is in
a bad mood
he thinks of his
daffodils and he
becomes happy
Alh

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Daffodils Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 6/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

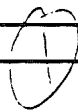
This poem is very confusing. I can't find much of deeper meaning in the daffodils and must be a Joke for something else but I can't work it out. The rhyme in the poem is quite interesting. 1, 3 lines in each stanza rhyme as does 2 & 4. 5, 6 & are also a rhyming couplet. I think the poem is like the Beatles song 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'. The similarities are that it is a happy poem.

Date of this entry 6/10/97Title: Daffodils Author: William Wordsworth

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem has not been made clearer to me as there is no deeper meaning to be found. The poem is merely about memory. Had they I can change our world & the way making I can't see how Daffodils are not a metaphor for anything they are just the subject of Wordsworth's memory. The poem says the brain as well as the heart also can touch or see things.

Date of this entry 7/10/97

PETER

Jordan

Why are all verses
not true

Who says that fictions onely and false hair
Become a verse? Is there in truth no beautie?
Is all good structure in a winding stair?
May no lines passe, except they do their dutie
Not to a true but painted chair?

does all beauty come
from fiction

Why cannot fact
be beautiful, interestin

Does it take external
factors too rethink true

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbours shadow course-spunne lines?
Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves?
Must all be vail'd, while he that reads, divines.
Catching the sense at two removes?

Shepherds are honest people: let them sing;
Riddle who list, for me, and pull for Prime:
I envie no man nightingale or spring;
Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme.
Who plainly say, *My God, My King.*

If a shepherd sings
he will sing the truth
unlike a poet who will
make something up

George Herbert

PRE 1900

PETER

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: Jordan Author: George Herbert
15/10/07

Date(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/07

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

* The author, George Herbert, is trying to say that no-one every met writes a poem or sings a song about the truth they always have to make something up to make it sound beautiful. The poem is about writing poetry that he is trapped into writing about fake words which are beautiful.

(2)

Date of this entry 15/10/07

Title: Jordan Author: George Herbert

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem is very hypocritical as it is all about writing poetry plainly and straight forward. But the poem itself is a riddle with a contradictory form. Herbert believes that all poetry should be written as fact not fiction about real like things not magical things.

(3)

Date of this entry 21/10/07

15/10/07

PETER

Nuns fret not
 Nuns fret not, at their convent's narrow room;
 And hermits are contented with their cells;
 And students with their pensive citadels;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
 Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is; and hence for me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

People are content with what they have as they know nothing else

Some people are content with the simple things that they have

The prison = Death

No Prison = Death may not be the end, there may be an after life

To which we will finally go to

William Wordsworth

PETER

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Nuns Fret not Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/19

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I think that this poem is about death. Death is described as a final doom. The first half of the poem is about the people who are content with what they have, eg Nuns are not happy to live alone in a convent and hermits are content living on their own in the confines of a cell (perhaps their home).

③

Date of this entry 15/10/19

Title: Nuns Fret not Author: William Wordsworth

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I still don't like this poem but I do find it a bit more enjoyable now that I understand it more. The form of the poem is a sonnet with a fixed rhyme scheme this makes the poem easier to understand once you see the rhyme scheme. The poem is all about writing poetry for example Wordsworth thinks that he is restricted by what is accepted as poetry ie He must write a sonnet with 14 lines and 10 syllables per line.

④

Date of this entry 21/10/19

Chartered $\Rightarrow$ Given by the King / crown. A document gives rights and privileges to the place (right to call itself City of London). Most important / richest people.

ANNA

24.2.97

Mark $\Rightarrow$ Look take note.

Hapless $\Rightarrow$ Unlucky or unfortunate



(13) * ban = strike?
Public protesting
against things
That's why gov. scared
of revolution

(14) every x 5
making it clear
that every one is involved, and
feels the same.

(12) Making it clear
the sort of place it is in
(Chartered + 2) ironic
a privileged place
Rich important people's
streets.

(7) church = congregation
in church. They are
getting more and more
worried about what
is happening

London

I wander thro' each chartered street, — everywhere ruled
Near where the chartered Thames does flow, by government
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe. (4) He sees everyone's
sadness.

5 In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban
The mind-forged manacles I hear.

(5) He can hear everyone's
stresses and how they
feel trapped by

(6) The chimney
sweepers have
gone on strike.
'blackening church'?

10 How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackening church appals;
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls.

(3) to do with
government.
(2) Buckingham Palace?

(10) A prostitute who
has become pregnant
accidentally and
cannot look after
the child properly.

15 But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

(16) Different place than
chartered
streets.
(8) saying
marriage is
not good.

(15) spoils the
marriage with
illness

(9) Once you are
married the next thing
that happens is death?

Forge = blacksmith.

hearse $\Rightarrow$ vehicle that transports dead people's coffins.

soldier $\Rightarrow$ ✗

At the time the government had brought the army into London
'cause they were scared there was going to be
a revolution.

Harlot $\Rightarrow$ Prostitute.

Manacles $\Rightarrow$ chains, hand-cuffed.

blights $\Rightarrow$ spoils, withers.

POEMS

missed one lesson THURS
 whole class - teacher discussion
 due to Dr appointment

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: London Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem: 24.2.97, 25.2.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

late lesson - done in a rush - came v. late from
write lesson

5
10

I don't actually understand what this poem is talking about and therefore find it difficult to write about. It may be about the fact that the government is worried about a revolution taking place and filling London with soldiers (line 10). It is full of sad words (cry, weep, weaken, sigh, curse). It is very metaphorical and I don't think it has a story to it or anything.

Missed talk (whole class)

Date of this entry 25.2.97

Title: London Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem: 24.2.97 - 27.2.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Rushed again - Hannah desperate to get away (music?)

After talking about this poem with other people I have a better idea what this poem is about. William Blake is saying how the soldiers, chimney sweepers and prostitutes etc. are only doing those jobs as a last resort, they don't really want to be there. The 'Chartered' streets is saying how all of London is owned and controlled by the government. No one else has a say in what happens in the city. The prostitute brings crime into lots of marriages.

6
10

Date of this entry 27.2.97

ANNA



POEMS

ANNA

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: ~~THE~~ A Poison Tree Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem: 3.3.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem tells about how by telling a friend about something they had done that had made him angry. It is anger ended. But because he did not say about his anger of a foe, it grew and grew until something big happened (in this case an apple being bared). I think this statement/verse is very true, if you do not tell someone something is wrong they will not know and therefore not be able to change anything. In verse two because he had not told anyone his anger got more intense. I find verse 3 hard to understand, but I think it might be about the realisation of the foe that he had done →

4.3.97
9/10

Date of this entry

Title: A Poison Tree Author: William Blake

Date(s) when I read this poem: 3.3.97-6.3.97

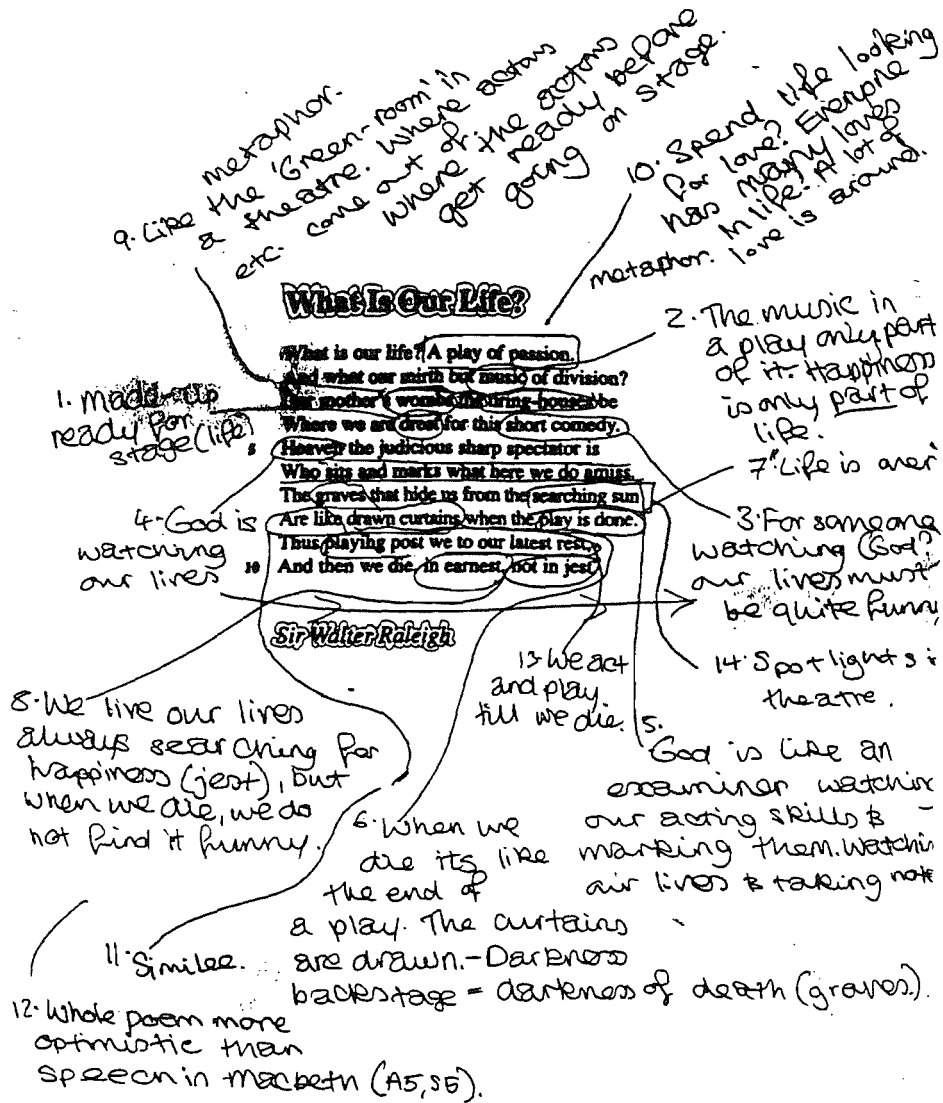
My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

At the beginning of this poem, there is juxtaposition when Blake in the first two lines talks about his anger with his friend, it ends. In the next two he tells of his anger with his foe which he does not say admit and it grows. This imagery of an ~~tree~~ ^{tree} growing is shown by a tree - "it grows from a seed". It produces an apple. An apple was used maybe because of the religious Adam & Eve story when Eve ate the apple of knowledge etc. In this poem there is no evidence that the argument with his foe was much different to the anger he felt with his friend

9/10

Date of this entry

ANNA



POEMS

ANNA

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems What is our Life?Title: ~~Sir Walter Raleigh~~ Author: Sir Walter Raleigh

Date(s) when I read this poem: 15.4.97 & 16.4.97.

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

He is saying that finding happiness or happiness itself is only part of life (like music in a play). When we are in our mother's wombs we are being made up ready for the world. He calls life a 'short comedy' that is watched over by God or 'heaven' and is marked like a spectator watching a performance. The poem is very metaphorical, saying life is like someone doing their part in a play. However, I think it is more optimistic than pessimistic. When we die it is like the curtain being drawn on a stage, shading it from the spotlights, leaving backstage in darkness (death). I like this poem, it is very meaningful.

9/10

Date of this entry 16.4.97

Title: What is our Life? Author: Sir Walter Raleigh

Date(s) when I read this poem: 15, 16, 17, 18.4.97.

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

"A play of passion" describes metaphorically that our lives are full of emotions. When you die and are put into a grave, it is dark, like the stage is when 'drawn curtains' cut out the light from the stage lights. At the beginning of the poem birth is spoken about, at the end death is, the poem dies. Death is the only serious part of our life. Each line below rhymes with the line above, makes the poem seem lighter-hearted. We play our characters up until we die, we never come out of them. Heaven is not like some serious court ~~and~~ judging everything you do, but just taking notes on your life.

9/10

Date of this entry 18.4.97

ANNA

*12 Be nice to your parents
because they'll help you
get on in life.

Most recent:
what it means nowadays.

The Latest Decalogue

- ④ No point in swearing because the person who you call names is not hurt 'cos it doesn't mean anything anyway.
- ② Who would want 2 Gods to obey?
- ③ Nowadays money seems the most important thing.
- ⑤ Going to church is actually only so people think you're religious. It's all about what others think of you.
- ⑦ No point in adultery for the simple fact that in the end you're usually worse off.
- ⑧ It's pointless to say this as it is so easy to cheat your way into money.
- ⑨ The lie will develop itself without your help.
- ⑩ Poem saying the main reasons to keep to the ten commandments is to help yourself live a better life. You'd be better off sticking to them.
- ⑥ However, if they are dying you don't have to work too hard to stop them.
- ⑪ Follow the rules to do this.
- Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honour thy parents; that is, all
From whom advancement may befall:
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officiously to keep alive:
Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.
- Arthur Hugh Clough
- PRI. 1900

POEMS

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: The Latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh Clough

Date(s) when I read this poem: 11.6.97

8
10

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I think the poem is saying that some of the main reason for keeping to the Ten Commandments rules is for your own good. By doing this you make your life easier. For example: lines 5-6 are saying there is no point in calling anyone names (eg. blaspheming) because they don't mean anything and you will never gain anything from it, there is no point. The poem also explains that although you should not kill, you don't have to follow any rules about keeping someone alive, you don't have to work hard to stop someone from doing. He mocks the fact the it is said someone shall

Date of this entry

Title: The latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh Clough

Date(s) when I read this poem: 11.6.97 - 13.6.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

7
10
About people of his time, bending the law. Doing what the 10's say literally but finding loop holes in them. Hypocrisy - people are eg. going to church but not for the right intentions. The writer's tone is generally sarcastic. Made me feel skeptical about people intentions for like Latest equals newest decalogue.

Date of this entry 13.6.97

ANNA

2/10/97.

The Daffodils

⑤ Imagery - yellow daffodils like ~~the~~ stars.

① a single cloud on a clear day could be lonely.

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils:

② Couplet of last words rhyming

5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line

③ Summing up lines of verse.

10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

⑥ might have been a windy day - blowing the flowers about.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee.

⑦ where better than

15 A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company,
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

⑧ "The waves beside them... waves of what beside the daffodils"

④ Inspiration to write a poem. - also delight at ~~the~~ beautiful sight.

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

⑨ Poets take delight in ~~these~~ beautiful things (i.e. beauty, sadness etc.)
A poet like himself was moved to write a poem, which made him happy.

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

⑩ At times, when he cannot think of anything to write about.

⑪ OR if he is in a mood like that he can think of these thousands of daffodils and feel happy.

POEMS

ANNA

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: The Daffodils Author: William Wordsworth
 Date(s) when I read this poem: 5/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

4/10
 This poem is about how one day this man was walking along and saw lots of daffodils and from this inspiration felt the need to write a poem about how this cheered him up. However, if it is twisted around a bit the poem could be about when this man saw a beautiful woman, fell in love and compared her to a field of daffodils - she was all he saw and she made him very happy.

Date of this entry

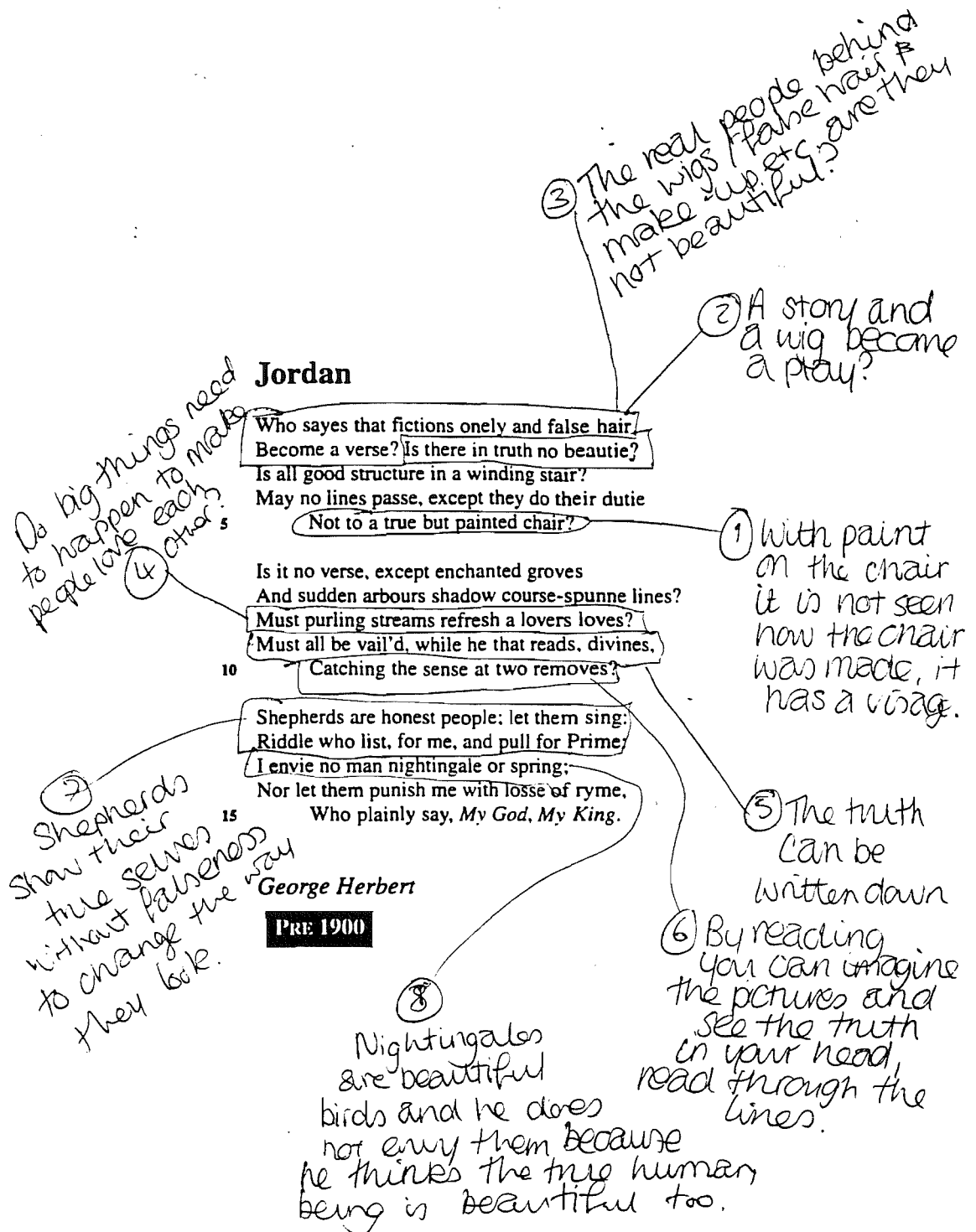
Title: The Daffodils Author: William Wordsworth
 Date(s) when I read this poem: 5 & 7/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

6/10
 Poem about memories. The daffodils, when he remembered them, his mood changed and he felt happier than before and his 'inner eye' and solitude was his inner/real self that no-one else could get to or know about unless he chose to speak about it. - Not longer etc happy to spend time with himself & his memories.

Date of this entry

ANNA



POEMSPre-Twentieth Century Poems

ANNA

Title: Jordan Author: George HerbertDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

9/10.
I like this poem as for a start there is no easy to explain reason why it is called Jordan, and the writer is being very metaphorical all the way through. The poem is done very well in like a code that unless you look very carefully you cannot decipher. I think Herbert is writing about how people put on false acts and false appearances, ~~was~~ using make-up and wigs etc. and he is asking what is wrong with showing the truth (ie. there is no beauty in truth?). I can't understand half this poem but as it is confusing it must have a good meaning behind it, other wise he wouldn't have bothered making it so confusing, or he was just being difficult.

Date of this entry 15/10/97Title: Jordan Author: George HerbertDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/97 & 21/11/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

8/10
1st verse: - ~~Why~~ Why do lots of poems have to be fictional and made up ~~and~~ why don't they write about ~~these~~ true things. Factual things.
2nd verse: - He doesn't like modern poems that are hard to understand. The meaning is "valid" and the reader only begins to understand it after reading it twice.
3rd verse: - He doesn't like those confusing poems, all he wants to say is simply God is his King. The poem is confusing, which is contradicting what he is saying.

Date of this entry 21/12/97

ANNA

- ⑧ People who don't have work, are unemployed, have (liberty) so much freedom to do with themselves are sad without work.
- ⑨ So ~~the~~ work or a job is not a prison.

Nuns fret not

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
 And hermits are contented with their cells;
 And students with their pensive citadels;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
 Sit blithe and happy: bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground:
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

maid and weaver are jobs - these people like doing them otherwise they would not.

- ① The life they have chosen to live, they are happy with, otherwise they would not be living that way.
- ②

- ④ A bee that sees flowers (bloom) are happy because they are going to collect pollen.

- ⑥ When his job as a poet was getting hard.

- ⑦ Souls and Sonnets in cages.

- ⑩ It times when he was out of work.

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

- ⑤ "Unto which we doom ourselves"? We seem to think life is a prison, or [job] is a prison, when if it was something we had wanted to do it would not be so.

- ⑪ Peace within themselves, there, where he has gone (community work!!)

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century Poems

ANNA

Title: Nuns Pret not Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

14/10
I found this poem a bit boring. I think it may be about how many people such as nuns and hermits (and bees) are contented with the lives they have chosen to live and they enjoy the work they have to do. Unemployed people though have lots of freedom and although they might not like the thought of having to work (they think it is like a prison) they are not happy when they are without work. Wordsworth tells the reader a job is not like a prison, but something the opposite as long as you enjoy doing what your job is.

Date of this entry ...

Title: Nuns Pret not Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/97 & 27/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

14/10
Now that this poem has been explained to me I have realised that it is very cleverly put together. The Sonnet is divided into a group of 8 lines (other people & where they are confined) and a group of 6 lines (about himself). The poem is about writing poems and how having chosen to write a Sonnet he no longer had to choose how many syllables in each line and how many lines he could write. The rhyme scheme changes between the octave and sestet; the style suits the meaning. If a person has too much liberty they have more choices to make, so life can be more difficult.

Date of this entry 21/10/97

JOSIE

(24.2.97)

Chartered = document that gives rights and privileges to a place.
 Awarded by the king. Given to the most important / wealthy / powerful people.
 Mark = look, take note.
 Hapless = Unlucky, Unfortunate.

This ~~my~~ verse is emphasising (3) the point that everyone in London is upset, weak and scared deep down, then in the last line of the verse it says that the chains (fears) are made in the mind.

(2) The repetition of the word 'marks' is to emphasise the point that the poet notices weakness and woe in every face he meets.

London

I wander thro' each chartered street,
 Near where the Chartered Thames does flow,
 And mark in every face I meet
 Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,
 In every infant's cry of fear,
 In every voice, in every ban
 The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
 Every blackening church appals;
 And the hapless soldier's sigh
 Runs in blood down palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
 How the youthful harlot's curse
 Blasts the new-born infant's tear
 And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

By William Blake
 1794

(1) My first response is that there is a lot of repetition. This is for emphasis. The repetition of 'chartered' is emphasising the point that everything in London is given its importance by the king. 'Everything is chartered.'

(6) This point about the harlot's curse is really bringing out the bad parts of London life.

(7) This might be saying that all of this fear and sadness will be passed from generation to generation.

(4) Blackening church could be caused by chimney-sweeper's soot. Metaphor - soot = fear.

The fact that the poet brought the palace into this could mean that the government are responsible for the fears and for causing the soldiers to be unlucky and upset.

(8) I am confused about this line and why there is a 'marriage hearse'?

Soldier -

At this time the government had brought the Army to London as they were scared of revolution.

Harlot - prostitute.

Manacles - chains, hand cuffed.

Blights - to spoil, wither.

Hearse - vehicle that carries the coffin to funeral.

Forged - blacksmith - made.

JOSIE

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: London..... Author: William Blake.....Date(s) when I read this poem: 24th and 25th Feb.....

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

My interpretation of this poem is that Blake brings out all the problems of London, are country's capital, and I think he is blaming these problems on the government. I think this as he emphasised the ~~fact~~^{point} that everything in London is chartered and that, in lines 11 and 12, it says, 'And the hapless soldier's sigh Runs in blood down palace walls.' It just seems to me that Blake brought the palace into the poem like that because he blames them. I found ~~an~~ interpretations for most of this poem, but the last lines confused me. Why would there be a marriage house? Maybe the poet is saying that living in London is like marrying death or the devil. This poem made me feel quite depressed. Blake pointed out all the bad things about London and our country. There was not a happy or positive point in the poem. (7)

Date of this entry 25.2.97.Title: London..... Author: William Blake.....Date(s) when I read this poem: 24th, 25th, 26th, 27, 28th Feb

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I am now even more depressed ~~at~~ by this poem now than I was at the start of the week. I now understand what the mind-forged manacles are. ~~The~~ It means that the people are trapped. They have no choice but to pursue the 'careers' that they do. They risk their lives to get money. The marriage house part is clearer now as well. The prostitutes are having sex with married men and transmitting diseases to them which is then passed into the married relationship.

Date of this entry

JOSIE

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

5 And I watered it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears;
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

10 And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

15 And into my garden stole
When the night had veiled the pole;
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

⑦ Until this point the mood and atmosphere of the poem is very depressing and sad, but suddenly we get the word "smiles".

⑧ I don't know what this could mean.

⑥ This line also makes me think that if he did murder his foe, due to his anger, he was 'veiled' he couldn't see what he was doing.

That in the morning, he was glad to see his foe outstretched beneath the tree. I think he could be saying that it was like he didn't know what he was doing, but he was glad that it had happened.

② This verse makes me think about that the poet is forgiving his friend when he is angry ~~but~~ because he told his friend. He was angry with his enemy, but didn't say anything so his anger grew.

① My first response is that the poet is using a tree as a metaphor for his anger, his wrath. He connects the watering and sun that a tree needs to have in order to grow with the fears, tears, smiles and wiles related to his anger.

③ This line might be saying that when the anger grew to a certain point, the enemy knew about it.

⑤ Maybe this poem is actually about murder.

Perhaps ~~maybe~~ his anger grew so much that he was driven to kill his enemy. Blake says

wile - strategy.
wrath - anger.

POEMS

JOSIE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: A Poison Tree Author: William Blake Date(s) when I read this poem: 3:2:97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I have found this poem more difficult to understand than previous poems, probably because there is a lot of imagery and there could be many meanings. I thought that this poem could be about a person's anger growing until they were driven to murder. I thought that the tree was a metaphor for the anger. The tree (anger) was watered with tears and sunned with smiles. I thought that it could have been that the anger got the better of him. I thought that lines 14 and 15 were saying that the angry person didn't know what he was doing when he committed murder. This poem was depressing. There were some positive words like 'sunned', 'smiles', 'bright', 'shine' but the message was about growing anger and the last line was about some one dead beneath the tree.

Date of this entry 4:2:97 Title: A Poison tree Author: William Blake Date(s) when I read this poem: 3:2:97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I have decided that this poem isn't teaching a lesson because in the end, he was 'glad to see' that his foe was dead. It's like the poet is saying that revenge is good. Therefore, this poem is not didactic. There is juxtaposition, the contrast between the friend and foe in the first verse. The death of the foe is tragic because it may have started from a very small argument which grew because it was not brought out in the open. The imagery of this poem is the tree growing from a seed or small tree into a large, strong tree producing fruit which is a metaphor for the anger growing from a small argument to an anger which can drive people to murder. The apple is ~~the~~ when the anger has got to it's greatest point.

Date of this entry 6:2:97

This poem didn't work for me because I just couldn't get into it and it didn't emotionally affect me.

JOSIE

15.4.97

What Is Our Life?

What is our life? A play of passion.

And what our mirth but music of division?

Our mother's wombs the tiring-houses be

Where we are drest for this short comedy.

Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is

Who sits and marks what here we do amiss.

The graves that hide us from the searching sun

Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.

Thus playing post we to our latest rest,

And then we die, in earnest, not in jest.

Sir Walter Raleigh

I am not quite sure of what this means, but the word division could mean that, although our lives may be full of emotion, the emotions are divided - some good and happy and some sad.

I think that in these two lines the poet is saying that whoever or whatever are in heaven or hell are like the audience. They are spectating our lives and also acting as judges and noting down how we live our lives. Maybe by doing this it is decided whether we go to heaven or hell.

Here, I think, the poet is saying that death is the only point of life that isn't funny or ironic.

Here, Raleigh is saying that death is like the end of the play when the curtains drop. - Graves hide us from the sun. - The curtains hide the stage and actors from the audience.

① This is symbolising all the emotions of life. Our mother's womb, dressing room.

② In this first half of the poem Sir Raleigh is using the imagery of a comedy play. He is saying that when we are in our mother's womb, we are in the dressing room preparing for the comedy.

③ I think that the poet used the comedy genre of play as to represent life as in a comedy good and bad things can happen and he may be saying that life is ironic and comic in that way.

POEMS

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title: What is our life Author: Sir Walter Raleigh

Date(s) when I read this poem: 15.4.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

In this poem Sir Walter Raleigh is saying that our lives are like a play of passion, a comedy. I think that the poet used the word passion to describe the play (our life) to show all the emotions that we feel throughout our lives. I think that the poet called the play a comedy ~~as~~ because he may be saying that life is funny and funny in that way. This is the opposite view of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Macbeth described life as a tragic play. This could be due to Macbeth's state of mind at the time or maybe Raleigh was happy with life at the time of writing the poem. I don't actually think that it is true though as I really think that Raleigh was calling life ironic. I have given this poem 7 out of 10 as I think I can interpret it quite easily. Date of this entry 16.4.97 $\frac{7}{10}$

Title: What is our life Author: Sir Walter Raleigh

Date(s) when I read this poem: 15.4.97, 16, 17, 18

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After discussing this poem with someone else I have decided to change the rating to eight out of ten as I did quite like this poem. The reason that I like this is because it is a happy and positive piece of poetry and I generally prefer poetry that doesn't depress me. This poem is basically saying that life is a comedy, where we are prepared in our mother's womb. Raleigh is saying that the only serious part of our lives is death. The poet uses the metaphor of a play for our lives. The dressing room is ~~at~~ our mother's womb and the end of the play when the curtain drops is like our death. Raleigh calls it a playful passion to show all the emotions that we feel during our lives. $\frac{8}{10}$

Date of this entry 18.4.97

JOSIE

This part may be saying that most people only worship one God because it would be too much work to worship two.

I think this is saying that people shouldn't swear because it doesn't really hurt your enemy.

Honour your parents if it is at your best interest to do so.

Don't commit adultery because it's not good for you in the long run. He's saying that people obey this not to save the feelings of others but to stop themselves from getting into trouble.

The Latest Decalogue

Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?

No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:

Swear not at all; for, for thy curse

Thine enemy is none the worse:

At church on Sunday to attend

Will serve to keep the world thy friend:

Honour thy parents; that is, all

From whom advancement may befall;

Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive

Officiously to keep alive:

Do not adultery commit;

Advantage rarely comes of it:

Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat.

When it's so lucrative to cheat:

Bear not false witness; let the lie

Have time on its own wings to fly:

Thou shalt not covet, but tradition

Approves all forms of competition.

Arthur Hugh Clough

PRE 1900

④ This poem is about what Clough's views of the ten commandments.

③ This is saying that although the decalogue says that there must be no graven images, people still seem to worship money more than anything. (Sarcasm)

⑧ It's better to cheat than to steal, (more lucrative)

⑤ I think the poet is saying that he agrees with the ten commandments but for different reasons. I think he is saying that people follow the decalogue for selfish reasons. He has changed the decalogue slightly to show irony.

POEMS

JOSIE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: The Latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh CloughDate(s) when I read this poem: 11.6.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I liked this poem, I had a lot of ideas about it. I think that Clough is being ironic about the decalogue and showing that people are selfish and only do nice things for their own good. This is a bit cynical but also of what he said is probably true. For every one of the 10 commandments he ~~he~~ says why people actually follow that commandment. I all it is ~~for~~ their best interest to do. so

Date of this entry 8/10Title: The Latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh CloughDate(s) when I read this poem: 11.12.13 June

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem is about hypocrisy. It is saying that people say they follow the ten commandments but really they have found the loopholes in the commandments and follow them for selfish reasons. ~~By~~ Every one in the class agreed on this. The latest decalogue simply means the newest decalogue. Clough is being ironic about the time he lives in, he is saying that people don't care about anyone else, just themselves. I think it is a clever poem, I appreciate it in that way.

8/10Date of this entry 13.6.97

JOSIE

2-10-97

The Daffodils

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils:
5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

③ The daffodils reminded him of people.

rhyming couplets at the end of each stanza?

⑤ What waves?

⑥ the wind makes them look like they're bobbing their heads.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:

15 A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed – and gazed – but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

④ The simple sight of daffodils "dancing" in the breeze had brought a "wealth" to him

For oft, when on my couch I lie
20 In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

① I think that this poem is about Wordsworth's escapism. When he needed to cheer up he thought of daffodils.

For tranquillity he imagines he's in amongst the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

POEMS

JOSIE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: The Daffodils Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 6.10.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem is firstly about daffodils, but also it's about a man's escapism. How the simple sight of daffodils dancing in the breeze gave him the sense of tranquility and relaxation that he needs to cope. This poem also seems to be about memories.

There isn't really much I can say about this poem.

4

10

Date of this entry 6.10.97

Title: Author:

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I now know that his poem is about memories. The 'wealth' that he gets from the sight of the daffodils is that whenever he thinks of that memory it will make him happy. Wordsworth's words are affected by his memories.

5

At least this is a happy poem.

10

Date of this entry 7.10.97

JOSIE

I think Herbert
is saying that
~~ugly things~~ beautiful
things are just
as real as ②
ugly things.

Jordan

Who says that fictions onely and false hair
Become a verse? Is there in truth no beautie?
Is all good structure in a winding stair?
May no lines passe, except they do their dutie
5 Not to a true but painted chair?

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbours shadow course-spunne lines?
Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves?
Must all be vail'd, while he that reads, divines.
10 Catching the sense at two removes?

Shepherds are honest people: let them sing:
Riddle who list, for me, and pull for Prime:
I envie no man nightingale or spring;
Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme.
15 Who plainly say, My God, My King.

George Herbert

PRE 1900

① My first impression
is that this poem
is difficult to
interpret and makes
no sense.
I'm sure this is
a very meaningful
poem, but the meaning
is hidden.

③ let the honest people
talk.

④ I think this
poem is about lies.

Rhyme - ABABA-each verse

POEMS

JOSIE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Jordan Author: George HerbertDate(s) when I read this poem: 15.10.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem is very unusual - At first glance it seems to make no sense at all. After reading it closely, I think it might be ^{partly} about love. There is a rhyming pattern in each verse. Lines 1, 3 and 5 rhyme and lines 2 and 4 rhyme. I'm sure this is a very deep and meaningful poem. But I only think a poem is good if people can understand it. Is it just meant to be a load of nonsense. What's the point? I give this poem 5 out of 10.

Date of this entry

Title: Jordan Author: George Herbert

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

The entire poem is about how Herbert doesn't like poems that are riddles, that rhyme and have hidden meanings. It is a poem about what type of poet the poet likes. The strange thing is that the poet spends the whole poem saying how he likes poems that get to the point and don't have hidden meanings when really the whole poem is a riddle. It all rhymes and has hidden meanings.

5/10

Date of this entry

POEMS

JOSIE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Nuns fret not Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15.10.97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

The only interpretation that I can get from this poem that being trapped in a war or in an occupation is not always a bad thing, it's often comforting and protecting. I think he might be saying that freedom is scary and can be lonely. This poem is a sonnet. It has 14 lines with 10 syllables to each line. There is also a rhyming pattern. Lines 1, 4, 5, 8 rhyme and lines 2, 3, 6, 7. Next lines 9, 12, 13 rhyme and so do lines 10, 11, 13. This poem is a bit uninteresting.

4
10

ABBAABBA CDCD

Date of this entry 15-10-97Title: Nuns fret not Author: William Wordsworth

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I now know that this poem is octave sonnet structured, which means it has 8 lines a sonnet where the first 8 lines are ABBA and the last 6 lines are CDCD. In the octave Wordsworth is talking about examples of where confinement can be a good thing and in the sestet he is talking about himself. He is saying that he is confined to a sonnet and likewise, confinement makes it easier as he knows his boundaries. Even though I understand this poem more now, I don't like it any more than before.

4
10

Date of this entry

JOSIE

Nuns fret not

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
 And hermits are contented with their cells;
 And students with their pensive citadels;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
 Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells;
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

I am confused
 as to what
 these lines
 mean. What
 murmurs everywhere,
 and why?

This is also (3)
 saying about that
 sometimes when
 you seemed trapped
 somewhere, you are
 actually more
 protected.

(1) This makes me
 think that words-
 worth is trying to
 say that everybody is
 happy doing what they
 naturally do best or
 what they have
 become accustomed to.

(2) This is emphasising
 my previous point.
 It is saying that
 too much liberty (or freedom)
 is not always a good
 thing. Perhaps he is
 saying that everybody
 needs guidance.

(5) Perhaps he is saying
 that freedom is lonely.

This is a sonnet - 14 lines, 10 syllables to
 each line

Harlot = prostitute.

Manacles = chains, handcuffs

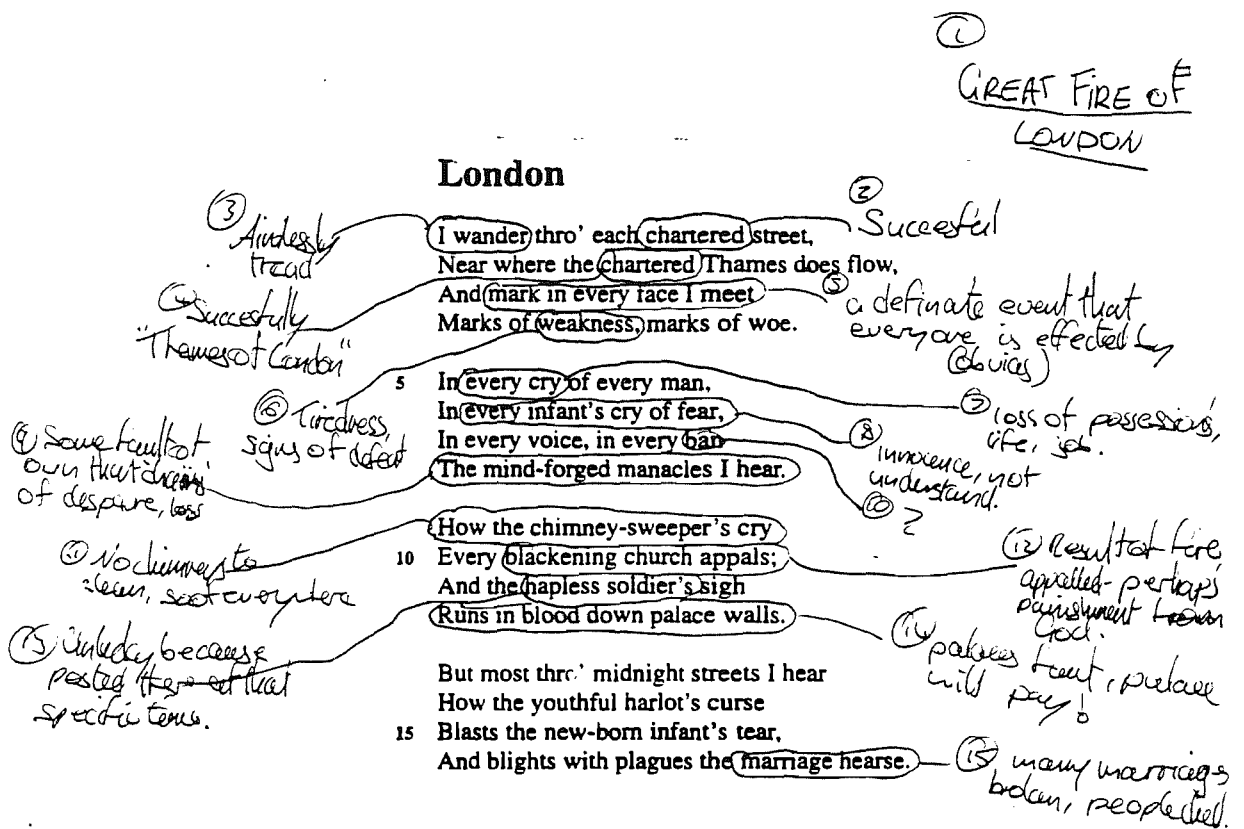
Blights = spoils

Hearse = vehicle that transports coffin

Forged = made

STEVE

26th Feb '97



Chartered = document that gives rights and privileges to a place/organisation awarded by the King, normally given to the richest (important)

Mark = look/take note

Unlucky = unlucky, unfortunate.

Soldier = Gunt brought in army cause scared of possible revolution

POEMS

STEVE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: London Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 24-2-97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

The subject in the poem is "wandering" which suggests that he/she has no place to go, nothing better to be doing. Although the poem was written a 'while' ago it reminds me of film extracts of towns after they were hit by bombs in the second world war.

The poem doesn't really trigger any emotions in me, I don't know why.

Line 8 - "The wind forged ironies I hear" is interesting. It is suggesting to people look at things as being worse than they really are - wind made chains.

(4/10)

Date of this entry 25-4-97Title: London Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 24-2-97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After working on this poem as a class I can now see that it has nothing to do with the great fire of London. Words are repeated for effect. Eg the word 'every' is repeated 5 times in the second verse.

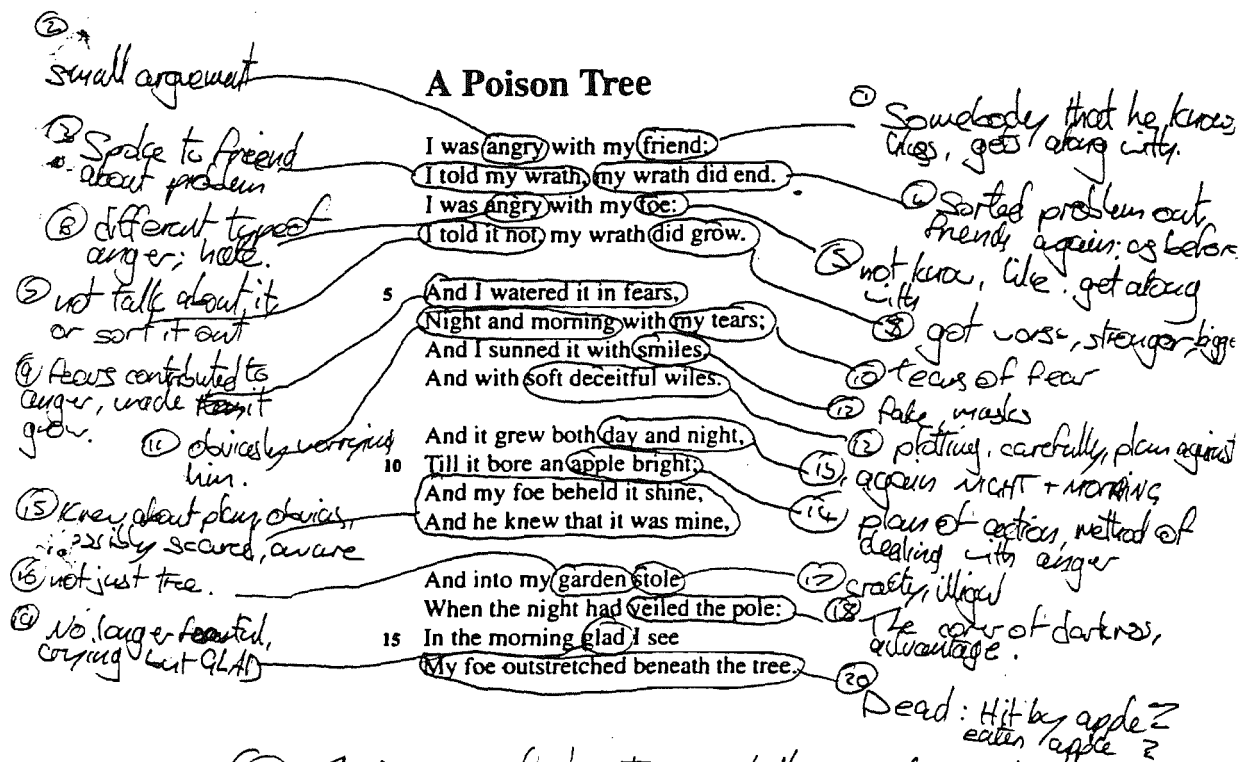
Emphasis is placed on the people that live in London, Harlots, Soldiers, Chimney sweeps.

Unreadable screen is used in the first verse, repeating CHARACTER Marriage and Hearse are placed together.

(6/10)

Date of this entry 28-2-97

STEVE



②① The image of the tree and the apple and the poison relates to the creation story, christian. Tree of fruitful temptation.

②② Imagery

wrath = anger
wile = strategy

POEMS

STEVE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: A Poison Tree Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 3/3/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem I liked quite a lot. It portrays the "fruit" of "bottling" up anger well, via imagery. It speaks of the anger harboured by the person and how it develops because the person says nothing to his foe about it.

It reminds me slightly of arguments that I sometimes have with my parents. When I go to bed still thinking about it.

It also reminded me of a passage from the Bible "Don't let the sun go down on your anger."

The line that I found interesting was the way that he "watered it with tears".

(8/10)

Date of this entry 3/3/97Title: A Poison Tree Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 6/3/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After a discussion about this poem, none of my feelings have changed. Some of them have just been backed up by other people suggesting them. For example the ease of making up with a friend and the difficulty of being friendly to a foe.

The poem is didactic in teaching us that we should make up with people quickly so that it doesn't grow and bear an apple.

(7/10)

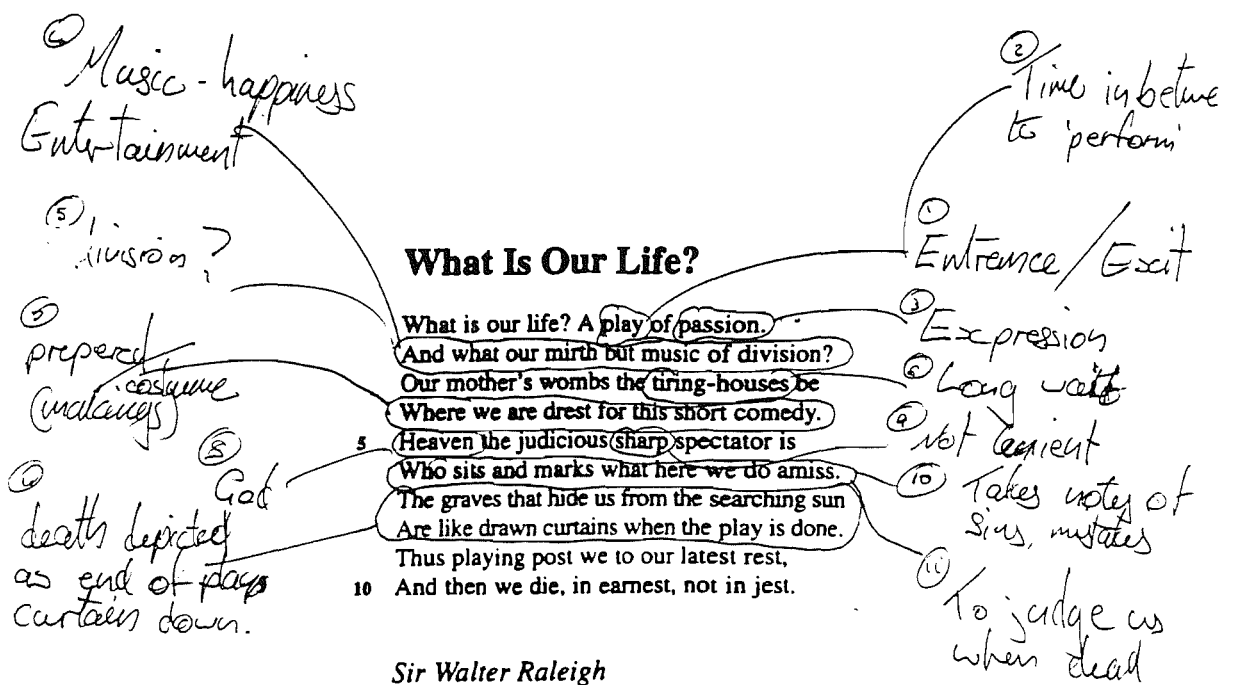
Each time I read the poem it appears to me less; it gets simpler.

The tree is metaphorical; the apple is the product - violence.

Date of this entry

STEVE

15/12/97



?

STEVE

POEMSPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: What is Our Life? Author: Sir Walter RaleighDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/4/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This play reminded me greatly of Macbeth's speech in the play Macbeth where he relates life to a play and himself as an actor, "Strutting + Pretting".

The poem uses a great deal of figurative language to describe the end of its content. However, as a "stern spectator" presentation of the sun, dying in earnest, not in jest. I didn't rate this poem much. It was almost as if it had copied Macbeth's speech. It had a very 'dramatic' appeal, gloomy, dull.

(2/10)

Date of this entry

Title: 1 Author: Date(s) when I read this poem: 17/11/97

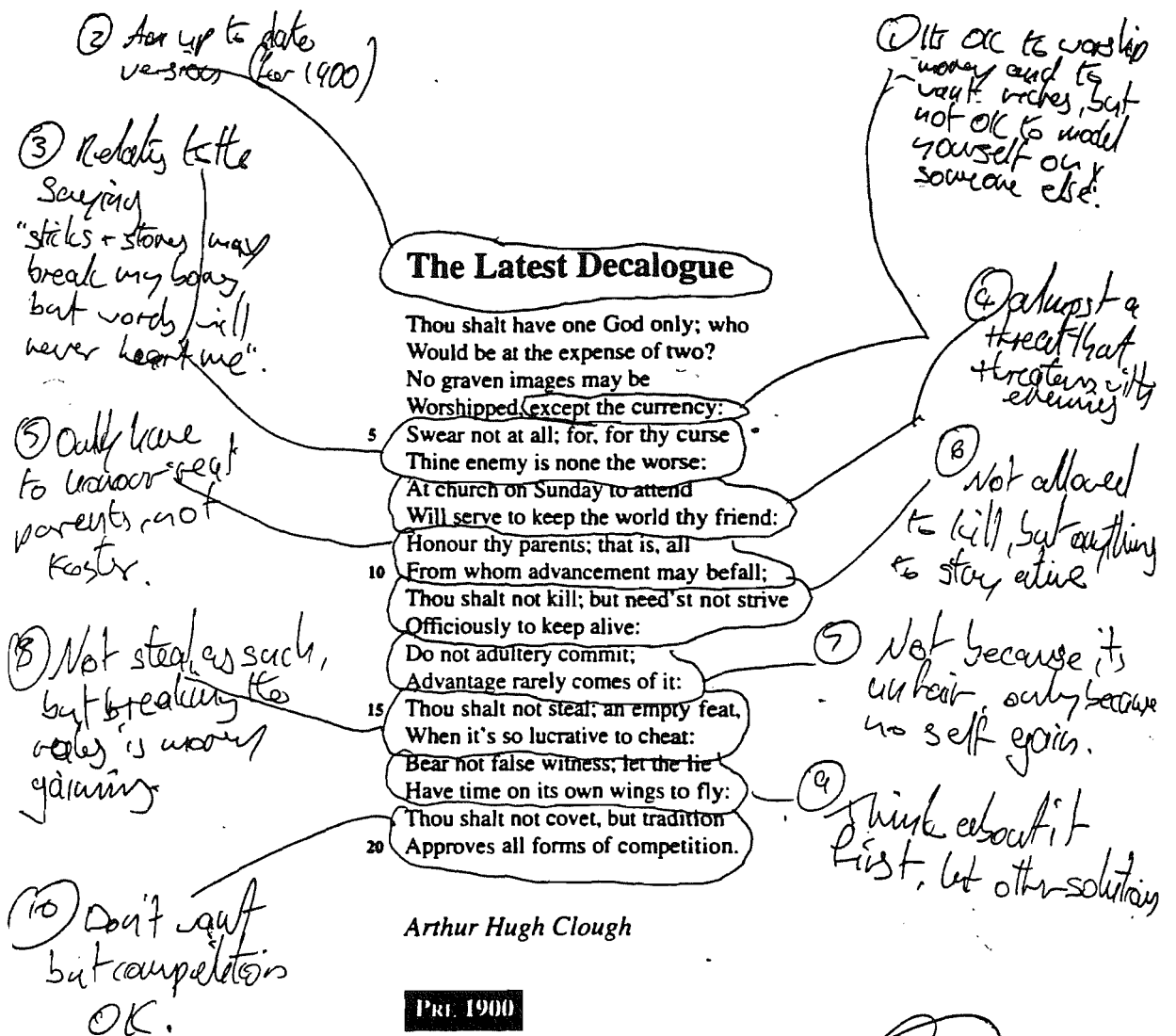
My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Poem is questioning the meaning of life v. Macbeth style comparison & is dramatic, some comedy, Die in Earnest

(3/10)

Date of this entry

STEVE



POEMS

STEVE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: The latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh CloughDate(s) when I read this poem: 11/6/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I liked this poem. It was all about going around the 10 commandments without actually breaking them.

The whole poem was based on methods of not going. For example: you mustn't steal, but cheating is different and is allowed to.

It reminds me of Dribby out of only look + horses

9/10

Date of this entry

Title: The latest Decalogue Author: T

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem is very ironic of the like a thing of the century. He is saying that he will always obey the 10 commandments, but will find a way of getting around them.

The tone of the writing is that there is a high amount of hypocrisy in society.

I thought that this poem was witty and clever and it was an exploitation of the 10 commandments

9/10

Date of this entry 13/6/97

STEVE

② Golden =
better than
feeling

The Daffodils

① Free to
drift

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils:
5 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

③ Stars are
uncountable

⑤ Dancing
metaphor again

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
10 Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

④ large N°
not actual

⑦ what had
he gained

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
15 A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

⑥ happy that
has something
to write about

⑩ feels
alone with
clouds

For oft, when on my couch I lie
20 In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

⑨ when he
closes eyes
sees daffs

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

POEMS

STEVE

Pre-Twentieth Century Poems

Title:

The Daffodils

Author:

William Wordsworth

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem to me, was about a boy who saw a field of daffodils. I think that he was so overjoyed by the experience that he had to write a poem about it.

I didn't really enjoy the poem because it was really just the re-telling of an event. The poem did not make obvious any hidden meaning (subtext).

3
10

Date of this entry

Title:

Author:

Date(s) when I read this poem:

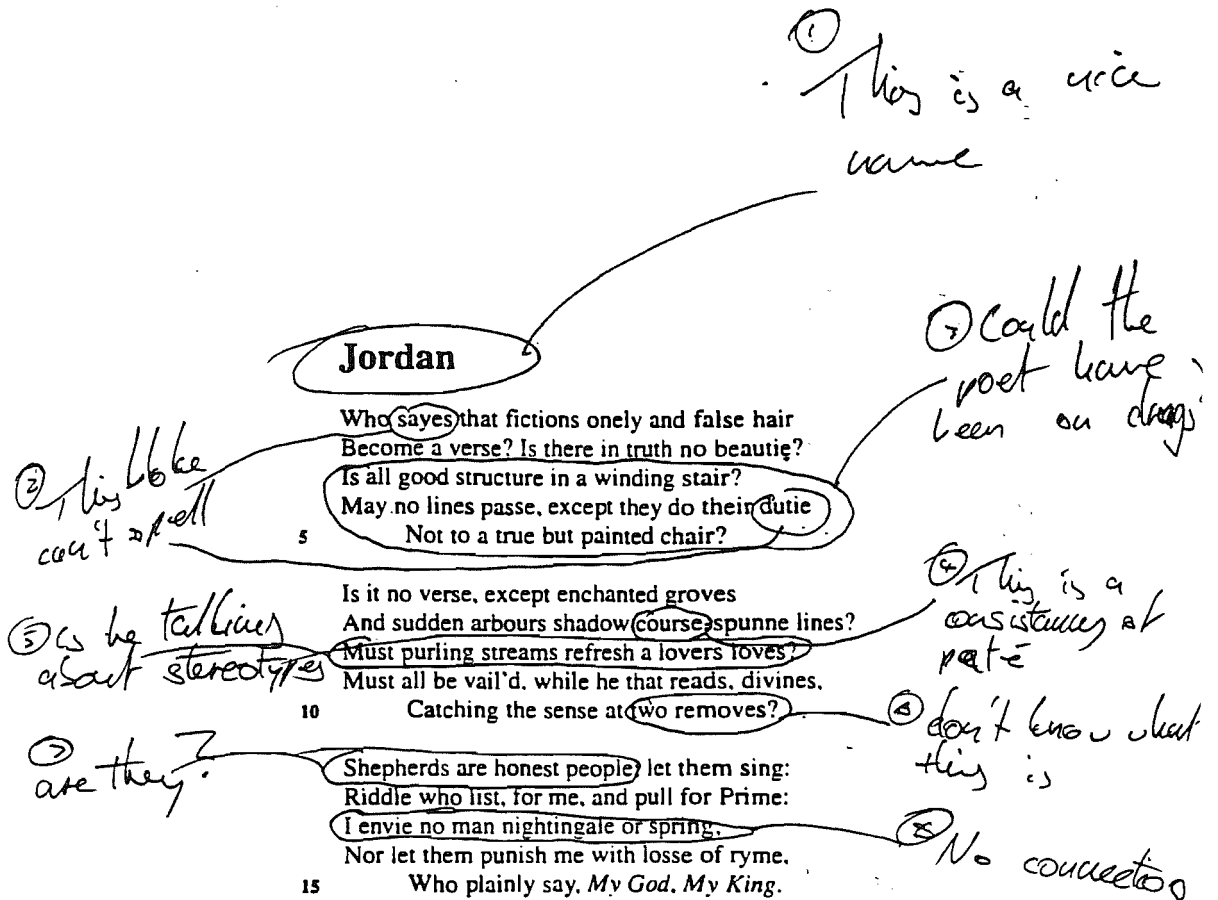
My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I know even that the poem is about memories being recalled in a certain thought. Memories that flash upon the mind are, this being the soul of the person. Solitude is bliss (extremely happy) because he is not on his own any more, because he has the thought of those times.

3
10

Date of this entry

STEVE



George Herbert

PRE 1900

POEMS

STEVE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Sordan Author: George HerbertDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/6/07

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This is a prime example
 of a nonsense poem. It
 does not have much
 sense to me. The only
 thing that worked out
 was that perhaps line 8
 is talking about stereo types.
 I think that the only
 deserves some credit for
 writing such complete and utter
 rubbish so I have given
 the poem a

$$\frac{3}{10}$$
Date of this entry 15/6/07

Title: Author:

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

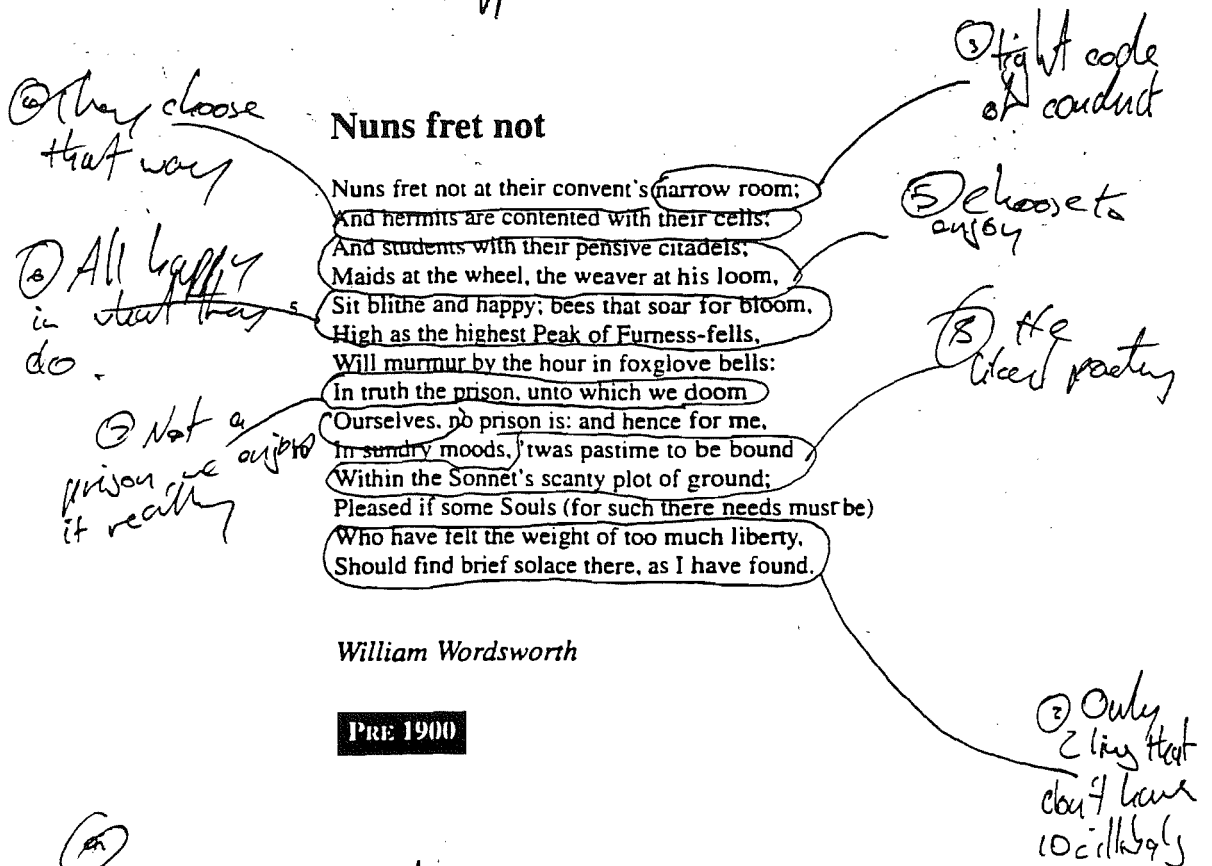
It is about the sort of poetry (GH) likes
 to write about. He does not
 like poetry that is made
 up of words and does
 not make up the sensible
 stuff.
 The poem is ironic because the
 poem is a riddle.
 Why can't everything be that
 as the poet
 the just want to write about
 God + the King.

$$\frac{2}{10}$$

Date of this entry

STEVE

Appears to be a Sonnet



⑧ The poem is basically saying that although we get fed-up with our day to day activity (jobs) we actually enjoy them. They fill up our time

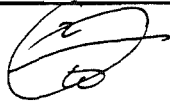
POEMS

STEVE

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Nurs' Foot Not Author: Will WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I think that the whole poem is saying that our mundane daily jobs are really our salvation. Although it's very much about them they actually mean quite a lot to us. It reminds me of school if we didn't have to go to school, it would be a lot different and we wouldn't be as happy. Solace is comfort in a time of distress. I didn't like the poem because I hate poetry.



Date of this entry

Title: Author:

Date(s) when I read this poem:

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem, I have been told, is actually quite cleverly structured. It is an octave sestet poem where the rhyming scheme is different for the sestet. In the octave the poet gives examples of people who are confined and where they are confined to. He is actually writing about poetry. As he has written a sonnet he has been restricted to 14 lines + 10 syllables. Freedom not always good.

Sestet about the individual poet



Date of this entry

ROB

24/12/97

*Chartered = signed document which gives rights + privileges to the place awarded by king
 *normally given to richest person. Rich/powerful people *Havle = look / take note
 *Hapless = unlucky / unfortunate *Soldier = government bought away into London - because government scared of poss. revolution *Harlot = prostitute *Manacles = handcuffs

① Emphasis on chartered

London

② Walking through the streets of London. Maybe shouldn't be chartered because the poor people live there

③ Sees weakness and sadness in all the faces he passes

I wander thro' each chartered street,

Near where the chartered Thames does flow,

And mark in every face I meet

Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

④ Everybody is crying in fear. Maybe because of the soldiers

5 In every cry of every man,
 In every infant's cry of fear,
 In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forged manacles I hear.

⑤ Trapped / hand outted by themselves in their mind, can hear this in their cry's. Made in mind

⑥ The unlucky soldier, maybe sympathising gets killed because of this

10 How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackning church appals;
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls.

⑦ Usually young boys very painful for them. cry in pain

⑧ Church doesn't approve of anyone in pain. Appalled by pain gone through

But most thro' midnight streets I hear

How the youthful harlot's curse

15 Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

⑨ Harlot's curse could be breaking up / death of marriage as in ⑥

⑩ Juxtaposition Marriage - happy time, joining of two people Hearse - vehicle of the coffin. Sad time because someone has died. Cause the death of someone's marriage

⑪ Poem about back-streets of London. How the people live and what they do. Makes them sound dark, painful, diseased. Everyman crying out in pain

*Blights = spoils / withers *Hearse = coffin car *Forged = blacksmith; shaping the metal

POEMS

ROB

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: London Author: William Blake Date(s) when I read this poem: 24/2/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I thought the poem was quite good but I find the whole poem is very depressing - people crying out, weakness, war, fear etc. This poem reminded me of a film about chimney sweeps where the backstreets of London are shown but I can't remember its name.

I like the phrase 'mind-forged manacles'. They are so trapped in these streets that they cannot think for themselves.

I felt a lot of pity for the people in the poem. They are in pain, afraid, starving and it is like a comparison with the East End of London today. After reading the poem it makes you realise how lucky you are.

The first time I saw the poem I thought it would be really rubbish but after reading it a few times I started to see more in it and what it was about. 7/10

Date of this entry 25/2/97.Title: London Author: William Blake Date(s) when I read this poem: 24/2/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

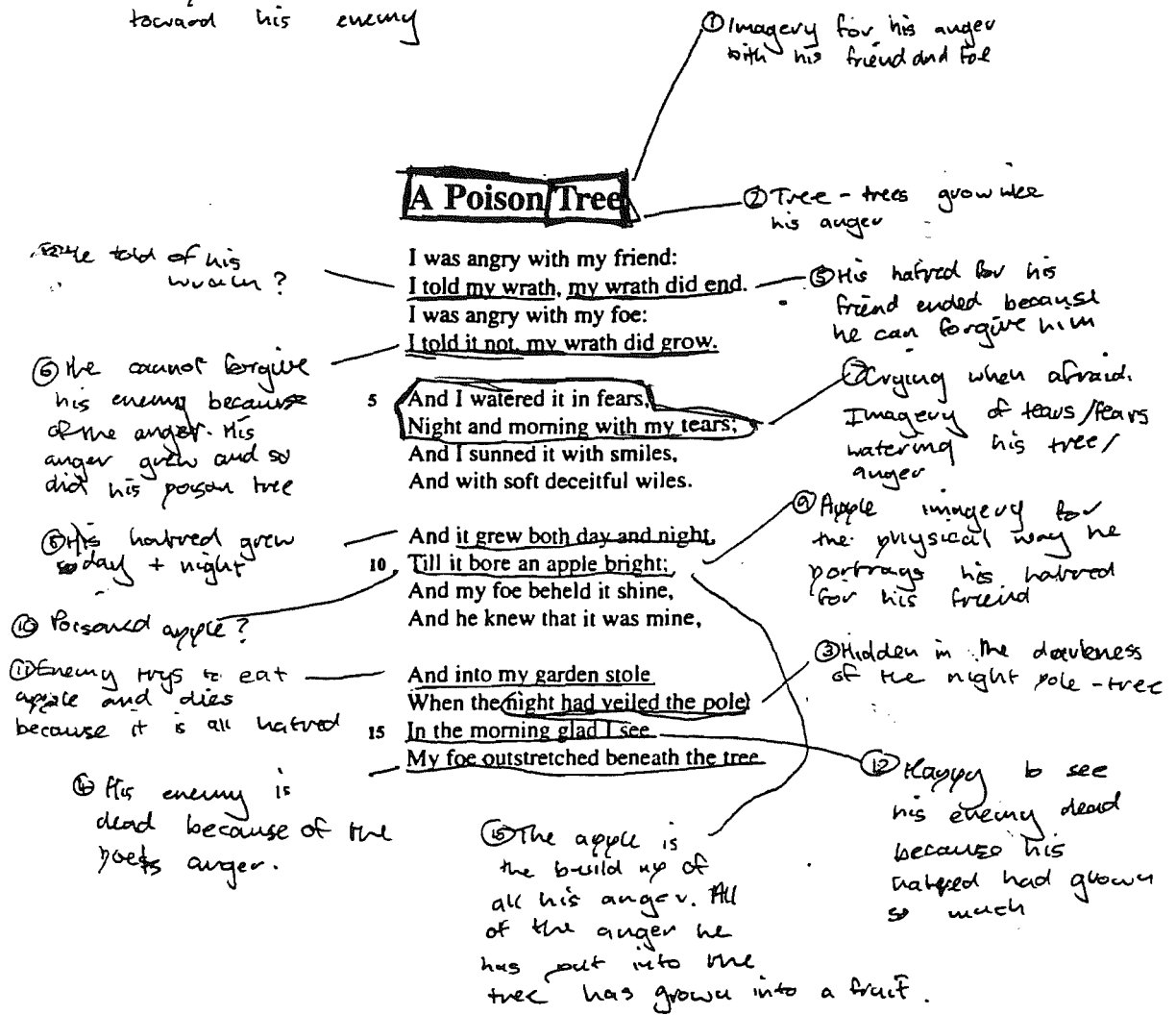
After re-reading and going through this poem several more times there is a lot more I have discovered and can draw from this poem.

The imagery used in this poem is also very powerful and evocative. I still find the poem comparable to modern day London.

8/10Date of this entry 15/12/97

ROB

⑭ A lot of imagery is used in the poem - tree - hatred apple etc. To ~~show~~ show the poet's hatred and anger toward his enemy



POEMS

ROB

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: A Poison Tree Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 4/3/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Didn't enjoy this poem as much as the other two although it was still quite good.

I thought the poet (Blake) used imagery well in the poem to express his anger toward his enemy. The way his anger grows and there is such a build up that the tree grows an apple etc.

As I re-read the poem I began to understand the imagery shown in it a lot more which helped me understand the poem a lot more.

I quite like the title of the poem because it gives an impression about what is in the poem and makes you want to read it. Although sometimes I did find the poem a bit boring but overall I would give it

6/10

Date of this entry 5/3/97Title: A Poison Tree Author: William BlakeDate(s) when I read this poem: 5/5/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After reading through the poem and going through all the points I can understand the poem a lot more and I like it more because I know what it's all about.

Some of my ideas about what is going on in the poem have changed but that also helped me understand it more clearly.

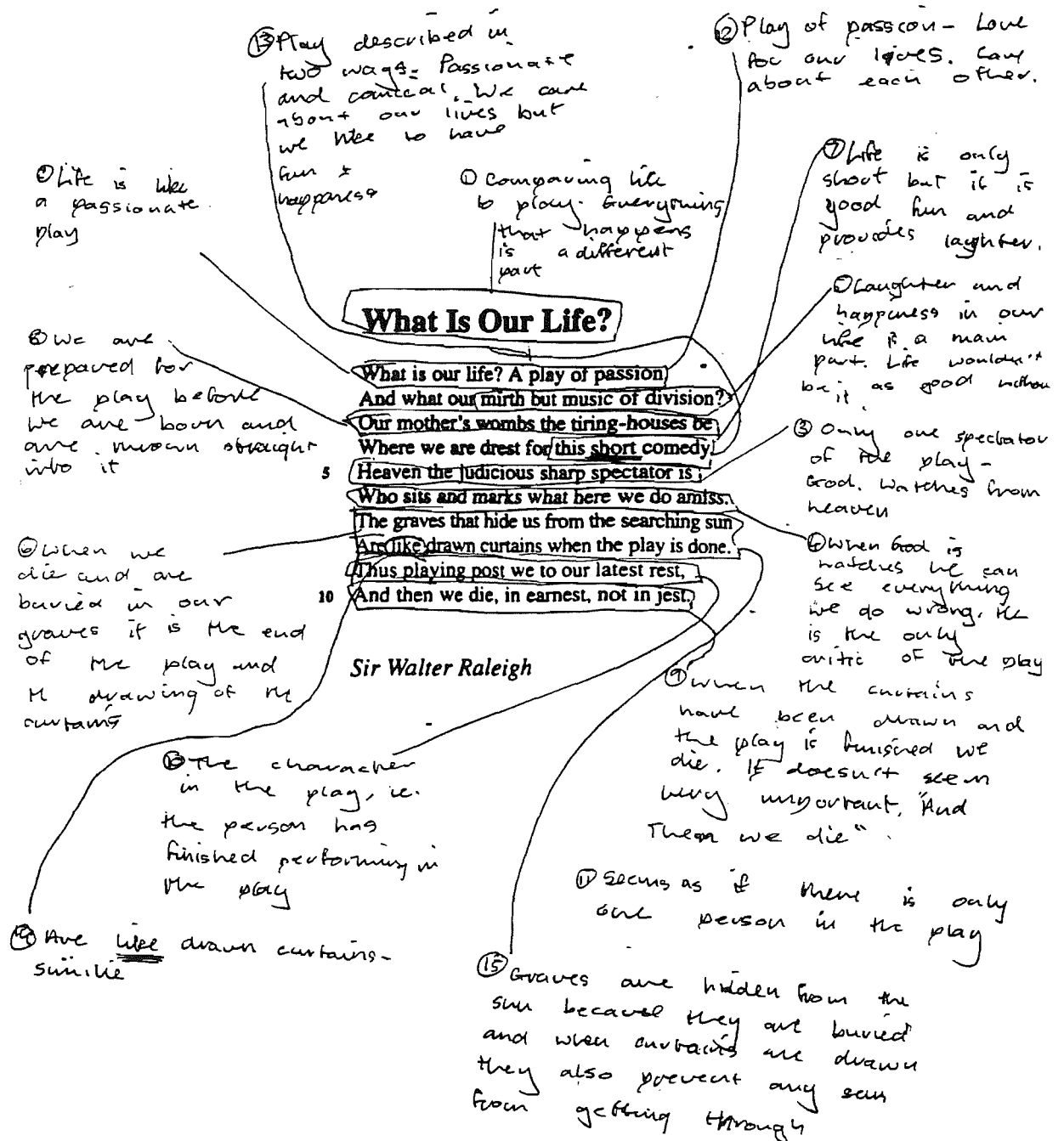
I like the way that William Blake uses the apple as a way of expressing his anger towards his foe in some way. We are not told what the apple is supposed to represent but we know that it somehow kills his foe.

I feel that the imagery used in the poem is a very good way of the poet getting his point across and I think that Blake really is holding a mirror up to life because everybody feels like this sometimes.

Date of this entry 8/10

ROB

15/4/97



POEMS

ROB

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: What is Our Life? Author: Sir Walter RaleighDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/4/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

The poem was a little bit boring but I liked the way in which it was written. Showing life as a play. Different aspects of the play are given as different aspects of life.

I liked the way in which the author says that there is only one ^{spectator} ~~actor~~ of the play and he sits in heaven and can see everything that goes wrong like he is a critic.

The author used a lot of imagery in the poem which is probably why I could write so much about it.

There was a lot written in the poem which I could really get into and I could understand what the poet was saying and what he meant 6/10

Date of this entry

Title: What is Our Life? Author: Sir Walter RaleighDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/4/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Didn't have much of a chance to go over anything that I may have missed in the poem so I can't really say that my views have changed.

Only thing that I did get other than what I already has is the fact that the only serious part of the play is the death at the end. Death is also mentioned in the last line - death of the poem.

Rhyming scheme - some lines rhymed - sun and done, others were nearrhymed - passion and decision.

Can't say anything else that I haven't already said about the poem. After reading it again I just got more boring 5/10

Date of this entry

③ This poem is about how people are hypocritical, blowing the ten commandments but really breaking them

ROB

Why have two Gods when it is easier to have one

③ You shouldn't kill but you don't have to stay alive

⑥ Don't commit adultery because it doesn't do anything for you.

The Latest Decalogue

Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?

No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:

5 Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:

At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:

Honour thy parents; that is, all

10 From whom advancement may befall;

Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive

Officially to keep alive:

Do not adultery commit:

Advantage rarely comes of it:

15 Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,

When it's so lucrative to cheat:

Bear not false witness; let the lie

Have time on its own wings to fly:

Thou shalt not covet, but tradition

20 Approves all forms of competition.

① The author's opinion on the decalogue. A new version

② Do not worship any graven images but people worship money

④ If you go to church then everything in your life will be alright

⑨ Don't steal because it's easier to cheat

⑤ Hypocritical as one of the ten commandments says not to be covetous or jealous but it is in everybody's traditions

Arthur Hugh Clough

PRI. 1900

POEMS

ROB

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: The Latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh CloughDate(s) when I read this poem: 11/6/17

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

This poem wasn't really too bad. I could get a lot of ideas from it.

However, some of these ideas were hard to put down into words. You could understand what the poet meant but it was hard to explain and put into words.

The poet obviously has many strong views on the decalogue and I think that he is complaining about how hypocritical we are by saying that we are Christians yet we are always breaking the most important laws.

Some of the lines I did not understand but I got the general idea of what they meant. Overall this poem is worth 7/10

Date of this entry 11/6/17Title: The Latest Decalogue Author: Arthur Hugh CloughDate(s) when I read this poem: 11.12.13/6/17

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After rereading the poem again I think I have completely misinterpreted the ideas in the poem. I got the bit about hypocrisy right but in the wrong way.

The poet is talking more about how people find loopholes in the Ten Commandments. They ~~take~~ take the literally and because of that they can find ways around it.

Another interpretation is similar to the last one about the writer being ironic of the time he is living in. His tone is saying that people don't follow the Ten Commandments. People agree with the Ten Commandments but really they don't follow them. 8/10

Date of this entry 13/6/17

2/10/27

ROB

The Daffodils

① Golden - not yellow - much greater than that

② No-one within miles of him

③ No on forever

④ Just glancing he could still see 10,000

⑤ How could a poet be anything but happy with so much beauty to write about

⑥ If he is just lying down nothing he always thinks of the beauty he saw with the daffodils

⑦ He does what the daffodils do that make them so beautiful

⑧ Rhyming scheme

A
B
A
B
A
A

— Last two lines stand out from rest of stanza

⑨ Him seeing the daffodils has brought him so much happiness and happiness is like money to him.

⑩ The daffodils bring him so much happiness + pleasure because of their beauty

⑪ Uses the dancing metaphor again

⑫ Metaphorically dancing

⑬ No-one within miles of him

⑭ Continuous as the stars that shine And twinkle on the milky way.

⑮ They stretched in never-ending line

⑯ Along the margin of a bay:

⑰ Ten thousand saw I at a glance, Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

⑱ The waves beside them danced; but they Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:

⑲ A poet could not be but gay, In such a jocund company:

⑳ I gazed - and gazed - but little thought What wealth the show to me had brought:

㉑ For oft, when on my couch I lie In vacant or in pensive mood, They flash upon that inward eye Which is the bliss of solitude; And then my heart with pleasure fills, And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth

PRE 1900

POEMS

2/10/97

ROBPre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: The Daffodils Author: Will WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 6/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I didn't really enjoy this poem as I couldn't find any form of hidden meaning in the poem. It just seemed to be the poet talking about past experience of something remarkable that he once saw.

Any kind of meaning that I did find in the poem was just muddled up and very vague which made it very difficult for me to interpret.

One thing that I did notice was the rhyming scheme which was ABABAB which made the last two lines stand out from the rest of the poem.

2/10
Date of this entryTitle: The Daffodils Author: WillDate(s) when I read this poem: 6/7/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Much the same as before - the only extra things that I found in the poem were in the last two stanzas where I had already drawn most of my interpretations from anyway.

Much of the information that I had extracted from the poem anyway was what most other people had found so I couldn't really draw much more from the poem.

There was some extra interpretation from the last line of the poem but it didn't really improve my enjoyment.

3/10

7/10/97
Date of this entry

ROB

15/10/17

③ Is it just something intricate that is well made or are simple things well made too

Jordan

① As in name or place?

Who says that fictions only and false hair
Become a verse? Is there in truth no beauty?

Is all good structure in a winding stair?

May no lines passe, except they do their dutie
Not to a true but painted chair?

5

② Is there real beauty in real life or just stories and poems

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbours shadow course-spunne lines?

Must purling streams refresh a lovers loves?

Must all be vail'd, while he that reads, divines,
Catching the sense at two removes?

10

④ Do beautiful things have to cause love or can simple things

Shepherds are honest people: let them sing:
Riddle who list, for me, and pull for Prime:

I envie no man nightingale or spring:

Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme,

Who plainly say, My God, My King.

15

⑥ These poems may not look good because they are simple but they are good

⑤ He is not jealous of things that are more beautiful or that can sing better because he is just as good in his own way

George Herbert

PRE 1900

⑦ Basically saying that things do not have to be intricate and beautiful to be good at something. Simple things can do the job just as well

POEMS

ROB

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Jordan Author: George Herbert Date(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/97

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After reading this poem through I instantly thought of the poem "Nuns bet not". The two poems are very similar in their message to the reader saying that things do not have to be the best to be good. Most people are happy with the simple things. I preferred this poem to "Nuns bet not" as I could associate parts of this poem with things I had already read in the previous poem and I could also draw my own ideas from it.

Date of this entry 15/10/97Title: Jordan Author: George Herbert Date(s) when I read this poem: 15-21-10-97

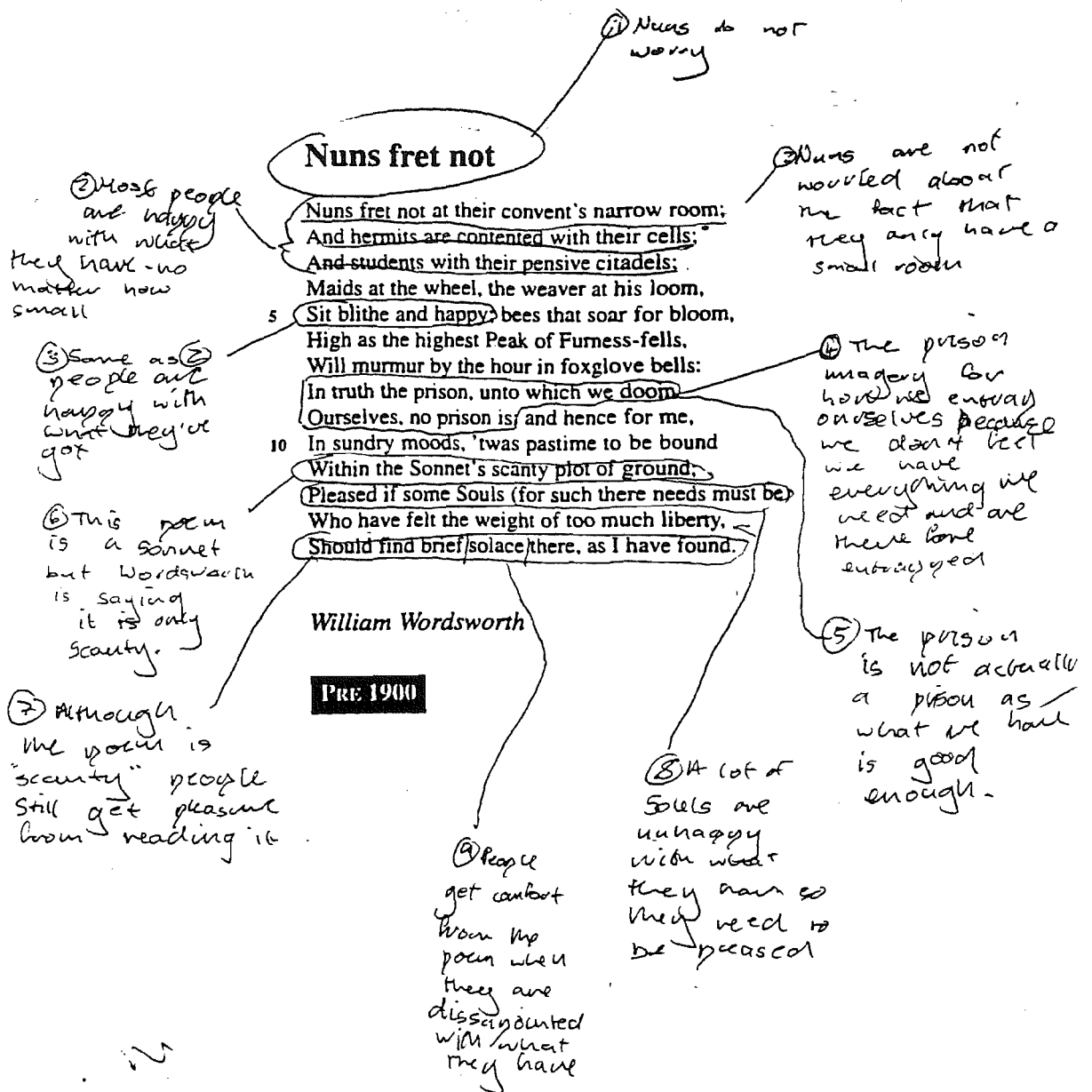
My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

Maybe the poems are not as similar as I thought. After an explanation of the poems they are still vaguely related. I did get what the poet was trying to say in his poem but after having it explained I can see more of a deeper meaning. However, if the poet is saying that we do not use poems with lots of hidden meanings then why does he write one himself ???

5/10Date of this entry 21-10-97

15/10/19

ROB



POEMS

ROB

Pre-Twentieth Century PoemsTitle: Nuns Get Not Author: William WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/10/197

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

I didn't really enjoy this poem as I couldn't really draw much from it. I found that there was one main message throughout the poem which was that people should be pleased with what they've got and not be disappointed because there is something which they don't have.

I got the basic poem idea but I couldn't really draw much from that either.

The first half of the poem is saying what people have and that they are happy with it. The second half is about how we should be happy.

(3/10)
Date of this entry 15/10/97

Title: Nuns Get Not Author: Will. WordsworthDate(s) when I read this poem: 15/21/10/197

My response to this poem and my reflections about my response:

After having Mr P.'s interpretation of the poem and the separation of the poem into an extract and a section I still wasn't moved that much from my previous opinion.

Although I now have a much better understanding of what the poet was trying to say in the poem it still has improved my view of the poem by a large amount as I still think that the poem is not very good. What the poet does with the separation of the poem is very clever from talking about other people to talking about himself.

(5/10)
Date of this entry 21/10/97

APPENDIX E**WRITTEN RESPONSE DATA**

A PERSONAL STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE PREFERENCES
EXPRESSED IN MY RANK ORDER

(It is not necessary to write about all fifteen poems as you may have more comments to make about the groups of poems at the top and bottom ends of your rank order)

Name: ADAM Date: 11/12/97

I thought "A Poim Tree" was a pretty good poem, I thought the last paragraph was humorous, I liked it because I thought I understood a great deal about it.

I liked the Latent Decalogue because I understand it's meaning and a lot about it. It's good the way it can shock people with what it says especially the line about the currency.

The "Despairing Lover" was good because I understood all of it, it didn't pose any difficulties of understanding it.

"What is Our Life" and "The Sick Role" were 4th & 5th respectively mainly because I could understand quite a lot about them, not because I liked them much.

The 'Tiger' and 'Jordan' were at the bottom because I hated them poems, I understood very little of what the poet was going on about.

From position 8 to 13, there are the poems I didn't think much of so I placed them in a large group at the bottom. My top 3 poems are all of different nature so I can't put them all in a group together.

I liked the Latent Decalogue and the Despairing Lover probably because I could understand them and I found little difficulty whilst reading them. A Poim Tree was humorous I thought, at the end and it flowed well because of the rhyme.

**A RANK ORDER ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION
OF THE PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS IN THE NEAB ANTHOLOGY**

Name: **ADAM** Date: 11/12/87

RANK ORDER	TITLE OF POEM	POET	APPRECIATION SCORE /10
1	Poison Tree	Blake	8
2	Latest Decalogue	Arthur Hugh Clough	7
3	Deepening Love	William Walsh	7
4	What is our life	Walter Raleigh	5
5	Sick Rose	Blake	5
6	Human Abstract	Blake	4
7	Two Corbys	Anon	4
8	Daffodils	Wordsworth	3
9	Nurs fret not	Wordsworth	3
10	London	Blake	3
11	The Lamb	Blake	3
12	I am	John Clare	3
13	The Lowest trees have tops, the oak her gall	Edward Dyer	2
14	Tiger	Blake	2
15	Jordan	George Herbert	1

Please fill this sheet in neatly - Mr Pike

A PERSONAL STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE PREFERENCES
EXPRESSED IN MY RANK ORDER

(It is not necessary to write about all fifteen poems as you may have more comments to make about the groups of poems at the top and bottom ends of your rank order)

Name: **PETER** Date: 11/12/97

Towards the bottom of my preference list are the poems 'The Sick Rose', 'The Daffodils', 'The Two Cockies' and 'The Lamb'. This is because I cannot relate to these poems very well. I prefer poems that reflect the actions of the society we live in, poems that involve me. Also I prefer poems with depth, long detailed poems unlike 'The Sick Rose'. I like poems that require work to get the deeper meaning like some of Blake's work. A poem that can be seen for what it is in just a quick glance is not as enjoyable as one with multiple deeper meanings.

I also like poems that try to be didactic. Sometimes I take notice of the lesson (such as with 'What is our life?') and sometimes I ignore it (such as in the 'Lutest Decalogus').

I don't like 'The Sick Rose' because it is too short and it is not relevant to my society. Nor do I like 'The Daffodils' because it's a

Relate - I say the poem is nothing to do with the things around me issues that affect me or people I live with.

A RANK ORDER ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION
OF THE PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS IN THE NEAB ANTHOLOGY

Name: **PETER** Date: ...11/12/97...

RANK ORDER	TITLE OF POEM	POET	APPRECIATION SCORE /10
1	What is our life?	Raleigh	9
2	Human Abstract	Blake	9
3	Lowest trees	Dyer	8
4	Poison Tree	Blake	7
5	Latest Decalogue	Clough	6.7
6	The Dispairing Lover	Walsh	5
7	I am	Clare	5
8	Nuns fret not	Wordsworth	4
9	Jordan	Herbert	4
10	London	Blake	4
11	The Tiger	Blake	2
12	The Lamb	Blake	2
13	The Two Corbies	Anon	1
14	The Daffodils	Wordsworth	1
15	The Sick Rose	William Blake	1

Please fill this sheet in neatly - Mr Pike

A PERSONAL STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE PREFERENCES
EXPRESSED IN MY RANK ORDER

(It is not necessary to write about all fifteen poems as you may have more comments to make about the groups of poems at the top and bottom ends of your rank order)

Name: ANNA Date: 11/12/97

The poems that are near the top of my list are the ones that I think are about a decent subject. I like the poems that are confusing because then there seems to be more of a point to them and plus they always seem to be deeper in the end than the ones that are simple - or at least they appear to be so.

The poems that are written in a way that is hard to decipher always seem to me that there must also be a reason behind the poem for it being written like that; or the poet is just being difficult which is also a good reason!

Although 'The Lamb' is right at the bottom of my list I do enjoy it more than some of the ones above it now as I have realised that it, too, actually has some meaning to it; before looking into it, it appeared relatively easy to understand and also very religious which I don't like; perhaps it is actually cleverer than all the others as although it appears to be easy on first read it actually isn't.

I don't really know why I like some poems and not others, with the scoring I just put down the first number that comes into my head and hope it is what I actually think because usually I neither like nor dislike a poem.

I gave all of the poems quite high marks out of ten (my top 6 all had 9/10) because I think that none of them are completely rubbish as I

ANNA

I think so, someone else might like it so therefore it must be good and I just cannot see it, or don't understand it properly.

In my Journal I gave "The Lowest Trees Have Tops, the Ant Her Call" 9/10, but for my last rank order I gave it 5/10. I do not know why I did this, it must have been because I forgot my mark I gave it before; in some moods I ~~may~~ may give it 5/10 but in others I may give it more, it depends, so I can't really explain my markings as they don't make sense.

I have no preference for any of these poems: after reading "The Lamb" I may say I don't like it because it is too religious, but then I gave "The Latest Decalogue" 9/10 which is probably even more religious.

A RANK ORDER ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION
OF THE PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS IN THE NEAB ANTHOLOGY

Name: ANNA Date: 11/12/97

RANK ORDER	TITLE OF POEM	POET	APPRECIATION SCORE /10
1	Jordan	George Herbert	9/10
2	I Am	John Clare	9/10
3	What is Our Life?	Sir Walter Raleigh	9/10
4	The Latestest Decalogue	Arthur Hugh Clough	9/10
5	London	William Blake	9/10
6	The Human Abstract	Blake	9/10
7	A Poison Tree	Blake	8/10
8	Tiger, Tiger/ The Tiger	Blake.	8/10
9	The Daffodils	Wordsworth	8/10
10	The Sick Rose	Blake	7/10
11	The Despairing Lover	William Walsh	8/10
12	Nuns Fret Not	Wordsworth	6/10
13	The Lowest Trees Have Tops	Edward Dyer	5/10
14	The Two Corbies	Anon	4/10
15	The Lamb	Blake	4/10

Please fill this sheet in neatly - Mr Pike

A PERSONAL STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE PREFERENCES
EXPRESSED IN MY RANK ORDER

(It is not necessary to write about all fifteen poems as you may have more comments to make about the groups of poems at the top and bottom ends of your rank order)

Name: **JOSIE** Date: 12.12.97

My favourite poem is 'The Latest Decalogue' by William Hugh Clough. I gave this poem 9 out of 10, I think I like it because I understand it and I agree with it. Clough is being critical of the hypocrisy of the people of his time. He was angry that people pretend they are abiding by God's rules because it is right to do so, but secretly people only do what is in their best interest. I think that life is still like this. People rarely do ~~kind~~ kind or selfless things because for any other reason than for their own image or status. I find the irony amusing and it does help to show that the hypocrisy and ~~hypocrisy~~ selfishness of society. I also like 'What Is Our Life?' because it is ~~poet~~ emphasising the pointlessness to our lives, I think he has a very valid point and I suppose I agree with his theory.

I really didn't like the poem 'Daisybuds'. I think it is boring and uninteresting. It seems to be about a man's escapism and his good memories which is nice for him but not very captivating to an audience. I didn't have much to say about this poem, and that is probably why I didn't like it. I also found 'I Am' boring and uninteresting.

**A RANK ORDER ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION
OF THE PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS IN THE NEAB ANTHOLOGY**

Name: **JOSIE** Date: 11/12/97

RANK ORDER	TITLE OF POEM	POET	APPRECIATION SCORE /10
1	The latest decalogue	Arthur Hugh Clough	9/10
2	what is our life?	Sir Walter Raleigh	8/10
3	London	Blake	8/10
4	A Poison Tree	Blake	7/10
5	The Human Abstract	Blake	7/10
6	The lowest trees have the tops the and her gall.		6/10
7	London		6/10
8	The despairing lover		5/10
9	The Tiger	Blake	5/10
10	Nuns fret not		5/10
11	The Lamb	Blake	4/10
12	The sick rose	Blake	4/10
13	The Two Cables	Anon	4/10
14	I Am		3/10
15	Reflected		3/10

Please fill this sheet in neatly - Mr Pike

A PERSONAL STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE PREFERENCES
EXPRESSED IN MY RANK ORDER

(It is not necessary to write about all fifteen poems as you may have more comments to make about the groups of poems at the top and bottom ends of your rank order)

Name: **STEVE** Date: 11/12/97

The reason that the poem 'A Poison Tree' came 1st in my rank order is that it has a direct relation to modern life. It is not just applicable to Blake's era. This is also true for 'The Latest Decalogue'. We still find ways to 'bypass' the rules that society lays down for us. Although Blake is talking about the 10 commandments it is still relevant to 20th century life. It is interesting that although these poems are both pre 20th they still ring true in the 20th. This demonstrates the skill of the poet and that the way we live hasn't change.

The poem 'Jordan' was incredibly hard to understand due to the amount of figurative language used to describe things. In fact it is unclear to me still the subject of the poem. 'Muss Foot Not' was just a plain boring poem. It wasn't in the slightest bit interesting, not that any of the poems were pure. So it came 2nd to last.

**A RANK ORDER ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION
OF THE PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS IN THE NEAB ANTHOLOGY**

Name: **STEVE** Date: 11/12/22

RANK ORDER	TITLE OF POEM	POET	APPRECIATION SCORE /10
1	A Poison Tree	William Blake	9
2	The Latest Decadence	Arthur Hugh Clough	9
3	The Human Abstract	William Blake	8
4	The Sick Rose	William Blake	8
5	What is Our Life?	Sir Walter Raleigh	7
6	The Lamb	William Blake	7
7	The Tiger	William Blake	6
8	London	William Blake	6
9	The Two Corbiers	Alfred	5
10	The Daisy-chain	William Walsh	4
11	The Lowest Trees...	Sir Edmund Spenser	3
12	The Pottodily	Will Wordsworth	3
13	I Am	John Clare	3
14	Nuns Feet Not	Will Wordsworth	2
15	Jordans	George Herbert	1

Please fill this sheet in neatly - Mr Pike

A PERSONAL STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE PREFERENCES
EXPRESSED IN MY RANK ORDER

(It is not necessary to write about all fifteen poems as you may have more comments to make about the groups of poems at the top and bottom ends of your rank order)

Name: **ROB** Date: 11/12/97.....

There are two main groups of poems. The top four poems are the poems I really liked. "The latest Decalogue" had a strong meaning and there was a lot which the reader could get out of the poem and they really knew what the poet was trying to say. Again, with "What is our life" there was also a strong meaning and a lot which the reader could draw from the poem by comparing the metaphor with a real life situation and again, the reader knew what the poet meant. This was also the case with "A Poison Tree". I also liked "London" and "The Human Abstract" because they also had a strong meaning which was conveyed really well by the poet.

However, from about position 6 downwards the my thoughts about the poems deteriorated. I didn't like either "The Two Cousins" or "The Sick Rose" because they were short and difficult to understand so I couldn't really interpret anything with these poems. The pattern is that the higher the scores for the poems the more I could draw from them and interpret the higher the score I gave them. This makes the poems loving.

**A RANK ORDER ACCORDING TO MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION
OF THE PRE-TWENTIETH CENTURY POEMS IN THE NEAB ANTHOLOGY**

Name: **ROB** Date: **11/12/97**

RANK ORDER	TITLE OF POEM	POET	APPRECIATION SCORE /10
1	THE LATEST DECALOGUE	ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH	9/10
2	WHAT IS OUR LIFE	SIR WALTER RALEIGH	9/10
3	A POISON TREE	WILLIAM BLAKE	9/10
4	LONDON -	WILLIAM BLAKE	8/10
5	THE HUMAN ABSTRACT	WILLIAM BLAKE	7/10
6	THE LOWEST TREES	SIR EDWARD DRYDEN	6/10
7	NUNS DET NOT	WORDSWORTH	5/10
8	JORDAN	HERBERT	4/10
9	THE DESPAIRING LOVER	WILLIAM WALSH	4/10
10	I AM	JOHN CLARE	4/10
11	THE TICKET -	WILLIAM BLAKE	4/10
12	THE DAFFODILS	WILLIAM WORDSWORTH	4/10
13	THE LAMB	WILLIAM BLAKE	3/10
14	THE SICK ROSE	WILLIAM BLAKE	2/10
15	THE TWA CORBLES	ANON	0/10

Please fill this sheet in neatly - Mr Pike

MAY 1998 END OF COURSE QUESTIONNAIRE.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Y9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Adam	I have enjoyed poetry more because I have been able to understand more about them and the ideas used.
Peter	The poetry this year has been more enjoyable than the last two years. I have become a lot more positive towards poetry.
Anna	I feel more positive about poetry - least I like the poems we have studied.
Josie	I definitely feel more positive about poetry now.
Steve	Poetry is merely half a song. There is no point it takes a great deal of effort to bring myself to read the stuff.
Rob	Poetry is alright, but I prefer novels and plays more.

Pupils' Questionnaire Responses about Teaching and Learning Strategies.

Q5: The teaching and learning strategy with What Is Our Life? and The Latest Decalogue has been to respond personally first. We didn't start by learning about the historical period or the life of the author, we did this later. The movement was from the interpretation of the text to the author's life. To what extent do you feel this was the right teaching and learning strategy?

Adam	It was a good strategy because I feel we have needed to be introduced and familiarised with the author's poem.
Peter	It worked well, however, if we had done Personal Response -> Historical Background -> Developed Personal Response then it would have been better.
Anna	I thought it was good, although it is only after learning about Raleigh's turbulent life that I have realised that 'what Is Our Life?' is a depressing poem rather than just a reflective one.
Josie	This was an ok way to do it. I don't really mind either way.
Steve	The historical and background teaching should be done before introducing the poem to the student. This saves wasting time with a student misinterpreting a poem and then having to be corrected.
Rob	It was ok but if you went through history and stuff after the first response and then found 2nd response it would have been better.

ROB'S RESPONSES IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Year 9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Autumn Y10	It depends what poems we are studying or, what the poetry is about. Since Y9 my feeling towards poetry has not really changed because the poetry hasn't really got any better.
Summer Y10	I still do not really like poetry, reading more poetry has made me become slightly more positive towards it.
Autumn Y11	It depends on the actual poet or poem studied. The standard of poetry has varied throughout Year 10 and Year 11. Since year 9 my attitude has been more positive as more poetry has been studied.
Summer Y11	Poetry is alright but I prefer plays and prose more.

JOSIE'S RESPONSES IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Year 9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Autumn Y10	I suppose that I know how to study what poems mean now. Last year if I had a poem put in front of me and was told to write about it I wouldn't have known where to start but I do now.
Summer Y10	I definately find it a lot easier to interpret poems now I know that I have really improved in that sense and if I can understand a poem I am likely to have more ideas and views about that poem. Therefore my attitude is more positive now.
Autumn Y11	I have quite negative attitude to poetry. I don't actually enjoy reading or analysing it, it's just something we're made to do. I think my attitude is slightly more positive now as I can understand it more.
Summer Y11	I definately feel more positive about poetry now. I understand it but I still don't think I'd read a poem for enjoyment unless I had to.

PETER'S RESPONSES IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Year 9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Autumn Y10	My attitude towards poetry has stayed the same since Y9. I still hate it.
Summer Y10	Poetry is probably my least favourite part of English. I much prefer novels or creative writing however some poems I think are quite good. My attitude towards poetry has slightly improved since Y9 as we have been given more freedom.
Autumn Y11	I don't like most poetry. This has changed since Y9 when I didn't like any poetry.
Summer Y11	The poetry this year has been more enjoyable than the last two years. I have become a lot more positive towards poetry.

ANNA'S RESPONSES IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Year 9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Autumn Y10	I don't think my attitude has changed at all, since Y9. The poems that we have to read in English are completely different from any that I had read really before Y9. I don't hate poetry, but I don't love it.
Summer Y10	Since Y9 I've read a lot more poems and a lot of different sorts of poems so as a whole my attitude towards poems has changed for the better, I think at the moment anyway.
Autumn Y11	I can't remember how I felt about poetry in Y9, but I would think it is pretty much the same although now I just have a better understanding and knowledge of poetry.
Summer Y11	I feel more positive about poetry - least I like the poems we have studied.

ADAM'S RESPONSES IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Year 9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Autumn Y10	My attitude towards poetry has not changed since Year 9, I don't really find it interesting of what I have heard so far.
Summer Y10	(ABSENT - ON HOLIDAY)
Autumn Y11	I suppose I have enjoyed poetry more than the last couple of years but I still don't like it though. I think this is because the poems this year have been better like Gutter Press etc.
Summer Y11	I have enjoyed poetry more because I have been able to understand more about them and the ideas used.

STEVE'S RESPONSES IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q2: How would you describe your attitude to poetry as a genre? Has your attitude to poetry changed since Year 9? (E.g. do you feel more positive, less positive or the same about poetry?)

Autumn Y10	My feelings have changed slightly because I used to see no point in poetry, but I can now see its few higher points.
Summer Y10	I still feel that poetry is pointless. It seems no purpose and is usually quite boring.
Autumn Y11	I still don't like poetry. it is a pointless 'genre' and has no real function in life. Mostly boring; no, all boring.
Summer Y11	Poetry is merely half a song; there is no point it takes a great deal of effort to bring myself to read the stuff.

ATTITUDES TO POETRY IN 4 QUESTIONNAIRES.

Q: On a scale of 1 - 10 how much have you enjoyed poetry to date?

(1=loathed, 5=okay, 10=enjoyed very much).

Please give your reason for your answer.

	Autumn Y10 Q3, Q4	Summer Y10 Q3, Q4	Autumn Y11 Q4, Q5	Summer Y11 Q3, Q4
Adam	4 - I haven't detested poetry but I don't like it particularly much	ABSENT ON HOLIDAY	5 - I think that I have started to enjoy it more at the end of the year because of our preparation to our mocks because we read poems like Gutterpress etc which were a change and were better than our previous poems we were reading	5 - Because I have been able to understand more about the poems and get to grips with them.
Peter	2 - I prefer plays and prose because it give you a story line and characters. Poetry does not that why I don't like it.	3 - The poems we have studied are not very good we need some more good ones i.e. 20th century.	6 - The score has improved on last year because we have done more interesting poetry. Poetry that is more challenging.	6 - see Autumn Y11 - The poetry this year has been more enjoyable than the last two years. I have become a lot more positive towards poetry.
Anna	6 - I prefer it to doing Shakespeare plays but I might enjoy a different type of play more than poetry. I found the poetry work easier than the prose work since Y10 because I don't enjoy writing essays.	7 - I don't really have a 'reason' more of what I feel at the time and it is very likely to change.	7 - I do not hate reading poetry but if I was not forced to I probably wouldn't read any out of choice.	9 - Because it is interesting to see others points of view written down in an artistic way that is usually clever too.
Josie	5 - I don't really enjoy reading poetry. I like reading books and plays because you can get a really entertaining story but to me poetry is just something I've been made to study.	6 - I've enjoyed some of the poems but I've found others totally boring.	4 - It doesn't appeal to me. I much prefer reading a book.	6 - I do understand poetry more but I don't get any pleasure from reading it.
Steve	4 - I find poetry quite boring. I personally feel that it is pointless.	2 - see Q2. I still feel poetry is pointless. It serves no purpose and is usually quite boring.	2 - Poetry is very boring and has no real benefit to the education of a student.	2 - see Q2. Poetry is merely half a song. there is no point. it takes a great deal of effort to bring myself to read the stuff.
Rob	5 - Obviously I didn't enjoy the poetry a lot but it wasn't awful. Some were alright but others were really awful and hard to understand.	5 - The poetry we have studied has not been as interesting as it could have been.	5 - Some poetry has been of quite a high standard and some has been really rubbish. Therefore in general poetry studied has been quite average.	6 - Some poetry, mainly pre 20th century was quite good but other poetry was really boring and rubbish and I didn't enjoy it.

REVISION WORKSHEET 13/05/1998.

Readers Reading Themselves.

Q4: Professor Louise Rosenblatt stated:

‘The attempt to work out the author’s system of values and assumptions about man and society should enable the student to discover the unspoken assumptions behind his own judgement’.

How have specific poems in section ‘The Way We Live’ helped you learn or think about your own assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, judgements etc? Have any of these poems influenced you in any way? (A poem might have prompted you to reflect on your own life, values, actions, society etc). If a poem has influenced you describe how.

Adam	No poems have made me try to do anything about my life but ‘Daily London Recipe’ has made me think about how we do go through routine after routine.
Peter	‘What is Our Life?’ is a poem that I read and took a constructive meaning from it. It motivated me to not waste my life, seizing opportunities. ‘The Latest Decalogue’ made me feel a little guilty, then I woke up and realized immorality makes the world go round.
Anna	‘What is Our Life?’ makes me reflect about where we all come from and think about philosophical questions like that. It is easier sometimes to think ‘Why Bother?’ ‘The Latest Decalogue’ has made me think about more how some people are able to believe very strongly about one thing i.e. Christianity. It seems odd to me that one person was so overwhelmed by the behaviour of his compatriots that he wrote a stereotypical poem to show his feelings; he must have been thinking those thoughts about how hypocritical people can be for a long time.
Josie	The poem ‘Where Is It Written?’ by Judith Viorst made me realise that I’ve always assumed that I won’t end up a housewife, trapped by the housework but I’ve realized it’s difficult to avoid by woman. If a woman has children the chances are she’ll want to stay at home with them. I was influenced by the poem ‘Daily London Recipe’ to make sure that, whatever I end up doing, I’ll be happy, not trapped or de-humanised.
Steve	The Latest Decalogue made me decide to give up all my worldly possessions and become a monk.
Rob	None of the poems have really influenced me.

Reading Poetry Voluntarily.

Q6: Are you more or less likely to read some poetry during the rest of your life out of choice? (If your answer is different to the one you would have given at the start of your GCSE course, please explain why this is.)

Q7: To what extent do you feel you are likely to read some pre-twentieth century poetry during the rest of your life out of choice?

Adam	Q6	I am not very likely to read poetry in later life because I wouldn't do it out of choice, it's not the sort of thing I read anyway.
	Q7	as in Q6.
Peter	Q6	I have enjoyed poetry a lot more this year, don't get any ideas though, I won't read <u>anything</u> out of choice, give me a good film anyway.
	Q7	Pre-Twentieth! Yow having a laugh! I would rather stand on a high desolate mountain in a thunder storm wearing a copper suit yelling all gods are bastards!
Anna	Q6	I would like to study more but as my future courses will not go into it and I will be very busy, there will not be time to bother.
	Q7	More likely than reading 20th century ones. I prefer them.
Josie	Q6	At the beginning of the course I'd see reading poetry as punishment. Now if I was really, really bored, I might be compelled to pick up a poetry book.
	Q7	Again I might read some if I was bored.
Steve	Q6	I wouldn't then and I still wouldn't.
	Q7	0%
Rob	Q6	Less likely but I wouldn't have been likely to read any anyway.
	Q7	None whatsoever.

All six readers' responses suggested they would not read poetry after leaving school. However, the time at which the questionnaire was administered is significant. Pupils were 'cramming' for exams and had recently written six practice essays on poetry. Upon reflection, this was not a good time to ask this question. Anna and Peter are the most positive, admitting that they enjoyed some of the poetry studied at school. It is

also of interest that Anna expressed a preference for pre-twentieth century poetry as Rob did (see 'Attitudes to Poetry in 4 Questionnaires' - Rob Q3 and Q4 Summer Y11). These results are disappointing but reality may not be quite so bleak as pupils were answering questions at a time of stress before facing GCSE examinations. It would be interesting to check who of the six became readers of poetry in adulthood. It can be surmised that views expressed here may not be congruent with actual outcomes.

Pupils' Perceptions of their Ability.

Q9: How would you describe your ability to read and respond to poetry now? If it has changed during the course please state.

Adam	I think my ability to read and respond to poetry now has increased with my learning of satire and parody etc, I can identify them.
Peter	My skills at poetry interpretation have improved over the years mainly due to excessive amounts of teaching, tediously long homeworks and numerous late nights spent reading the work of deranged poets.
Anna	I reckon my ability has improved as I have learnt a lot more about literary features and rhyme schemes and what things mean.
Josie	My ability has improved obviously, if it hadn't you wouldn't be saying I could get an A*.
Steve	Bad.
Rob	Hasn't really changed.

APPENDIX F

IDENTITY DATA

PERSONAL WRITING

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSEWORK - YEAR 10

SET: 9th June 1997

DUE: 14th July 1997

LENGTH: 2,000 Words

Homework time allocated for assignment: 9/6, 13/6, 16/6, 20/6, 23/6, 27/6.

Assignments should be neatly and legibly HANDWRITTEN. All drafts and work in progress should be brought to each lesson. Occasional lessons may be devoted to this assignment but most of the writing will be done at home as class time will be dedicated to:

- i) teaching for this assignment
- ii) reading good examples of this type of reflective writing
- iii) GCSE oral tasks and assessment
- iv) completing a study of prescribed Blake poems with discussion in pairs

**PROMISE: YOUR WORK WILL NOT BE READ IN FRONT OF THE CLASS.
YOU CAN BE HONEST.**

***THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU OPEN UP IS THE DEGREE OF REFLECTIVITY
AND DEPTH YOUR WRITING WILL DISPLAY***

Some ideas for your reflective writing:

Try narrative writing (anecdotes) as well as descriptive writing (observation). Be informative and communicate details. If it would help, ask friends how they see you; get an adult opinion outside of your family ie your tutor. How does your self-image match the image other people have of you?

1. Activities, hobbies, teams, sports, leisure interests, favourite TV programmes, friends.
2. Parents and siblings (descriptive/narrative/informative) and your relationships with them.
3. Personality - the real you, deep down. Your strengths your weaknesses, hopes, dreams, fears etc.
4. Your future - choice of A Levels, career aspirations, lifestyle aspirations.
5. Your literary history - what you have read and how you have responded. This can be individually or as a class in school. Are you a reader? What do you enjoy about certain texts?
6. Your values beliefs/opinions about the big issues in life or any issues you feel strongly about. (God, religion, politics, abortion, euthanasia, war/pacifism, nuclear weapons, poverty, homelessness, global warming, education, censorship, life after death, relationships, sexuality, images, advertising, music, theatre, literature, art, science, the universe, space, UFO's, male/female roles/equality, sexism, racism, the lottery etc).
7. Your most embarrassing/moving/enjoyable moment.
8. Your worst experience/trauma.
9. What you like/admire/detest most in other people? Qualities that are important to you.
10. What/who do you wish you were like and why? Qualities, faculties, personality traits - you wish
you had more of and why this would be a good thing.
11. You have 3 wishes that will come true. What would you wish for and why?
12. Do not forget to describe your attitudes/moods/character strengths/flaws.
13. Appearance - paint a picture, be descriptive. Remember that although a person may be well known to you, you have to paint a picture in words to communicate.

**TRY TO DEVELOP YOUR OWN VOICE WHEN YOU ARE WRITING SO
THE STYLE OF YOUR PROSE REFLECTS WHO YOU ARE.**

Develop your own structure and do not be limited by my suggestions

⑧ LANE ✓ ADAM

Short Story Coursework

The snow swept down through the derelict buildings on the East side of Manchester covering everything with a fine white coat. The gusts of wind blew through the narrow alley ways and streets causing small whirlwinds to pull up the mixture of snow and litter which lay scattered around the roads and deposit them only metres away.

The ice cold wind bit at the faces of two boys on their way to Old Trafford to see Manchester United take on Tottenham Hotspur in the fifth round of the F.A. cup. They were both wearing the large Manchester United supporters winter coats which they had both bought with their money at Christmas time together.

"Bloody hell it's cold," said Ian.

"No shit man, my fingers are freezing," replied Steve. "I knew I should have brought my damn gloves."

"I thought these coats were meant to keep you warm through almost anything," said Ian angrily, obviously annoyed at the money he had wasted on the coat. "I'm freezing me bollocks off at the moment, chink."

They continued to trudge up to the

✓ football ground, the snow had lightened up significantly, only a few solo flakes plummeted to earth adding to the recent layer of snow which had just been falling.

✓ Ian and Steve had both lived in the south of England for fifteen years until both of their families decided to move to Manchester because the boys' fathers had joined a business within a partnership which made and sold spare car parts, they had run it successfully for the three years they had been living in Manchester. Ian and Steve had been best friends for all of their eighteen years of living, they would go around each others' houses nearly every day and just walk in as if it were their own, they would do everything together. They have had their fall outs but one of them would always ring up the other and ask if he'd come around and the incident would be forgotten.

They were nearing the old Trafford gates, they headed for the main stand entrance where their season ticket seats were. There was a long queue at the entrance of about twenty people, all moving around on the spot trying to keep themselves warm. It wasn't for quarter of an hour later that they finally got their tickets checked and were allowed to proceed into the

✓

②

ground and to their seats, they were right behind one of the goals.
 "Oh for fuck's sake!" yelled Ian at the top of his voice.

"Shut up!" Steve snapped. "You don't want us to get chucked out do ya."

"Some bloody bird has done a huge shit on my seat, look at it, it's the size of one of my rodding fists, I ain't sitting on that."

Steve looked down at Ian's seat and suddenly gave a big whoop of laughter as Ian's face turned a beetroot colour, full of rage.

"Hold on man," giggled Steve, still trying to control his laughter. "I'll be back in a minute."

It wasn't till half an hour later that Steve returned with two hamburgers in one hand and a hot dog in the other.

"Here ya go mate," said Steve offering Ian the hot dog and a couple of paper towels. "You can wipe that crap off with these."

"Cheers mate," replied Ian, appreciating Steve's troubles.

Ian had just finished wiping the rest of the birds mess off his seat as the two teams came out onto the pitch.

✓

③

The first half got under way with an explosive start by Manchester United, Sherringham hit the post twice and Andy Cole missed a one on one with the Tottenham goalkeeper, the first half was over very quickly but the score still remained nil all. The second half started in similar fashion to the first but the play died down tremendously after the first twenty minutes with no shots on goal for either team. The crowd showed their annoyance at the sluggish way the game was being played with long periods of time where they whistled and jeered at the players.

It wasn't till injury time that a spark of life was injected into the Tottenham side, a large proportion of people in Ian and Steve's stand had started to filter out of the exits and they were not able to observe the next thirty seconds on the pitch. A neat through ball by David Ginola sent Klinsmann racing clear of the Manchester United defence, a neat chip over ~~David~~ Schmeichel put the

Tottenham fans in total hysterics as the ball bounced over the line and into the back of the net. The minority of Tottenham fans were cheering wildly, but the United fans fell deathly silent, staring in disbelief as Klinsmann slid across the turf on his stomach, in

celebration. Steve and Ian both stared at the ball in the net, in total shock, as if what had just happened was all just a bad dream, staring, as if it were not true, ~~like~~ as if it couldn't have happened, like a fingerprint in a script, how it could be made right.

After a minute of staring in total bewilderment, Ian erupted in a furious rage yelling as loud as he could. "You fucking fascist bastard, you're a heap of shit, you were a fucking mile offside you fucking Nazi prick, come up ere and I'll sort ya out, come on!"

"Shut up Ian," said Steve, trying to calm Ian down but he himself was still staring at the ball in disbelief. "Let's go now."

Outside the ground, Ian was still bellowing obscenities at the buses full of Tottenham supporters, they replied by sticking their fingers up, mocking him. Steve dragged him away as the police started arresting a few thugs who were hurling stones at the buses windows right next to him.

"Come on Ian, let's just get home now, yeah. There's nothing we can do about it now, is there!" said Steve.

Ian reluctantly agreed, still fuming with rage, he followed Steve through the cut which led to the station.

As they approached another cut just next to the station, Ian grabbed Steve by the shoulder and pointed him in the direction of something he had seen out of the corner of his eye.

"Hey, Steve, look at that, a bloody Tottenham supporter, all on his own."

Before Steve could get any words out of his mouth, Ian had bounded off towards the Tottenham fan.

The Tottenham fan wasn't very large, he was about five foot six inches and wore a large pair of glasses which made him look rather clever. Ian approached the man and deduced that he was around his mid thirties. The man looked up at Ian, seeing his Manchester United top on he assumed he had been to see the match.

"Exciting match wasn't it."

"You talking the piss?" Ian snapped. "I don't think you're funny."

The Tottenham feared that Ian was looking for trouble and tried to calm things down.

"Hey come on, it's only a game mate."

Just then Steve came flying around the corner and the man glanced away from Ian to look at Steve, just as he did so Ian lunged forward with his fist and caught the man with frightening power on the side of his head. He went reeling back with the force and fell backward and his head hit the

edge of the curb with a mighty crack.

"What the hell did ya do that for?" Steve said. "You've probably killed him."

"Don't give a shit, I could handle a death to my name, makes me sound pretty 'ard, don't it."

"I'm getting the hell outta here" said Steve already running down the road, and with that they both fled back to their homes and left the man lying by the side of the road.

Ian awoke on the Thursday morning to the smell of bacon & eggs which his mum had left him before she went to work. Ian plodded down the stairs and into the kitchen where his dad was watching the news just before he left for work.

"I an have you seen this?" his Dad pointed to the television. Ian's heart started to pound uncontrollably, the blood thumped around his head, the adrenaline started to rush.

"Ian, know anything?" his Dad said again.

"Um, err, um, what, no nothing, err no." he mumbled trying to give a straight answer.

His Dad gave him a suspicious look and walked out of the door. Ian slunk down in the corner of the kitchen and buried his head in his knees and began to sob loudly. A

After a while, he stood up, took his belt made of leather from his waist and walked upstairs and into his room still

distraught and robbing. ✓

Later in the morning, Steve came around, he walked in the door without knocking, he was very worried.

"I am," he shouted. "Have you seen the news this morning? You know that bloke you hit last night yeah." He started to walk up the stairs and to Ian's room.

"You bloody killed him man, he cracked his head on the..." He stopped in mid sentence and stared before him, at Ian's lifeless body hung from the light ~~fit~~ fitting.

✓ CANS. (B)

Question
number

ADAM

MR.

16 Hale Ave

Leave
blank

⑥

Hants

10th June 1998 Tuesday

Dear Wayne

How is life in the army? You've only been away for a couple of months and I am missing you badly already.

Life at school has been more or less the same since you left but everyone misses your cheeky comments to Mr Wilford. Last Saturday, I organised a group of us to have another fight in the woods with our airguns, it was the best turnout yet. We had a five a side game for a couple of hours until "Ant" shot "Goldie" in the ear with the repeater air rifle from about ten metres, it was the funniest thing I had ever seen. Goldie was writhing in agony on the floor whilst we were all laughing at him. He'll probably have a scar for life now.

Personal
Voice

Remember Laura Hounsome, well she finally asked me out and we've been together for a five weeks now. I never thought I'd actually say this but

GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET

Examining body	NEAB	Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate name		Candidate number	3	0	6	4	
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number	1				

Question
numberLeave
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I think I like her personality even more than her looks. ✓

The rugby team is running you badly as well, we won against Andover 65 points to 7 in the league, Dave was very impressed, we have some important matches coming up, we're playing Trojans in the Hampshire cup which will be a real hard game and we're also playing a touring team which I think are called Carvy or Carby Island from London, somewhere. Deano from Twynham has replaced you on the right wing, I still prefer you there though, he's real poor at catching the ball. ✓

My plan to go to the world cup has now ended because I'd never have got a tickets with such demand for them at the moment, I have decided to either buy Wade's soccer scanner off him or put my money towards a half decent car for when I'm seventeen.

Wade and I were finally asked for some I.D. in the "Rydal" and we've now been kicked out. I was thinking of using my brother's 'prove-it' card seeing as I look a lot like, I hope it'll work.

Q. detail

AAS

I hope that the army isn't too strenuous
for you, I see somebody has taken the
nickle about your ginger hair by now.

You must write to me soon Wayne and tell
me about what's been going on with
yourself lately.

Yours sincerely

ADAM

Reasonably well organized into parts: but (34)
there's such contr. splicing, so punctuation
doesn't clarify meaning as much as it should.
Some logical sequencing of ideas & there's
quite a lively personal voice. Clear identification
with people & audience.

Question
NumberLeave
blank

	Laura Brown	ADAM	1
	25 Hardy Close	16 Hale Avenue	
	Hampshire	Hampshire	
		January 3rd 1998	
	Dear Laura		
	I received your letter last week and it really made me worry about you, I didn't actually realise things were that bad between you and Phil. I knew things weren't that ~~bad~~ good but to hear that he beats you enraged me. I have been a good friend of yours for many years now and you know you can trust me, but I believe your decision to just leave home with no idea of where you are going or what <u>your</u> going to do is foolish. I understand you wanting to leave but you must have a good idea of what to do. Try not to take this badly Laura, but you don't have any qualifications to fall back onto ~~and~~ if your money was to run out and I fear that you will have to end up on the streets. I cannot		

Question
numberLeave
blank

it uses simple words to appeal to everyone.

Orwell's article uses a lot of sophisticated words the average person would not understand such as "Dilemma" and "vagabond." I think he's trying to appeal to upper-class people because they are the ones most likely to have bad attitudes towards tramps.

I think that the Guardian article is very effective at to show the scale of the matter with many figures to back it up and what needs help and what is being done to help the tramps. It is very informative, unlike Orwell's article which is trying to destroy the idea of tramps being bad people by making people realize they are still human beings. The words which are most very effective in my opinion is where Orwell said it is no fairer to think that it serves the tramps right / has to cripples or invalids.

15

15

34

PETER

Personal Writing
GLSE English Language Coursework

We (or I) live in an age when much is known, much, much more than 2 or 3 decades ago but as we know more more unknowns appear. From discovering something new we uncover a new enigma, a thousand new encrypted codes or locked doors. I'm talking about space exploration the search for beings not from this earth, from another terra extra terrestrial. With so much to explore I, nor man kind in its current state of evolution will ever see the day when a scientist stands up and says: "Well, its 4.30 pm and I want to be home by 5 pm so I'll just scan a couple more planets, oh gosh this is the last one I'll be home by 4.45 pm... Err oh dear I'm unemployed". My knowledge of astro-physics is very limited but I do know new planets are being born all the time with the potential to spawn life.

I'm not really a decisive person on some matters, b on the theory of the existance other beings in this universe I have definite views. Somewhere out on some planets there are in my opinion other forms of life what I don't know is how advanced they are, are they searching for us? or are they simply minute amoebas cloaking around some deep

see hydro-thermic vent (which is where
 top body of NASA seen to think life
 on earth originated). One thing I'm
 quite sure about is that no human-
 being has seen or heard/been abducted
 by / zapped by etc on E.T. - All
 of those Americans claim to have been
 abducted are either mistaken or lying.
 All you have to do is fall asleep under
 a lamp and get a bit delusional at
 night! You tell the local newspaper
 National Press gets hold of it and
 within 8 weeks you've got your own
 slot on channel 4 and you get to
 be a guest presenter on The Big
 Breakfast for a fortnight.
 I may be well out of my league
 when I say that I think some scientists
 are stupid because they say: the surface
 temperature of this planet is -200°C
 so nothing can live there. Humans and
 all other known creatures are carbon
 based so we could not live there but
 what about other forms of life such as
 silicon based life forms there blood could
 unpurise at -50°C . They could look
 at earth and say 'No way no forms
 of life can live there.' If we're searching
 a universe billions of light years across then
 why are we looking for more humans?
 Enough of my opinions on other life
 why don't we look more at our life
 doesn't someone think that we should sort

out or world before we going to looking for another. If we were assessed by an alien they would see all our power as stupidity for example having over half a million nuclear missiles when it would take only about 5000 of them to kill every single living thing on the planet. Our planet would be so easily overcome by just a simple E.T because all our fears.

America fears Russia, Russia fears America and the rest of the world is terrified of the fact that the two fear each other.

It would take not much more than a mistake to finish our world one blow from America or Russia and the whole world will be caught in the crossfire. Despite my views on Nuclear warfare @ I am not a pacifist. I want to join the RAF when I'm out of college, I just believe in the protection of those who don't want to get involved.

Nuclear weapons are designed to kill civilians nothing more, well of course they will take out their target & perhaps the White House or the Kremlin but they will also kill everything for 100 miles around. For the next couple centuries or until we reach a utopia it will always be necessary to kill people. Complete pacifists don't believe in any death which is unnatural but a world like where most people practiced that would never ever work as there will always be someone who takes advantage of it and will kill people in pursuit

of power so that person who would have
 to be killed for the sake of humanity
 from the universe to earth to me
 each time getting smaller but even the
 universe involves me. Anyway, sometimes
 I feel as if I should sit down and
 write about my self take an over view.
 I enjoy writing and it would be a lesson
 in self education but I just couldn't be
 bothered most of the time. Well, this
 piece of coursework has got me doing
 it (at last). Perhaps looking at myself will
 change me, but I doubt it. I'm a
 very stuck in my ways type of person
 when it comes to lot of things. One
 of the things that I'm stuck with and
 want to get rid of is my laziness.
 my family think I'm lazy my friends think
 I'm lazy I know I'm lazy. I want to
 kick it but I can't why? Because I'm too
 lazy. It sounds stupid, but it's not,
 since I can only make it a positive
 associative attempt at something when I'm
 really really motivated I will never stop being
 lazy. There are other things that do or am
 that I wish I didn't or wasn't well really
 its a combination of two things: one is
 my sharp tongue and all too cruel wit. The
 other is my lack of thought of for the
 consequences of my actions. This is a
 big problem when it comes to school
 an teachers many a time have I realised

that 'Laugh and the class laughs with you
But you stay in detention'

I'm also the most stubborn person I know
I stick to my guns even when I know
I'm wrong. This is sometimes a quality as
it counter acts "my laziness, if
somebody says: oh, you'll never do it" I will
even if it kills me I'll do it even just
to prove them wrong.

I had a teacher once, back in Essex
and one day he asked us to write
down on the a bit of paper what we
wanted to do in life. I wrote that
I wanted to be a pilot, he was a
bully I swear he only read mine and
he laughed and said I'd never do it. I
was too thick, too short and too lazy.
After that I was motivated to fly and
I still want to be a pilot. That teacher
also regretted saying that, he regretted
it until I left to come to New Milton

He regretted saying it because as soon
as he did say it a hundred things that
were wrong about him just popped into
my head and rolled off of my tongue.
Ever since I've not let anyone push me
around (because they'll pay).

Sometimes I watch the news about all
the death and destruction in the world
and I feel sad for those people, but
I suppose that's normal everybody feels
sorry for all the starving children

in the world. But sometimes I feel something
 closer to home than that. I look at
 my life and realise how good it
 really is and what a care and trouble
 free life I've had. I know loads of
 people who have had to go through
 their parents getting divorced etc I think
 I have never had to go through any
 of that. My parents are still married and
 no one close to me has ever died.
 I have never been upset by someone
 dying (apart from one person). My three
 of my grandparents died but I only knew
 1 of them and I was only 6 when
 she died. I feel a kind of guilt I think
 that there is only a certain amount of
 grief in the world and I have not
 had my fair share which means other
 people carry my burdens.
 The only things I have ever been
 really moved by were the deaths of
 a good friend of mine in year eight. It
 wasn't really the fact that he died (he knew
 he was dying from the day he was born)
 it was the injustice that he had so much
 forward and so little back. The other thing
 was the death of a relative he too died
 too early.
 When ever I am faced with death, not
 me personally, but I just think about it
 I start to think how long I will
 live and how I'll die. how I want
 to go. The fact of the matter is

that I don't but that's because I have done so little, achieved so few of my goals. Someone once said that: "It is not a tragedy to die doing what you love." If this is true then I will die in the sky but so few of us choose so little of what we do. Choice for some is a luxury. ~~One man's~~ philosophy of life is this was I heard heard.

PETER 11RI

③ *Disappointing to confirm*
Reality Checks

Mr. Pike Set2

He fumbles. Finds what he is looking for and begins to talk.

"Well it all began..."

His reminisces always started like this. Like a fairy tale, however not because it was going to be a story of love, heroics and maidens, it was because fairy tales are badly written, boring and conformed to some un-written law that says that they must be badly written, boring and must contain a sufficient quotient of maidens heroics and love. This start seemed to sum him up completely, dull and conformed, out of the metropolis' mould an ideal citizen, works but rarely questions.

He sighed and repeated.

"Well it all began when I woke this morning." Again his start could be read like a book. It was the kind of start that you knew was only going to be a minute part of the tale. You knew that he was going to go on about his day like it was the whole of his life.

He questioned himself for a moment.

"Yes. Well, umm, yes. That was it, it was this morning." One day blended so well in with the next and also the previous that it was hard to distinguish one 9 to 5 from another. But that morning was different, it did stand out. Only for one reason, the reason was that it was his birthday. He had completely forgotten, and the whole 24 hours would have been lost if it were not for his kitchen maid. The maid was a gift from parents. It was getting on a bit now, nearly ten years old, the circuits and pneumatics were on the blink. They always had had problems with that model.

The maid put out a little candle with his breakfast. This, although being a good well programmed gesture set off the fire alarms and sent the cleaning maid into a state of malfunction.

"I have this little dream that one day my maid might actually say something, something with a little emotion." He continued, but was rudely interrupted.

"Hmm, yes, I understand" Came the interruption. It seemed so timed.

The interruption cut him off, stopped the flow of emotion from his lips. He sat staring at his knees, wallowing in self pity, half wanting to get out of his pitiful situation and half liking the way he could just sit there and do nothing. He could have got up, walked out of that room, righted wrongs, upheld justice, preached peace love and freedom and become a idol and legend for millions of people in generations who's grandfathers had not yet even been born. But the: sit there and do nothing half of the decision won. So he sat there. And did nothing.

"Well?" Came the voice from his hired trouble dissolver. The word, brought on be the sensing of silence, was long and drawn out. Inquisitive. Not like an inquiring friend, genuinely concerned with your welfare. It was as though the question was just to dilute and attenuate the conversation. For some other selfish desire.

He pondered for a second on whether or not he should complain about the interruption. He decided not to, it would have fallen on deaf ears anyway.

"Well, its like this". He began again. "I feel cut off. Like one person in a sea of integrated circuits and pneumatics." His words were well rehearsed. He had thought about saying them so many times before, but never did. Could be that he dare not, but it wasn't. Nobody was going to persecute him for his thoughts. Like in some old film where the protagonist goes down a hero, a martyr to his people for speaking out about injustice. The world had done with heroes. The last of them died out in the twenty-four frames per second of the cinema. And even that had come long after the populous had realised that films aren't true. He had never spoken before because he really never could be bothered, he never had the occasion or audience to do so.

Things changed now, someone was listening to him. A world away from them just hearing him. Something had finally picked him out of the drone that is just a muffled composure of a million voices.

"I go into work like I usually do, conversation with the cab driver was..." A marked pause came and went "... Well, wasn't. I do miss those chats we used to have. Till he was replaced with 'something more efficient' so they say" Mild anger brewed, stewed then cooled, after all, anger causes stress. And stress causes cancer. Anyway, anger is 'non productive'. So they say.

Lessons like that had been taught to him since childhood. Innocently he first thought. In his interest, yes, that must be right.

"After the cab ride the walk to the office. Well actually its just a few steps" He corrected himself and added: "after all exercise is non-productive"

"Yes, ha, very good" The psychologist added, in praise.

"I go into my office, work and not much else. My secretary comes in occasionally, she, well 'it' relays messages and goes. Not much chat there either. I do the same job, the same work, the same things every day. It used to feel like I was breaking up rocks with a tooth pick. Now I am confronted with boulders, and armed with a cotton bud." The recital of his daily monotonous prescriptions continued for a few minutes. He droned drunkenly on, punctuation seemingly escaping his lips.

After the minutes had passed he looked up to see a but a blank face. Realising he had just wasted the last few minutes in his life he began to wonder. It was the kind of wonder he used to sense many other people having at fortieth birthday parties.

A moment transformed into a second, into a minute. A minute in which: 'what' and 'why' figured predominantly, them being ingredients in such rhetorical questions as 'What's the point?' and 'Why am I here?'. Questions that had been answered in the twentieth century. Not accurately by today's opinions but correctly at the time. An answer, he thought, is always correct, as long as at least one person perceives it to be right or can conceive the possibility of it's correctness. Today, of course, he thought again, the answers are always what is obvious. He briefly transcended back in time to looking with pitying mirth upon the inhabitants of the centuries that passed by before someone connected the Darwin theories with that often misjudged pondering 'why are we all here?' The ancient scientist come heretic explained things perfectly well.

The minutes had been wasted for the simple reason that his fellow hired shoulder to cry on did not understand. He had never been in his shoes, never felt his problems. The best person to talk to about problems was someone who'd been there before. This person who knew what he knew, had been through what he had been through, had lived like he had, worked like he had, would have been an inspiration. A person who may have helped

him to overcome his problems, made him once again the driver, not just a passenger in the cheap seats upon the public transport journey of life. But the person before him on the appointment list got him. He was left with what now sat before him, still poised, ready to offer another cold note of sympathy.

The thoughts of the public transport life theorem crossed his mind. How the proportion of drivers to passengers never seemed to change, people from the cheap seats seemed to occasionally jump up and drive, eclipsing the current driver to the back seat, the one covered in chewing gum and crushed crisps. The circulation continues.

"So what exactly do you do?" The sudden voice brought him back from his thoughts. It was posed innocently, but was consciously analysed and ripped to shreds in seconds by the subject of the question. The question, he now realised, was so depressing, perhaps he just twisted it to be so but didn't give that possibility a second chance. The inquisition implied that his job his common, lowly nine to five was his purpose in life. He worked, that was what he did, all he did. He felt that he was being singled out by something that was incapable of discrimination. The fact that his aimless job was being referred to as his goal in life. His being was uni-purposeful, to do a job that he hadn't even chosen.

Never before had thoughts ever taken the scenic route around his head. Never had they picked up a hundred possibilities, possibilities that were not dictated to him. He had always dotted every 'i' and crossed every 't' and never asked really why. Now he let himself loose. He was angry, no one in the room could sense it but he was incensed. He hated his society, he hated the efficiency of every thing else, how his co-workers, his cab driver, his secretary were replaced with something that could be powered for weeks on a battery costing less than five pounds sixty four pence. He'd heard it all before.

His finger pointed at his psychiatrist, making sure he was listening and acknowledging him. He was about to explain his life. About to explain that: 'what he did' was a multitude of things besides work.

"I... I..., well I, umm" He started hastily. His speech accelerating so fast that the brick wall of reality was careering towards him far too quickly for him to stop. He realised that he didn't actually do anything else. That was it.

The after effect of hitting the wall was, in this case, not shattered bones but the unrelenting pain of realisation.

It wouldn't of mattered anyway. The psychiatrist, just sat rigid in it's chair. It's blank screen eerily reflecting the sign 'Insert New Coin'

"Bring more change next week" The mental note was made. ✓

The note paid off, the week after he even got to talk about his family ancestry and his theories on the creation of the universe!

V. Co-firing
Read the Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock
by T.S. Eliot.

Question
numberLeave
blank

6

PETER

Billerica
EssexNew Milton
Hants5th June 1998

Dear Gareth,

Seems like ages since you left. How long has it been?

Gareth, get ready for this bit. It the bit where I do write everything that my mother wants me to say. (This ^{letter} has to get passed mum's customs like control of the front door) Any Anyway, if you want to skip this bit or even cut it out to give to your parents then cut carefully here: ~~Personal~~
 - - - - - cut style

How are you? I'm fine. How's school going? How are your parents? my mum sends her love. Is little Ryan ok? hope he got over the mumps ok!

- - - - - cut

Right! Glad that's over. I'm sorry but ~~any~~ nothings allowed out of the door since the exams have started.

I've discovered that my parents spent 25 hours a day revising for their exams funny that isn't it? it started off at 6 hours but went up by 60 minutes every time I got the lecture.



GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

**ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET**

Examining body	NEAB	Centre number	58823
Candidate name	PETER	Candidate number	3262
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number	1

Question
numberLeave
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Well, the exams just about cover what I've been doing for the last couple of weeks. I've come to discover that sleep and food are highly overrated parts of our lives, when in pursuit of grades they are mere insignificancies. It's amazing what a little guidance from my parents can do. The rations of five Tesco's vitamin tablets and a jar of Ken Nescafé instant has done fine.

On the bright side though I have two more weeks of exams than 10 weeks holiday.

74 days of pure uneducated fun to be precise. Actually 73 if you discount the day which will be filled with the mandatory destruction of every pen in the house along with many a worksheet and grammar book.

The holiday is only stopped by the beginning of our voluntary education. Voluntary education that's something I never thought I could do!

Personal Voice

I'm going to a local sixth-form to do Maths Phys and ~~Phy~~ Psychology. After 2 years I'll be able to analyse your behaviour whilst knowing exactly how much potential energy I have and reciting the square root of all the number from 1 to 20. Now, whilst which employer could turn me down!

AAS

GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET

Examining body	NEAB	Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate name	PETER	Candidate number	3	2	6	2	
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number	2				

Question
numberLeave
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But But seriously, I am looking forward to to doing A-levels although the ^{amount of} work needed does seem deep enough to drown a giraffe with skills.

A-levels are 2 1/2 months away now so between the revision I'm planning my summer. I have got an unavoidable family holiday in Wales coming up that takes me down to 9 weeks, still plenty of time. Going to the local beach is a must, partly because it's quite fun ^{but} mostly because it's free! I am at the moment ~~to~~ less endowed with cash than an extremely ~~unlucky~~ unlucky compulsive gambler.

As yet I do not have a job, I thought it would take up to much of my hard earned 10 week holiday. It later hit me that I would have no money to do anything in my 10 week holiday thus ~~shirereading~~ ^{shirereading} my personal crusade to watch every film released over the holiday at the local Odeon. I'll have to settle for one a month.

I've got a few other things planned like a camping trip with the lads. We've managed to borrow a huge tent ~~for~~ from the local scouts so we've now got to find somewhere to pitch it.

I hope you've got your summer planned, you know it's going to come and go faster

AAS



GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

**ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET**

Examining body	NEAB	Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate name	PETER	Candidate number	3	2	6	2	
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number	3				

Question
numberLeave
blank

Then anything else anywhere summer, or atleast
it will seem to
Have a great summer and good luck
in your A-levels

Yours Sincerely

PETER

Form & style restricted to prepare &
audience. Para: usually well used
& there's some varied detail & quite
a lively personal voice. Occasional
spelling errors don't stop reader's
enjoyment.

AAS

English - Personal Writing ANNA

I am one of those people who are always tired out. I exert myself to the extent to which I am no longer motivated to do anything; I sit on my bed thinking of things that need to be done and things that I'd like to be doing but I can't make myself get up and go. Every night is the same, I plan to go to bed early, but for me planning things never seems to work; I can't stick to plans. Something interesting appears on television, I get stuck reading a good book, a conversation starts between my mum and me, or in this case, I get an idea for my latest piece of English Course work and have to write it down! (convey as it may sound!) for me if it is the latter reason, and the idea is left alone in my brain to branch off and develop in all directions, the concept of sleep becomes even more impossible!

Of course, this paragraph above maybe true of me, but it is not the truth; it is not every night that I plan to go to bed early, but most nights; the question you may now be thinking is why didn't I just say that, "most nights", but that demonstrates my problem with this essay, I can not write what I mean. And even if I did manage to write what I mean, a paragraph about me could stereotype myself to the person reading, for example: if I said a certain situation scared me, the reader may

← sorry didn't see margin (it's very late)

automatically think that if something of that sort were to happen again, I would be scared. However, me writing "I was scared" does not necessarily mean "I was scared" it might mean I was slightly 'scared', or even that I felt at that moment in my life I should be feeling 'scared'. (Helpful hint: put expression in your voice whilst reading the paragraph above, otherwise it makes no sense at all). reread the paragraph above with expression in your voice, then it might make more sense).

This piece of coursework causes a problem for me as I am and becoming increasingly more analytical of myself and others; because of this I feel flustered ^(Suggest another word please cos I don't like that) (not completely, but because someone else in this situation would!) and come to the conclusion that my life is too complicated to write down. ~~Hope this expl~~

I hope this explains what I think I mean, in actual fact I might well be able to write pages and pages about myself and feel that that is me, my personality and what my beliefs are. To round this paragraph off I think I can honestly say that my main personality trait is scepticism; I don't believe anything, what I see, what others say, or even what I feel. I'm also very sarcastic (except I have always and will continue to pronounce it 'sarcastic'!).

I will now try and tell some of the more formal details about myself, for instance: I have blond hair which is now getting darker after looking practically bleached all my life, blue eyes from my father, and I used to be incredibly skinny. Now however ~~may~~ the bottom half of my body seems to be filling out (ie getting fatter) and the top half of me is unfortunately taking after my mother ~~and~~ ^{is} stubbornly remaining considerably flat-chested so I look like an eleven-year-old. I am always pale and pasty looking unless I pile on the blusher and as I've mentioned before I ~~am~~ 90% of the time tired out (again taking after my mum). ~~Speaking about my parents reminds~~

I am the middle child of three. My younger sister is Downs Syndrome. Also, along with this formality that she carries with her is her name: Esme, Age: 11 (although I am told mentally around 6 or 7), she has strawberry blond hair, blue eyes and in the summer develops freckles on her nose. It strikes me as odd that the first thing I say about her is her accidental inability to learn things quite as quickly as others. I suppose it is because on meeting people and mentioning my sister I forget to tell about the handicapp. Very often, after the person in question has met her,

I got ahead: "How come you never told me Emma was backward?" and I suddenly ~~remember~~ remember that by now I should tell each and everyone who might have to speak to her; it came it comes as a shock to them and they don't know what to say!

I have a vivid memory of my Mum sitting down in the playroom just after Emma had been born and telling my older brother and me that "Emma is Down's Syndrome" and "she will be slower than other children." I, who must have been about 4 at the time, turned to my Mum and said: "So, when she runs, will she run like this?" after which I proceeded to 'run' across the room in slow motion, like in replays of Olympic Running footage on T.V.! I understand now why everyone around me burst out laughing.

What upsets me about my sister is that I do not know her and I don't think I ever will. Whenever she is around I am always busy and because of her 'problem' she is harder to talk to. I do not like the fact that even though it is about her she ~~will~~ might not ever be able to laugh about the incident in the playroom, because she may never understand it.

Can you tell that I wrote the above

three paragraphs on my sister at a different time to when I am writing this? As well as sounding different (I think very bitter), and also I think more educated, the writing I wrote it in is completely different to how I am writing now. Is there a connection between my writing and the mood I'm in? (If you look at the writing at the beginning of this exam, it too is different from my writing now). Why? 841

Mummy's Medicine

"JOSH! WHERE IS IT?!"

Mum would always shout loudest first thing in the morning. She would desperately search the whole house sometimes before dragging me out of bed. I was always awake though, long before the frantic hunt began; I knew from previous experience that it was best to leave her alone. After about twenty minutes her frustrated bangs and crashes would gradually die down. The roaring would finally be replaced with quietly distressed whimpers.

"Where is it, Babes?"

One time I was up before her. I had hurriedly packed my small rucksack with the general items needed when going away: toothbrush, soap, favourite book, one-winged model aeroplane, and the recent Christmas offering - a second-hand Power Ranger. Before I left I ritually tidied the mess in the lounge. I remember feeling the letter from Dad burning in the back pocket of my jeans. He had left only a few months before, maybe five perhaps; to me it seemed like years. I felt certain that if I could just find him and talk to him, he would let Mum and I go and live with him again. I would make him realise that I could look after Mum now, he needn't worry about any of that.

At 8 years and 7 months I was the man of the house, at least that was what Mum always told me. I had great responsibilities that had to be done every day; the main priority being to sort out the medicine Mum needed for her illness.

Mum told me about her sickness once, she explained that if she did not take her medicine regularly she would get the shakes and feel very, very ill. In my naivete I listened to her and believed her; one thing was made clear to me, if she took her treatment daily, everything would be all right. I might have questioned this concept had not the change that took place each morning made such a difference to the character of my parent. Before the medicine was given, she always looked such a state; yesterday's make-up smeared across her milky-tanned complexion, her dark-brown almost afro hair stuck-out in all directions; many times her big black eyes woke-up bloodshot. I was used to this though, I knew how to sort her out.

On this day in particular, Mum struggled almost silently into the cupboard like kitchen. She slumped against the fridge and stared up at me.

"I can't find it, Babes. I've lost it. I 'id it last night didn't I? Where'd I put it?"

"It's in the same place you always keep it," I sighed. I reached under the sink and rummaged around the pipes until my fingers automatically grasped the cold aluminium foil wrapper.

I poured the last of the citric acid onto the spoon and swiftly moved it over to the candle flame. As the powders finally dissolved into a liquid, the solution began to boil. I expertly sucked 'Mum's medicine' into a day-old syringe and handed it to her.

"You're so good to me, what would I do wiv'out you darlin'? I would never 'ave been able to find me medicine wiv'out you. Thank you Ba"

Her eyes rolled into her head as the needle entered her vein and the

plunger was pushed down.

The traffic roared past the estate as Mum dragged me along the roadside as though she were competing in a race.

"I'll take you to the fairground, yeah? You'd like that wouldn't you, luv? Then we'll go buy a take-away for tea. We'll 'ave a good feed, alright?"

I grinned up at Mum as she nattered away nineteen-to-the-dozen. She was all dressed-up now: silver platforms, short black dress and furry purple jacket. This morning she had scraped back her untamable hair into a pony-tail in order to show-off the intricate eye make-up that made her beautiful eyes look wider and more mysterious. My Mum was always like that, she either looked a complete mess, or almost like a model. It was her medicine that gave her the motivation to make herself look half-decent she always said. I was more or less inclined to agree with her.

I had grabbed my packed rucksack as we left the flat. Although I had decided to go and find Dad that day, my departure was becoming less and less likely, as a chance to leave Mum secure never arose.

Hand-in-hand, Mum and I strode down the street. I knew that ideas of the fun-fair and take-away were long forgotten when Mum took a sharp right in to Massey Street, the home of Mel.

As we entered No.28A, we were greeted by the relaxing sound of transcendental rhythms. Mum let go of my hand when we arrived in the large, bare kitchen, and without looking back she made her way up the stairs.

"I just need some sweeteners to get me through the day, Babes. I won't be a minute"

I slowly gazed around the dreary room and quietly ambled into what could have been called the lounge. A dank odour filled the house and I can remember now the way it used to cling to my hair and clothes for hours after we had left. Nicotine-stained paint peeled from the walls and floated, almost like leaves in autumn, onto a discoloured old carpet. Some upside-down boxes next to an off-colour settee proved to be an interesting obstacle course for my model aeroplane and Power Ranger to fight and brawl on for a while. Just as the plane was about to be smashed into a thousand pieces Mum came stumbling down the stairs. She wandered out into the street, and as I reached the doorway she was off, running, her heels clattering on the pavement as she went.

"MUM!," I shouted after her, "MUM!". She kept on running. I think it was when I was racing after her, the letter from Dad fell out of my pocket.

As I rounded the corner onto the main road, I sadly took in the scene before my eyes - a crowd of strangers was surrounding my mother as she lay in a dazed heap on the pavement. I quickly ran to her and pushed the disgusted onlookers away. Her eyes suddenly opened as I sat her up, and the confusion in her sickened face told me she was unable to distinguish me from any other passer-by. The only words she uttered as we staggered home hours later were "I'm sorry, Babes, I'm sorry."

That night I checked on Mum more than usual. For some reason, she slept more soundly than ever. While she rested, I had time to contemplate the day's events. I came to the conclusion that if I *had* left her to visit my father, she may have died. All hope of seeing my Dad again was finally destroyed when the realisation occurred that the letter was gone. I

searched the house to no avail, it was nowhere to be found. That one fragment of my father's new life was the only ticket out of my broken existence. Now I had no choice but to stay and take care of the only family I had.

* * *

At 3:15pm, on New Year's Day, 1993, Ayisha Nissargat was pronounced dead from AIDS at Hackney General Hospital. I was her only living relative. That same day I was taken by social services to a near-by foster home. I spent the next four years overcoming my past experiences in a warm and caring environment. I have much to thank to the family who took me in and loved me like their own. ✓

As for my father, there has never been any hint as to his whereabouts although I did spend two years after my mother's death searching for him. Finally, at thirteen-years-old I gave up and soon after I was adopted.

My days are different now, I take responsibility for only myself. I have realised my future is in my own hands and I can make anything of it that I choose. I fill my days with ambitious dreams and aspirations of a profession in medicine. However, at night, my world is filled with remnants of my previous reality. I remember the drugged strangers invading my home and my privacy, the days when I was not even sure where my next meal was coming from. Mum's torturous cries echo in my mind. Her continuous yearning for more heroine still pervades my soul.

Every evening before I retire to bed, my mind methodically recalls the words passed between my mother and I during our nighttime routine. As I slowly fall into the silence of my dreams, I hear the words over and over.

"Night, Babes."

"Good night, Mum."

"You got Mummy's medicine ready for the morning, babes?"

"Yeah Mum. Night Mum."

Question
number

6

Leave
blankHighcliffe,
Dorset,10th January 1998

Dear Vicky,

How are you? I'm fine ^{as} ~~and~~ I
have just arrived home from a two
week holiday in the USA! (don't worry I
got you a present!)

The most amazing thing happened
whilst we were away, on New Year's Eve.
Mum, Dad, Emma, Kate and I went to
Epcot (one of the Disneyland theme parks)
and during the evening Kate and I ~~had~~
managed to lose all the others!

~~Kate and I~~ were strolling around the
foreign countries part (there are produces
and main attractions of different countries
all over the world - i.e. France has a
mini Eiffel Tower!) ^{when} at about 5pm, ~~then~~
~~at the station~~ this rather tasty, good-
looking young man came and asked
me for the time!!! *Personal style*

Of course I obliged by telling him it was
about 5pm and then quickly I found
out he was called Ross, was 24 and
came from New Jersey. To cut a long
story slightly shorter ~~///~~, Kate and I
spent the rest of New Year's Eve

GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET

Examining body	NEAB	Centre number	58823
Candidate name		Candidate number	3091
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number	1

Question
numberLeave
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walking and talking with Ross and his friend David.

It turned out Ross actually lives in Orlando now and so later on in the week (yes you've guessed it we saw them again!) I went to his apartment and everything is just great!

Ross is absolutely gorgeous, he's a writer of screen-plays and he plays guitar (he's written me three songs already!!) He has black hair and quite dark skin and he's Jewish, at least his family is, he's not a practising Jew.

Anyway, you haven't heard the best news yet. he's booked me a flight for the 30th of June 1998 to go and spend two more weeks in Florida with him! He's paying for it and everything!

Anyway to completely change the subject just before we went to America in December I did my audition to see if I can go to the Northern Ballet School next September, and I got in! on the Professional Dancer's Course. I'm so happy, I'm ~~so~~ ecstatic! ✓

Due to the fact it's in Manchester I'm going to get my own flat and you, my friend, are going to come and stay

AAS

Question
number

there with me as often as possible. We'll have an amazing time!

On a more disturbing note though, Toby has been chucked out of the house again by Mum and Dad as recently they found another bag of his hypodermic needles. It's so dangerous having him around as Esme could easily go into his bedroom and pick one of his syringes up. It's funny, I don't seem to mind at all when Toby's not here, I know he is my brother and I love him and everything (I suppose!), but being at home is so much quieter and relaxed when he's gone. Even pro gets to stop worrying about whether they're locked everything away in case he takes it. ~~like the old etc~~. Which reminds me, Dad managed to ~~buy~~ buy back Esme's tape player from a ~~pawn~~ pawn shop in Pokedown, I don't know how much money Toby sold it for though. ✓

One of the counsellors said the other day that Toby is on a slow suicide, he's bound to catch AIDS sooner or later and then Mum and Dad will have to look after ^{him}? I was wondering whether it would stop Toby taking drugs if he caught something, but then I thought, he's so stupid he'll probably not think about it and kindly give the disease to loads of other addicts (oh well, it's their fault I suppose).

Anyway, now I'm feeling all morbid ✓

GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET

Examining body	NEAB	Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate name	ANNA	Candidate number	3	0	9	1	
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number	2				

Question
numberLeave
blank

And down. Sorry if I've upset you or anything, it's just when I start writing all my feelings about him seem to just come out.

Anyway, I'll ^{quickly} ~~just~~ cheer myself up by reminding me, and you, that I'm going to America again in a few months and then Manchester to start ballet school in September!

I hope you had a brilliant Christmas and got loads of presents, write to me and tell me all about it. Sorry this letter has been so up and down,

Write to me soon,

Love,

ANNA

xxxx

P.S. Can I still come and stay with you in February half-term? Write and tell me.

For style rather than purpose & audience. Para well used to develop suitable narrative & there's quite a convincing personal voice. Occasional punctuation lapses don't detract from reader's enjoyment.

42 ✓

ANNA

Question
Number

Section B

Leave
blank

③ Rood,
Congleton,
Nr. Manchester, Highcliffe,
Dorset,

2nd June 1998

Dear Ada,

I ~~received~~ received your letter this morning and I hope you get this before you make any rash decisions.

First of all, I think you should consider more carefully how your life would completely change if you tried to get along on your own. Everyone needs people to support them, and that comes from friends and family, people who care about you. If you leave home, to put it bluntly, you are going to make the rest of your life much more difficult for yourself.

I realise you've been having problems with your parents, and maybe yours are worse than others - but the bottom line is they care about you and always will. All teenagers argue with their family, look at Darren. I don't think your Mum and Dad can be as anxious about you as they are him.

Which brings me to another point, think about the problems your parents have had to deal with with Darren. From ~~their~~ where they are standing perhaps they are hoping ^{that} being ~~more strict~~ with you will be harder on

Question
number

save them heartache and stress in the long run. You know your mother blames herself for Darren's trouble, but to be honest it is he who has caused his unstable way of life. For your Mum's sake I think perhaps you should stay just to prove that getting into drugs and crime is not a result of the way you and your brother have been brought-up.

After saying that, I'm not insinuating that if you did leave home you would inevitably begin to mix with the wrong kinds of people, but if you leave and have no money and no where to go there are the sorts of people you will eventually meet; drug-addicts, alcoholics and no-hopers who have just lost the notion to try and live respectably.

I hope I'm not sounding patronising, I'm just very worried about you that's all. Just a little aside I thought I might briefly bring up, you are in your last year at school. If you left tomorrow you would not finish your GCSE courses and you would have to continue your life with no qualifications whatsoever. Perhaps next year when you go to college you could talk to your parents about maybe going to a college further away from home, one where you could stay in some sort of college-hostel for students that would be a better idea wouldn't it?

Examining body NEAB

Candidate name

ANNA

Paper reference 2115

Centre number 5882

Candidate number 309

Sheet number

Just so you know what I am thinking, I know you don't agree with me, but I am inclined to believe that most of your problems stem from the influence Darren has had on your life. Due to the way he is and how violent and irrational he can be, your mother has been allowed a bit of freedom by your parents, your school and by other people. It has been clear for sometime that Darren has a social problem and because of this he very often gets chance after chance, and people ~~seem~~ always seem ~~to~~ to go out of their way to help him. However, you have to see that, obviously, you (and I) are not like this because you have never caused severe emotional problems within your family due to a disability of some kind, and your brother has, you feel that the way your parents and school treat you is often very unfair. If anything it can seem that for smaller wrongs, you get larger punishment ~~than Darren~~, ~~but~~ you have to accept that he will get what is coming to him soon enough.

I have realised the above paragraph sounds very callous and unfeeling towards Darren, but it is true that he has put

AAS

you and your parents through a lot of stress and strain, none of you deserved it.

I don't know about you Dad, but your Mum needs you and I know she loves you very much. It may seem that right now your parents always seem to be ganging up on you and shouting about your faults. However, the solution is definitely not to leave home, however strong the urge maybe. You have to endure this and I promise you that soon everything will sort itself out, everything is just getting on top of you at the moment.

Thank you for writing to me and confiding in me, I hope I have helped and you know I will always ~~be at the end of the phone~~ ~~be at the end of the phone~~ just a phonecall away,

Take care,

Love

ANNA

xxx

P.S. Write back soon and tell me how everything is getting ~~sort~~ sorted out!

Letter has a bit more depth than usual.

Letter just a little longer at times.

Leaf
blank

(42)

(42)

①

JOSIE

Personal writingGCSE English Language coursework - Year 10

I have a family of seven. I have a mum, a dad, two younger sisters, an older brother and an older half-sister. My half-sister is called Caroline, she is twenty-seven years old. I never know whether to include her as part of my family or not. When she was younger she used to stay with my mum and dad but at present she is pursuing her career. Caroline and myself have never been close. There is a large age gap and she resents the fact that our father is married to my mother and not her's. I think it's a pity that she doesn't see our dad more often but she doesn't seem to mind. I don't expect to see her many more times in my life as we have two totally separate lives with only one thing in common: we have the same dad.

My brother is called Don and he's seventeen. Our relationship is unusual. We used to be close as children but for the last five years we've hardly spoken. We don't argue but we are not close; I don't know him at all. I know which foods he likes and dislikes and I know which type of music he likes but that is as far as our relationship stretches. He ~~has~~ sees me as the 'geeky' little sister. I know that he'd look after me if I was in trouble and he's always said that if anyone was nasty to me he'd 'sent 'em out' and I should be grateful for that. I wish that we could be closer but we have nothing in common and we both want different things out of life.

My younger sisters are called Verity and Julia. Verity is eleven years old and Julia is ten. We are very close. I look after my sisters sometimes and we spend a lot of time together. We talk to each other about everything, especially

②

Verity and I. A lot of sisters argue constantly but my sisters and I get on really well. I feel very protective over them, especially Julia. Julia has been ill for a number of years. As far back as I can remember she has been constantly feeling ill and always pale and underweight.

The first time any doctors took any real notice of Julia's on-going illness was when she was five years old. We had been on a family outing to the cinema to see a Walt Disney film. My sisters have always loved Disney films and my parents thought it would take Julia's mind off of feeling unwell. I remember that as we left the cinema Julia complained of her legs feeling, 'all wobbly' but as Julia always had aches and pains we didn't take much notice. We had almost completed the half-an-hour journey home when I looked over at Julia. At first I assumed that she'd fallen asleep as her eyes were closed but I then noticed that she was trembling and her fingers were tensed and twisted around each other. I reached out and shook her causing her to flop forward in an almost life-less fashion. I remember that I told my mum that there was something wrong with Julia, while I repeatedly shook her and said her name. I saw saliva run from her mouth and I felt her limp body as I held her. I was now really starting to panic as was everybody in the car. ~~We~~ ^{and} we saw that Julia's lips were turning an icy-blue colour, my dad stopped the car. All this had happened in only a minute, none of us had had time to think.

My dad quickly got Julia out of the car and into the fresh air. He and mum held her and spoke to her, desperately trying to wake her up. Verity, Don and I

③

just sat in the car with blank expressions on our faces. Verity started to cry so my brother and I tried to comfort her, we told her that Julia would be fine but we had no idea what was really going on.

It seemed like ~~for~~ mum and dad were outside with Julia for an eternity, finally they got back into the car. My parents seemed so calm and in control; when I think of it I really admire them for that as it really helped the situation. My mum sat with Julia lying still across her lap. I was relieved to see Julia's eyes wide open. She looked totally awake. I remember stroking her hand and saying, 'oh, good you're awake, are you feeling better now?' There was no response, she just stared into space. This was almost more terrifying than seeing her unconscious. She didn't seem to understand a word we were saying, either that or she just couldn't hear us. She just looked at our faces with no expression on her own.

My dad drove us to the nearest hospital where my parents rushed Julia inside. I can't really remember anything else, just that my brother, sister and I waited in the car for a while and then we went into the hospital to hear Julia crying. The nurses had covered Julia in ice packs to bring her temperature down and, except for the fact that she was cold, wet and tired, she seemed a lot better. Julia was kept in hospital over night for observation and then went home with little or no explanation of what had happened.

My parents were just glad that Julia was back to normal and so we all tried to put the matter behind us.

④

Three years passed of Julia feeling unwell but having no scientifically classified symptoms. After this period of time Julia's condition seemed to get worse. It was very mysterious. She would scream with terrible stomach abdominal pains which would suddenly subside and she'd have days where she didn't have the strength to stand up. My parents took Julia to various doctors but the symptoms were always put down to a virus of some kind. One morning Julia awoke feeling particularly unwell. She got out of bed to discover that her body had swollen to an alarming size. Her stomach had swollen to such an extent that she looked six or seven months pregnant. Her eyelids were also very swollen. Julia had put on half a stone in weight over night. The family doctor found this disturbing and ordered several tests to be carried out. As the test results returned Julia was admitted to Southampton General Hospital's newly formed paediatrics kidney unit. My sister was diagnosed as having Nephrotic Syndrome, a chronic kidney disease.

We all assumed that, as the doctors knew what was wrong with Julia they could treat her and she'd get better; we were wrong. It is almost two years since Julia was diagnosed and, although she is in remission now, it is possible for her kidney problem to come back and affect her anytime in the next five years. Kidney failure when she is older is also a possibility.

I don't know how my sister's illness has affected me, I don't think I've ever thought about it before. I know that I believe in fate and that everything happens for a reason, so perhaps Julia was

⑤

supposed to get ill so it would have a certain effect on me or my family. When I was a little girl I used to love getting attention and sympathy, but then people started saying things like, 'be nice to Jenny, her little sister's in hospital'. I found this really annoying. The fact that my sister was ill was no reason for people to be really nice to me, people should be nice to each other anyway, not just when something bad happens. I was worried that if I wrote about Julia's illness it would be like I was trying to get sympathy but that is not true, Julia's illness isn't anything serious to get all upset about anyway, it was just a bit worrying.

I find it very difficult to analyse my own personality. I feel like other people don't understand me very well but I don't really understand me either. I mentioned before that I believe in fate. I believe that bad things happen to make us stronger. Everybody has problems but I think that we shouldn't let problems upset us too much and take over our lives, we should use them as experience and learn from them. I might just think like this because I'm young and nothing really terrible has ever happened to me. I am very lucky to be able to say that no one close to me has ever died ('touch wood!'). This shows another significant part of my personality, I'm very superstitious. Don't you think that when you say something like, 'I've never broken a bone before' you always end up wishing you hadn't said it. I know that

⑥

it's probably just a coincidence, but I can't help but touch wood anyway, or avoid walking under ladders.

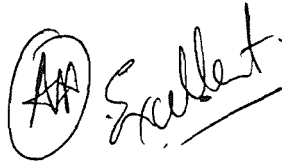
There's one thing that I know for definite about myself; I don't give up. I'm grateful that I can be so determined. If I fail at something I might be annoyed, but I just think, 'well, I failed, I won't let that happen again' and I try even harder to succeed. I am determined to have a successful and enjoyable life. Some people spend their whole lives with an attitude that says, 'what's the point in trying, we're just going to die anyway?' I think that if we do only get one chance we may enjoy it.

I don't understand how people could kill themselves, I value life so much. ~~It's~~ Surely nothing can be worse than being dead. You have nothing. At least when you are alive you have the chance to be happy.

From reading this essay I have realised that I sound like a naive child. I have led a happy life and so I have a positive outlook on life. My views will probably be totally different in ten years time. At this moment in time I am happy with life and I want to keep it that way.

The Up Line

10.2.98

A handwritten signature, possibly 'A. Scallan', is enclosed within a hand-drawn circle. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSEWORK

SHORT STORY

The Up Line

by

JOSIE



John Barry awoke with a start and groaned when he found himself sitting on a bench outside the waiting room on Lower Fordham station. He thoroughly hated train stations, especially at night, and there was a special kind of hell in finding himself on one that the Beeching cuts had closed years earlier. Nothing was more depressing than a couple of deserted platforms facing each other across the empty divide of a weed covered track.

How he got here he couldn't imagine, unless some of the boys had brought him as a joke. That was some wild party. The last thing he remembered was getting giggly drunk and driving off to the village pub where he'd rented a room for the night. He must've passed out and while he slept some of the lads had dumped him here.

John brushed his dark, floppy hair away from his tired eyes and rubbed them in an attempt to wake himself up. He was an attractive man; tall and dark with extremely deep, brown eyes. Despite his large and cumbersome build, John moved with grace and confidence, he could appropriately be described as a 'gentle giant'.

John peered along the station surprised to see it illuminated; just a couple of dim bulbs, but they shed enough light for him to see that the station wasn't deserted. There were several other people waiting, and that was strange. Surely they knew that the station was closed?

There was a tall guy, standing at the platform edge, and further along, sitting on a bench, another, older man, holding his head in his hands. John thought he heard a sob, but he couldn't be sure. Strangest of all was the young woman at the end of the platform who clutched two young children to her skirt. Even from this distance he could see her staring at him. He smiled and nodded affably but she ignored his pleasantries. He turned away and was immediately startled by an old guy sitting on the bench next to him.

"Who are you?" John blurted out, momentarily rattled by this sudden, unheard appearance.

"I'm the station-adviser, sir."

The man spoke in a soft lilt which was definitely Irish. The old fool must mean station-master. John thought. There's no such thing as a station-adviser, even in British Rail.

"Adviser?" John asked.

"Yes. When lost souls turns up I advise them."

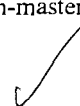
"But why should anyone come here?" John said, perplexed. "There aren't any trains."

"Oh yes, sir. There is the occasional train."

"Are all these people waiting for a train?"

"Oh yes indeed, sir. They're all waiting for the train."

"Are you Irish?" John asked, annoyed at the station-master's oh-so-pleasant voice.



"Oh no, sir, but I do find that the Irish lilt is more comforting."

"Well, it's not comforting me," John retorted, rudely. He looked along the platform and saw that an old woman had joined the growing group of passengers waiting for the train.

"Go and comfort her and stop pestering me."

"I will, sir, I will. Excuse me."

John watched him go. He'd had enough of this. The joke had worn off. He stood up and walked along the platform looking for the exit. There were several doors located at intervals along the station but to his growing bewilderment he found them all locked. This was ridiculous, he thought. There must be a way out. Perhaps the exit was on the other platform? He decided to cross over and went to the platform edge. Being a cautious man he listened for any sound of a train, then shook his head. What was he thinking? There wasn't going to be a train. These people were mistaken.

The jump into the cutting was easy enough and John landed in the knee high weeds that grew profusely between the platforms. Now that he'd decided on direct action he wasted no time and quickly climbed onto the opposite platform, but all the doors on this side were locked too. John shook his head. There was something funny here. No, he thought, not funny, strange; eerie almost. If all the doors were locked, how did he get here? More to the point: how did all the others get here? And why were they all waiting on the other side; the up line?

John decided to cross back. Perhaps the station 'adviser' could advise him about the way out? He jumped into the cutting and felt his foot strike something metallic. The track, he thought, or was it? Since it was too dark to see much he reached out with his foot and swished it through the weeds. He heard an empty tin-can roll away but that was all. He felt no rail. There must be tracks, he thought. If a train was coming through there must be rails, trains don't run on thin air. Intrigued, he determined to explore.

Slowly and carefully, John put one foot in front of the other until he reached the other side. Nothing! Just the tin-can, a brick and some empty crisp packets blown in by the wind. There were no rails! Lower Fordham really was derelict, and if anyone thought that a train was coming through, either this night or any other, they were mad.

John clambered out of the cutting and went to look for the station-master who was obviously having everyone on. All these people - and there were now dozens of them - were wasting their time, and he was fed up with wasting his. He'd had enough. If all the doors were locked he would leave by walking off the end of the platform. He could then cross the open country until he found a road.

Determinedly, he marched to the platform's end. To his annoyance, his way was blocked by a dilapidated fence. He decided to climb, but a voice from behind stopped him.

"You can't do that, sir. It's not allowed."

"Oh, isn't it," John said, turning furiously on the station-master. "And who's going to stop me?"

The station-master ignored his anger. "If you look over the fence, sir, you'll see why."

John craned his neck, and immediately recoiled in fear. He felt a sudden cold sweat burst over his body. He gulped, hardly able to get his words out.

"But that's... that's... "

"Hell. Yes, sir. And the pit runs right around the station. That's why I keep the doors locked. I wouldn't want to lose a poor soul accidentally. Of course, if you really want to leave that way you can, but I wouldn't advise it. Oh, no, sir, not at all. Not while you still have a chance."

"This is crazy!" John said, backing away from the fence. "What's going on? Who are you?"

"My name's Beeching, and, if you'd care to sit, I'll explain." John sat and listened, still afraid, but comforted by the station-master's lilting voice. "You were in an accident."

"Accident, I don't remember any accident," John said, wildly.

"No, sir, you wouldn't. But now you're waiting for the train, just like the others."

"What train? There aren't any tracks. God Almighty! There won't be a train." But in that instant John heard the sound of a whistle, and his blood froze.

"Here it comes. You wait here, sir, while I speak to the Director."

"Director," John said, wide-eyed. "Who's he?"

"He's in charge, sir." The station-master turned to go.

"Beeching." John called, not wanting to be alone. "Why does that woman keep staring at me?"

"The woman? She, sir, was the other half of your accident. Her and the children."

"I don't remember," John said, tremulously, but the station-master wasn't listening.

He had turned to attend the train that had thundered into the station and come to rest amid a furious hissing of steam and a clank of wheels.

John heard the doors slam shut as the waiting people climbed aboard. He saw their faces watching him sadly through the train windows. Something inside his brain screamed at him to join them. He desperately tried to stand but could not. His limbs were like lead. To his utter consternation he couldn't move.

The Up Line

page 4

"I want to get on," he said, almost pleading as the station-master returned. "Please let me on." But the man shook his head.

"No, sir. You can't get on. I can, though." and relief flooded his voice. "The Director has released me." He opened a door and climbed aboard.

"Who are you?" John shouted.

"I've told you, sir: Beeching. The Director made me stay because of what I did to the trains. I've done my time. Now the job is yours."

"Mine? I'm not a station-master, I work in the City. I hate stations, and trains!"

"The City, was it, sir. Then you'll know about Hell."

The train began to depart, its wheels spinning madly as they fought for traction on the cold night air. John called out, desperate for one last answer.

"What am I?" and the station-master's lilting voice came back to haunt him.

"Why, sir: you're the Branch line ghost."



6	Verity Crescent		
	Porthcawl	JOSIE	New Milton
	Mid Glamorgan		Hants
	WALES		ENGLAND
			5th June 1998
	Dear Christina,		
	I hope you are well. I'm really good at the moment. I've got quite a lot of news to tell you. The most interesting thing would probably be that Maria next door won the lottery! Can you believe it? She never plays the lottery but on Saturday we were driving home from work and because I was buying a ticket, she decided to as well. Just after the lottery was on telly she phoned me and		

Question
number

Leave
blank

screamed, "Jerry I've won the lottery". ✓
I ran round to her house and we
jumped around screaming for the next
half an hour! She got the jackpot but
it was divided by five people so she
got £1.6 million. The really good news
is that, ~~because~~^{as} she got a ticket because
of me, she's taking me on holiday. I
can't wait. I think we're going to
Florida! We haven't quite sorted it out
yet but I'm so excited.

Addressing
and vice
All the gang are alright. We ~~all~~ miss you,
it's not the same without you. We're
pretty stressed at the moment because of
our exams. ~~Knowing~~ you you must be a bit
worried too. You don't need to be, I know
you'll do really well. Your new school
sounds nice and I'm glad there's lots
of good-looking boys. I recently
decided that I'm definitely coming home
for 6th form, it's the best place
and anyway it's most convenient. Does
your school have a 6th form?

I went to a job interview last week for
~~some~~ a job in Texas during the summer.
I think it went well but they haven't
phoned yet. If I don't get the job I'll just
have to carry on at the café. I'm
planning to work a lot because I want to
be able to buy a car around Christmas.

Question
numberLeave
blank

I can't believe that I'm almost seventeen already; ~~I~~ can't wait to start driving lessons. Mum and dad said that for a birthday present they'll pay for all my lessons, providing it doesn't take me too long to pass!

I'm really looking forward to when we all go to Newbury, it'll be good to see you again. The camp site sent some more photos of the caravan and the park. I've enclosed some photocopies; sorry they're not very clear. I've organised the travel for me and the others. How are you going to get there now? Is your mum alright about driving all that way?

My family are quite ^{well} at the moment. Julia had another relapse of her illness but she's doing better now. I had a big row with mum about how much revision I'm doing. She thinks I'm doing too much! It's usually the other way around. She keeps trying to make me have breaks but I can't look after myself. She wants me to go shopping with her on Saturday but I can't take the time off. I am getting fed up of all the revision but it'll be over soon. Just think, twelve weeks with no school! I can't wait to just relax and lay in the sun all day without worrying about lessons or homework or revision.

GCSE and GCE Examining Bodies

ADDITIONAL
ANSWER SHEET

Examining body	NEAM	Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate name	JOSIE	Candidate number	3	2	0	9	
Paper reference	2116	Sheet number					

Question
numberLeave
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I found the most perfect dress for the loosers' ball. It's long and blue with a big slit up the side and I found shoes to match. Me and Hannah are going in a big ~~stretch~~ limo with Katie and Maria. If you can make it down you can come with us. I asked Miss Johns and she said you can still come because you were in the school for four and a half years. If you can get here you can stay with me. I've already asked mum and she said yes. I hope you can come because our group isn't complete without you.

Please write back soon and tell me all your news.
Loads of love

JOSIE

Clear identification with purpose & audience. Usually coherent points: sure of punctuation clarified meaning. Vocab: Supplement apt to the task.

34
35

JOSIE

Question
numberLeave
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③	Verity crescent. Porthcawl Mid Glamorgan SOUTH WALES	New Milton Hants. ENGLAND
	2nd June 1998	
	Dear Christina,	
	I was really upset to get your letter today. I can't believe you're seriously thinking of leaving home. Look Chris, I know you've been having problems with your mum lately but running away won't make everything better. It might seem like a really good idea now but what about in a few months when you've got no money and no home or family? You can't go and stay with your brother because your mum would just find out and besides, can you really see you and Daniel living together without killing each other? You couldn't go and stay with any of your friends because their mums wouldn't keep it a secret. You definitely couldn't afford to get your own place, unless you left school and got a dead-end job to try and pay the bills. This is just not an option. Running away would mean running away from your education and you're not stupid, you know that to have a good future you need qualifications.	
	Please spend more time thinking about this. If you ran away from your mum it would mean living on the streets and not only is that	

Question
numberLeave
blank

un-comfortable ~~but~~ it's very dangerous too. I know you think you could cope on your own but really Christina, it would be horrible. Just imagine waking up on a freezing cold doorstep or under a bridge or even in ~~your~~ hostel instead of your own bed. At home you can eat as much as you want and watch telev or listen to music but without a home and money you can't.

Christina, I know it seems unbearable at home at the moment but you and your mum are just going through a bit of a bad patch. I remember when I stayed with you last year, you and your mum got on like best friends and it will be like it again. If you really can't bear it at home you could go and stay with someone for a while. I understand that you can't live with your dad permanently but he'd love to have you for a few days. Or, how about coming to stay with me for a while? It's nearly the summer holiday and my mum and dad love having you. Hey Chris, that's another reason not to run away, you'd have to leave all your friends behind. You wouldn't be able to stay with me if you were hiding. You'd also have to say goodbye to dressing up and going out with your friends. You couldn't move out anyway, you'd miss the puppies too much! I hope you change your mind because running away would mean

Question
numberLeave
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giving up so much and I'd miss not having you as a friend. Also, I understand that you feel like hurting your mum at the moment, but if she lost you she'd be devastated. Just because she's got a new boyfriend, it doesn't mean she doesn't want or need you anymore. Write to me as soon as you can and DON'T do anything stupid.

Love you loads

JOSIE

P.S. I'll ask my mum about you coming to stay this summer, It would be really fun. (38)

Develops variety of reasons.

Changes tone.

Accurate & fluent.

GCSE English Language Coursework

STEVE

Personal Writing

One of the most difficult subjects for me to talk about is myself. I think this is because I don't really have a very high self-opinion of myself. This is because I am always doing things that I look back at and regret. I can't help doing these things, they just happen. I'll give you an example. I am a 'semi-religious' person, but I don't take it to the extreme limits. On the evening of my confirmation of faith into the Church of England there was a barbeque at my local church. I was sitting, eating a beef-burger with some of my 'churchy' friends, and then I said the words that I have regretted ever since. These words were to deny everything that I had previously pledged my faith to. They would also place a great weight of guilt over my head for ever and a day. These words were

"If you think about it, communion is just an excuse for a piss-up in a church".

Please excuse the rudeness of the statement, but that's what I said. Now, any of my friends would find nothing out of the ordinary about this statement coming from me. But I had surprised myself at my thoughtlessness and complete idiocy. How could I be

so stupid as to say those words, and in a church! Anyone who heard me say those words could have changed their views of me just like that, like the flick of a switch. Along with my traitorous words to Christianity, I felt even smaller when I learned that only non-alcoholic wine was used at mass!

Having read this, you can make your own judgements of me, but I still regret those words to this day.

However, I don't spend my whole life making a complete prat of myself, just most of it. If I can't be found saying things I shouldn't in a church, I can often be found on a riverbank. One of the ways that I like to 'wind down' is to go in search of the monster fish that probably won't be found. Fishing is the thief of many a day that should be spent working or something else constructive. Many people are addicted to cigarettes or alcohol, not me; well not cigarettes anyway. Fishing is my main addiction. Not only the thought of catching a monster, but the complete atmosphere surrounding it. Early morning on a water is the most peaceful experience ever to be found, legally. The mist across the water, clinging like flies to flypaper. The birds singing each their own song; a sign of identity. Encouraging fish bubbles on the surface of the water

tease you yet again. Even fishing has its 'down sides' though. Flies can prove to be a pain in the **** (neck)! But apart from this, the only bad part of fishing is the thought of returning to a desk full of coursework. Even this doesn't spoil the day though. My biggest fish is a 10½ lb mirror carp; but there are bigger fish out there, I know it.

If I can neither be found in a church or on a riverbank, it is most likely that I can be found at a piano. Music is my true passion above fishing. I used to be satisfied with buying books to play music from; not any more. I prefer to have a substantial part in everything that I do. This includes my music. Not satisfied with just playing music, I set about writing it for myself. This I found to be surprisingly effective. After only a year of writing I find myself with about 10 pieces of music written of my own sweat and blood. In total these amount to approximately 30 minutes of music. Although this may not sound like much, an incredible amount of time and effort has produced these 30 minutes. I have had the pleasure to play assorted compositions in various concerts and assemblies. I see these performances as a reward for my work because I enjoy the performing equally as much as the writing.

One of my personal views of life is to make the most of everything that you have got; I hate to see things wasted.

So I grasped my musical talent with both hands and am currently in the process of 'milking' it for everything it has got. In two years I have 'rocketed' through the grades for the drum kit, currently working towards grade six. I enjoy playing the drums immensely. Not only as a musical instrument. My drums are an alternative to beating the living daylight out of my little sister. Doing so, not opposing any christian teaching also.

Along with the piano and the drums, I also play the tenor saxophone. I enjoy my individuality and value it also. So I chose the tenor sax because no-one else in the school plays it, making myself an individual.

As I mentioned previously, I value my individuality. So my view on life is to not listen to what anyone else says, just get on and do what you want to do. If everyone listened to what everyone else said, life would be so boring; boring people doing boring jobs at the same boring time. This is not the way to live life. Life is for living, so live it!

I have many beliefs in life; some strong, some not so strong. But one of my strong beliefs is that something weird is going on beyond our planet. I mean extra terrestrial activity, alien life forms. I do not believe in calling these 'space credit UFO's. This is simply because UFO only

stands for 'Un-identified Flying Object'. When Reilly explained, a UFO can mean a frisbee or a dodgy picture of a weather balloon, all UFO's. But only 1% of 'UFO's' can actually be completely unexplainable. It is this minority that I believe to be 'visitors from afar'. The reason that I believe this is that there is so much evidence that suggests that there is extra terrestrial activity, that this cannot all be lies or coincidence. OK, if we say that 95% of it is fake, this still leaves the 5% that is genuine. This 5% may consist of abduction stories, alien craft sightings, this can not be ignored!

There is nothing really that I am scared of. I'm not just saying that either. Perhaps one thing worries me more than anything else; the thought of not being liked. This to me would be the worst thing that could happen. I can not survive without other people and friends. Perhaps this is the reason that I am so paranoid, a fear of the lack of friends. I need people to talk to, people to listen to, people to laugh with and people to enjoy life with. Maybe it's not actually a fear of not being liked. More a fear of upsetting other people. I hate making people feel upset or bad about themselves; the main reason for this is because I hate it being done to me. This also keeps in line with a christian

teaching from the bible:

"Do unto others as you would have done to yourself."

Whenever I go to do something that I shouldn't, I always think of these lines. Most of the time they deter me from my actions, most of the time.

If I was to be granted three wishes I would have no trouble in using them all up. In fact my first wish would be taken up by wishing for three more wishes. There are no rules about wishing for more wishes. For my second wish I would be tempted to wish that all of my family and friends were healthy and well provided for. But after some consideration I would wish for everyone on earth to be healthy and provided for. This being granted, I would have to make the third a purely selfish wish. Not a wish for money or food, simply the desire for understanding. So that I could understand and help people with abnormalities or twisted ideas.

ic/2/98

③

STEVE

Mr Pike

Creative Writing

62

Surprise!

Contradiction?

Three minutes ago the bell had summonsed all 1215 pupils into their classrooms for lessons to begin in the Oak Lodge Secondary School in Dorset.. To Josh this signified yet another day of mind-numbingly boring activity, and what's more a waste of a perfectly wastable day. He drifted into room 12 like a leaf on a leisurely breeze, only with far less activity. Oblivious to the world around him, his ears plugged into his heavy metal playing personal stereo, Josh walked to his desk at the back of the class and slumped into his chair, an action that appeared to require a maximum effort input in order to be accomplished with success. As if by reflex action to the aforementioned operation, two size 9 DM's landed on the desk in front of the untroubled teenager. These, of course, were attached to the lump which had placed itself in the chair to the rear of the desk. Casually his eyes closed and his head started to sway in time to what was, in his opinion, music. However, anybody within earshot would object to the noise emanating from Josh's earphones being called music. Josh had the stereo turned up so loud that most in the class could hear exactly what he could; this defeated the object of the Walkman and annoyed those around the unconcerned Josh.

One person that would be concerned, though, was Maria. She entered the room from exactly the same door as Josh, she had walked down the same corridor, and was about to attend the same lesson as him, but she had a certain enthusiasm about her that was not displayed in the case of Josh. This was to be seen in her swift, purposeful steps as she strode across the classroom. She sat in the vacant space next to Josh and tapped him on the arm. His eyes opened and he peered at the figure in front of him. "Mornin'." she said, knowing full well that she was not heard, but merely understood by her lip movements. She was given no verbal reply, but a roll of Josh's eyes was his response. Maria expected no more than this of him as she had grown up with him since Play School and had grown to learn what various responses meant. This meant 'Hi. I really could do with being somewhere else right now!' and she could sympathise with him. He really didn't want to be in this geography lesson; he'd have thought it far more useful to be practising his guitar in order to achieve his dream of stardom through a self formed rock group. This, however, was not the case and he did have to be in this seemingly pointless lesson.

The door flew open and the tall, thin, familiar figure of Mr Harrison walked into the room. He looked hot and flustered as he always did at this time in the morning. It was the 3 mile cycle to the school in the morning that made it such a struggle to get into work everyday. With his purple helmet in one hand and his briefcase in the other, the out of breath teacher stood at his desk and said the routine morning greeting, "Good morning class." His beady eyes washed over the class to determine who was paying attention and who was being their normal selves. His eyes locked on the relaxed Josh. "Smith," he said in a voice no louder than his usual conversation voice.

There was no reply.

Mr Harrison put down his things on the desk and paced, arms behind back, in the direction of Josh.

8 accuracy, spelling, vocab.
odd lapses in generally good expression.
Content? plausibility?

words

Maria would have kicked Josh or something but the eyes of Mr Harrison were still fixed in their direction.

Now standing behind him, Josh was completely unaware of the presence of his geography teacher. The sharp tap on his shoulder soon gave him the impression that something was not quite right. He removed the headphones from his ears without looking round at the unimpressed teacher.

"Good morning Mr Smith," said the voice from behind him.

"Hi," was the reply that Mr Harrison received.

"Nice of you to join us, ^{physically?} mentally that is." Mr Harrison made for the front of the classroom.

"No problem," came the rather ~~courageous~~ reply. ✓

At this Mr Harrison stopped and turned on his heel. "I'll pretend I didn't hear that." His eyes were, again, doing that 'stare thing'.

Maria sat there in a state of disbelief and reviewed the situation. Josh had already had many of these confrontations with Mr Harrison. What a great way to start the day, way to go Josh! If he'd only listen to her once in a while then he wouldn't get into half as much trouble as did. But that was Josh. ✓

Mr Harrison was sat at his desk now. He took a long deep breath and sighed a disappointed sigh. He tried so hard to understand why Josh didn't share his love of geography, but he couldn't see. He tried to make the lessons interesting in order to keep the students' attention long enough for them to learn at least part of the syllabus. He tried so hard to do his job to the best of his ability, it wasn't easy.

"Right," he paused, "I've cleared it with The Head for us to go on a field trip next term." This was part of his 'get interesting' plan. "The Avon gorge is our destination. Does anybody know what can be found at the gorge?"

"Grass?", as could be expected of Josh, who had now gone into his defiant mode.

"Any sensible suggestions?"

"The Clifton suspension bridge built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel." came a voice from the front.

Josh didn't care if the statement from the fountain of knowledge at the front of the class was true or not; he didn't want to go, bridge or no bridge.

"Where is it Sir?" Maria was interested.

"Bristol, so you'll get the whole day off school."

That was different. Josh sat up in his chair and began to listen. "The whole day, you say?"

"That's right."

"And what would this trip involve? I mean, what would we have to do?"

This was the reaction that Mr Harrison had been looking for, even though the interest wasn't in the geography, it was still interest. "A few notes, a couple of diagrams. That's all." was his reply to Josh's question.

That was it. Josh was sold.



Weeks went by and so did Mr Harrison's struggle to get back all of the parental consent slips for the field trip. Josh, however, did not pose as part of this problem. This was the one reply slip that he had returned within two days of receiving the letter.

The day of the trip was upon them. Josh arrived at the coach five minutes later than it had said on the letter, but this didn't really bother Mr Harrison. What mattered was that he had actually turned up for the trip at all.

"That's the last of them Mrs Stratton." Mr Harrison had a hint of scepticism in his voice. He was unsure of the success that this trip could hold. He followed the other teacher on to the coach and gave the signal for the driver to leave.

Maria had saved a seat for Josh at the back of the coach, she knew he'd want to sit here and she knew that he would be late. Somehow, though, Tom Vincent had managed to get the seat the other side of Josh. There was nothing that she could do about this, but she didn't like it; Tim was a bad influence on Josh. It was Tim Vincent who had glued Mr Harrison's desk drawers closed. He never did find out who it was, although he wrongly suspected Josh.

Mr Harrison sat at the front of the coach next to Mrs Stratton. This appeared to the students as if he was using her as protection from certain members of the class.

"Promise me you'll behave today. Don't ruin it for the others, please." Maria sounded serious.

"What is there that I can do on this poxy little coach anyway?"

"I'm sure you'll find something if you try, but don't!"

"Yeh beard, you sound like my old dear." Was the slang thrown back at her.

At this she focused on her copy of 'Teengirl' and was soon nodding off into the land of no control.

Josh and Tim did find something to do. It was in the form of flicking the pickle from Tim's sandwich at Mr Harrison. Mrs Stratton only posed to them as an obstacle, not a deterrent. The brown lumps that belonged with the cheese in Tim's bread were soon being launched at a regular rate in the direction of their geography teacher.

Maria woke to the sound of boyish chuckles. It was too late, though. Mr Harrison was already on his feet and making his way towards the back of the coach, closely followed by the ever-present Mrs Stratton. But Josh could taste victory once again as the evidence of their crime had already been discarded of behind their seats.

The procession stopped in front of the back row. Silence.

Mr Harrison had gone slightly pale. He looked as if he was going to go ballistic at Josh, but he had no proof. Instead, in a relatively calm voice, "Whoever that was, would they please stop." He turned around and returned to his seat.

Maria said nothing. Anything that she did say would have been a waste of breath.

Sudden
jump.

The class were gathered around Mr Harrison on the bridge. He had gone off on one of his geography speeches. The class were supposed to be taking notes, hardly surprising that half of them weren't. Their minds were elsewhere.

Then, in a split second, Mr Harrison had climbed onto the ledge of the bridge and had turned to face the gorge.

This caught the attention of the class, although all could see that this was not a part of Mr Harrison's 'get interesting' plan. This was serious, really serious.

"Have I got your attention now?" Mr Harrison was shaking. Silence. Nobody moved. Traffic stopped. Passers by froze with terror.

"Stop." came a small voice. It was Maria. "Stop.....Please." This time with more concern and fear.

"Have you any idea what it's like?" said the shaking bundle of disturbed nerves, still facing away from them. "Nobody listens! Nobody cares! Everything I've tried to do in life has been ruined by something. Why?"

No reply came from the stunned onlookers.

Then, somebody said something that was not understood by Mr Harrison. It was Josh. He repeated it, "I'm sorry." This was not something that Josh had said many times before, he found it hard, but he really meant it.

Mr Harrison turned around to face the crowd that had gathered. He looked at Josh and shouted, "it's not just you. It's life!" He shouted at the crowd, "LEAVE ME IN PEACE." He waved them away violently.

Suddenly, the sound of Mr Harrison's shoes slipping from the concrete barrier caused screams, one of which was his own. People turned their heads in horror as the suicidal figure fell from where he was standing.

People opened their eyes gradually trying to cope with the tragic event. But there on the pavement was a very shaken geography teacher.

"Why?" echoed through people's minds.

would
they
med
them?

?

STEVE

Question
number

(3) Jenny Priest

Derset

Derset

2/6/98

Dear Jenny,

Do you remember the time you ran away from home and we, your parents and I, found you two nights later sitting on the doorstep of the Woodworths in Christchurch? We were so worried about you; your mum would not stop crying. I've got this ambient feeling that a similar situation is going to happen again. That is, if you leave home. I fear that you'll end up on the streets, too proud to return home for help.

At the age of 16 you would be incredibly vulnerable and money would soon become your biggest problem. Did you know that people under the age of 25 account for 25% of all homeless people? This is a direct result of the financial difficulties that face this age range. How would you get money? I know it sounds as if I am just carrying over nothing to

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you but it could get to the point where you would have to stoop as low as taking up prostitution. That is not right for a 16 year old girl. It would damage you for the rest of your life and it would be hard to get off of the streets.

What about your dream to become a teacher? There is no way that you would be able to support yourself whilst in full-time education. I am upset to see that when faced with the choice of pride or career your dream takes a back seat.

What about your parents? Have the last 16 years really been so bad that an insignificant agreement is going to allow you to break off all ties with your parents? Think of all that they have done for you. They gave you the greatest childhood that anybody could wish for: they looked after you, sheltered you from danger and showered you with gifts. Do you really want to throw this back into their faces?

I know you sometimes let

Question
numberLeave
blank

your pride get in the way of
your true instinct. Don't let
it happen this time. You've
got my phone number, give me
a ring and we'll get together
sometime soon and talk about
this. Thank-you for asking for
my advice, it means a lot.
Hang in there!

~~Yours truly, Steve~~
Yours lovingly

STEVE

Limited range of reasons + approaches but fluent &
accurate.

35

①

Personal Writing ROB

There are a lot of big issues in life that I feel strongly about.

Firstly, the Universe, space and U.F.O's. All of these subjects link together and I feel very strongly about them. The one thing that bothers me is how did the Universe come into being? If it did start from the big bang then what was there to explode? I also often wonder what was there before the Universe. Was it just empty nothingness or was it something completely different. How big is the Universe and do we accept it as not starting or finishing but just being there?

If the Universe is an infinite space, or even if it is just an extremely vast space, there must be room for other species or other living things besides ourselves. I believe that things, or even species and living organisms, from other planets have been discovered and do exist ~~yes~~ but why are they kept secret and undercover and why aren't we told about them? I also believe that area 51, a so called "secret" army base, does contain evidence of extraterrestrial life. I know that this does sound like a certain television program but it is what I believe in.

These beliefs also relate to my likes and dislikes ~~and~~ a reader. My favourite texts that I have read is the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, the so called 'trilogy'. It is a comical look at the Galaxy and the Universe and

the life within it. It is my favourite text because I find it relates to my beliefs but is also very funny in the way it is written in both narrative, but sometimes lapsing into informative modes.

The kind of texts that I generally enjoy as a reader tend to be ~~be~~ comical texts, such as 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy' and also books such as 'African Mock'. I tend not to like more serious texts as they begin to get boring and quite repetitive. However, I did enjoy reading 'To Kill a Mockingbird' earlier this year as it was quite emotive and I really felt the injustice in the book. I did not like 'The Mayor of Casterbridge' as I did not understand the language and it just got too long after a while which led me to just skim-reading the chapters rather than getting into the book.

One thing that I really do love in life is football. I try to play it on most days, and although I am not a very good player I do enjoy it a lot. I also love watching football, especially the team I support, Sheffield Wednesday. Football provokes a lot of feelings in me. Near the end of the season, Sheffield Wednesday needed to win one game, against ~~Leicester~~ Leicester to qualify for the UEFA cup the next season. Leicester scored the winning goal in the last minute of the game and it left me feeling really down and depressed for hours afterwards. After hearing that Leicester had scored in the last minute I

(2)

like making jokes, but I can be vulgar when they are at other people's expense. However, a lot of people do make jokes at my expense so I suppose I am just getting back at them and trying to make things funnier.

People generally expect a lot out of me and I am given a lot of responsibility, such as when I was given my pocket tie. It wouldn't have been given to me if the teachers didn't think I had a lot of responsibility. Personally I feel that I am quite trustworthy and will normally do as I am told.

One of my main weaknesses is that I don't have a lot of self-confidence in a lot of areas which is why I am not as good as something as I could be, because I don't believe I can do it well, especially in things like sport. I suppose my main weakness, and the other reason for me not doing as well as I can, is my laziness. If I can put something off until the next day then I will. I always end up doing things at the last minute, rushing them and then not doing very well.

I live at home with my parents and my two sisters. My parents are most definitely the biggest influences in my life and without them I wouldn't get anything done at all, let alone done well. At the time, it seems as if they are nagging and I really want them to shut up and

go away. I know that they are always right but I am too afraid to admit it, or maybe just too proud.

My father works for Paul O European Services and so he is away quite often. He used to be away once every week but he tries to limit it to once a month now. My dad was born in and grew up in Sheffield. His first real job was in the BBC career which must have been quite a good job to have. When I was one year old my father left to go to Dubai where he had a job and we joined him there when I was sixteen months old. Three years later we moved back to England before moving to Indonesia for two years. This didn't really have much of an effect on me as I was too young to really notice.

We moved back to Hertfordshire again and we lived just down the road from the school that I went to. In the summer of 1980 we moved to St Marys Close, Bransgore for the next four years. I went to Bransgore primary school. I made a lot of friends at Bransgore, some which I still see every day and some which I lost contact with, either because they were a year younger than me or because we went to different schools. I miss these friends because they were always a good laugh. I still see them now and again but we barely say anything to each

③

just lay on my bed for hours just thinking about what could have happened. Sometimes I can't believe some of the things that football evokes in me. Some people say that it is only a game, but I believe it is much more than that.

I think that if I had nine wishes in life that would come true then one would definitely be to become a professional footballer. There are the obvious disadvantages like spending Christmas away etc. but I think the fact that I would be getting paid for doing something I love would outweigh all of that. It would be my ultimate dream.

My second wish would probably be to stop all suffering in the world. I know that sounds like the kind of wish that people say so that they don't sound selfish, but after having to sit through pictures of this a few months ago, I was really moved.

My last wish would probably be to see Sheffield Wednesday win the league or some really important trophies in my lifetime. It is something I would love to see them do and if I did become a professional footballer I could help them to do this. I didn't wish for money because I would get enough of that from my first wish and if I did have lots of money, I wouldn't know what to spend it on.

If my wishes did not come true, then the job I would really like to do would be a marine biologist. It is something that has interested me for a long time and it really

appeals to me. It is much better than being stuck in an office all day, which puts me off work completely. My choice of A-levels would, or will, include Biology, although I am not sure about what else I would like to do. I do enjoy the other sciences, Physics and Chemistry, but if I took both of them then I feel that it may be a bit too much for me. Other A-levels that interest me are Business Studies and also something ~~similar~~ like Psychology as they both look interesting. However, I don't really see an A-level in Business Studies helping me in the future to a great extent. I am put off Psychology because it is quite a popular and complicated course that requires a lot of work, and sometimes I do not feel up to that challenge.

Psychology is all about what people think and how they feel and what they are like. The problem with this is that everybody is different so it is difficult to place a certain problem.

As a person I would like to think I am very honest, but that would probably be a lie. I wouldn't call myself a pathological liar but I do tend to bend the truth from time to time to suit myself. I suppose this is one of my weaknesses really as I always want to get ahead or get the advantage and will sometimes go quite a way to get it.

I have a good sense of humour and I

④

other, which is quite upsetting.

My mum, as far as I know, has always been a teacher until about two years ago when she had to give up to look after my little sister, who is now eighteen months old. She still does part time work at Burton Primary School.

Out of both of my parents I probably have a better relationship with my ~~relationship~~ mother rather than my father. This is probably because I generally ~~generally~~ ^{see} my mother a lot more than my father. This doesn't mean that I don't love them both equally, and I don't know what I would do if one of them was gone.

I do still have quite a good relationship with my father and if I want to go somewhere or do something then he is normally the one who takes me. I do go to quite a few places with my father such as a football match whenever we can get to one. However, as I don't get to see my dad much I don't really feel I can open up to him as much and talk to him as easily as I can to my mum.

I also have quite a good relationship with my older sister and I can open up to her quite well if there is something I need to talk about.

However, if I have a really bad problem or if I need to get something off my chest that I cannot talk to a

member of my family about I don't have anyone I can turn to for advice. I did used to have someone that I could discuss everything with but we are not close friends anymore.

The qualities that I like in a person contain many of my own personal qualities. Top of my list would probably be a good sense of humour. I couldn't be with someone that I couldn't have a ~~laugh~~ laugh with. They'd also have to fairly honest because I begin to get really annoyed if people don't tell me something. The other qualities I would expect would be the normal qualities that anyone would expect in a person.

ROB

10 - 2 - 98

quest 

Short Story

He had been waiting for this chance for years. The year was 1945. He was situated on the River Rhine. The war had been going for six years now. These men, if they could be called men, had taken his family, his friends, anybody he had ever loved. He couldn't wait to get out there. He checked his sidearm. Even if his weapon failed he was prepared to go out there, to the killing fields, with his own bare hands. He was going to hit them where it hurts.

He was about 6 foot tall, most of his body wasn't visible under the immense amount of camouflaged clothing he was required to wear. He was built like a fighter. He had short flattened blond hair. His anger was almost visible in his deep, blue eyes. On his uniform nothing was out of place. Everything was where he could get to it. Water, rations but most importantly, his weapons. He hadn't shaved for three days, not that it was visible under his heavily camouflaged face. He hadn't done anything for the past three days. Hadn't slept, hadn't shaved of course he'd eaten and had something to drink but he wasn't really concentrating. The anticipation of finally meeting them, the men who had taken away his life, was too much.

"Soldier...419", said a voice.

"YES SIR", he replied quickly standing to attention.

"As you were, soldier. Here is your brief from command headquarters. The sergeant is arriving shortly, be ready."

What did he mean be ready? He was as ready as he had ever been in his whole life. And what was this brief. He didn't need a stupid piece of paper to tell him what to do. He knew what he was going to do to from the first day he saw them.

He was only 16 on the day they first bombed his city. He had been there and he remembered it vividly. He wished that one day he would just wake up and realise it had all been a bad dream. But this was real. He was filled with anger. He could almost smell the vengeance that was coursing through his veins. It had been in there waiting to be released from it's cage and finally pay back the scum which had taken his life away from him.

He slowly screwed up the piece of paper and threw it to the floor.

"I wouldn't do that if I was in your position soldier"

He quickly turned to see the sergeant standing right behind him.

"SORRY SIR"

"May I ask *why* you decide to throw your orders to the floor"

"SIR- I'm sorry sir, but I don't see the point in following orders. All I want to do is get out there"

"In time soldier, in time. What's your number? 419 eh? I'll have to watch out for you.

Anyway you can get out there soon enough, once you've read the brief"

"Yes Sir", he replied, rather reluctantly.

The Sergeant turned and left and he began to read his brief. After a while he had soaked up all the information. Whether or not he was going to use it properly was a different matter. He doesn't need strategies to tell him how to kill. He was so desperate to kill these men he could have won the war by himself by now, so he thought.

✓

"I better get some rest", he thought to himself. He lay on his bed but couldn't concentrate for all the thoughts that were running through his head. What it would be like to finally meet them, how it would feel to kill one of them.

After a few hours everyone ~~was~~ called together. It was about 6 o'clock. The battle was planned to be done at night time, under the cover of darkness. Rumours had been going around that this could be the last battle. At the final meeting everyone was restless at the thought. All he could remember from that meeting was the final wish of good luck. He knew he wasn't going to need it.

The soldiers stood at the door like ~~hungry~~ wolves waiting to be fed and feeding time was getting nearer by the second. "I want you men to get out there and fight proudly for your country. Fight like you've never fought before and may God help you", bellowed out the sergeant as the soldiers ran out cheering and yelling.

He looked behind him at the temporary camp which had been set up. As the troops moved closer to the front line the sound of gunshots came ever closer. He wasn't afraid though, he was willing to die for his country, just as long as he took some of them with him.

As he approached he saw men fall all around. The dark, harsh wind blew against his face. His only fear was that he may be killed before he killed them. "DAMN", he felt a bullet whoosh past his ear. Quickly, almost as if it were a reflex reaction he picked up his own weapon and fired at anything that moved. The visibility was low yet he knew where to shoot. Anywhere he heard that disgusting language, the distinct tones and words. That's where he aimed for. He was getting colder yet he carried on with the wind rushing around his body and freezing those parts of his body which had been left uncovered. Still he carried on doggedly determined that these men would pay for all the lives they had taken. This was the moment he had been waiting for and he wasn't going to miss a minute of it.

One shot. He heard a man scream out in pain. Two shots. He heard the man fall to the floor. He wasn't going to give him the pleasure of a third. He wanted him to suffer. Suffer in a way that he had been suffering for all these years. He hadn't made any friends in the army. He didn't want to lose them in the same way he had lost the rest of his friends and family.

He ran. Not away. Running to find shelter. A vantage point. Somewhere he couldn't be shot. Somewhere where he could shoot at them. A rock, straight ahead. He dived toward it. He ducked. Away from the fire. He looked up, slowly. No one had seen him. He looked again. He saw someone. Ducking again, he checked his sidearm. He brought himself up again from behind the rock. He stood, in full view of the other man. He aimed and shot. The bang almost made him jump. The other man lay on the floor. The hole in his head clearly visible. He was covered in blood but he didn't care. For him the blood was like champagne. The sign of his own personal victory.

He took cover once more. He ran round to the side so that he was behind the enemy he began to shoot them. One by one they fell. He must've got at least 10 of them he thought before he ran to find more cover. The enemy ran to find him. He found another rock. Again he leapt behind it. Good. They hadn't seen him. He stayed there for a little while. Until the commotion had died down. He left his hiding place once

more. He silently and carefully cocked his gun and took aim once more. Another one, and another and another. He found himself enjoying the sensation. He knew that killing was wrong but this felt so good to him. He kept on shooting until he had no ammunition left. He quickly hid again. Behind the rock. He replaced the used magazine with a new one. Full of another twenty death sentences. He almost threw away the used magazine but decided to keep it as a souvenir of this great day. He placed it in his pocket. He wasn't going to lose it. He kept up this routine all night. Making sure he saved every used bullet. He remembered every used bullet as if it were the most important part of his life. The juxtaposed feelings. He knew he was doing wrong but that was what had made him so happy.

Soon the dark was turning into light. He knew he wouldn't be able to hide under the cover of darkness for much longer. Soon he heard a truck in the distance. He looked behind him. It was one of his trucks. "Reinforcements" he thought to himself. In a way he was sad because he didn't want the help. He thought he could do it himself. He was enough to take on the enemy.

It wasn't reinforcements though. He looked back at the truck and just one man came out. "Herr Hitler has surrendered", said the man, "the war is over". He looked at the man in disbelief. How could he have surrendered. The man he had been fighting for all these years had given up. He was upset at this. He felt that giving up was the easy way out. He wanted to fight until the end. He fingered the spent magazines that filled his pockets. In a way he was happy. He had got his revenge on the English for their evil killings. He had always wanted to die happy. He brought his gun up to his head and pulled the trigger.

THE END ☺



3 Dear Ian,

ROB

I read the letter you sent and I couldn't believe it. I had to read it through five times. Are you sure that's what you really want to do?

Where are going to stay? What are you going to do? Where are you going to get money from? Have you thought about all of those things? I wouldn't even think about it if I was you.

Just because you had one little row doesn't mean your mum and dad don't love you. Trust me, you'll be better of with than without.

Do you really want to become a drunk? Or a drug addict? People die out there. Even if you can't live with your mum and dad now, it'd be better than living with people who are going to get you killed. Do you just want to be another statistic? Another on the homeless list. ~~Another on the homeless list.~~ Another on the heavy drinker list.

Question
numberLeave
blank

another on the 'no-hoper-junkie' list, maybe. Even another on the fatality list.

The chances of you finding a bed are a thousand to one. The chances of you finding a comfortable bed - ten thousand to one. The chances of you finding another comfortable bed with three meals a day and a loving family - a million to one. Don't waste what you're already got, don't take it for granted. Think about what you have got: a mum and dad, your own bedroom - a warm one at that, loads of friends, food, water, clothes, education, excellent predicted grades, a good career and so much more as well. Can you tell me truthfully that you want to throw it all away?

Most of the people who are homeless didn't even have the same chances that you did. You've got those chances so take them. If ~~all~~ of the people on the streets had the same chances as you then we probably wouldn't have a problem with homelessness in this country.

Before you decide what you want to do you ought to have a long hard think. Think about your choices. Bed or street? Good health or AIDS? Friends or enemies? Fun or depression?

Your life would be a thousand

Question
NumberLeave
blank

this better if you could just swallow your
pride and say you were sorry to your
parents I doubt they hate you and
for once something might have been
your fault. Wake up to yourself, don't be
a cretin all your life! (only joking)

In the end it's your decision but seeing
as you asked me I'm going to say stay
at home. You'll be much better off.

See you later,

Strongly delivered 'hard truths' for advice.

ROB

Some shipping of material.

Accurate + controlled.

(4)

(41)

APPENDIX G

ABILITY AND ATTAINMENT DATA ON SIX READERS

TABLE 1: PUPIL PROGRESS CATS, SATS AND GCSE.

	MEAN CAT	NFER GCSE PREDICTION USING CAT	Y 9 SAT N.C. LEVEL	Y 11 GCSE LIT.	Y 11 GCSE LIT. N.C. LEVEL	Y 11 GCSE ENG.	Y11 GCSE ENG. N.C. LEVEL
STEVE	113	C	6	A*	10	A	9
ROB	113.6	C	7	A*	10	A	9
ANNA	110.6	C	7	A*	10	A	9
JOSIE	109	C	6	A	9	A	9
ADAM	113.3	C	5	B	8	B	8
PETER	119	B	5	A*	10	B	8

TABLE 2: PUPIL PROGRESS.**KS3 LEVEL COMPARED TO KS4 LEVEL.**

	Y 9 LEVEL	Y11 LEVEL LIT.	Y11 LEVEL ENG.	DIFFERENCE IN LEVEL LIT.	DIFFERENCE IN LEVEL ENG.
STEVE	6	10	9	+4	+3
ROB	7	10	9	+3	+2
ANNA	7	10	9	+3	+2
JOSIE	6	9	9	+3	+3
ADAM	5	8	8	+3	+3
PETER	5	10	8	+5	+3

TABLE 3: PUPIL PROGRESS.**CAT PREDICTED GRADE TO KS4 GRADE.**

	MEAN CAT	GCSE ENGLISH PREDICTION OF MEAN CAT	GCSE ENG.	GCSE LIT.	DIFFERENCE IN GRADE ENGLISH	DIFFERENCE IN GRADE LITERATURE
STEVE	113	C	A	A*	+2	+3
ROB	113.6	C	A	A*	+2	+3
ANNA	110.6	C	A	A*	+2	+3
JOSIE	109	C	A	A	+2	+2
ADAM	113.3	C	B	B	+1	+1
PETER	119	B	B	A*	0	+2

TABLE 4: PUPILS' ATTAINMENT WITHIN A GRADE:**ENGLISH LITERATURE.**

ENGLISH LITERATURE: LOWEST MARK FOR EACH GRADE:	A* = 124	A = 109	B = 94	C = 79	D = 63	E = 55
STEVE	126					
ROB	127					
ANNA	125					
JOSIE		115				
ADAM			99			
PETER	129					

TABLE 5: PUPILS' ATTAINMENT WITHIN A GRADE:**ENGLISH.**

ENGLISH: LOWEST MARK FOR EACH GRADE:	A* = 166	A = 147	B = 128	C = 109	D = 84	E = 71
STEVE		149				
ROB		158				
ANNA		152				
JOSIE		149				
ADAM			139			
PETER			143			

PETER**THE****SCHOOL**

9 RI

English

Peter is following a course which covers all aspects of National Curriculum English, involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. This year, he will complete a broad range of assessed tasks. Four of these - the examination, two written and one speaking and listening - are common to all ability groups. Other work is pitched at a level suited to Peter's set.

GRADE C**- EFFORT 4****- SET 2 of 11**

	Excellent ----- Very poor				
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK			*		
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR		*			

READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Peter responds in an interested way to texts studied. Peter has maintained a pleasing level of contributions to speaking and listening activities. Peter contributes helpfully and successfully to most group work.

WRITTEN WORK

Peter has, at his best, produced interesting and relevant written work. He should seek to maintain the improvement already achieved. Peter's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard. He needs to maintain his efforts to improve. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Peter is making pleasing progress. He should now increase his efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. It would be helpful if we could discuss Peter's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

THE SCHOOL

PETER

10RI

English

Peter is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Peter will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Peter's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE C - LITERATURE C - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION	*				
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At his best, Peter has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. He should seek to achieve greater consistency across a range of activities. Peter shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. He should seek to build on his achievements so far. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Peter's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy.

Peter's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are generally in need of improvement.

ASSESSED WORK

Peter's coursework is generally of a good standard. His obvious ability has been matched by a conscientious approach. Peter's results in the recent examinations were disappointing.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Peter is making pleasing progress. If he can increase his application, he is capable of further progress. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss Peter's work further at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

PETER**THE****SCHOOL**

11RI

English

Peter is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Peter will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Peter's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE A - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent			Very poor
	1	2	3	4 5
CLASSWORK	*			
HOMEWORK	*			
PRESENTATION	*			
BEHAVIOUR	*			

G.C.S.E

Peter has displayed a high level of ability in a range of speaking and listening activities. Peter shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively to texts studied. He should seek to build on his achievements so far. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Peter's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should seek to build upon the skills already evident. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy. His handwriting is always legible. Peter's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are generally in need of improvement. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

ASSESSED WORK

Peter's coursework has consistently been of a high standard. I hope that he will continue to work hard to produce his best in every assignment. He is to be congratulated on his efforts. Peter's results in the recent examinations were excellent.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Peter is making excellent progress. If he can increase his application, he is capable of further progress. He should now increase his efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. He would, on this evidence, make a very good student of English/English Literature at 'A' level. He should certainly give serious consideration to studying English/English

PETER**THE****SCHOOL****11RI**

Literature at 'A' level. I would be delighted to discuss Peter's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ADAM

THE

SCHOOL

9 LZ

English

Adam is following a course which covers all aspects of National Curriculum English, involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. This year, he will complete a broad range of assessed tasks. Four of these - the examination, two written and one speaking and listening - are common to all ability groups. Other work is pitched at a level suited to Adam's set.

GRADE A

- EFFORT 2

- SET 2 of 11

	Excellent			Very poor	
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK		*			
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR		*			

READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Adam shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively to texts studied. Adam has maintained a pleasing level of contributions to speaking and listening activities. Adam contributes helpfully and successfully to most group work.

WRITTEN WORK

Adam has, at his best, produced interesting and relevant written work. He should seek to maintain the improvement already achieved. Adam's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard. He needs to maintain his efforts to improve. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Adam is making excellent progress. He should now increase his efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. It would be helpful if we could discuss Adam's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ADAM

THE

SCHOOL

10LZ

English

Adam is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Adam will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Adam 's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE B - LITERATURE B - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION	*				
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At his best, Adam has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. He should seek to achieve greater consistency across a range of activities. Adam shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. He should seek to build on his achievements so far. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Adam 's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy. Adam 's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent.

ASSESSED WORK

Adam 's coursework has consistently been of a high standard. His obvious ability has been matched by a conscientious approach. Adam 's results in the recent examinations were encouraging.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Adam is making pleasing progress. If he can increase his application, he is capable of further progress. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss Adam 's work further at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ADAM**THE****SCHOOL****11LZ****English**

Adam is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Adam will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Adam's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE B - LITERATURE B - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

Adam has maintained a pleasing level of contributions to speaking and listening activities. Adam shows evidence of reading widely and responds enthusiastically to texts studied. He should try to develop his ability to express his responses effectively. Adam's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should seek to build upon the skills already evident. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy. His handwriting is always legible. Adam's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are generally in need of improvement. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

ASSESSED WORK

Adam's coursework is generally of a good standard. I hope that he will continue to work hard to produce his best in every assignment. He is to be congratulated on his efforts. Adam's results in the recent examinations were rather inconsistent. Adam's results in the recent examinations varied considerably between papers.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Adam is making pleasing progress. He should now increase his efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. I would be delighted to discuss Adam's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ANNA**THE****SCHOOL**

9 LZ

English

Anna is following a course which covers all aspects of National Curriculum English, involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. This year, she will complete a broad range of assessed tasks. Four of these - the examination, two written and one speaking and listening - are common to all ability groups. Other work is pitched at a level suited to Anna's set.

GRADE A**- EFFORT 1****- SET 2 of 11**

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION	*				
BEHAVIOUR	*				

READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Anna shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively to texts studied. Anna has maintained a pleasing level of contributions to speaking and listening activities. Anna contributes helpfully and successfully to most group work.

WRITTEN WORK

Anna has, at her best, produced interesting and relevant written work. She should seek to maintain the improvement already achieved. Anna's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard. She needs to maintain her efforts to improve. She should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Anna is making excellent progress. She should now increase her efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. It would be helpful if we could discuss Anna's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ANNA

THE SCHOOL

10LZ

English

Anna is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Anna will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Anna's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on her performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE B - LITERATURE B - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent	1	2	3	4	Very poor	5
CLASSWORK			*				
HOMEWORK		*					
PRESENTATION				*			
BEHAVIOUR		*					

G.C.S.E

At her best, Anna has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. She should seek to achieve greater consistency across a range of activities. Anna shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. She should seek to build on her achievements so far. She should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Anna's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. She should now seek to improve her overall level of accuracy. Anna's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent.

ASSESSED WORK

Anna's coursework has consistently been of a high standard. Her obvious ability has been matched by a conscientious approach. Anna's results in the recent examinations were disappointing.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Anna is making pleasing progress. She should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss Anna's work further at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ANNA**THE****SCHOOL****11LZ****English**

Anna is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Anna will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Anna's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on her performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE A - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 1 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At her best, Anna has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. Anna shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. She should seek to build on her achievements so far. She should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Anna's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. She should now seek to improve her overall level of accuracy. Her handwriting is always legible. Anna's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent.

ASSESSED WORK

Anna's coursework has consistently been of a very high standard. She is to be congratulated on her efforts. Anna's results in the recent examinations were excellent. Anna's results in the recent examinations varied considerably between papers.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Anna is making excellent progress. She should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. If she can increase her application, she is capable of further progress. She would, on this evidence, make a very good student of English/English Literature at 'A' level. She should certainly give serious consideration to studying English/English Literature at 'A' level. I would be delighted to discuss Anna's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

JOSIE

THE

SCHOOL

9 LS

English

Josie is following a course which covers all aspects of National Curriculum English, involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. This year, she will complete a broad range of assessed tasks. Four of these - the examination, two written and one speaking and listening - are common to all ability groups. Other work is pitched at a level suited to Josie's set.

GRADE B

- EFFORT 2

- SET 2 of 11

	Excellent	Very poor			
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK		*			
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR	*				

READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Josie shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively to texts studied. Josie has maintained a pleasing level of contributions to speaking and listening activities. Josie contributes helpfully and successfully to most group work.

WRITTEN WORK

Josie has, at her best, produced interesting and relevant written work. She should seek to maintain the improvement already achieved. Josie's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard. She needs to maintain her efforts to improve. She should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Josie is making excellent progress. She should now increase her efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. It would be helpful if we could discuss Josie's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

JOSIE**THE****SCHOOL**

10LS

English

Josie is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Josie will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Josie 's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on her performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE B - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION	*				
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At her best, Josie has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. She should seek to achieve greater consistency across a range of activities. Josie shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. She should seek to build on her achievements so far. She should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Josie 's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. She should now seek to improve her overall level of accuracy. Josie 's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent.

ASSESSED WORK

Josie 's coursework has consistently been of a very high standard. Her obvious ability has been matched by a conscientious approach.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Josie is making excellent progress. She should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss Josie 's work further at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

JOSIE

THE SCHOOL

11LE

English

Josie is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Josie will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Josie's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on her performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE A - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION			*		
BEHAVIOUR		*			

G.C.S.E

Josie has displayed a high level of ability in a range of speaking and listening activities. Josie shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. She should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Josie's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. She should now seek to improve her overall level of accuracy. Her handwriting is always legible. Josie's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent. She should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

ASSESSED WORK

Josie's coursework has consistently been of a high standard. I hope that she will continue to work hard to produce her best in every assignment.

Josie's results in the recent examinations were encouraging. Josie's results in the recent examinations varied considerably between papers.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Josie is making very pleasing progress. If she can increase her application, she is capable of further progress. She should now increase her efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. She would, on this evidence, make a very good student of English/English Literature at 'A' level. She should certainly give serious consideration to studying English/English Literature at 'A' level. I would be delighted to discuss Josie's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

STEVE

THE

SCHOOL

9 RM

English

Steve is following a course which covers all aspects of National Curriculum English, involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. This year, he will complete a broad range of assessed tasks. Four of these - the examination, two written and one speaking and listening - are common to all ability groups. Other work is pitched at a level suited to Steve's set.

GRADE B**- EFFORT 2****- SET 2 of 11**

	Excellent ----- Very poor				
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK			*		
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR				*	

READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Steve shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively to texts studied. Steve has maintained a pleasing level of contributions to speaking and listening activities. Steve participates in a lively way in most group work.

WRITTEN WORK

Steve has, at his best, produced interesting and relevant written work. He should seek to maintain the improvement already achieved. Steve's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard. He needs to maintain his efforts to improve. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Steve's progress is rather uneven. He should now increase his efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. He must show that he recognises the importance of tackling all work conscientiously. It would be helpful if we could discuss Steve's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

STEVE**THE****SCHOOL****10RM****English**

Steve is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Steve will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Steve's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE C - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 1 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent ----- Very poor				
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At his best, Steve has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. He should seek to achieve greater consistency across a range of activities. Steve shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. He should seek to build on his achievements so far. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Steve's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy. Steve's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent.

ASSESSED WORK

Steve's coursework has consistently been of a high standard. His obvious ability has been matched by a conscientious approach. Steve's results in the recent examinations were disappointing.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Steve is making excellent progress. He should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss Steve's work further at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

STEVE**THE****SCHOOL****11R5****English**

Steve is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Steve will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Steve's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE A - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 1 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK		*			
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR		*			

G.C.S.E

At his best, Steve has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. Steve shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Steve's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy. His handwriting could be more consistently legible. Steve's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are inconsistent. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

ASSESSED WORK

Steve's coursework has consistently been of a very high standard. He is to be congratulated on his efforts. Steve's results in the recent examinations were encouraging.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Steve is making excellent progress. He should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. He would, on this evidence, make a very good student of English/English Literature at 'A' level. He should certainly give serious consideration to studying English/English Literature at 'A' level. I would be delighted to discuss Sam's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ROB**THE****SCHOOL**

9 RM

English

Rob is following a course which covers all aspects of National Curriculum English, involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. This year, he will complete a broad range of assessed tasks. Four of these - the examination, two written and one speaking and listening - are common to all ability groups. Other work is pitched at a level suited to Rob's set.

GRADE A - EFFORT 1 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent	----- Very poor			
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK		*			
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION		*			
BEHAVIOUR		*			

READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Rob responds in an interested way to texts studied. Rob has only occasionally achieved a satisfactory standard in his contributions to speaking and listening activities. Rob contributes helpfully and successfully to most group work.

WRITTEN WORK

Rob has, at his best, produced interesting and relevant written work. He should seek to maintain the improvement already achieved. Rob's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard. He needs to maintain his efforts to improve. He should try to use a more varied vocabulary.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Rob is making excellent progress. He should now increase his efforts to overcome remaining areas of weakness. It would be helpful if we could discuss Rob's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ROB**THE****SCHOOL**

10RM

English

Rob is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Rob will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Rob's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE A - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 1 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent	-----			Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK	*				
PRESENTATION	*				
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At his best, Rob has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. He should seek to achieve greater consistency across a range of activities. Rob shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively and enthusiastically to texts studied. He should seek to build on his achievements so far. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Rob's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy.

Rob's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard.

ASSESSED WORK

Rob's coursework has consistently been of a very high standard. His obvious ability has been matched by a conscientious approach. Rob's results in the recent examinations were encouraging.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Rob is making excellent progress. He should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss Rob's work further at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

ROB

THE

SCHOOL

11RJ

English

Rob is following the same course as all pupils in Years 10/11. While much of the course combines English and English Literature, Rob will be awarded two G.C.S.E. grades. Rob's coursework carries 40% of English marks and 30% of English Literature. The remaining marks are based on his performance in three examination papers.

GRADES: LANGUAGE A - LITERATURE A - EFFORT 2 - SET 2 of 11

	Excellent				Very poor
	1	2	3	4	5
CLASSWORK	*				
HOMEWORK		*			
PRESENTATION	*				
BEHAVIOUR	*				

G.C.S.E

At his best, Rob has achieved a high standard in speaking and listening activities. Rob shows evidence of reading widely and responds perceptively to texts studied. He should seek to build on his achievements so far. He should continue to analyse closely all texts studied. Rob's written assignments are consistently interesting and relevant. He should now seek to improve his overall level of accuracy. His handwriting is always very neat. Rob's spelling, punctuation and grammatical expression are usually of a high standard.

ASSESSED WORK

Rob's coursework has consistently been of a very high standard. I hope that he will continue to work hard to produce his best in every assignment. He is to be congratulated on his efforts. Rob's results in the recent examinations were excellent.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, Rob is making very pleasing progress. He should now seek to maintain this progress and work hard to improve in areas of relative weakness. He would, on this evidence, make a very good student of English/English Literature at 'A' level. He should certainly give serious consideration to studying English/English Literature at 'A' level. I would be delighted to discuss Rob's work at the forthcoming Parents' Evening.

Mr M. PIKE

GCSE Grade Predictions Based on Levels C and D CAT Scores in Years 6 and 7 (Total sample size: 23,956)

The following tables use a mean CAT score. This is calculated by totalling the three individual battery scores and dividing by three. Useful summary information is provided in Table 2, namely the predicted overall mean GCSE grade, the number of grades A-C and the total number of GCSE entries that can be predicted for each band of mean CAT scores. For example, a pupil achieving a mean CAT score of 109 in Year 7 would be predicted an overall mean GCSE grade of C and would be expected to achieve 6 A-C grades out of a total of 9 GCSE passes. Information about the correlation and the sample size is provided below each table. Further explanation of these is provided on page 4, along with information about the accuracy, or reliability, of the predictions.

Table 1: Predictions by GCSE subject category

Mean CAT Score	English	Maths	Science	Geography/ History	Humanities	Modern Languages	Business Studies	Home Economics	PE Studies
125 - 130+	A	A★	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
115 - 124	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
105 - 114	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
95 - 104	C	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	C
85 - 94	D	E	E	E	D	E	D	E	D
75 - 84	E	F	F	F	E	F	E	E	E
-70 - 74	F	G	G	G	F	G	F	F	F
Correlation	0.66	0.76	0.70	0.63/0.59	0.53	0.57	0.52	0.59	0.54
Sample size	22,113	21,282	21,232	10,305/9,640	6,192	16,688	6,004	3,878	2,224

Table 1 (cont.): Predictions by GCSE subject category

Mean CAT score	Information Technology	CDT	Art
125 - 130+	B	B	B
115 - 124	B	C	B
105 - 114	C	C	C
95 - 104	D	D	C
85 - 94	D	E	D
75 - 84	E	E	E
-70 - 74	F	F	E
Correlation	0.44	0.44	0.44
Sample Size	3,348	6,246	6,578

Table 2: Summary predictions of GCSE grades based on CAT standard age scores

Mean CAT Score	Overall Mean Grade	No. Of Grades A-C	Total No. Of GCSEs
125 - 130+	A	11	11
115 - 124	B	9	10
105 - 114	C	6	9
95 - 104	D	4	8
85 - 94	E	2	7
75 - 84	F	0	6
-70 - 74	G	0	5
Correlation	0.74	0.69	0.51
Sample Size	22,967	23,956	23,956

APPENDIX H

POETRY ESSAYS

APPENDIX H.

The development of intellectual keenness in written essays.

In all, six one hour essays on 'The Way We Live' section of the Anthology for GCSE English literature were written by the six readers and their peers as preparation for the examination. Including the real GCSE examination there are, therefore, seven essays on this section which includes the poems 'What Is Our Life?' by Sir Walter Raleigh and 'The Latest Decalogue' by Arthur Hugh Clough. In this appendix a comparison is undertaken of the thoughts expressed about these two poems in the first essay (26/11/1997) and the seventh essay (18/05/1998). Both were written in one hour in an exam room, the first essay was written as a 'mock' GCSE exam and the seventh was the real, terminal examination. It is most appropriate to compare these two as they are the first and last essays written by candidates and were produced under similar conditions. The essays in between were often set as a homework and may have taken longer than one hour. The question addressed in my analysis is: what does Essay 7 demonstrate that is missing in Essay 1?

Before the comparison of the two essays by each pupil, the major points made about the pre-twentieth century poems 'The Latest Decalogue' and 'What Is Our Life?' are numbered. Generally the candidates own words are used throughout although occasionally where I have summarised a pupil's point, this is shown in brackets. At the end of Essay 7 the comments in capital letters are those scribbled by the NEAB examiner on the script and the mark awarded. Pupils' comments on the twentieth century poems have been omitted as this investigation is concerned with pre-twentieth century poetry in particular. After the comparison between the two essays, the terminal examination scripts of pupils, returned by the NEAB have been reproduced.

Conclusions regarding the development of intellectual keenness in written essays.

Generally, the essays show that pupils' vocabulary and literary awareness improved between November and May. Also, over the six months an awareness of the historical and cultural contexts of works had been gained. Pupils expressed their views more coherently in the final essay than in the first and, in general, the acquisition of specific knowledge regarding style and historical context did not diminish personal response. In fact, personal response appears, in general more developed in the latter essay.

ESSAYS WRITTEN.

EXAM PREPARATION ESSAYS.

DATE	ESSAY NUMBER	SHORT TITLE
2/4/98	Essay 1.	Poems make you think about Rights and Wrongs of Life Around You.
30/4/98	Essay 2.	How Poets' communicate their views.
7/5/98	Essay 3.	Poets' different styles.
12/5/98	Essay 4.	Poems make you think about beliefs and morality.
14/5/98	Essay 5.	Poets' comments on society.

FULL TITLES OF ESSAYS WRITTEN ON 'THE WAY WE LIVE'.

26/11/97	Mock examination essay.
2/4/98	Some poets have strong views about what's wrong with the world, and how it could be made better. Which poems in this group make you think about the rights and wrongs of the life around you? Compare at least three poems from this group. (The Way We Live)
30/4/98	In at least three poems from 'The Way We Live' discuss <u>how</u> the poets communicate their views. Think about: - Style - form - Satire and parody - Tone and mood - Persona - Language (vocabulary and style) - Humour - Message - what the poets teach.
7/5/98	Different poems are often written in very different styles. Comment on the ways in which the poets communicate their views about the way we live.
12/5/98	How do the poets in 'The Way We Live' section of poetry make you think about beliefs, ethics and morality?
14/5/98	A poet often comments on the society in which s/he lives and tries to make people see life in a new way. How do the poets present society in this section? (The Way We Live)
18/5/98	Terminal examination essay.

MOCK EXAM QUESTIONS (26/11/97)

Section B: Pre-Twentieth Century and Twentieth Century Poetry

-
- Answer **one** question in this Section.
 - You should spend **about one hour** on this Section.
-

- The following questions refer to the *Literature* section of your 1998 *Anthology*: Poetry (pages 69 to 96).
- You must refer to **at least one** of the pre-twentieth century texts in the *Anthology* in your answer.
- The poems listed below are the pre-twentieth century poems which you have been studying in your *Anthology*.

'The Lowest Trees have tops': *Sir Edward Dyer*
 'What is our life?': *Sir Walter Raleigh*
 'The Latest Decalogue': *Arthur Hugh Clough*
 'The Twa Corbies': *Anon*
 'I am': *John Clare*
 'Jordan': *George Herbert*
 'Nuns fret not': *William Wordsworth*
 'The Daffodils': *William Wordsworth*
 'The Sick Rose': *William Blake*

The Way we Live

- In your answer to Question 30 or Question 31 you **must** refer to **both** pre-twentieth century **and** twentieth century poetry.
- The pre-twentieth century texts are 'What is our Life?' and 'The Latest Decalogue'.

30. Writers have different ways of appealing to a reader. What differences do you notice in the way poets in this group try to gain our interest and attention? Compare **at least three** poems from this group.

You should think about:

- unusual choice of words
- ways of creating interesting associations
- verse techniques which bring the subject to life
- different choice of subject matter
- the writers' choices of form
- similarities and differences between modern and earlier writing.

(70)

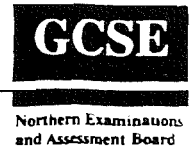
31. Some poets have strong views about what's wrong with the world, and how it could be made better. Which poems in this group make you think about the rights and wrongs of life around you? Compare **at least three** poems from this group.

You should think about:

- what the writers warn us about
- different ways writers persuade us that something is wrong
- the writers' purposes in the poems
- what the poems make you think about in your life
- words and phrases which made an impact on you
- similarities or differences between modern and earlier ideas.

(70)

TERMINAL EXAM QUESTIONS (18/5/98)



General Certificate of Secondary Education

English Literature
Tier H (Higher)



Monday 18 May 1998 9.30am - 11.30am

Section B: Pre-Twentieth Century and Twentieth Century Poetry

- Answer **one** question from this Section.
- You should spend **about one hour** on this Section.

NEAB Anthology

- The following questions refer to the *Literature* section of your 1998 Anthology: Poetry (pages 69 to 96).

The Way we Live

- In your answer to Question 30 or Question 31 you **must** refer to **both** pre-twentieth century and twentieth century poetry.
- The pre-twentieth century poems in *The Way we Live* are 'What is our Life?' and 'The Latest Decalogue'.

Either

- 30 "You don't have to shout or preach to gain people's attention."

How do poets in this group try to gain our interest and make us see things the way they do?

You should write about:

- appealing subject matter, settings or incidents
- interesting choices of language
- tone and attitude
- similarities/differences between modern and older poems.

(54)

Or

- 31 Write about **three** or **four** poems in this group which show poets' opinions about what's wrong with the world they live in.

You should write about:

- what the poets feel strongly about
- your response to their feelings and opinions
- persuasive words and phrases they use
- similarities and differences between the views of modern and earlier poets.

(54)

ADAM - 1ST POETRY ESSAY - MOCK GCSE EXAM 26/11/1997.

p.1	1. Latest Decalogue - writer warns us how far we have strayed from the original 10 commandments - our morals are all wrong
	2. adultery - shows us what the writer thinks of our society - we don't commit adultery because it's wrong but because we'd get caught and advantage won't come from it.
p.2	3. The writer is trying to say that today's society isn't good but has its morals all wrong - makes reader realise how corrupted and immoral today's society has become
	4. an impact one me ... 'except the currency'. This line is very good and to the point - the most law abiding Christian finds that he is 'worshipping' the currency because that's what he works for.
	[Paul Dehn - Gutter Press]
	[Steve Turner - Daily London Recipe].

ADAM - 7TH POETRY ESSAY - REAL GCSE EXAM 18/05/1998.

p.1	[Daily London Recipe - Steve Turner]
p.2	[Daily London Recipe - Steve Turner]
p.3	1. What is our Life? Raleigh is trying to make people realise that you have to do something exciting in life and that you need to get out of life's cycle of being born, live a little, then die
	2. little hope in life - life is likened to a play at a theatre ... curtain falls ... you die
p.4	3. I think Raleigh wants people to do something interesting in their lives
	4. The one phrase which would make people try and do something about their life (lines 5+6 - heaven the judicious spectator)
	5. This makes people think that everything they do right and wrong is being taken note of
	6. In 'The Latest Decalogue' Clough is trying to make society around him stop finding loopholes in the 10 Commandments - he's attacking the materialistic Victorians
	7. he's attacking the way people follow the letter of the law and not the spirit or the ethos of the commandments
	8. The whole poem makes out that the people have adapted to the 10 commandments to suit the materialistic society they are in now.
	9. I think the line which makes people realize they are doing wrong is 3-4 (except currency)
p.5	10. Clough uses satire to make people condemn these views and laugh at

p.5	them and then realize that they are the ‘butt’ of the satiric ridicule which I think is a very good method. 11.I think Clough’s opinion and feelings are justified - people in Victorian times are pretending to be righteous and good but they’re not admitting their sins. 12.Darwin - Origin of Species - I think Clough has written this poem as a response to the people responding to this book and them questioning the 10 commandments and God and Christianity itself.

P.RESP. Mmm!

31

AS WITH Q1. SAME FOCUS

LITTLE LANG EXPLORATION

UNDERSTANDING EVIDENT THROUGHOUT

Adam’s last essay contains far more detail and a greater range of points about the pre-twentieth century poems compared to his first essay. In his first analysis of The Latest Decalogue, Adam saw Clough addressing contemporary society and seems unaware it is a pre-twentieth century work. An awareness of the Victorian context is much clearer in the last essay. In addition, Adam is aware of satire and explains it well, noting ‘Clough uses satire to make people condemn these views and laugh at them and then realize that they are the ‘butt’ of the satiric ridicule which I think is a very good method’. Adam also shows a knowledge of the social and cultural context, referring to Darwin which although it is not with the insight of other readers, is a vast improvement on the lack of historical understanding evident in his first essay. An awareness of audience is also apparent from Adam’s points about Raleigh and this was not present in the earlier essay. The improvement evident in the seventh essay compared to the first are:

1. Increased literary awareness (satire and persona)
2. More specific historical and cultural detail
3. Improved expression and vocabulary
4. Developed personal response.

PETER - 1ST POETRY ESSAY - MOCK GCSE EXAM 26/11/1997.

p.1	The Latest Decalogue: 1. didactic 2. Clough is telling us that day by day we become less holy and more sinful. 3. written over 100 years ago 4. people follow 'letter' of the ten commandments but not the theology behind them. 5. (church attendance) - motives for the action must be brought into question 6. warning about immoral temptations - currency, competition etc. 7. true today - many people wish to become rich. 8. Clough's sinical tone may evoke a mood of guilt in a reader.
p.2	9. Clough persuades us that something is wrong with today's society. [Steve Turner - Daily London Recipe] What is Our Life:
p.3	10. Birth, Life, Death. But underneath he is trying to tell us something. 11. (Number of lines for) birth - life death Raleigh is trying to say that most people waste their lives. 12. trying to frighten us into doing something with our lives And then we die, in earnest not in jest. [Paul Dehn - Gutter Press].

PETER - 7TH POETRY ESSAY - REAL GCSE EXAM 18/05/1998.

p.1	[Steve Turner - Daily London Recipe]
p.2	The Latest Decalogue: 1. Clough parodies the Ten Commandments 2. This is a means to two ends: firstly it helps to convey the message of the poem and brings interest to a reader. 3. Another literary device used is a persona 4. Character of persona has totally differing views to the author. 5. The persona is a hypocritical character ... love of material possessions and lust for personal gain. 6. typical of Victorian middle class 7. expanding empire - riches and wealth - distraction from a religious life. 8. A reader is intended to see the poet's point of view by looking upon the persona with contempt and scorn for their lack of moral fibre and ethics. 9. Social relevance ... religious teachings much questioned ... book of Genesis Darwin's Origin of the Species three years before the publication of this poem. 10. All this would have given poem controversial value What Is Our Life?:

p.3	11.Raleigh tries to gain the attention of a reader by simply writing about the subject that is relevant in every life, death. 12.portrays a rather depressing view of life 13.we have but a few decades to complete all we ever wanted to do 14.the poem explains we rarely do this 15.Raleigh spent his life exploring the globe as full a life as any. Yet he still says that he will die in 'earnest' wanting more.

INSIGHT, CONTEXT, SUSTAINED INSIGHT THROUGHOUT

44

A dramatic improvement is apparent between Peter's first and seventh essay. From vaguely stating that 'Clough persuades us that something is wrong' and believing Clough to have a 'cynical tone' by his later essay Peter has fully grasped that Clough uses the literary device of creating a persona who is hypocritical and typical of the Victorian middle class. Although in the first essay Peter had grasped the ideas about loopholes and evasion of moral laws, following the letter but not the ethos of the commandments an awareness of the techniques employed by the writer was almost entirely lacking. By the later essay Peter's understanding and expression was dramatically improved and he was writing 'a reader is intended to see the poet's point of view by looking upon the persona with contempt and scorn for their lack of moral fibre. As well as an awareness of the poet's relationship with his audience and much improved literary judgement, Peter's later essay also demonstrates his understanding of the social relevance of the poem and a knowledge of Darwin's impact on readers. In his work on Raleigh's poem, Peter's seventh essay shows an understanding of mood and also of the historical situation of the poet. To summarise, Peter's later essay in May, compared to his first attempt in November shows:

1. Increased literary awareness.
2. More specific historical and cultural detail
3. Improved expression and vocabulary
4. An understanding of the poet's relationship with readers.

ANNA - 1ST POETRY ESSAY - MOCK GCSE EXAM 26/11/1997.

p.1	The Latest Decalogue: 1. a gifted parodist, Arthur Hugh Clough 2. hypocrisy of people in Victorian England 3. Clough is warning the reader ... many people follow letter not spirit 4. This poet communicates his message by creating a certain sort of speaker ... incredibly cynical ... sarcastic afterthoughts 5. this style ... manages to put across the way these ostensibly moral Victorian people thought and lived 6. Clough's poem also exposes the materialism of his compatriots 7. Clough was highly critical of his society and I feel that it is a very good reflection on many people's lives today ... total hypocrisy 8. loopholes can be made (going to church - motives) 9. What is our Life? - very poignant, reflective points in rhyming couplets 10. God ... mark our performance of life ... compares a human's life ... to a play 11. this poem is pessimistic about life ... poet can find no deeper meaning ... Raleigh fails to find a purpose 12. may evoke a reader to reflect 13. Raleigh puts across an absence of hope. 14. What is our Life is shorter than The Latest Decalogue and comes across a lot less harsh. [Steve Turner - Daily London Recipe]

ANNA - 7TH POETRY ESSAY - REAL GCSE EXAM 18/05/1998.

p.1	1. The Latest Decalogue ... a parody of the Biblical 10 commandments 2. Clough is trying to expose the hypocrisy of Victorian times (1861) by satirizing his materialistic compatriots. 3. Clough creates his message by communicating a persona, a typical Victorian who is set up for ridicule. This character seems to condone the hypocritical materialistic behaviour of the Victorians ... intended by Clough for the reader to ... condemn him. 4. Clough feels strongly ... expansion of British empire of Victoria ... increase in affluence. 5. Many traditional ideas and beliefs such as Christianity were being challenged ... 'Origin of Species' by Darwin 1859, three years before The Latest Decalogue - Clough became concerned that people were straying from the Christian ideas such as the 10 commandments
p.2	6. Many religious people ... would take it apparent that they worshipped nothing except God; however, the speaker here reflects on the truth that these materialistic people do actually worship something else: money speaker is being cynical ... people follow the letter not the spirit 7. This interpretation of Victorian spiritual malaise cause the reader to look at themselves. Clough is intending to correct human vice by

p.3	showing up the immoral newest decalogue 8. I feel that in today's society we live in a more multi-cultural pluralistic world, there is less hypocrisy as people are very frank 9. Clough points out in his ... parody ... people of his time were finding 'loopholes' ways to evade God's laws 10. The persona is saying ... helping a rumour on its way if it is in your best interest does no harm. God's commandment in Deuteronomy Chap 5 verse 20 is: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour' 11. Clough has managed to expose the desire for wealth and prestige.
p.4	[Where is it written? by Judith Viorst] [Where is it written? by Judith Viorst] [Daily London Recipe by Steve Turner]

ENOUGH EXPLANATION OF LANGUAGE TO REWARD
 MUCH DEVELOPED WORK ON ATTITUDE AND CONTEXT
 SOME INSIGHT. VERY PERSONAL RESPONSE

43

Although, for a first poetry essay on 'The Way We Live' Anna's essay is very good, several improvements are evident in her final essay, six months later. Even in Anna's first essay the notion of parody is understood, however in the later essay the notion of satire is also incorporated into her work. In the first essay Anna refers to a 'certain sort of speaker' and clearly recognises that this speaker is not Clough. However, in more precise terms as 'a persona, a typical Victorian who is set up for ridicule'.

Far more historical detail is evident in the later essay. Although Anna did refer to the Victorian age in her first essay, she notes that the expansion of the British Empire brought increased affluence and also refers to Darwin's Origin of Species in the seventh essay.

Anna's vocabulary and expression is much improved by May as she depicts the 'Victorian spiritual malaise' and Clough's desire to 'correct human vice'.

A developed personal response is evident in the later essay. Originally, Anna believed the hypocrisy Clough attacks to be an accurate picture of 'him today'. Six months later, Anna has developed her idea that there was less hypocrisy today than in Clough's time because we live in a 'multicultural pluralistic world' where people engage in pretence less than in the Victorian era.

To sum up, although Anna's first essay was very good her seventh essay demonstrates the following features not found in the essay written six months previously.

1. Increased literary awareness (satire and persona)
2. More specific historical and cultural detail
3. Improved expression and vocabulary
4. Developed personal response

It is important to consider the cause of the improvement. Undoubtedly both essay writing and work in class. Undoubtedly both essay writing and work in class played a part. My revision and teaching booklet (Appendix??, p.4 and 5) specifically dealt with satire and persona and these were particular teaching points over the six months between the two essays. Similarly, Anna had been taught about the historical details of Clough's time and had also had time to develop her personal views in group discussion situations when the teacher was not present.

JOSIE - 1ST POETRY ESSAY - MOCK GCSE EXAM 26/11/1997.

p.1	1. We can see from the poem 'The Latest Decalogue' that Arthur Hugh Clough's intention is clearly to expose the hypocrisy of the Victorian times in which he lived. 2. He believed that people followed the letters of the law, but not the spirit or ethos 3. The people created an illusion that they were extremely proper, religious and righteous but beneath the surface there was a lot of the immorality 4. In the poem Clough says each of the commandments and after each one he writes the real reason that people follow that commandment. 5. He believes that people are selfish and only follow each law because it is in their best interest to do so.
p.2	6. I believe Clough is warning us not to fall into the same trap of leading an immoral life ... I think Clough has persuaded us that it is wrong to live like this. 7. 'No graven images may be worshipped, except the currency' Most people can relate to this example as money and power are probably up higher on our list of priorities than being a good Christian. 8. money is more important to me than God ... Clough is against people being hypocritical and I am not being a hypocrit ... I believe that

p.3	Clough does succeed in making people feel guilty as we have all been hypocrits at some time in our lives. Although this poem is written about Victorian times, it reflects our society today. 9. I think 'What is our Life' by Sir Walter Raleigh and also 'Daily London Recipe' by Steve Turner are also about the wrongs of life. 10. 'What is Our Life?' is about the unfairness of life ... Raleigh is comparing our life to a play, more specifically a comedy. 11. He believes it is wrong that we are forced to work hard all through our lives and put up with all the terrible things that happen just to die at the end of it. 12. It makes me think that this is a very pessimistic view of life, good things do happen and we should be grateful for that. What does he expect? Does he think we should live for 200 years and have nothing but fun? My opinion is that, although life can be a struggle ... that's just the way life is and we have to make the most of it. I'm sure that without hardship and pain we wouldn't really appreciate the good things that do happen 13. If it is Raleigh's to depress us about life, he hasn't succeeded with me. He could be trying to warn us that life is short and we should make the most of it ... he has a valid point. [Daily London Recipe]
p.4	14. I think that Clough's The Latest Decalogue made me think about the rights and wrongs in life most as he is actually criticizing people's morals and I think he has a good point.

JOSIE - 7TH POETRY ESSAY - REAL GCSE EXAM 18/05/1998.

p.1	1. The Latest Decalogue ... the poet is trying to expose the hypocrisy of the Victorian times ... people followed the letters of the law but not the spirit. 2. I know this because there is a satirical tone throughout the poem, aiming to ridicule the beliefs of the Victorian people. 3. The persona is of a typical Victorian person's views; through the satire we can see that Clough disagrees with what the persona is saying. 4. The poem is a parody of the ten commandments, this imitation is used so the wrongs of society would be readdressed.
p.2	5. the situation in Great Britain ... The British Empire was becoming increasingly powerful ... much affluence in the middle classes. At this time of prosperity, traditional ideas and beliefs were also being questioned. For example, Darwin ... Origin of Species 1859 ... This caused people to desert God and many people were becoming agnostic. These are the wrongs in society which Clough is trying to have readdressed. 6. 'except the currency' ... a persuasive part of the poem which criticizes the materialism of his compatriots 7. He also feels that people are being hypocrits in appearing to be very moral, correct and religious when really they are finding loopholes in

p.3	the commandments 8. I agree with a lot of what Clough is saying. I think that most peoples' acts are for their own benefit while we all try to appear as generous and kind. 9. The view of Clough about religion is very different to the view of people today. Religion is not so important in today's society. Today it isn't seen as wrong to be an agnostic by most people. [Daily London Recipe by Steve Turner] 10. Turner is criticizing people for being trapped ... Clough is criticizing people for being too free. He thinks people have been emancipated from the strict lives they should lead. [Where is it Written? by Judith Viorst] 11. Straight away we can see this twentieth century poem is a contrast to the pre-twentieth poem 'The Latest Decalogue'. Clough believes in tradition and thinks people should live their lives in the same moral and religious manner as ever. Viorst thinks it's time for change.

SOME COMPARISON

38

TEXTS SECURE

COMP DIFF. P.RESP. LANG. CHANGE CONTEXT.

Although Josie's first essay shows clear understanding of hypocrisy being condemned and an awareness of Clough addressing readers, no notion of persona or of parody is apparent in the first essay although hit features well in the seventh essay. Whereas Josie refers to Victorian times in her first essay, specifically relevant cultural and historical detail such as Darwin's Origin of Species appear in the seventh essay.

Both essays demonstrate personal response where the poem's relevance to Josie and her society is considered although the seventh essay shows an awareness of the altered place of religion in society, the concomitant of this being a different reception of Clough's poem.

The style of Josie's essay writing is much improved in the May example as she avoids direct questions such as 'What does he expect?' which appear in the November example.

To summarise Josie's seventh essay, compared to her first shows

1. Increased literary awareness (personal and parody)
2. More specific historical and social detail.
3. Improved expression and vocabulary

4. Understanding of reader's reactions in Clough's age and in our own.

STEVE - 1ST POETRY ESSAY - MOCK GCSE EXAM 26/11/1997.

p.1	1. What is our Life? is critical of life and meaning of life 2. very depressing, ironic tone 3. achieved by ironic extended metaphor of 'short comedy' 4. poet feels life is ironic 5. my mood ... confused and slightly depressed _ 'down' view of life 6. rhyming couplets give sharp feel to every line 7. last line - only at death does life cease to be comical 8. 'sharp' style of poem helped to convey the shortness of life 9. four main stages - conception, birth, life, death.
p.2	10. The Latest Decalogue is critical of way society bypasses the 10 commandments 11. poet's tone is critically satiric of people's attitudes to life and rules 12. literary technique of rhyming couplets ... making reader think about lines in pairs 13. second line is a critical comment about the hypocrisy of society 14. about a society who says it is religious and obeys the law of God, but is actually breaking the commandment 15. main theme - society's fundamental interest in self gain 16. only reason you should honour they parents is because you might get something out of it 17. style of rhyming couplets - first the commandment then the general attitude of society toward it 18. mood of anger within me due to the hypocrisy of society 19. impact - 'advancement' - how selfish society is
p.3	[Daily London Recipe - Steve Turner]

STEVE - 7TH POETRY ESSAY - REAL GCSE EXAM 18/05/1998.

p.1	1. The Latest Decalogue is critical of Victorian age in which Clough lived. 2. rise of science caused increased agnosticism 3. Darwin's 'The Origin of Species' were challenging the traditional religious views 4. Clough is attacking the hypocritical society which appeared to follow the letter of the law but not the spirit. 5. biblical commandment then follows it with a satirical comment - this comment attacks the materialism of his society - society is the butt of

p.2	the satire. 6. The poem is meant to make people look at themselves and see themselves in the poem. The satire is designed to correct human vice and folly. 7. The parody of the ten commandments helps us to see (i) what people should be doing then (ii) why people actually did it 8. Clough creates the persona of a hypocritical Victorian, he does not actually believe these things. 9. The cynical tone of the poem creates a mood of uncertainty within me as I can remember times when I do things purely out of selfish reasons. 10. still relevant in the twentieth century as people are still thriving on materialism - result of expansion of Victorian Empire, still relevant today with the expansion of technology. 11. Sir Walter Raleigh is critical of the meaning of life 12. The poet fails to find any sense of purpose 13. written whilst Raleigh was in the Tower of London, the poem can only be expected to have a depressing tone. 14. most effect on me 'short comedy' - Raleigh is saying that our life is just a comedy, designed to amuse
p.3	15. ironies of life ... can be looked back upon and laughed at 16. Raleigh going from Queen's most trusted courtier to being set the death penalty caused him to question life and reading the poem made me do the same - left me in a confused, depressed mood. 17. single stanza ... to convey loneliness 18. last 3 words ... impact ... death is not funny 19. Like The Latest Decalogue, What Is Our Life is designed to make us look at our own lives and change. 20. Raleigh is trying to persuade us to make something of our lives [Steve Turner - Daily London Recipe]

CONTEXT

42

V. PERS RESP

COMP

COMP

CLEVER ON THE TURNER A DEVELOP (PERSONAL IN PLACES)

RESPONSE

Steve's first essay on What Is Our Life? contained errors, for instance, that rhyming couplets give a 'sharp' feel to a poem. His work on this poem is rather superficial early on but by the later essay is perceptive noting Raleigh's failure to find purpose or meaning. In his November 1997 essay Steve shows no understanding of parody or persona and seems to believe the speaker is the poet. By May 1998 Steve was highly perceptive noting that 'Clough creates the persona of a hypocritical Victorian' and showing a full and comprehensive understanding of parody and satire and the relation of poet to readers. Steve even notes that the 'satire is designed to correct

human vice and folly' and applies this on a very personal level. Steve's fluency, expression, vocabulary and overall perception and literary judgement are dramatically improved in the later essay. Overall, Steve's seventh essay has the following virtues that are absent from his first essay:

1. Increased literary awareness (satire and persona)
2. More specific historical and cultural detail
3. Improved expression and vocabulary
4. Developed personal response.

ROB - 1ST POETRY ESSAY - MOCK GCSE EXAM 26/11/1997.

p.1	1. The Author of The Latest Decalogue has extremely strong feelings about the wrongs in our life. The author exposes the hypocrisy of the time
	2. The tone of the author is very critical and cynical of the way we live
	3. the author creates a cynical persona who ... finds loopholes to evade God's laws.
p.2	4. The author states the commandment and then the line after is how society avoids it by making an extremely cynical comment. This creates a mood of anger within the reader as they are being criticized but it also makes them realize what they have been doing wrong ... still applicable today.
	5. 'except the currency' ... the reader begins to realise that what the poet has said is true. Everybody worships the currency. [Daily London Recipe]
p.3	6. What is our Life? ... the main aspect which the author believes is wrong is the fact that we do so much and experience so much in our lives but end up with nothing.
	7. The poet uses a very simple extended metaphor of a play to describe our lives and the poem is also simple and brief just as our lives are.
	8. The shortness of life is also criticized when the poet describes life as a short comedy
p.4	9. The tone of the poem also changes considerably in the last line. It changes from jest to seriousness ... the poignancy of the poem also changes at the end. [Gutter Press by Paul Dehn]

ROB - 7TH POETRY ESSAY - REAL GCSE EXAM 18/05/1998.

p.1	1. In 'The Latest Decalogue' Arthur Hugh Clough uses a satirical, cynical and hypocritical persona to try and make us see things the way he does. 2. The new Ten Commandments help to gain the reader's attention as they are very highly held in society ... especially so in the Victorian society in which Clough lived 3. Under Queen Victoria ... almost everybody in society was Christian and therefore followed the commandments very strongly. However, Clough exposed what society really believed. 4. By using a satirical, cynical and hypocritical persona Clough exposes the real beliefs. 5. Clough's persona starts off by naming and listing a commandment and then reading the 'loophole'
p.2	6. 'except the currency' The persona is very hypocritical saying ... you all worship money. This shows that Clough's contemporaries followed the word of the law but not the spirit 7. Clough's contemporaries would have felt very criticized by this poem as they were all practising Christians. This is the effect that Clough wanted, so that his satirical persona could possibly change the views of his contemporaries. 8. 'What is Our Life?' ... trying to make people see things the way Raleigh does. 9. Raleigh uses the extended metaphor of a play ... By doing this Raleigh easily gains the attention of the reader
p.3	10. The poem is very poignant in the question it asks ... easy to relate to Raleigh's life. For most of his life he was one of the most popular men in the country and was in favour with the Queen ... ended his life in the Tower of London preparing to be executed, with nothing 11. 'we die, in earnest, not in jest' Raleigh is trying to convey that no matter how hard you work and how much you gain during life you end with nothing. Raleigh is trying to say to the reader that life is not worth anything 12. The poem is very simple and brief or short, as is life 13. The tone of the poem changes for the first eight lines we are shown music, mirth and laughter. However, the tone changes in the last two lines, from jest to seriousness. The poignancy increases at the end of the poem as the tone changes.
p.4	[Daily London Recipe by Steve Turner]

SOME INSIGHT. A WELL DEVELOP.
 CONFIDENT ANSWER
 COMP. INSIGHT. CONTEXT. AUTH VOICE

43

Like Anna's first essay, Rob's first attempt to write about The Latest Decalogue and What Is Our Life? was quite accomplished and demonstrates a grasp of the cynical

persona's representation of hypocrisy. What the seventh essay shows that the first does not is, as with Anna's, an understanding of satire. More historical and cultural detail is given in the later essay as Rob notes the broadly Christian character of society under Victoria and the fact that Raleigh was in the Tower of London.

The most significant difference, however, between Rob's two essays, written six months apart, is the awareness in the later essay of a relationship between poet and reader. Although in the first essay the extended metaphor of the play is noted, in the seventh essay the effect of this on readers is considered. Similarly, Raleigh's impact on a reader is considered in the seventh essay and in the first essay a much more limited concept of the presence of the reader is apparent.

To summarise the later essay demonstrated:

1. Increased literary awareness (satire).
2. More specific historical and cultural detail.
3. A greater awareness of the relationship between writer and reader.

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

Q	(31)	THE WAY WE LIVE	ADAM
Q. 291		In "Daily London Recipe," Steve Turner attacks society in his poem because he thinks that people in London go through daily routines with little change and people are all very much the same and insignificant, there's no distinction between each other. I think the poet uses the parody of a recipe to make people seem amused by this method and about who the poem is attacking and then for them to try and get out of this repetitive, formulated life ~~every~~ day to	

Question
number

The one phrase which ^{would} make people try and do something about their life is "line" 5-6.

"Hearin' the judicious spectator is who who sits and marks what we do amiss" (line 5-6).

This makes people think that everything they do right and wrong is being taken note of.

In the "Latent Decalogue", though is trying to make society around him stop finding loop holes in the 10 commandments and he's attacking the materialistic Victorian, only to gain things such as money and wealth.

He's attacking the way people follow the letter of the law and not the spirit or the ethos of the commandments.

The whole poem makes out that the people have adapted to the 10 commandments to suit the materialistic society they are in now.

I think that the line which makes people realise they are doing wrong is "line" 3-4.

"No graven images may be worshipped, except the currency" (line 3-4).

Leave
blank

Question
numberLeave
blank

has
 "Daily London Recipe" ~~the~~ the same
 theme as "What is our life" by Sir
 Walter Raleigh. He attacks society
 by saying that we are insignificant
 in life and that we go through
 a routine of being born, live a little and
 then die. I think both poets want
 people to do something interesting into
 life, a bit of ~~interest~~ excitement instead
 of the same patterns in life.

In the poem "What is our life",
 Raleigh is trying to make people
 realise that if you have to do
 something exciting in life and that
 you need to get out of life's
 cycle of being born, live a little then
 die. I think that Raleigh's poem
 is showing there is little hope in life
 and that life is likened to a
 play at a theatre. The stages of
 being born is where you are
 dressed right through to where the
 curtain falls at the end and you
 die. I think Raleigh wants people
 to do something interesting in their
 lives instead of condemn themselves to
 a boring cycle which the spectator is
 God. I think the spectator is
 God, just like if the crowd like
 you, you'll perform longer and if they
 don't then the curtain will close, meaning
 death.

Question
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blank

day-life cycle they're in.
I think that Steve Turner
wants people to get rid of the continuity
in ~~their~~ people's lives. and He has
constructed this parody of a ~~poem~~ ^{recipe} by
using a number of imperatives
usually found in a recipe such as
"pour," "scrape" and "push."

I think that the ~~the~~ ^{biggest} impact
made on me was when Turner refers to
people as "them" it's like he makes
out they are insignificant and dehumanizes
them. I think he is trying to
correct human vice and folly by showing
~~the~~ the way people go about their
day to day lives with little change.

Steve Turner makes people who read
the poem think that they are all
the same with little change between each
other by the lines 16-18, saying:

"each carefully lined with copy of
the ~~the~~ standard and Tit bits."

(Lines 16-18)

This shows that there is little
difference between each other's houses
and what they read. People's behaviour
patterns in the evening are made to
look the same by Turner writing:

"Place mixture before open television screen at 7 p.m.
and then allow to cook in bed at 10:30 p.m."

(Lines 19-22)

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

NEAB GCE and GCSE Examinations

SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Centre name

Centre number

59827

Candidate name

ADAM

Candidate number

3064

Question
Number

This makes people realise they are breaking the commandments.

Cough was satirical to make people condemn their views and laugh at them and then realise that they are the 'butt' of the satyr's ridicule which I think is a very good method.

Q. resp.

I think that Cough's opinions & feelings are justified because people in Victorian times are pretending to be righteous and good but they're not admitting their sins. There was a high increase in brothels in London at the time. Darwin had written the book 'origin of species' a couple of years before and I think Cough has written this poem as a response to the people responding to this book and then questioning the 10 commandments and God and Christianity itself.

Mmm!

As with Q1, same form.

Little lang. explanation.

Understanding evident throughout.

31

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

PETER

Question
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30

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In the poem 'Daily London Recipe' Turner parodies a recipe to convey his message and gain interest. ~~The style of the poem is serious.~~ The use of the form of a recipe allows the use of a certain style and vocabulary. This style is very calm and methodical not at all is the poet using strong language or a forceful tone. However the

'and then allow to cool' ✓
(line 21)

The use of a more plain imperative such as 'allow' gives the impression that the ^{poet's} ~~reader's~~ views are not being forced upon the reader. This makes the poem easier to read.

A type of comic style is used in the poem, but it is ~~intend~~ not intended that laughter is the end of the process, so a satirical tone is adopted. This tone envelopes comedy but also it conveys the poet's feelings as well, it gently evokes a ~~as~~ positive response in a reader.

'Pour into empty red bus
until full

and then push in

ten more' ✓
(lines 3-6)

These lines serve both as comic, to entertain

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of his love of material possessions and lust for personal gain. This character is typical of a Victorian middle class worker. The expanding empire brings riches and wealth to the country, yet another distraction from ~~and even~~ a religious like style:

'No golden image
worshipped, except the currency.'
(lines 3-4)

A reader is intended to take up the poet's point of view by looking upon the person with contempt and scorn for their lack of moral fibre and ethics.

To give the poem social relevance and bring it into context, Clough parodies the Ten Commandments. These religious teachings were much questioned at the time; along with other biblical extracts such as the book of Genesis. This was due to ^{new} distractions from religion such as prostitution and ~~money~~ also the publication of Darwin's 'Origin of Species' three years before the publication of the poem did a lot of damage to ^{the} christian belief system. All this would have given the poem almost 'controversial' value, going against the popular 'religion' of the time that was crime and personal escalation.

'Thou shalt have one God only: who
would be at the expense of two.'

* more prevalent -

(lines 1-2)

Question
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prevailing

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blank

a reader, and as message to convey the didactic tone of the poem.

By writing about real people, yet disguise them behind the under the blanket of them:

'Take any number of them'
(line 1)

Turner shows the extent of the degradation faced by many commuters in urban areas. Imperatives such as 'push' and 'take' and phrases such as 'scrub remainder off' show the treatment and impersonality of the subject. Turner tries to make ~~not~~ readers see his point of view by a process ~~which~~ which begins with humour but ends with a serious note. The point at which a reader goes through the 'them' barrier: 'them' and the ^{use of} humour is the time when they make the transaction between laughing and learning.

~~to the~~ Clough parodies the Ten Commandments in his poem: 'The Catechism Dialogue'. This is a means to two ends: Firstly it helps to convey the message of the poem and brings interest to a reader.

Another literary device used is a person. The character of the person has totally differing views to the author. The person is a type hypocritical character, trying to keep to a religious way of life, but failing because

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

NEAB GCE and GCSE Examinations

SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Centre name
Candidate name

PETER

Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate number	3	2	6	2	

Question
Number

Raleigh tries to gain the attention of a reader by simply writing about the subject that is relevant in every life, death. Raleigh perhaps a rather depressing view of life, illustrating the fact that we have but a few decades to complete all we ever wanted to do. The poem explains that we rarely do this:

'And then we die, in earnest, not in jest'
(line 10)

contrast.

Learning a little of Raleigh's history will bring the poem together, then we realise exactly how he is trying to convey his message. Raleigh spent his life exploring the globe a full a life as any. Yet he still says that he will die in 'earnest', wanting more.

Raleigh knows

that quite a impressive a Q1, but still sustained insight throughout.

(44)

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

31 The poem 'The Latest Decalogue' written by Arthur Hugh Clough is a parody of the Biblical 10 Commandments.

Clough is trying to expose the hypocrisy of Victorian times (the poem was written in 1861) by satirising his materialistic compatriots. Clough ^{communicates his message} ~~does this~~ by creating a persona, a typical Victorian who is set up for ridicule. This character seems to condone the hypocritical materialistic behaviour of the Victorians and it is intended by Clough for the reader to look upon him and condemn him.

Clough feels strongly that under the expansion of the British empire of Victoria there had been an increase in affluence of the middle classes. Many traditional ideas and beliefs such as Christianity were being challenged. A main disturbance that confused people's belief systems was the publication of "Origin of Species" by Charles Darwin, a philosopher. This book came about in 1859 (three years before 'The Latest Decalogue' was written*) and Clough became concerned that people were straying from the Christian ideas such as the 10 commandments and gathered

Much context

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other, different values.

Many religious people in this era would make it apparent to the outside world that they worshipped nothing except God; however, the speaker here reflects on the truth that those materialistic people do actually worship something else: money.

"No graven images may be
worshipped, except the currency."

(Lines 3+4)

It is clear here that the speaker is being cynical about the way the people seemed to follow the letter of the law but not the spirit or ethos of each. ✓

This interpretation of Victorian spiritual malaise causes the reader to look at themselves and the way they live. Clough is intending to correct human vice by showing up the immoral newest ~~the~~ dogma everyone seems to be following.

Q. 28. I feel that in today's society we live in a more multi-cultural pluralistic world; there is less hypocrisy as people are very frank and open about themselves. Clough points out in his uncomplicated parody of the 10 commandments that ~~the~~ he felt the people of his time were finding 'loop-holes' in the laws ways to evade God's laws. For example:

NEAB GCE and GCSE Examinations

SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Centre name

Candidate name

ANNA

Centre number

58823

Candidate number

3091

Question
Number

"Bear not false witness; let the lie-
have time on its own wings to fly." :
(lines 17+18)

The persona is saying to the reader that,
yes it is wrong to deceive people out-right,
but helping a rumour on its way if it
is in your best interests does not harm
God's commandment in Deuteronomy
Chap 5 verse 20 in:

"Thou shalt not bear false witness
against thy neighbour" ✓

Clough has managed to expose the desire
for wealth and prestige of his compatriots
in his commandment.

Another poem in this section that
condemns written down rules is
"Where is it written?" by Judith Viorst. In
this poem Viorst satirises the house-wives
of this world. ✓

Wives are presented as having very
mundane lives compared to the exotic
and glamorous lives of husbands. Viorst uses
hyperbole when suggesting that "husbands
get to meet beautiful body lawyers and
beautiful lady professors of ancient history"
(lines 5). The repetition of the word
'beautiful' emphasises this. ✓

Question
Number

The repetition of the title "Where is it Written?", always has a line to itself which lends extra significance. This also gives the impression that there are many questions Viost is asking - in fact, there are only two. The first: Where is it written that men get all the fun, and the second: Where is it written that if women get a break they must feel guilty?

This last question occurs in the last stanza of the poem when the speaker suggests that if a role reversal happened and the husbands began the mundane chores of life and the wives did something professional and apparently exotic like "transcendental meditation", the result would be guilt on her part. No-one can win this situation - hence the satire.

This poem is written in ~~conversational~~ conversational tone, this breaks certain poetic stereotypes of poetry as it is tightly ordered. The form of the poem therefore reflects the content as Judith Viost is challenging the 'status quo' and the unquestioning acceptance of stereotypical roles adopted by husbands and wives.

I have a different view to Viost. I believe that if I had children I would prefer to stay at home and watch them grow and learn, than be away from them. This, my acceptance of a stereotypical role may bother both Viost and another poet, Steve Turner.

NEAB GCE and GCSE Examinations

SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Centre name

ANNA

Centre number

58823

Candidate name

Candidate number

3091

Question
Number

The poem 'Daily London Recipe' is a parody in which the poet reflects on the materialism in today's society that requires people to conform to a 9-5 routine and act like raw material in a capitalist economic machine.

Turner presents quite a Marxist ideological view of society. The way the poem is structured is as a recipe in a cookery book. The poem parodies a recipe by using words such as 'leave for 8 hours' and '~~see~~ serve with'. A recipe is formulated and repeated often by chefs. The fact that the poem is called 'Daily London Recipe' brings the reader to the conclusion that Turner is bringing to the attention the monotony of the day to day lives of London working people (and by implication others).

The intention of Turner is not to merely amuse the readers of his poem, but to expose to them the vice and folly of humans. Karl Marx, a philosopher in the industrial revolution of the early 20th century, came to the conclusion that factory workers only play a tiny part in the of production, they never see the benefits of work (the final product) and many derive no satisfaction.

Question
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whatsoever from their job. The discommod opinion of Tumor is that no believes such a way of life is completely unacceptable. He feels ordinary people are being exploited, alienated and dehumanised. By conforming to a 9-5 routine job everyone is the same and the individuality and creativity is removed from that person.

The ridicule of the satirised London workers is heightened by the apparently absurd subject matter (humans instead of cooked ingredients). The people Tumor discusses in his poem are degraded by strong imperatives such as "push" and "scrape", the humans are robbed of their dignity.

The laughter derived from this poignant poem is used to attack the extreme, uncomfortable formulation London lives, Tumor hopes that a reader may realise the depressing cycle they are caught in, and free themselves.

By reading and understanding this poem I have become determined not to lose my individuality and creativity to a job when I am older. As the poem is related to Marxist views, who was around in Victorian times, the poem may also have been quite relevant to people of that time also.

Use personal response

Enough exploration of lang to reward.

Must develop work in context. Some might...

43

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

JOSIE

30

31 In the poem 'The Latent Decalogue' by Brithen Hugh Clough, the poet is trying to expose the hypocrisy of the Victorian times in which he lived where people followed the letters of the law but not the spirit or either of the ten commandments. I know this because there is a satirical tone throughout the poem, aiming to ridicule the beliefs of the Victorian people. The persona is of a typical Victorian person's views; through the satire we can see that Clough disagrees with what the persona is saying. The poem is a parody of the ~~ten~~ ten commandments, this imitation is used so the wrongs of society would be re-addressed. ~~For~~

? ~~est~~ I can also understand what Clough feels strongly about because of the situation in Great Britain at the time. The British Empire was becoming increasingly powerful at this time and there was

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Context much affluence in the middle classes. People were becoming very hungry for ~~possessions~~ possessions and very materialistic. At this time of prosperity, traditional ideas and beliefs were also being questioned. For example, Charles Darwin wrote a book, 'Origin of species' in 1859 where he outlines his theories of ~~evolution~~ evolution. This caused people to desert God and many people were becoming agnostic. These are the wrongs in society which Clough is trying to have redressed.

"No grown images may be ~~met~~
Worshipped, except the currency:" (lines 3 and 4)

This is a persuasive part of the poem which criticizes the materialism of his compatriots. He also feels that people are being hypocrites in appearing to be very moral, correct and religious when really they are finding loopholes in the commandments. I agree with a lot of what Clough is saying. I think that most people's acts are for their own benefit while we all try to appear as generous and kind.

Chapter 2 The view of Clough about religion is very different to the view of people today. Religion is not so important in today's society. Today it isn't seen as wrong to be ^{an} agnostic by most people. ~~It~~

In the poem 'Daily London Recipe' by Steve Turner, the poet is reflecting on the meaningless and worthless lives which people live and he is ~~the~~ criticizing.

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society for using workers as nothing but raw materials. Turner parodies the style, language and structure of a recipe. This shows that ^{the} style and content of a poem often work in conjunction. Turner is trying to make people aware of the boredom of a repetitive job and he wants to warn us not to end up trapped in our own lives. ✓

Through his satire, Turner presents quite a Marxist view of society; that ordinary people are being exploited. I agree with Turner's view that we shouldn't end up in a lifestyle which is repetitive and meaningless. His poem makes me quite determined to always be happy with my life.

The importance of using a recipe is that the writer uses imperatives to show the abuse of ingredients and this shows the degradation of people and their lack of dignity thus persuading us that their treatment is wrong. ✓

The ideas behind this poem are obviously modern. Turner is criticizing people for being trapped in their jobs and for just following the tradition of getting a job and a home instead of thinking if it's what they really want. In 'The latest Decalogue' Clough is criticizing people for being too free. He thinks people have been emancipated from the strict rules they should lead. ✓

In 'Where Is It Written' by Judith Viorst, she is trying to explain the unfairness in the tradition of women leading mundane lives while their

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husbands are ~~experiencing~~ experiencing glamour and exotic locations. Straight away we can see how this twentieth century poem is a contrast to the pre-twentieth poem 'The latest Decadique'. Clough believes in tradition and thinks people should live their lives in the same moral and religious manner as ever. Victor thinks it's time for change. She feels that the traditional views of men being the 'bread winners' are wrong. Victor is satirising the sexual divisions of society.

Q. 2. After studying this poem I felt totally determined to fight the traditional sexist roles of women and to do what I want to in life. Victor is very persuasive as she uses words ^{and phrases} like 'Campbell's black bean soup', 'Jaxway' and 'trip to the firehouse' to show the mundane chores of women and for men she uses phrases like 'forty-five-dollar lunches' and 'beautiful sculptresses and heiresses and poetesses' to describe the life of her husband. She is also persuasive as she makes us feel that women cannot be emancipated from the traditional roles of women without feeling guilty. All three poems have been about freedom in some way but the two twentieth century poems are about the lack of freedom and the need for more while the pre-twentieth century poem was about the people having too much freedom. This suggests to me that in older times, people's lives were much stricter than today.

Same composition.

Treat secure.

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

STEVE

(31) The Latest Discourse is critical of the Victorian age in which Clough lived. The rapid rise of science caused increasing agnosticism within the Victorian society. Books like Charles Darwin's 'The Origin of Species' were challenging the traditional religious views which had always stemmed from the Bible. Clough is attacking the hypocritical society which appeared to follow the letter of the law but not the spirit.

"Thou shalt have one God only; who would be at the expense of two?" (L. 1-2)

He gives the biblical commandment then follows it with a satirical comment. This comment attacks the materialism of his society; society is the stuff of the satire. The poem is meant to make people look at themselves and see themselves in the poem. The satire is designed to correct human vice and folly. The critical comment highlights people's real interest in self-gain. The parody of the Ten Commandments helps us to see: (i) what people should be doing then (ii) why people actually did it. Clough creates the persona of

Question
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a hypocritical Victorian, he does not actually believe these things. The persona mentions words like "expense, advancement, advantage and lucrative", words connected closely to self gain.

The cynical tone of the poem helps to create a mood of uncertainty within us as I can remember times when I do things purely out of selfish reasons. The poem is still relevant in the 20th century as people are still thriving on materialism. Clough refers to materialism as a result of expansion of the Victorian Empire, still relevant today with the expansion of technology.

Sir Walter Raleigh is critical of the meaning of life. The poet links to him any sense of purpose for life on earth, as the poem was written whilst Raleigh was in the Tower of London, after 13 years, the poem can only be expected to have a depressing tone.

The words which had the most effect on me were "short comedy". Raleigh is saying that our life is just a comedy, designed to amuse "heaven's judicious sheep spectators". I think he is relating to the small

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	movies of life which happen to all of us that don't appear amusing at that time but can be looked back upon and laughed at. The ~~even~~ the extreme distortion of Raleigh going from the Queens most trusted courtier to being set the death penalty caused him to question life and reading the poem made me do the same; it left me in a confused depressed mood. The single stanza helps to convey the view of life, it just appears on the page, all alone. Life like no apparent purpose. The last 3 words made a large impact on me, they contrast the metaphor of the cowardly by saying that death is not killing, it's not coming. Like the 'Latest Decalogue' 'What is our life is designed to make us look at our own lives and change. Raleigh is trying to persuade us to make something of our lives because they could end at any time "is earnest not in jest". ✓ Steve Turner is attacking the way people live their lives, like Raleigh. He is critical of the repetitiveness	

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of people's lives, he also is telling us to make something different out of our lives. He attacks the way people are robbed of individuality and are unable to be creative in what they do. This is like the Marxist critique of modern society. Karl Marx said that people are just "cogs in the machine" and never see the final products of their labour.

The parody of a recipe helps to convey his feelings that people do the same things every time, never changing. The poem doesn't mention people the only mention of the subject is in the first line:

"Take any number of them" (C.1)

This "them" is referring to a group of people, no particular individuals. The imperatives used to be performed on the group like "transfer, pour, scrape and place" make the people feel uncomfortable and remove all dignity from them. Another method of dehumanisation is the way the parody depicts people as ingredients, raw material. The omission of the definite article helps to give the terse style of

A perceptual
commentary

Question
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Q	a	every body. Although ~~there~~ humor
		can be found in the poem, the series
		meanings behind the humor is not to
		let life restrict you. Try not to become
		one of those people "tipped into
		tenured houses and carelessly lived
		city copies of The Standard and
		Tit Bit." ✓ And on the same.
		& develop (passed in places) repeat.

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(42)

TERMINAL EXAM ESSAY (18/5/98)

ROB

Question
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30. In 'The Latest Decalogue' Arthur Hugh
Clough uses a satirical, cynical and
hypocritical persona to try and make
us see things the way he does.
The style of the poem is very important,
also, in trying to persuade us. Clough
uses a very well known list to
convey his feelings. The new Ten
Commandments help to gain the readers
attention as they are very highly held
in society. This is especially so in
the Victorian Society in which ~~Clough~~
Clough lived.

Under Queen Victoria and during the
time at which the poem was written
almost everybody in society was Christian
and therefore followed these Commandments
very strongly. However, Clough exposed
what society really believed in
in this poem. By using a satirical,
cynical and hypocritical persona Clough
exposes the real beliefs. Clough starts
off by naming and listing a
commandment and then reading the
'loophole'. One example is

"No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency" L 4-5

This persona is very hypocritical saying
that there should be no other God
in your life and no other religion. However,

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you all worshipping money and want as much as possible. This shows that Clough's contemporaries followed the word of the law but not the spirit. Clough's contemporaries would have felt very criticised by this poem as they were all practising Christianity. This is the effect that Clough wanted, so that his satirical persona could possibly change the views of his contemporaries.

Clough's simple style also helps to convey his beliefs. The poem is split up into ten sections, each a rhyming couplet. Each one also shows the commandment and then the new beliefs of his contemporaries.

'What is our life' is also a very interesting poem in trying to make people see things the way Raleigh does.

Raleigh uses the extended metaphor of a ~~the~~ play throughout the poem when describing life. He uses different aspects of the play and relates them to different aspects of life for example:

"And what our mirth but music of division?"

L2

By doing this Raleigh easily gains the attention of the reader.

The poem is very poignant in the question it asks 'What is our life'. The

Question
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incidents and aspects described in the poem are very easy to relate to Raleigh's life. For most of his life he was one of the most popular men in the country and was in favour with the Queen. He gained a knighthood, land and many other titles. However, he ended his life in the Tower of London, preparing to be executed, with nothing. As Raleigh says at the end of the poem:

"And then we die, in earnest, not in jest" L 10

Raleigh is trying to convey that no matter how hard you work and how much you gain during life you end with nothing. Raleigh is trying to say to the reader that life is not worth anything.

The form of the poem also helps to convey meaning. The poem is very simple and brief or short, as is life.

The tone of the poem changes. For the first eight lines we are given a happy music, mirth and laughter. However the tone changes in the last two lines, from jest to seriousness. The poignancy increases at the end of the poem as the tone changes.

NEAB GCE and GCSE Examinations

SUPPLEMENTARY SHEET

Centre name
Candidate name

ROB

Centre number	5	8	8	2	3
Candidate number	3	0	3	2	

Question
Number

A modern poem in which the author uses an interesting style to gain the readers attention is 'Daily London Recipe'.

The subject matter is very intriguing and appealing to the reader as it is that of a recipe. The fact that the poems title mentions a specific place in the title is also very appealing. London is the capital of Britain and is also the business centre of the world, so readers will be drawn towards this poem.

The language used in the poem is that of a recipe. Mainly orders such as 'push', 'scrape' and 'pour'. It seems ridiculous though that these imperatives are being applied to humans. It is as if people are being de-humanized and having ~~their~~ ^{their} personalities taken away. This poem could be compared to Karl Marx's critique of society, 'The Communist Manifesto'. Marx said that people were treated like cogs in a machine rather than actual people. He also said that people did not gain satisfaction from their work as they never saw the finished product.

Turner emphasises the mundane and monotonous life of people in London by

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insight

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saying it is a daily recipe. These people have to go through this dehumanization every day of their lives. The poem is also showing a paradox in London.

These people are travelling but not moving. They are confined to the same, mundane tasks every single day.

The tone in the poem is that of a cookery writer giving orders as to what to do with the raw ingredients, this again is a very interesting and appealing persona to take on.

All of these three poems have one main thing in common which make them appealing to the reader. The subject matter. It is always something which will draw the reader into reading the poem. In 'The Latest Decalogue', it is every important set of rules which everybody in that society followed. In 'What is Our Life' it is a play. A very interesting way for life to be referred to. In 'Daily London Recipe' it was the style in which the poem was written, like that of a recipe. This is not how people expect to read or see a poem and therefore it is very appealing to the reader.

(43)

Some insight

A well develop. confident answer.

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM RESEARCHER'S JOURNAL

FROM RESEARCHER'S JOURNAL: STEVE'S CONTACT WITH ME AFTER HIS ENGLISH EXAMS.

1st June 1998 - afternoon of Steve's last English exam.

Steve came to visit me today and asked what I was doing - going through how to write a diary with Year 7 after they didn't do that bit of their exam so well. He said: 'I'll teach that for you'. I said 'Okay'. Then, hesitating, he said, 'Right, what do I say?' I explained:

1. no Dear Diary - not a letter
2. empathy
3. reflective writing - thoughts and feelings.

Steve's pretext for visiting me was to return books and get his leavers form signed. In the end it became clear he had neither but had popped in for a chat! He readily agreed to help with my Y 7 class. Weird. I've torn my hair out with this boy and yet he can be the best of the best!

8th June 1998.

Steve popped in to see me again today - although he's now finished all his English exams. He taught the Y7 Set 2 lesson for me again today! He can't stay away. He did a recall on diary from last week and then administered the vocab. / spelling test I had planned based on words in The Snow Queen by Hans Christian Andersen.

Friday 12th June 1998.

Steve has been back for a third time to chat. Very positive going to do A level English - still a bit immature.

- showed them (y 7) a photo of my head on a bay watch female body - says it's kept him going throughout the course - great laugh - everyone including me very jocular - lots of banter with Steve.

INFORMAL INTERVIEW WITH STEVE FRIDAY 15/5/98
(FROM RESEARCH JOURNAL)

Steve voluntarily and of his own initiative came to see me in my classroom for 20 minutes at lunchtime. The conversation was written up that afternoon as it was impromptu and not recorded on audio tape.

Steve: Steve began, 'You know that questionnaire?' (he is referring to the one they were asked to comment on teaching methodology} 'Well, why did we do it that way? Why didn't you tell us the right answer to start with cos now I look at my anthology, at notes I first made and they're wrong - now I know what it's all about?'

Steve continued to make the point that it was 1) frustrating and 2) being thrown in at the deep end - when they were asked to respond initially without a teacher's help. He gave the example of his friend Rob who thought the tree in Blake's 'Poison Tree' was real to start with and asked 'Why didn't you say that was wrong?'

Teacher: So I explained to Steve why I'd followed the sequence / teaching and learning strategy I had:

1. You have to do unseens at A level. You've opted for A level and so have many others - so it's good practice - also, this is often the method followed with more able classes at GCSE.
2. Figuring a poem out for yourself without all the information about literary terms and historical context develops your literary mind and way of thinking.
3. Responding - I know it can feel like you're fumbling in the dark but it's a really valuable experience, you know the poem better as a result.

NOTES FROM RESEARCHER'S JOURNAL.

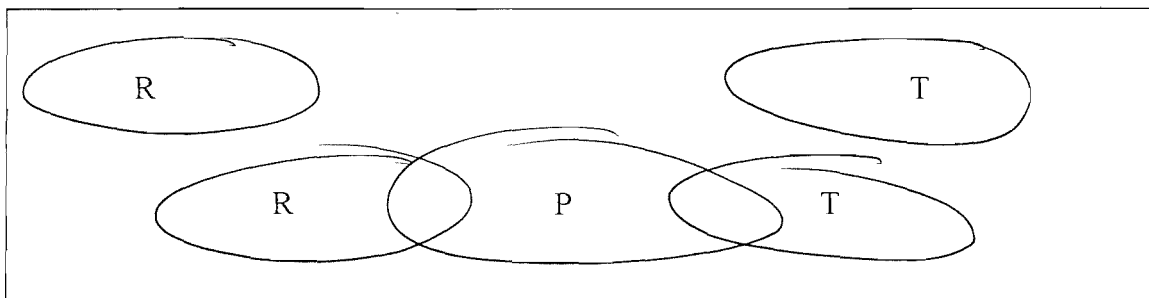
25/3/98 Lesson: Introduction to Literary Theory.

New Criticism <-----> Post Structuralism

no right answer

Rosenblatt - difference between TEXT black ink on white paper and POEM.

On board:



poem only occurs where reader's experience and text overlap.

Discussed: Aesthetic <-----> Cognitive
 Intellectual
 Cerebral

Response: positive

I told them it was an insult to think that they could not understand the philosophy or literary theory involved.

Observations made about 4 readers independently by PGCE student following group discussion. Spring Term Year 11 - 26th March 1998.

The notes jotted down by my PGCE student during independent observation of group work corroborates my own conclusions about these readers and were made after one term with the class. Josie's mood or emotional response is mentioned no less than four times. Steve's image consciousness and immaturity are evident. Peter's confidence, articulateness and philosophical / detached approach are reported. Rob's quiet confidence is noted. The original jottings of this trainee teacher are available but harder to decipher than this typed copy.

1. Josie.

Seemed to take on organising role - drawing attention to specific poems or points and inviting responses to her own ideas. Towards the end became irritated by the male attitude (mostly Steve). Josie slightly upset by male attitude, voiced her objection to male behaviour - life experiences used in responses to poems.

2. Steve.

Steve's view of poetry as only half a song in evidence again. Was more serious about joining discussion at start, making remarks and quoting poems - very observant at times, but appears to have a very relaxed attitude to this work - doesn't take it seriously or perhaps doesn't want to be seen to be taking it seriously.

3. Peter.

Unreserved participation in discussion. Had a lot to say. Interest in philosophical questions evident. Enthusiastic - seems detached even when heated. Unruffleable - doesn't get emotionally involved whereas Josie does. Peter seems to look more for facts in poems whereas Josie responds on a more emotional level. Peter is more philosophical about life experiences, and is not as emotionally involved as Josie. However, Josie is more practical in her outlook on life.

4. Rob.

Not a leader, but quietly confident in his own views and related discussion to poems.

**CONVERSATION WITH JOSIE ABOUT 'THE LOWEST TREES HAVE
TOPS' 22/9/97.**

T: Why didn't you like it?

J: I just didn't, it didn't stir up a mood, it wasn't a very emotional poem.

RESEARCHER TO ADAM 4/4/98

T: How d'you get on?

A: Yeah, good.

T: You got your views over?

A: yeah, I did.

T: So, are you still a poetry hater like you were at the start of the course in
Y 10?

A: No, I've come to accept it more now.

JOSIE - ORAL ASSESSMENT (Comments to student teacher).

As we walked from the classroom to the English Office, Josie was telling me how her attitude to poetry has only recently changed. A friend of hers claimed to be able to write poetry and offered to write a poem there and then for her to read. When Josie read it she felt that it was nothing more than lines of words which had rhymes. As a result she came to the conclusion that poetry was something more than this - that poetry, perhaps, had to be written when the poet was in an emotional state or feeling very emotional about a particular issue and that poetry had to have some depth - even obscurity - which the reader then had to work at in order to extract any meaning.

Josie proceeded to ask me if it would be ok to just speak about what she thought of poetry and suggested that I ask her a question at the start of her oral to enable her to do this. She explained that she had thought quite a lot about how she would do her oral and had planned what she would say.

APPENDIX J

TEACHING RESOURCES

WHAT IS OUR LIFE? Sir Walter Raleigh.

(from 1st Journal entries or initial annotation of poem)

Y11 STUDENT A	"calls life a short comedy ... life is like someone doing their part in a <u>play</u> ... <u>I think it is more optimistic than pessimistic</u> ... I like this poem."
Y11 STUDENT B	"a play of passion ... to show all the emotions that we feel throughout our lives. <u>This is the opposite view of Shakespeare's Macbeth, Macbeth described life as a tragic play ... maybe Raleigh was happy with life at the time of writing the poem.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT C	"A <u>dire</u> view of life"
Y11 STUDENT D	"Raleigh seems to have a <u>dim view of life</u> ... He likens life to a comedy which is <u>pretty useless and futile.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT E	"reminded me of ... Macbeth's speech where he relates life to a play and himself as an actor strutting and fretting ... <u>It had a very 'down' appeal, gloomy, dull.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT F	"The poem is <u>quite depressing</u> ... we laugh through our lives and it is a comedy but <u>we die wanting more, not laughing.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT G	"The poem is <u>not intended to make you happy</u> , obviously the poet was not laughing at the time of writing ... potentially depressing ... I would say it is a <u>fair view of life.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT H	"I thought it was saying that <u>our lives are comical.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT I	"I think that the author <u>does not really see the point in life</u> you work hard throughout ... but in the end you just die."
Y11 STUDENT J	"life is a play and <u>doesn't last very long.</u> "
Y11 STUDENT K	"Play described in two ways: Passionate and comical. We care about our lives but <u>we like to have fun and happiness. Life is only short but it is good fun</u> and provides laughter. Laughter and happiness in our life is a main part."
Y11 STUDENT J	"We die <u>not knowing of what our life was for or about.</u> "

A range of different responses to 'What Is Our Life?' are evident from 1st Journal entries and jottings around this poem. Some of the above statements clearly contradict others - so what is Raleigh's **TONE** in this poem and what **MOOD** should it evoke? Is Raleigh being optimistic or pessimistic? Is Raleigh's intention to depress or encourage his readers? Read my explanation of **MOOD** and **TONE** carefully so you don't confuse them. Don't assume that the **MOOD** and **TONE** of Raleigh's poem will automatically be the same as that of the speech in Act V Sc V of Macbeth just because Shakespeare and Raleigh use the same imagery - that of the

theatre and acting - to describe life because there are many different sorts of plays and actors - some are optimistic and some are pessimistic and most are far more sophisticated and complex than either of these very simple alternatives.

MOOD = IN THE READER

TONE = IN THE WRITER

TONE :

Think of “tone of voice”. You use a different tone of voice to communicate with different people on different occasions. The **tone** you use reveals, quite sensitively, your idea of the intelligence, status and sensitivity of the person you talk to and also your relationship with and your feelings about or attitude to your listener. Some examples of different **tones** follow but remember, there are almost infinite possible nuances and very subtle differences of relationship and feeling or attitude.

The **tone** of a speech could be **formal** (to the Head) or **intimate** to your boyfriend / girlfriend / close friend. A poet may use a wide variety of **tones**. Here are just a few:

- ardent
- serious
- ironic - using words of the opposite meaning to make one's remarks forceful
- bitter / wounding
- light-hearted / playful
- solemn
- despairing
- patronising / condescending
- satirical
- arrogant
- critical
- confused / abstruse
- simple / uncomplicated
- angry
- sceptical - inclined to disbelieve - doubts truth of claims / statements
- cynical - a person who believes people's motives are selfish and sneers at them
- nonchalant / unexcited / cool / indifferent

As people are so complex and vary linguistically and emotionally at different times, there are many more **tones** used in poems than these. I.A. Richards defined **tone** as a literary speaker's ‘attitude to his listener’ and stated that the, ‘tone of his utterance reflects ... his sense of how he stands towards those he is addressing’ (Practical

Criticism, 1929). When you read poetry, try to think of the **tone** of a narrative or lyric persona whether he or she is telling a story (narrating) or just talking to him/herself.

Some people prefer to use the term 'voice' for 'tone'. Please use the term **tone** in your exam and writing about poetry.

MOOD: (sometimes called atmosphere or ambience)

This is related closely to the **tone** of a poem, which causes the reader to respond in a certain way whether cheerfully, happily or with terror (just one example). Some books you read or films you see establish a tense and fearful atmosphere at the very start - often by using nervous, abrupt dialogue. Other books / films create a mood of superstitious terror, others engender a feeling of the pettiness and futility of the human struggle.

Think about the mood and tone of Macbeth's speech in V.v.19-28. How is this speech different to Raleigh's speaker in 'What is our Life' ? Try to be subtle and sensitive.

Macbeth

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Macbeth calls life a pathetic, strutting actor briefly on a stage. The tone of the statement is of extreme cynicism and despair. It is a kind of hymn to futility, marvellous poetry expressing complete negation which is conveyed by the plodding monotony of dreary days succeeding each other in a meaningless life. Macbeth's atheism is apparent, having ignored his conscience so long, he is not even aware he is on the brink of Hell. This generates in the reader a feeling or mood of the pettiness, futility and monotony of life and we may empathise with Macbeth and feel

how spiritually lost and damned he is, totally devoid of all hope of redemption and in the deepest and most utter depression. The slow and dreary pace of the speech conveys the weary, plodding, despairing nature of Macbeth's existence.

STYLE AND CONTENT ALWAYS WORK IN CONJUNCTION

The poet's technique (style) - the way s/he uses structure, rhythm, rhyme, vocab. etc. ALWAYS HELPS TO CONVEY THE **MOOD** AND THE **TONE**.

A POEM WORKS / OPERATES, NOT JUST BY <u>WHAT</u> IS WRITTEN (<u>CONTENT</u>) BUT ALSO BY <u>HOW</u> IT IS WRITTEN (<u>STYLE</u>).

Don't forget, it is NOT ENOUGH to state clearly what the MOOD and TONE of a poem is, you have to write about how it is created (style). How does the writer create a MOOD? How can we tell what TONE the speaker is using? QUOTE TO EXPLAIN.

Now re-read the comments of some anonymous Year 11 students at the start of this handout, see which you agree and disagree with. Develop your ideas about the mood and tone of these two poems further - 'What is our Life?' and 'The Latest Decalogue'. - You may wish to change your mind completely. Discuss the mood and tone of these poems.

TASK 1: Use Response Journal sheets.

- (a) Write about the tone of the speaker in Raleigh's poem and the mood of this poem. (50 words minimum).
- (b) Write about the tone of the speaker in Clough's poem and the mood of this poem. (50 words minimum)
- (c) Give each poem a fresh score out of 10 for how good the poem is after you have developed your ideas about tone and mood in relation to each poem. Explain why you have given this score - it doesn't have to make you feel good to be good!

THE LATEST DECALOGUE - Clough.

Y11 STUDENT B	"I liked this poem, I had a lot of ideas about it. I think that Clough is being ironic about the Decalogue and showing that people are selfish and only do nice things for their own good."
Y11 STUDENT E	"I liked this poem. It was all about going around the 10 Commandments without actually breaking them. The whole poem was based on methods of self gain."
Y11 STUDENT K	" I think he is complaining about how hypocritical we are by saying we are Christians yet we are always breaking the most important laws."
Y11 STUDENT J	" Each commandment is explained with a line or two of, occasionally, rather humorous alternatives to them like 'Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat' ... is followed by 'When it's so lucrative to cheat'".

G.C.S.E. ENGLISH LITERATURE - REVISION PACKAGE

AIM: 1 HOUR ESSAY WORTH A STAGGERING 35% OF TOTAL GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE GRADE.

Theme of poems: The Way we Live.

This theme is about the way we as humans live our lives and therefore includes, among other subjects, some of the following:

Beliefs and practices

The value of people

The purpose of life

Morality and ethics - the moral code by which people live their lives.

Appearance and reality - the capacity of humans to deceive, to behave hypocritically.

Habits and routines - ways of working

Gender roles

Influence of media = representations of our lives, the way the media behaves as an industry - how the media portrays our lives and what aspects of human behaviour certain publications focus on how human behaviour is depicted.

Psychology, philosophy, media studies, theology, religion, sociology, economics, human geography, politics etc.

The way humans treat other humans.

Routines, habits.

- 2 -

The Way We Live: Pre Twentieth Century Poetry

Works of the past . . . engender a major psychological question:

What are the basic human traits that persist despite social and cultural changes?

(Rosenblatt, p13, Literature as Exploration)

“Such works (pre twentieth century Literature) invite reflection on the idea that in different ages and in different parts of the world man has created extraordinary dissimilar social, economic and political structures which pattern the life of the individual in ways very different to our own”

(Rosenblatt, p13, Literature as Exploration)

If we consider ‘The Latest Decalogue’ (1862) as an example, it is necessary to consider whether our society today is more honest and less hypocritical than the one Clough portrayed. We also need to reflect on the similarities and differences between society today and that of the Victorian period.

THE LATEST DECALOGUEATTACKS THE MATERIALISM OF VICTORIAN SOCIETY

Clough’s poem is a PARODY of the Ten Commandments and a heavy blow against the MATERIALISM he saw in the people around him. Are people today less materialistic than those Clough attacked or are the motives of people living today the same as those exhibited by the people Clough witnessed in the nineteenth century?

There is a whole catalogue of carefully chosen words in Clough’s poem which reflect the MATERIALISM he saw around him: “expense”, “currency”, “advancement”, “advantage”, “lucrative”, “covet”, “competition”.

MATERIALISM is the opinion that nothing matters but matter (excuse the pun!) or to put it another way, that nothing is really as important as tangible objects or things. Possessions are, to a MATERIALIST, more important and more valuable than anything else. A MATERIALIST has the tendency to prefer material possessions and physical comfort to SPIRITUAL VALUES

Is Society today materialistic? Give examples to support to your views? How materialistic are you? Do you think you will become more or less materialistic as you get older? Who do you know that is very materialistic?

- 3 -

Quotation from the Bible about Materialism

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of COVETOUSNESS (Immoderate desire for wealth, the greedy longing to have more): for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the THINGS which he possesseth" - Jesus.

(Luke: 12 v 15)

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul?" - Jesus.

(Matthew: 17 v 26)

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" - Jesus.

(Matthew: 6 v 21)

"For the love of money is the root of all evil"

(Not money itself but people's ATTITUDES to it, their love of it.)

(1 Timothy 6 v 10)

What evidence of MATERIALISM is there in the play A Man For All Seasons by Robert Bolt? Who is seen to be the greatest materialist in this play?

MATERIALISM is a philosophical theory that the ultimate reality is Matter and that the phenomena of life, mind and consciousness can be completely explained by the laws of matter and motion. This sounds very scientific - i.e. if you can't measure it, see it etc. it doesn't exist.

The early Greek philosophers, notably Democritus believed this. In more modern times Hobbes held this view. MATERIALISM implies that the so called 'Spiritual' values are based only on religious or idealistic premises and that material satisfaction constitute the proper goal of humans. THIS VIEW WAS IMPLIED IN MUCH NINETEENTH CENTURY SCIENCE.

VICTORIAN SOCIETY (NINETEENTH CENTURY)
(The Latest Decalogue = 1861)

It is sometimes convenient to see Victorian Society as the age of the middle class. Merchants had newly gained importance in economic and political fields. The second half of the century saw unprecedented economic growth. Under Queen Victoria, the Empire achieved its largest extension, thus increasing the feeling of contentedness among the middle class. THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF MATERIALISM AND PRIDE IN PROGRESS but also contradictory ideas and insecurities.

AGNOSTICISM

(An agnostic is an adherent of the view that nothing is known, or likely to be known, of the existence of God or of anything beyond material phenomena.)

Especially after 1860 there was rising agnosticism. Many people at that time thought that Darwin's Origin of Species 1859 (published just three years before 'The Latest Decalogue') disproved the book of Genesis in the Bible. The theory of evolution challenged the beliefs people had previously held.

Some representatives of religion and a few artists FOUGHT AGNOSTICISM AND MATERIALISM. Clough was one of them.

- 4 -

THE LATEST DECALOGUE

LITERARY PERIOD : 1830 - 1890 = VICTORIANISM

A strict but sham morality prevailed which demanded that subjects such as sex were to be ignored in popular literature. Some writers REVOLTED AGAINST THE PRUDISHNESS, PRIGGISHNESS AND NARROW-MINDEDNESS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS.

HYPOCRISY could never be eradicated. The seemingly moral Victorian period saw the rise of pornography in underground literature and there was an unprecedented rise in prostitution in London. Queen Victoria embodies the hypocrisy of the age : her public image was of a morally upright monarch but she had a long drawn out affair in private.

HYPOCRISY = Simulation of virtue or goodness, dissimulation, pretence, acting a part.

HYPOCRITE = person guilty of hypocrisy, pretender.

PARODY

If you write about Clough's STYLE or the FORM of the poem, it is essential that you include the fact that this poem is a PARODY.

A parody imitates the serious materials and manner of a particular literary work, or the characteristic style of a particular author or other features of a serious literary form, in this case, the Ten Commandments.

A parody makes the imitation amusing by a ridiculous difference between its style / form and its subject matter.

PARODY is a form of SATIRE.

What or who is the butt of the satiric ridicule in The Latest Decalogue?

What is being imitated?

SATIRE

The Latest Decalogue 1861 is satirical.

Satire is the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn and indignation.

It is different from the comic. In comedy, laughter is an end in itself.

Satire "derides" - it uses laughter as a weapon. The target of the satire is known as the "butt" of the satiric ridicule.

That butt may be an individual, a type of person, a class, an institution, a nation or even the whole human race.

What is the butt of the satiric ridicule in The Latest Decalogue?

Satire is designed to correct human vice and folly. Which particular vices in humans is Author through Clough attempting to correct?

- 5 -

Even those works of Literature that are in opposition to the DOMINANT ATTITUDES of their time are as much a part of their age as the writings that reflect its dogmas and prevailing attitudes.

"Knowledge about the author's life and the literary influences acting upon him will create the need for understanding the intellectual and philosophical, the social and economic, conditions surrounding him.

If the work is not a contemporary one, the CONTRASTS AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE CONDITIONS OF THE PAST AGE AND THE PRESENTS WILL ILLUMINATE WAYS IN WHICH PRESENT DAY REACTIONS TO THE WORK MAY DIFFER FROM THOSE OF THE AUTHOR'S CONTEMPORARIES"

Rosenblatt, p118, Literature as Exploration.

Using your knowledge of Victorian society, how would a contemporary of Clough's have reacted to the poem?
How is this reaction similar or different to your reaction?

How perceptive and accurate is Clough's poem about the Victorian era?

What differences are there between the Victorian age in which Clough lived and our society today?

What similarities are there between the way people behaved in Clough's time and the way people live their lives today?

PERSONA

What persona is adopted in 'The Latest Decalogue'?

Persona - reflects the tendency to see the work of literature as a mode of speech. To conceive the work as an utterance suggests that there is a speaker who has specific personal qualities.

What are the personal qualities of the speaker in
'The Latest Decalogue'?

Adopting a persona is a key feature of satire:

The speaker expresses attitudes towards characters or situations and towards the audience to whom the work is addressed.

"Persona" is often applied to the first person narrator, the "I", of a narrative poem or the lyric speaker whose voice we listen to in a lyric poem. By referring to the 'persona' adopted in a poem we stress the fact that they are all part of the fiction, the character has been invented for a particular artistic purpose. The 'I' or persona in works is often not the poet or writer.

What can you say about the persona adopted in 'The Latest Decalogue'? How are the attitudes of the persona in the poem different to the attitudes and beliefs of Clough himself?

THE LATEST DECALOGUE

The poem is a parody of the Ten Commandments, under the guise of merely interpreting them for modern society. It has a satirical tone which subverts the original meaning in order to draw attention to the authors recognition of a recent moral decline. His intention appears to be to expose the flaws he has noticed in society with the hope of encouraging them to be redressed. The poem's structure is not complex, being based around a list of commands. It is written in iambic metre throughout and this device creates an atmosphere of solemnity, which belies the heretical content. Each command encompasses two lines, which are joined by a rhyme scheme.

From the opening couplet, the narrator is established as advocating the manipulation of a basic moral code to make it suit a society with materialistic values. The persona of the narrator is unclear, but as the original Ten Commandments are attributed to God, in this twisted interpretation, it can be assumed that the persona issuing the revised commands is a voice speaking on behalf of the more worldly society. That such a society is being addressed is made clear by the familiar, casual and cynical tone adopted in each interpretation of the more distant and authoritative original instruction:

"Thou shalt have one God only; who
would be at the expense of two?"

The command from God is separated by a semi-colon from its subverted interpretation - a device which heightens the incongruity of the intended meaning and that which has been wilfully construed. Juxtaposed with the selfless devotion to a deity which celebrates elevated principles, is the assumption that egocentricity prevails in the morally corrupt society being addressed. It is the personal inconvenience of serving more than one deity that is offensive, rather than any moral scruples or consciousness of the virtue of loyalty.

The second command, which prohibits the worshipping of "graven images" is followed by an amendment which confirms the tone of the opening couplet: money "may be worshipped", with the implication that it frequently is and has gradually become an acceptable religion. The religion of materialism holds sway here. To further reinforce the impression that material satisfaction has usurped any spiritual ideals, the explanation for the decree "swear not at all" is a recognition of the relative futility of vocal abuse, when compared with a more substantial form of vengeance against an enemy.

As the commands become increasingly serious in nature, addressing the sins of theft, murder and deceit, their subversion similarly degenerates into a lower and more powerful form. It is best described by the adjective "officiously", which occurs at the beginning of the twelfth line:

"Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
officiously to keep alive"

This implies a subscription to the letter, but not the meaning of the law and gives insight into the motives behind the other readings of the commands. Parents, or elders, should be honoured, but only for their power to give; adultery is not advised because "advantage rarely comes of it". However, it is with the vice of theft that the officiousness referred to in the injunction against murder begins to manifest itself most fully. To steal is regarded as "an empty feat", but not from moral compunction. Theft loses its charm only when shadowed by the far more devious sin of cheating another. To cheat is as "lucrative" as the cunning deed of letting a "lie have its own time to fly".

The final couplet draws attention to itself by breaking from the structures of eight-syllable lines, which has previously been adhered to rigidly. In contrast, it is made up of lines of nine syllables and addresses the "tradition" of the Victorian culture which has been described in the poem. It is the most daring of the revised commandments, merely re-phrasing the original command so that, as long as a person appears to be competing with another for a job, or a coveted object, it is acceptable; only open jealousy that takes no acting is frowned upon. The message the reader is left with is that the society upholds a tradition which "Approves all forms of competition" and has thereby degenerated into serving itself rather than God.

WHAT IS OUR LIFE?

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Elizabeth I (1558 - 1603)

James I (1603 - 1625)

MONARCHY

Momentous political and religious changes had taken place during the reign of Elizabeth I. The reign of the Stuarts under James I (1603 - 1625) foreshadowed the revolutions. When the Scots James VI succeeded to the throne of England as James I, England and Scotland were united. The year 1665 saw the 'Gunpowder Plot', an attempt to blow up the English Parliament, and thereafter the Stuarts began their battle with the House of Commons and the Puritans.

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT

The social and political conflicts of these troubled days have left their traces in philosophical and moral writings, defending either body or mind, reason or faith, worldiness or religiosity, rationalism or empiricism. *Rene Descartes* (1596-1650), the French mathematician, physicist, and philosopher, made man the centre of the universe with his famous phrase, "cogito, ergo sum". He relied exclusively on reason and distinguished between spirit and matter. His influence on the development of philosophy and science was immense. *Thomas Hobbes* (1588-1678) published his *Leviathan* in 1651, defending materialism and explaining both ideas and sensations as a result of matter in motion. Hobbes explained man as a selfish animal interested merely in self-preservation. Order, according to Hobbes, can only be established by granting of absolute power to a ruler or a body of rulers.

The seventeenth century was an age of exploration in many areas. America was colonized: Jamestown, Virginia, was founded in 1607, and the Pilgrims landed in New England in 1620. **Sir Walter Raleigh attempted to establish a settlement in North Carolina in 1585 but this failed.** The Seventeenth Century was marked by upheaval, revolutions and great changes. It was an age of contradictions and contrasts. This century saw the publication of the vastly influential Authorised Version of the Bible in 1611 (commissioned by James I in 1604).

What are the similarities and differences between life in Raleigh's time and in your time?

1) What is Our Life?

Raleigh's poem appeared in a madrigal setting by Orlando Gibbons in 1612. I find it to be quite a poignant poem (moving, touching, causing sympathy). It is reflective and key points in each rhyming couplet seen and be: emotions, brevity of our short, comic lives, God watches our performance (and seems quite stern and distant) and we die unfulfilled. The tone of the speaker in this poem is not as utterly despairing as Macbeth's similar speech but a mood of sympathy is still created in the reader as there seems to be an absence of meaning in the speaker's life. There is certainly an absence of great purpose achieved in this poem. The speaker fails to find any deeper meaning in life. Is the poem atheistic? Heaven doesn't seem to be taken that seriously and there is no mention of what happens after death - it really does seem to be the 'final curtain' which I find a pity because there is therefore an absence of hope etc. A comedy - is there no deeper meaning in life? Are we here only to amuse?

Some biographical information that may help:

Sir Walter Raleigh (1554 - 1618) Born in Devon, studied at Oxford. Courtier, adventurer, poet and historian. 1569 fought with contingent of volunteers for Devon on side of Huguenots. 1580 fought against Irish rebels at Munster. Came to attention of Queen Elizabeth I. By 1582 he was established as her favourite - rewarded with monopolies, vast estates in Ireland and England, a knighthood, Captaining of her Guard, Vice-Admiralship of Devon and Cornwall. Secret marriage to Elizabeth Throckmorton, one of the queen's attendants, became public with birth of their son 1592 - so Raleigh briefly committed to the Tower - couple settled at Sherbourne in Dorset. 1595 Raleigh led an expedition to the Orinoco, 1596 took part in raid on Cadiz, 1597 quarrelled violently with Essex.

As Queen's favourite he had not been popular - his pride and extravagance made people dislike him. Acquired a reputation for unorthodox thought. Jesuit pamphlet of 1592 accused him of patronising a 'school of atheism'. He was certainly interested in sceptical philosophy, chemistry and mathematics. 1603 arrested again on suspicion of conspiracy to dethrone James I. After an unfair trial, he was again committed to the Tower. He lived there with his wife until 1616. He was released to undertake expeditions to Orinoco in search of gold - arrested after its failure. Executed 1618 Westminster.

2) Notes for revision on The Latest Decalogue and What is Our Life?

The Latest Decalogue

With his parody of the Ten Commandments, 'The Latest Decalogue' (1862), Clough DEALT A BLOW TO HIS MATERIALISTIC COMPATRIOTS. His intentions is clearly to expose the hypocrisy of the Victorian times in which he lived where people followed the letter of the law (the ten Commandments) but not the spirit or ethos of each Commandment. Arthur Hugh Clough is known as a poet for his interpretation of the Victorian spiritual malaise. (In Victorian times, people were outwardly very proper, religious, righteous etc., but in secret, beneath the surface, there was lots of immorality - for an age when people were outwardly, ostensibly so moral, London had a staggering number of brothels - people just pretended to be righteous and didn't admit their sin).

A satirist imitates a literary work, or the characteristic style of a particular author, or the stylistic features of serious literary form, and applies them to a lowly or comically inappropriate subject). Clough quotes a commandment in The Latest Decalogue and follows it with an incredibly cynical comment. (A cynic is one who sarcastically doubts or despises human sincerity and merit and is incredulous of human goodness - sneering).

Clough is exposing the materialism (desire for wealth and things) of his time. He is highly critical of his society - look at all the words to do with materialism/selfish gain in this poem: expense, currency, advancement, lucrative, competition. However, Clough communicates his message by creating a certain sort of speaker or persona - a cynic, one who doesn't really believe the Commandments but outwardly helps them while finding 'loop holes' ways to evade God's laws. Clough is showing up the immoral nature of the 'latest, newest' decalogue that everyone seems to be following but remember, there are almost infinite possible nuances and very subtle differences of relationship and feeling or attitude.

- 3) The tone of a speech could be formal (to the Head) or intimate to your boyfriend/girlfriend/close friend. A poet may use a wide variety of tones. Here are just a few:

ardent
serious
ironic - using words of the opposite meaning to make one's remarks forceful
bitter/wounding
light - hearted/playful
solemn
despairing
patronising/condescending
satirical
arrogant
critical
confused/abstruse
simple/uncomplicated
angry
sceptical - inclined to disbelieve - doubts truth of claims/statements
cynical - a person who believes people's motives are selfish and sneers at them
nonchalant/unexcited/cool/indifferent

As people are so complex and vary linguistically and emotionally at different times, there are many more tones used in poems than these. I.A.Richards defined tone as a literary speaker's "attitude to his listener" and stated that the, "tone of his utterance reflects.....his sense of how he stands towards those he is addressing" (Practical Criticism, 1929). When you read poetry, try to think of the tone of a narrative or lyric speaker whether he or she is telling a story (narrating) or just talking to him/herself.

Some people prefer to use the term 'voice' for 'tone'. Please use the term (tone) in your exams and writing about poetry.

4) **Mood** (Sometimes called atmosphere or ambience)

This is related closely to the tone of a poem, which causes the reader to respond in a certain way whether cheerfully, happily or with terror (just one example). Some books you read or films you see establish a tense and fearful atmosphere at the very start - often by using nervous, abrupt dialogue. Other books/films create a mood of superstitious terror, others engender a feeling of the pettiness and futility of the human struggle.

Think about the mood and tone of Macbeth's speech in V.v.19-28.
How is this speech different to Raleigh's speaker in What is our life?
Try to be subtle and sensitive.

Macbeth

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Macbeth calls life a pathetic, strutting actor briefly on a stage. The tone of the statement is of extreme cynicism and despair. It is a kind of hymn to futility, marvellous poetry expressing complete negation which is conveyed by the plodding monotony of dreary days succeeding each other in a meaningless life. Macbeth's atheism is apparent, having ignored his conscience so long, he is not even aware he is on the brink of Hell. This generates in the reader a feeling or mood of the pettiness, futility and monotony of life and we may empathise with Macbeth and feel how spiritually lost and damned he is, totally devoid of all hope of redemption and in the deepest and most utter depression. The slow and dreary pace of the speech conveys the weary, plodding, despairing of Macbeth's existence.

5) STYLE AND CONTENT ALWAYS WORK IN CONJUNCTION

The poet's technique (style) - the way s/he uses structure, rhythm, rhyme, vocab etc., ALWAYS HELPS TO CONVEY THE MOOD AND THE TONE.

A POEM WORKS/OPERATES, NOT JUST BY WHAT IS WRITTEN (CONTENT) BUT ALSO BY HOW IT IS WRITTEN (STYLE).

Don't forget, it is NOT ENOUGH to state clearly what the MOOD AND TONE of a poem is, you have to write about how it is created (style). How does the writer create a MOOD? How can we tell what TONE the speaker is using? QUOTE TO EXPLAIN.

Now re-read the comments of some anonymous Year 11 students at the start of this handout, see which you agree and disagree with. Develop your ideas about the Mood and tone of these two poems further - What Is Our Life and The Latest Decalogue. - You may wish to change your mind completely. Discuss the mood and tone of these poems.

TASK 1: Use Response Journal sheets

- (a) Write about the tone of the speaker in Raleigh's poem and the mood of this poem. (so words minimum)
- (b) Write about the tone of the speaker in Clough's poem and the mood of this poem. (so words minimum)
- (c) Give each poem a fresh score out of 10 for how good the poem is after you have developed your ideas about tone and mood in relation to each poem.
Explain why you have given this score - it doesn't have to make you feel good to be good!

DAILY LONDON RECIPE

by Steve Turner

The fundamental issue this poem addresses is the treatment of human beings. People are compared to ingredients and the words “push” and “scrape” suggest how they are degraded and how their lives lack dignity. People are treated as raw materials or ingredients in the mixture that perpetuates the economy, seeing people as raw materials is a key feature the Marxist critique of modern societies. Marx believed that workers play a tiny part in an overall process of production and never see the final product or derive satisfaction from their work. They are treated as cogs in a machine and who do not see the fruit of their labour and are dehumanised and alienated. Turner appears to present a similar critique of society but the alienation effect that people experience is communicated by likening them to ingredients in the mixture of a cake. They are poured, stirred, scraped and left. They all suffer. The people depicted are clearly passive. They are not pro-active or imaginative; all their creativity and imagination is stifled because they react rather than acting. The repetition and mundane nature of their existence is emphasized as this recipe is a “daily” one. The spiritual poverty of their existence is apparent and the populace appears to suffer a repetitive, dehumanising, alienation because there is no mention of anyone deriving satisfaction from work.

Turner’s technique or style in his attack on the way Londoners (and by implication others) live is parody. He parodies the style, language and structure of recipes. Key stylistic features of recipes are copied but the imperatives (orders) such as “pour”, “scrape”, “push” are applied to people. Their discomfort and lack of dignity is apparent and they are clearly degraded. Through his satire, Turner presents quite a Marxist ideological view of society, where ordinary people are exploited, alienated and dehumanised because they are seen as ingredients (raw materials) and not as humans or as individuals. Everyone seems to be the same in Daily London Recipe.

Does the poem also set out to ridicule the fact that the buses are always full? “Pour into empty red bus, until full - then pour in ten more.” This begs the question: Why is the transport system so archaic and inefficient?

List all the imperatives (orders) in this poem.

What image/impression of the lives of these people do we get?

Turner parodies a recipe by using words like “leave for eight hours” and “serve with” he satirises London working people. He ridicules their way of life and by doing this he hopes to bring about some changes. The poet’s intention, his purpose and his objective, is not merely to amuse his readers but to expose human vice and folly. When people see the way they live they may be able to free themselves from the depressing cycle they are caught in.

By being written in the style of a recipe, it highlights that their lives are formulated and repetitive. Their houses are all the same, “each carefully lined with a copy of the standard”. The poem also ridicules the London society when the speaker says “fill bus” and then “push in ten more” and at the end “scrape remainder off”, the target is London life itself.

This poem parodies the style of writing of cookery writers, the ridicule is heightened by the apparently absurd subject matter (people instead of cookery ingredients.) The laughter derived from the poem is used to attack the extreme, uncomfortable, formulated existence of those who live in London “pour into empty red bus, then add ten more” whose day to day routine appears to be laid out methodically like a cookery recipe. It is those who live in London, following such a routine, who are the butt of the satirical ridicule. The writer highlights the monotony of their day to day routine, it is a ‘daily’ recipe. From this we may discern the opinions of the writer, and that such a way of life is unacceptable, and that the people become no more than ingredients in the recipe and are robbed of dignity.

GUTTER PRESS

- The world of tabloid journalism = “gutter” press = gutters are dirty, full of rubbish and other disgusting things.
- Seedy, sensational, irreverent, scandalous, obscene, sordid, salacious.
- The media represents or re-presents (presents again) reality, it constitutes an interpretation about what is worthwhile or what will sell (what people want to read) - a version of reality, not truth.
- The news is selected - items are considered by an editorial team for inclusion or exclusion; a particular view of the world is presented in tabloids.
- The world of the newsroom is one of hectic, stressful, bustling activity - deadlines have to be met, circulation figures have to be kept up.
- Journalists and news editors look for a “scoop”, a world exclusive to put them ahead of rival publications.
- Tabloids are often accused of having no principles, dubious morals, no decency and of invading privacy e.g. Diana chased by paparazzi.

What morality/values/attitudes does the News Editor have?

1. “Never mind who got hurt”
2. “What’s the latest dirt?”
3. “Go and get a picture of her bust”

Style and content work in conjunction to communicate meaning

STYLE

Very short, abrupt phrases/lines – catchy reminiscent of headlines in tabloids - is the Editor reading old headlines / suggestions for new headlines? **You end up reading it quickly - the rhythm determines this - it simulates the pace, energy and rush of the journalistic environment.** Style and content work together well. i.e. how it is written and what is written.

Alliteration: G’s = Girl Guide. B’s = Baronet Bottled

Use of colloquial (slang) English not standard English.

The Editor is "paid" finally by a bullet, he can no longer exploit people, invade their privacy or disseminate the "latest dirt". All his life and money, commercial success and gaining the most lucrative story have been his priority - he now dies in a typically tabloid fashion. This is NEMESIS i.e. retributive justice.

The innocence and desire for all wholesome and clean things is juxtaposed with the seedy, sordid, manipulating Editor.

What is the result of this juxtaposition?

The personae (Editor and Cameraman) are all part of the fiction Dehn has created, characters invented for a particular artistic purpose.

What is this artistic purpose?

What is Dehn's view of tabloid journalism?

Even in death the Editor wants a newsworthy event - and a picture to go with the story:

"(dying) Come and get a picture of the hole"

He is devoid of any finer feelings and doesn't even die with dignity. The Editor appears corrupt to the very end.

Do we feel justice is served at the end?

Is Dehn satirising / describing satirically the world of tabloid journalism?

What is the vice or folly being exposed?

Does Dehn want to change the media?

RHYME

Undresses
Confesses

Jug
Bottled
Throttled
Rug

Garotted
Spotted
Dog
Bog
Yarmouth
Barmouth
Nests
Guests

Examine the rest of the rhyme scheme

How does the style of this poem suit / fit
the meaning it conveys?

The News Editor and the Cameraman are complete opposites and have very different views of the world and about what is of interest. The Cameraman seems more interested in nature and appears to completely misinterpret what the News Editor says. The Cameraman should work for a BBC Wildlife programme, he is concerned about "nests", "eggs", a "lonebird", "pollen" a "queenbee", as he says at the end, things that are "clean", "fresh" and "green" are important to him. He is the antithesis of the Editor who wants "dirt", not things that are "clean" or "fresh". Attitudes/morality/vocabulary = juxtaposed.

After the first two speeches of the Cameraman, containing four questions each, the News Editor appears to bellow or roar "no". Instead of nature he wants female legs or a bust to be photographed. The subjects the News Editor is interested in seem to be: sex, nudity, gruesome murders, disasters, clergy in sex scandals, drug use, the indiscretions/immorality of those with wealth, position or status, sado-masochism, financial ruin, remains of bodies discovered, grievous bodily harm etc.

The two characters in the poem have different views about what is of value and of interest in life. The Editor is arguably motivated by greed and commercialism, people's feelings are of secondary importance to getting a sensational story. He seems to be similar to the hypocritical, immoral, selfish Victorians satirised by Clough.

In lines 26 and 40, the Editor's reply to the Cameraman, both involve the exploitation of women and the use of female bodies to advertise, to sell products - in this case, the newspaper.

WHERE IS IT WRITTEN?

What is Viorst's tone in this poem?

Wives are presented as having very mundane lives compared to the quite exotic and glamorous lives husbands lead. Husbands are taken out to expensive lunches, meet attractive people who happen to be all female professional career women or artists. They also go to football, get a "nap" and are pampered when affected by mild influenza.

In contrast, wives seem to have no rest and their lives are filled with domestic chores and meeting the needs of children.

Does this reflect the views of women you know?

In the last stanza the speaker suggests that if a role reversal occurred and she was to make the husband do mundane chores like getting shoes mended and was to do something professional like 'brain surgery' or apparently exotic like 'transcendental meditation', the result would be guilt on her part. This appears to indicate that she cannot be emancipated (freed) from the traditional gender role she is performing. Unwritten rules that govern behaviour. Rules – link to Ten Commandments.

What is the significance of the title?

What is Viorst's aim in writing this poem?

STYLE

Repetition of title - always has a line to itself - lends it extra significance. Also gives the impression of many questions, although in fact there are only two:

1. Where is it written that men get all the fun, and
2. Where is it written that if women get a break, they must feel guilty?

This division of the poem into two sections / two questions reflects the dichotomy between the people who impose the rules and the people who obey them unthinkingly who are both, it appears, at fault.

No-one can win in this situation, hence the satire.

Conversational tone, blank verse, written in the style of prose. Breaks certain poetic 'conventions' / stereotypes of poetry as tightly ordered, structured and rhyming. So form of the poem reflects its content, as J.V. is challenging the 'status quo' and the unquestioning acceptance of stereotypical roles adopted by husbands and wives.

The Way We Live - WORKSHEET FOR PAIRS

1. Compare what you and your partner have written about tone and mood in The Latest Decalogue and What Is Our Life ?
2. Discuss situations in which you have spoken cynically or heard someone else speak cynically - in the way Clough does in The Latest Decalogue.
3. Hypocrisy - discuss examples from your own lives where you have behaved hypocritically like those Clough is criticising. Confession is good for the soul! Also discuss situations (in life, on TV, books etc) where you've observed hypocrisy.
4. Discuss your views about life. Was Raleigh right? Go through the poem, one rhyming couplet at a time.
5. Discuss the similarities between:
 - a) What Is Our Life? and Gutter Press.
 - b) The Latest Decalogue and Gutter Press.
 - c) The Latest Decalogue and Daily London Recipe.
6. Discuss examples of where you follow/have followed the letter of a law/rule/regulation but not the spirit of it.
7. What tone does Dehn give the Cameraman and the News Editor?
8. Why is the style of Daily London Recipe appropriate to its content?
9. What similarities and differences are there between The Latest Decalogue, What Is Our Life, Daily London Recipe, and Gutter Press.
10. Individually construct a rank order for the four poems for how good they are.
Individually construct a rank order for the four poems for how much you liked them.
Discuss your rank orders and give reasons for your views.

REVISION WORKSHEET

(Answer each question as fully as possible)

1. What have you learned about Raleigh's life and times that has helped you to appreciate and/or interpret the poem "What is our Life?"
2. What have you learned about the social, historical, cultural and intellectual background of "The Latest Decalogue" that has helped you to interpret and /or appreciate this poem?
3. How are each of the poems in the section "The Way We Live" relevant to your own experience? Write out the numbers 1-5 next to a list of the 5 poems: 1= most relevant to you as an individual, 5= least relevant to you. State clearly the ways in which these poems are relevant to you and how they "connect" with your life / experience etc.
4. Professor Louise Rosenblatt stated:
 "The attempt to work out the author's system of values and assumptions about man and society should enable the student to discover the unspoken assumptions behind his own judgement".
 How have specific poems in the section "The Way We Live" helped you learn or think about your own assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, judgements etc? Have any of these poems influenced you in any way? (A poem might have prompted you to reflect on your own life, values, actions, society etc.) If a poem has influenced you describe how.
5. In one of the exam board's questions candidates were asked to write about the similarities and differences between pre-twentieth century ideas and current ideas. Louise Rosenblatt stated:
 "if the work (poem) is not a contemporary one, the contrasts and similarities between the conditions of that past age and the present will illuminate ways in which present day reactions to the work (poem) may differ from those of the author's contemporaries".
 - (a) How might present day reactions to "The Latest Decalogue" differ from those of Clough's contemporaries?
 - (b) How might present day reactions to "What is our Life?" differ from those of Raleigh's contemporaries?
 - (c) What similarities and differences are there between the Victorian times in which Clough lived and the time we live in now?
 - (d) What similarities and differences are there between the time Raleigh lived (17th century - end of the reign of Elizabeth I

2

and start of the reign of James I) and the time you live in today?

6. List examples of vocabulary or word order from the poems by Raleigh and Clough that are not in current use in 1998. Have you found the language a barrier to your appreciation of or ability to interpret these poems?
7. Is learning background information about the life and times of an author irrelevant and distracting or does the placing of a work (poem) in the context of the life and personality of its author provide valuable clues when reading?
8. Rosenblatt said "Literary works, if they are to "work" on us, must engage our feeling". Comment on this statement giving examples from the anthology of poems which have engaged your feelings.
9. When we began studying poems, you made jottings around poems and gave your initial reactions in a response journal. As you have got closer to the exam you have learned about (i) literary features and devices (style), (ii) the life and times of authors and (iii) you have developed your ideas about the poems, (iv) you have written 4 essays about the poems.
Has your appreciation / enjoyment / satisfaction of particular works increased or decreased with this further study? Explain why.

APPENDIX K

YEAR 9 PILOT STUDY DATA

GLORY OF WOMEN : WORKSHEET 1

1. Who does the poem appear to be addressing specifically?
2. List everything the women do e.g. 1) love us.
3. What are the women "fondly thrilled" by?
4. Why are the women "fondly thrilled" by this?
5. Why is the word "thrilled" used?
6. What do you associate with this word?
7. What alliteration is used in the first line?
8. Why is this literary device used here?
9. When specifically do the women "love" the men?
10. What does this tell us about the women?
11. When, by implication, may the women not "love" their men?
12. What do we know about the quality of love the women possess then?
13. Where, literally, could the "mentionable place" be? Give 5 examples.
14. What might an "unmentionable place" be then? Give 2 examples.
15. Why might certain places be unmentionable?
16. What are the decorations the women worship?
17. Why do you think the verb "worship" might have been used?
18. how could the women "crown" the soldiers "distant ardours"? What exactly would they literally do?
19. What is chivalry?
20. What does the word "redeem" mean?
21. Why could the women believe "chivalry" can "redeem" the disgrace of war?
22. What could line 4 mean? Discuss interpretations.
23. What point is the poet making about "chivalry" and this war?
24. Why can't the women believe the men even "retire"?
25. What is the poet's view of the way the women behave?
26. Why did he choose the title "Glory of Women" do you think?

GLORY OF WOMEN : WORKSHEET 2

1. Where does the tone of the poem change? Discuss and agree on a place to draw a line to divide the poem.
2. Why is "retire" in inverted commas?
3. Why is the phrase "hells last horror" used?
4. What do people traditionally associate with hell? - up to 5 points.
5. Why is it the "last horror" of hell?
6. How literally could this "horror" actually "break" the men?
7. What literary technique is in line 11?
8. Why might the poet have used this technique here in particular?
9. Which word is most frequently repeated in the poem?
10. Why is this word so important?
11. What has the poet chosen to have the German mother doing?
12. Where has he shown her doing this?
13. Why has this activity and setting been chosen?
14. Why has a German mother and not an English mother been chosen?
15. Does the poet hate Germans?
16. How does the poet want readers to feel after reading this poem?
17. What literary device is used in the last 2 lines?
18. Why is this literary device used?
19. What type of poem is this?
20. Give a definition of what makes the poem this type.
21. Why has this type of poem been chosen for this subject?
22. Describe the rhyme scheme of this poem.
23. What is the significance of certain words rhyming e.g. "killed" and "thrilled"?
24. How does the poet show the difference between the women's idea/image of war and what it is really like?
25. What reason did the poet have for writing this poem?

PETER

10 min reading time
30 min writing time

⑤

3/6/96

Practical Literary Criticism (unseen)

The poem is written about women through the wars about what they do and how they act. It is in the style of a letter from a soldier to perhaps his wife ~~or~~ or just women in general. 'You love us when we're heroes.'

This quote explains the style of the letter.

~~explain~~ to explain the horror of war 'Trampling the terrible corpses' 'His face trodden deeper in the mud'.

It puts across the point that without ~~women~~ the women back home the war ~~to~~ could not be fought like women are the back bone of the fighting men 'You make us shells'. But ~~it~~ it expresses that although they help women don't know what is ~~going~~ really going on hundreds of miles away on the battle field because of the sharp contrast in the types of words he uses in the poem. 'kitting socks by the fire' to some being 'trodden deeper in the mud' and the line 'You make us shells You & listen with delight'. Shells are a weapon of war death and destruction yet they are ~~it~~ linked to ~~the~~ the word delight.

The women think that war is ~~so~~ not too dangerous and is something to tell stories about and they ~~are~~ are really taken back ~~to~~ when someone they know dies 'By tales of dirt and danger fondly & thrilled' 'You & can't believe that british troops "retire"'

Retire meaning die. The poem might be trying to get women to understand that war is not just something to talk about over tea ~~and~~

ANNA

10 mins reading, 30 mins writing

3.6.96

Practical Literary Criticism (Unseen)

Write an appreciation of the poem 'Glory of Women'
 (points to bear in mind: Content, literary techniques, ~~and~~
 meaning, style, message, poet's
 points of view, who the poem
 is addressing.)

⑥

This poem is ~~about~~ written by a man who must have been a German Soldier in 1917 (the 1st World War). He is writing mainly about how the wives and mothers of the soldiers love them whatever they do, even though they are murdering people and doing other bad things. It is about how the women forget the disgrace of war and ~~remember~~ ~~take~~ ~~of~~ ~~all the good things~~ ~~of~~ calling the soldiers heroes.

According to Craiglockhart (the poet) women seem almost unaware of all the dying and suffering the war brought about,

"You listen with delight, by tales
 of dirt and danger fondly thrilled."
 (lines 5-6).

The poet used words like love, worship, believe and delight to express ~~how~~ ^{what} the women thought of the soldiers.

"You worship decorations."
 (line 3)

The poet thought that ~~the~~ ^{to} women the badges

and armoury were a sign of bravery (which they were) but the women never actually thought of what the soldiers had to go through to get them. The same as when listening to the stories, ~~the~~ to the women they were exciting ~~to~~ stories, but to the men they were a reality.

To express the horrors of the war Craiglockhart used words like wounded, dirt, danger, hell, horror, blind, blood ~~and~~ mud, fight and killed, these are the things the women don't know about.

The poet used personification:

"You crown our distant ardours while we fight." (line 7)

Five out of the fourteen lines started with 'you' meaning the women. This poem was dedicated to the women of Germany, and Craiglockhart, I think, was trying to show how these women made the soldiers forget about the horrors of the war by calling them heroes etc., therefore helping them get through it.

* Find good things out of the bad

lost three lines, mother unaware of trouble etc son is in, she is happy.

JOSIE

10 mins reading time
30 mins writing time
3rd JunePreceded literary criticism (unseen)3.6.96

Write an appreciation of the poem 'Glory of Women'.

Points to bear in mind: content, literary techniques used, meaning, style, message, poet's point of view, who the poem's addressing, vocabulary.

This poem is obviously about the heroes of war and ^{their families} ~~Although it is about the war~~ Although the genre is dangerous and terrifying, there are words used that are positive and powerful, 'delight', 'fondly thrilled'.

These words are used to describe the heroes soldiers, who are the heroes. There are lots of negative, sorrow words to really explain how terrible the war is.

The writer ~~has~~ has used alliteration in the poem to help create the effect of horror, 'hell's last horror', 'blind with blood'.

The poem explains how the wives or mothers of soldiers love them and stand by them no matter what they do. The poet is even named the poem 'Glory of women'. The last ~~two~~ two lines of the poem describe how the women are affected by the war as well because their loved ones could get killed. I think that the writer was a soldier, because in the first line he says, 'you love us when we're heroes, '. He is writing this poem to tell everyone how ~~brilliant~~ good he thinks the women ~~of~~ are for their support.

The writer has spent most of the poem writing ~~how~~ all the things that the women do for the soldiers to help them like loving and caring for them, listening to the stories of war and mourning when their loved ones die. This is to show that even though they aren't fighting in the

war, the women do lots to help and ~~without~~
their support ~~the soldier~~ is greatly appreciated.

This poem was written during ~~the~~ world war
one, the writer ^{might have} ~~probably~~ wanted to show his
gratitude to a woman who helped him ~~by~~
writing a poem. The writer ~~is~~

The writer has been very descriptive to really
show the terror of fighting in the war
by writing 'Trampling the terrible corpses - blind
with blood' He has been very literal and truthful
and told just how bad it was.

10 mins reading, 30 mins writing

. ADAM

3/6/96 Practical Literary criticism (unseen)

Q write an appreciation of the poem
Glory of women:
Points to bear in mind

① This poem is about the women at war time in the first world war.

The writer describes the horrors of the war how people are being destroyed & that the war 'breaks' them, & this means that they're either being killed by the bombs & bullets or they're being killed by all the horrors they see & the loud noises the explosions make, they are becoming insane. He makes out that the women make them feel good because they hear them when they're home & although women don't actually fight, they inspire the men & they make their weapons & the shells & they help them when they're wounded, it shows that women do help in the war & they're a real help.

The writer gets the message across that war is awful because it ~~is~~ ^{isn't} that while a German mother is 'dreaming' by the fire, this shows she is probably thinking of her son thinking he's her son. But then it ~~isn't~~ ^{is} that while she is knitting socks for him, his face is trodden deeper in the mud. It shows that the son is dead & that nobody really cares about him on the battle field.

because his face is being trodden deeper into the mud.

The writer uses strong words & phrases like 'horror, corpses' & 'blind with blood'. These words make war seem like a very bad which the writer wants. danger. It seems as though women are

not affected by the war because he says they are 'fondly chilled' by the bad tales of war & the danger. He makes out that the women should or would want to be out on the battle field. He writes about the women as though they think the English are the ultimate fighters because it says 'you can't believe that British troops retire.'

When it says that 'chivalry redeems the war's disgrace', it is as though the medals that the soldiers have on them makes war look like a good place because you get medals etc, but it says that the medals hide the war's real horrors & that the women don't think it's as bad as it really is.

I think he's writing this poem to make war seem bad & to stop people ever starting other wars, and that women are useful even if they don't actually fight in the actual battle fields.

ROB

10 mins reading
30 mins writing

⑥

3/6/96

Practical Literary Criticism (Unseen)

I think this poem is about how women feel when their husbands or sons are fighting in the war. The title only says ~~glor~~ Glory of Women. The women don't know what it is like fighting in the war.

In the first two lines it states that they are loved when they are 'home on leave' so the women are proud of them ^{men} but only when they can see them. They also 'worship decorations' so they like it that their husband has killed lots of men and made the war easier to fight and the fact the men have got these medals and are so good cancels out the fact that the war is so dreadful. ~~to the fifth line imagery is used: 'You make us shells'~~

X In the fifth line imagery is used: 'You make us shells'. People say if you listen to the inside of shells you can hear the sea but shells are worthless. Making the man a shell means that all the women will do is listen to his story. The story about 'dirt and danger' by which they are badly thrilled. They are thrilled by the fact their husband has killed all the people but for them it's probably quite depressing that they have taken someones life away and probably a part of other peoples lives. As in the last three lines where a mother is dreaming of her German son winning the war but he has just been killed.

In the seventh and eighth lines it shows the proudness of the women when their men are fighting and the fact that they killed someone to help win the war should be remembered. If the man was still alive then it would probably be one of the things he was most trying to forget.

As I said before it is probably a horrible experience for a man if he kills someone but the women can't believe how the men give up when their doing so well and killing so many people as stated in line nine.

In the next two lines a lot of language to do with death is used to describe everything eg. 'terrible corpses' and how the women don't like it when the men run away when all this terror is

reigning them.

I think the ^{point} ~~fact~~ that this poem is trying to get across to the readers is that no matter what happens in the war and how much it upsets the soldier it doesn't matter to the women in their lives because they will be proud of all the death and misery that they have caused. Therefore I think this poem may be addressing women because they should be caring towards their men and should help them get over their misery that killing people may have caused ~~causing~~, instead of showing them off to other people.

3rd June

Loving Reading

STEVE

Practical Literary Criticism (Unseen) ^{30 mins} ~~45 mins~~

The poem is addressed to ~~English~~ women. Their husbands are fighting in the field. In line 5 "You make shells", the women had to go to work in factories making ammunition for the soldiers. And in line 9 it says "You can't believe that the British troops retire", it's as if they think that sometimes making shells is a waste of time, the women don't appreciate some of the difficulty that the soldiers face, the women ~~could~~ are sort of disgusted.

In line ~~10~~ 10, Laqueur personifies hell - "Hell's last horror" to describe how sometimes the soldiers can't cope on the battle field. In line 11 it says "blind with blood", I think that he is talking about the soldiers having so much blood around them. say alliteration

In line 5 it says about the women listening to the news tales of heroism with "delight". The women again not appreciating the danger and risk involved. The women think that it's all fun fighting for your country, but the poem is trying to explain what it's really like.

Line 12 is saying how nobody knows if a certain person is alive until contact is made with that person. But the women still keep up hope, knitting socks and "decorating" for when their men come home. The poet obviously thinks that the women don't understand the reality of war but should be informed.

Out of
Ideas

to come back, and the soldiers will definitely be back to have another go at it. When someone says HELL you normally think of fire, death and evil. That is what it was like on the battle field. Bodies all over the place with fire and death. When it says in line 10 that "hell's hotter brother" it is talking about the German army giving it all in a last attempt to beat the English. By "breaking" it means to make them retreat. Give up for ever.

After line 2 the poem takes a noticeable change in tone. Where as beforehand it was talking about living things and believing, and after it talks about mourning, running and bloodied corpses.

Near the end of the poem it specifically talks about a German soldier. This is because perhaps Lockhart wants it to happen. It talks about a fire. Warm, secure and a feeling of togetherness. Where the son is on a cold, insecure battle field, lonely and dark.

I think that Lockhart thinks that we can think that it is all very and excitement in a war, fighting for your country. He's trying to get across that it isn't.

The title of the poem requires some thought as I wouldn't have called the poem The Glory of War.

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