English Department

Year 11-12 Bridging Work

Literature

Pack 2



In this booklet you will find activities to extend your knowledge of Literature and develop your reading and analysis skills.

To be successful in your study of Literature it is important to develop a reading habit. You should aim to read for at least 30 minutes a day. This is not limited to texts set by your teacher. See the Lockdown Reading List on SMHW for ideas to get you started.

HOW TO DO UNSEEN POETRY

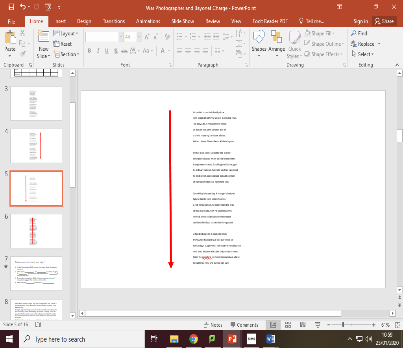
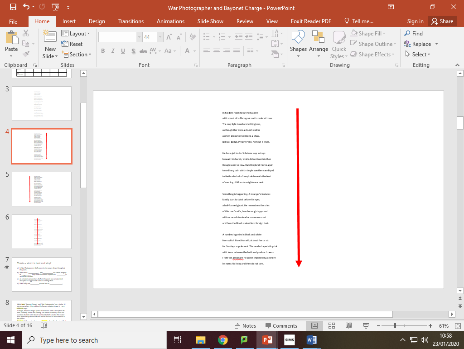
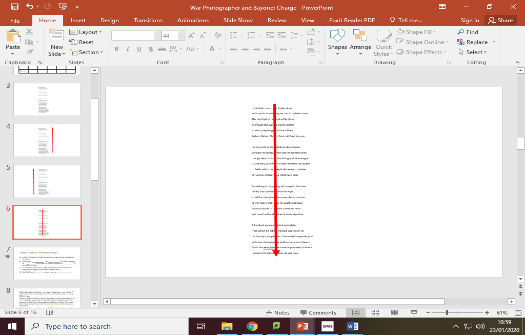
**Unseen poetry**

**Practice questions.**

Do not try to figure out everything you are going to say before you say it. Annotate things you notice- analyse what they mean as you write.

1. Read the **question and the title** of the poem. Literal meaning? Metaphorical meaning?
2. Look at the **shape** of the poem.

Observe and annotate:

* Stanzas: How many? If more than one, are they regular in length/shape?
* Lines. How many in each stanza? Line length: Long or short? Regular or not? Any that stand out?
* Patterns
* Rhyme (scan down the *end* of each line)
* Anaphora (scan down the *beginning* of each line)
* Caesura (scan down the *middle* of each line)
* Punctuation. Does anything stand out? Is there a *lack* of punctuation?

1. Read the poem

Observe and annotate:

* **Who** is speaking – first person, second person, third person
* **What** is happening – is it about events? Or feelings? Both?
* **Where** the poem takes place – a location? A mind? Several locations?
* **When** it happens – present tense/past tense/future tense

1. Read the poem again

Observe and annotate: **SLIMER**

* **Structures** – rhyme, enjambment, caesura, start and end – how does the poem fit together? Is there a **change?** Either in topic, tone, time, place; narrative perspective; rhythm or rhyme?
* **Language/Imagery**: Simile and metaphor. Personification. Pathetic fallacy. What pictures do we **see**?
* **Sounds**: alliteration, sibilance, plosive, fricative, onomatopoeia - what do we **hear**?
* **Meaning**: Literal and metaphorical
* **Effect on reader and reflection/relevance to contemporary society.**

1. Start writing.
   1. Rephrase the question-thesis
   2. Start at the beginning. Tackle the poem ‘in order’.
   3. Explore meaning in detail
   4. Carry on to the end
   5. Finish with the last line.

**Part 1 – Unseen Poetry**

***The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.**

**Step 1: Read these introductions on the ‘Big Read’ project and the history of the poem, using the following links:** <https://www.ancientmarinerbigread.com/about>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/apr/24/why-willem-dafoe-iggy-pop-and-more-are-reading-the-rime-of-the-ancient-mariner-to-us>

**Step 2: Read the text and annotate, using the ‘Unseen poetry advice’ sheet.**

**The poem can also be accessed electronically at** <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43997/the-rime-of-the-ancient-mariner-text-of-1834>

**You can break this up, using this link:** <https://www.ancientmarinerbigread.com/readings>

During the current lockdown, a number of famous artists have recorded readings of the poem, accompanied by a range of artwork. It is very useful to hear the poem read aloud to understand the narrative, and to get a feel for the language. The recordings are only 2 mins (approx.) so very helpful to listen to whilst annotating.

You can of course read the poem in its entirety! Give it a go!

**Step 3: Comprehension questions:**

1. Who or what is responsible for the curse against the Mariner?
2. Why does the Mariner get to survive to voyage when all the sailors die? After all, he was the one who shot the albatross?
3. What does "Life-in-Death" represent, and what is the result of her winning the dice match with Death?
4. Does this seem like a religious or specifically Christian poem? Does it change your perspective at all to learn that Coleridge was considered by many to have radical, free-thinking tendencies?
5. Why do you think this poem has become so famous and influential? Does the poem seem ahead of its time, or does it seem quaint and old-fashioned?
6. Essay question: Answer using SQI. Spend 30 mins. Make sure to analyse the effect of language in your answer.

What do you think the albatross symbolises, and why does the Mariner decide to kill it?

**The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (text of 1834)**

BY [SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/samuel-taylor-coleridge)

*Argument  
  
How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.*

**PART I**

It is an ancient Mariner,

And he stoppeth one of three.

'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,

Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,

And I am next of kin;

The guests are met, the feast is set:

May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,

'There was a ship,' quoth he.

'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'

Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—

The Wedding-Guest stood still,

And listens like a three years' child:

The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:

He cannot choose but hear;

And thus spake on that ancient man,

The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,

Merrily did we drop

Below the kirk, below the hill,

Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,

Out of the sea came he!

And he shone bright, and on the right

Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,

Till over the mast at noon—'

The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,

For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,

Red as a rose is she;

Nodding their heads before her goes

The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,

Yet he cannot choose but hear;

And thus spake on that ancient man,

The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he

Was tyrannous and strong:

He struck with his o'ertaking wings,

And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,

As who pursued with yell and blow

Still treads the shadow of his foe,

And forward bends his head,

The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,

And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,

And it grew wondrous cold:

And ice, mast-high, came floating by,

As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts

Did send a dismal sheen:

Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—

The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,

The ice was all around:

It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,

Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,

Thorough the fog it came;

As if it had been a Christian soul,

We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,

And round and round it flew.

The ice did split with a thunder-fit;

The helmsman steered us through!

And a good south wind sprung up behind;

The Albatross did follow,

And every day, for food or play,

Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,

It perched for vespers nine;

Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,

Glimmered the white Moon-shine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!

From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—

Why look'st thou so?'—With my cross-bow

I shot the ALBATROSS.

**PART II**

The Sun now rose upon the right:

Out of the sea came he,

Still hid in mist, and on the left

Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,

But no sweet bird did follow,

Nor any day for food or play

Came to the mariner's hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,

And it would work 'em woe:

For all averred, I had killed the bird

That made the breeze to blow.

Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,

That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,

The glorious Sun uprist:

Then all averred, I had killed the bird

That brought the fog and mist.

'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,

That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,

The furrow followed free;

We were the first that ever burst

Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,

'Twas sad as sad could be;

And we did speak only to break

The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,

The bloody Sun, at noon,

Right up above the mast did stand,

No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,

We stuck, nor breath nor motion;

As idle as a painted ship

Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,

And all the boards did shrink;

Water, water, every where,

Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!

That ever this should be!

Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs

Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout

The death-fires danced at night;

The water, like a witch's oils,

Burnt green, and blue and white.

And some in dreams assurèd were

Of the Spirit that plagued us so;

Nine fathom deep he had followed us

From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,

Was withered at the root;

We could not speak, no more than if

We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks

Had I from old and young!

Instead of the cross, the Albatross

About my neck was hung.

**PART III**

There passed a weary time. Each throat

Was parched, and glazed each eye.

A weary time! a weary time!

How glazed each weary eye,

When looking westward, I beheld

A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,

And then it seemed a mist;

It moved and moved, and took at last

A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!

And still it neared and neared:

As if it dodged a water-sprite,

It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,

We could nor laugh nor wail;

Through utter drought all dumb we stood!

I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,

And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,

Agape they heard me call:

Gramercy! they for joy did grin,

And all at once their breath drew in.

As they were drinking all.

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!

Hither to work us weal;

Without a breeze, without a tide,

She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.

The day was well nigh done!

Almost upon the western wave

Rested the broad bright Sun;

When that strange shape drove suddenly

Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,

(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)

As if through a dungeon-grate he peered

With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)

How fast she nears and nears!

Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,

Like restless gossameres?

Are those her *ribs* through which the Sun

Did peer, as through a grate?

And is that Woman all her crew?

Is that a DEATH? and are there two?

Is DEATH that woman's mate?

*Her* lips were red, *her* looks were free,

Her locks were yellow as gold:

Her skin was as white as leprosy,

The Night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,

Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,

And the twain were casting dice;

'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'

Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;

At one stride comes the dark;

With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,

Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!

Fear at my heart, as at a cup,

My life-blood seemed to sip!

The stars were dim, and thick the night,

The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;

From the sails the dew did drip—

Till clomb above the eastern bar

The hornèd Moon, with one bright star

Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,

Too quick for groan or sigh,

Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,

And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men,

(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)

With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,

They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—

They fled to bliss or woe!

And every soul, it passed me by,

Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

**PART IV**

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!

I fear thy skinny hand!

And thou art long, and lank, and brown,

As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,

And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!

This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,

Alone on a wide wide sea!

And never a saint took pity on

My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!

And they all dead did lie:

And a thousand thousand slimy things

Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,

And drew my eyes away;

I looked upon the rotting deck,

And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;

But or ever a prayer had gusht,

A wicked whisper came, and made

My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,

And the balls like pulses beat;

For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky

Lay dead like a load on my weary eye,

And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,

Nor rot nor reek did they:

The look with which they looked on me

Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell

A spirit from on high;

But oh! more horrible than that

Is the curse in a dead man's eye!

Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,

And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,

And no where did abide:

Softly she was going up,

And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,

Like April hoar-frost spread;

But where the ship's huge shadow lay,

The charmèd water burnt alway

A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,

I watched the water-snakes:

They moved in tracks of shining white,

And when they reared, the elfish light

Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship

I watched their rich attire:

Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,

They coiled and swam; and every track

Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue

Their beauty might declare:

A spring of love gushed from my heart,

And I blessed them unaware:

Sure my kind saint took pity on me,

And I blessed them unaware.

The self-same moment I could pray;

And from my neck so free

The Albatross fell off, and sank

Like lead into the sea.

**PART V**

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,

Beloved from pole to pole!

To Mary Queen the praise be given!

She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,

That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,

That had so long remained,

I dreamt that they were filled with dew;

And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,

My garments all were dank;

Sure I had drunken in my dreams,

And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:

I was so light—almost

I thought that I had died in sleep,

And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:

It did not come anear;

But with its sound it shook the sails,

That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!

And a hundred fire-flags sheen,

To and fro they were hurried about!

And to and fro, and in and out,

The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,

And the sails did sigh like sedge,

And the rain poured down from one black cloud;

The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still

The Moon was at its side:

Like waters shot from some high crag,

The lightning fell with never a jag,

A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,

Yet now the ship moved on!

Beneath the lightning and the Moon

The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,

Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;

It had been strange, even in a dream,

To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;

Yet never a breeze up-blew;

The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,

Where they were wont to do;

They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—

We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son

Stood by me, knee to knee:

The body and I pulled at one rope,

But he said nought to me.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'

Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!

'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,

Which to their corses came again,

But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,

And clustered round the mast;

Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,

And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,

Then darted to the Sun;

Slowly the sounds came back again,

Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky

I heard the sky-lark sing;

Sometimes all little birds that are,

How they seemed to fill the sea and air

With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,

Now like a lonely flute;

And now it is an angel's song,

That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on

A pleasant noise till noon,

A noise like of a hidden brook

In the leafy month of June,

That to the sleeping woods all night

Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,

Yet never a breeze did breathe:

Slowly and smoothly went the ship,

Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,

From the land of mist and snow,

The spirit slid: and it was he

That made the ship to go.

The sails at noon left off their tune,

And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,

Had fixed her to the ocean:

But in a minute she 'gan stir,

With a short uneasy motion—

Backwards and forwards half her length

With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,

She made a sudden bound:

It flung the blood into my head,

And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,

I have not to declare;

But ere my living life returned,

I heard and in my soul discerned

Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?

By him who died on cross,

With his cruel bow he laid full low

The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself

In the land of mist and snow,

He loved the bird that loved the man

Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,

As soft as honey-dew:

Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,

And penance more will do.'

**PART VI**

*First Voice*

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,

Thy soft response renewing—

What makes that ship drive on so fast?

What is the ocean doing?'

*Second Voice*

Still as a slave before his lord,

The ocean hath no blast;

His great bright eye most silently

Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;

For she guides him smooth or grim.

See, brother, see! how graciously

She looketh down on him.'

*First Voice*

'But why drives on that ship so fast,

Without or wave or wind?'

*Second Voice*

'The air is cut away before,

And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!

Or we shall be belated:

For slow and slow that ship will go,

When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

I woke, and we were sailing on

As in a gentle weather:

'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;

The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,

For a charnel-dungeon fitter:

All fixed on me their stony eyes,

That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,

Had never passed away:

I could not draw my eyes from theirs,

Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt: once more

I viewed the ocean green,

And looked far forth, yet little saw

Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road

Doth walk in fear and dread,

And having once turned round walks on,

And turns no more his head;

Because he knows, a frightful fiend

Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,

Nor sound nor motion made:

Its path was not upon the sea,

In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek

Like a meadow-gale of spring—

It mingled strangely with my fears,

Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,

Yet she sailed softly too:

Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—

On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed

The light-house top I see?

Is this the hill? is this the kirk?

Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,

And I with sobs did pray—

O let me be awake, my God!

Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,

So smoothly it was strewn!

And on the bay the moonlight lay,

And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,

That stands above the rock:

The moonlight steeped in silentness

The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,

Till rising from the same,

Full many shapes, that shadows were,

In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow

Those crimson shadows were:

I turned my eyes upon the deck—

Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,

And, by the holy rood!

A man all light, a seraph-man,

On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:

It was a heavenly sight!

They stood as signals to the land,

Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,

No voice did they impart—

No voice; but oh! the silence sank

Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,

I heard the Pilot's cheer;

My head was turned perforce away

And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,

I heard them coming fast:

Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy

The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:

It is the Hermit good!

He singeth loud his godly hymns

That he makes in the wood.

He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away

The Albatross's blood.

**PART VII**

This Hermit good lives in that wood

Which slopes down to the sea.

How loudly his sweet voice he rears!

He loves to talk with marineres

That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—

He hath a cushion plump:

It is the moss that wholly hides

The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,

'Why, this is strange, I trow!

Where are those lights so many and fair,

That signal made but now?'

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—

'And they answered not our cheer!

The planks looked warped! and see those sails,

How thin they are and sere!

I never saw aught like to them,

Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag

My forest-brook along;

When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,

And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,

That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—

(The Pilot made reply)

I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'

Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,

But I nor spake nor stirred;

The boat came close beneath the ship,

And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,

Still louder and more dread:

It reached the ship, it split the bay;

The ship went down like lead.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,

Which sky and ocean smote,

Like one that hath been seven days drowned

My body lay afloat;

But swift as dreams, myself I found

Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,

The boat spun round and round;

And all was still, save that the hill

Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked

And fell down in a fit;

The holy Hermit raised his eyes,

And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,

Who now doth crazy go,

Laughed loud and long, and all the while

His eyes went to and fro.

'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,

The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,

I stood on the firm land!

The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,

And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'

The Hermit crossed his brow.

'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—

What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched

With a woful agony,

Which forced me to begin my tale;

And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,

That agony returns:

And till my ghastly tale is told,

This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;

I have strange power of speech;

That moment that his face I see,

I know the man that must hear me:

To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!

The wedding-guests are there:

But in the garden-bower the bride

And bride-maids singing are:

And hark the little vesper bell,

Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been

Alone on a wide wide sea:

So lonely 'twas, that God himself

Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,

'Tis sweeter far to me,

To walk together to the kirk

With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,

And all together pray,

While each to his great Father bends,

Old men, and babes, and loving friends

And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell

To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!

He prayeth well, who loveth well

Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best

All things both great and small;

For the dear God who loveth us,

He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,

Whose beard with age is hoar,

Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest

Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,

And is of sense forlorn:

A sadder and a wiser man,

He rose the morrow morn.

**Part 2 – Hamlet**

**Hamlet by William Shakespeare - 1609**

**In order to understand the themes and language used in the play, we need to study the context behind it and discover what influenced the playwright to incorporate certain elements and ideas. Make notes from the following video to remind you:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZU72\_uLo9Y**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZU72_uLo9Y)

**Step 1: What is a tragedy?**

**Watch the following videos using the links below to discover the history of the tragedy genre and make notes on the key information you learn:**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6Vz2TCGTKs**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6Vz2TCGTKs)

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k2Y1pZUCig**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k2Y1pZUCig)

**Step 2: Read the selected scene from Hamlet, Act 1 scene V, and annotate its tragic features.**

**You may wish to use your notes about the tragedy genre from step 1 to prompt you. For example, you should be looking for any signs of death, what the deceased character does and has in common with the stereotypical tragic genre. Are there any particular language or structural features you might link to tragedy? Why? Can you make any connections between what is happening in this scene and the conventional terms found in a tragedy, such as hamartia?**

**You may also wish to watch the scene being performed; after all, plays are meant to be visualised on stage! Watching the play can be really useful when trying to gauge what is happing in terms of the plot and the relationships between the characters. There are several versions online, all you have to do is search.**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g05x9X7mpcY**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g05x9X7mpcY)

**Step 3: Comprehension questions**

1. **Highlight the two stage directions in this scene. Why do you think Shakespeare chose to use such a small number of them? What do they add to the scene?**
2. **Some words are repeated throughout this scene. What are they and what is their effect? How do they lend themselves to the tragedy genre?**
3. **There is a lexical field of religion in this scene. Highlight the words and phrases associated with this concept and explore their meaning. What is the purpose of mentioning them?**
4. **There is a clear supernatural element here. Which aspects of the language help you to identify it and how does this reflect the tragedy genre?**
5. **Look at the father and son relationship between the Ghost and Hamlet. How would you describe it? How does Shakespeare use their relationship to represent the tragedy genre?**
6. **Using SQI, answer the following essay question: using Hamlet’s final piece of speech at the end of this scene, discuss how Hamlet is presented as a tragic hero.**

**Act I, scene V:**

*[Enter Ghost and Hamlet.]*

**Hamlet**

Where wilt thou lead me? Speak. I'll go no further.

**Ghost**

**Mark** me.

**Hamlet**

                 I will.

**Ghost**

                           My hour is almost come

When I to sulfurous and tormenting flames

Must render up myself.

**Hamlet**

                                          Alas, poor ghost!

**Ghost**

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing

To what I shall unfold.

**Hamlet**

                                       Speak. I am bound to hear.

**Ghost**

So art thou to revenge when thou shalt hear.

**Hamlet**

What?

**Ghost**

I am thy father's spirit,

Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,

And for the day confined to **fast** in fires,

Till the foul crimes done in my **days of nature**

Are burnt and purged away. **But** that I am forbid

To tell the secrets of my prison house,

I could a tale unfold whose lightest word

Would **harrow up** thy soul, freeze thy young blood,

Make thy two eyes, like stars, **start** from their spheres,

Thy **knotted and combinèd locks** to part,

And each particular hair to stand on end

Like quills upon the **fretful** porcupine.

But this **eternal blazon** must not **be**

To ears of flesh and blood. **List**, Hamlet, oh, list.

If thou didst ever thy dear father love ...

**Hamlet**

Oh heaven!

**Ghost**

Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

**Hamlet**

Murder?

**Ghost**

Murder most foul, as in the best it is,

But **this** most foul, strange, and unnatural.

**Hamlet**

Haste, haste me to know it, that I, with wings as swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love,

May sweep to my revenge.

**Ghost**

                                              I find thee apt,

And **duller** shouldst thou be than the **fat** weed

That roots itself in ease on **Lethe** wharf

Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear.

It's given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,

A serpent stung me. So the whole **ear** of Denmark

Is, by a **forgèd process** of my death,

**Rankly** abused. But know, thou noble youth,

The serpent that did sting thy father's life

Now wears his crown.

**Hamlet**

                                      Oh, my prophetic soul!

Mine uncle?

**Ghost**

Ay, that incestuous, that adulterous beast,

With witchcraft of his wits, with traitorous gifts —

Oh, wicked wit and gifts that have the power

So to seduce — won to his shameful lust

The **will** of my most seeming virtuous queen.

Oh, Hamlet, what a falling off was there!

From me, whose love was of that dignity

That it went hand in hand even with the vow

I made to her in marriage, and to decline

Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor

To those of mine!

But Virtue as it never will be moved

Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,

So Lust, though to a radiant angel linked,

Will **sate** itself in a celestial bed

And **prey on** garbage.

But soft, methinks I scent the morning air.

Brief let me be. Sleeping within mine orchard,

My custom always in the afternoon

**Upon** my **secure** hour, thy uncle **stole**

With juice of cursèd **hebenon** in a vial,

And in the porches of mine ears did pour

The **leperous distillment**, whose effect

Holds such an **enmity** with blood of man

That swift as **quicksilver** it **courses** through

The natural gates and alleys of the body,

And with a sudden **vigor** it doth **posset**

And **curd**, like **eager droppings** into milk,

The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,

And a most instant **tetter** **barked** about —

Most **lazar**-like with vile and loathsome crust —

All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand

Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched,

Cut off even in the **blossoms** of my sin,

**Unhousled, disappointed, unaneled,**

No reckoning made, but sent to my account

With all my **imperfections** on my head.

Oh, horrible, oh, horrible, most horrible!

If thou hast **nature** in thee, bear it not.

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

A couch for **luxury** and damnèd incest.

But howsoever thou pursuest this act,

Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive

Against thy mother **aught**. Leave her to heaven

And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge

To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once.

The **glow-worm** shows the **matin** to be near

And **'gins** to pale his **uneffectual** fire.

Adieu, adieu, Hamlet! Remember me.

*[Exit.]*

**Hamlet**

Oh, all you **host** of heaven! Oh, **earth**! What else,

And shall I **couple** hell? Oh, fie! Hold, my heart,

And you, my **sinews**, grow not instant old,

But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee?

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat

In this distracted **globe**. Remember thee?

Yea, from the **table** of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All **saws** of books, all **forms**, all **pressures** past

That youth and observation copied there,

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmixed with **baser** matter. Yes, by heaven.

Oh, most pernicious woman!

Oh, villain, villain, smiling damnèd villain!

My **tables**, my tables — **meet** it is I set it down,

*[Hamlet writes.]*

“That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.”

At least I am sure it may be so in Denmark.

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word.

It is "Adieu, adieu, remember me."

I have sworn't.

**Step 4: Character Analysis**

**Now read the passage below from Act 1, scene 2 and focus on how Claudius, Gertrude and Hamlet are presented differently. As you read, you need to be thinking about what is happening in the play and annotating what the language used conveys about each character.**

**Extract from Act 1, scene 2:**

*[To Hamlet, wearing dark clothes of mourning.]*

**Claudius**

But now, my **cousin** Hamlet, and my son —

**Hamlet**

A little more than kin, and less than kind.

**Claudius**

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

**Hamlet**

Not so, my lord; I am too much **i'** the sun.

**Gertrude**

Good Hamlet, cast thy **nightly** color off,

And let thine eye look like a friend on **Denmark**.

Do not for ever with thy **vailèd lids**

Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

Thou know'st 'tis common: all that lives must die,

Passing through **nature** to eternity.

**Hamlet**

Ay, madam, it is common.

**Gertrude**

If it be,

Why seems it so **particular** with thee?

**Hamlet**

Seems, madam! Nay, it is. I know not 'seems.'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy **suspiration of forced breath**,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

Nor the dejected **'havior** of the **visage**,

Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,

That can **denote** me truly. These indeed seem,

For they are actions that a man might play.

But I have that within which **passes** show.

**These but** the trappings and the suits of woe.

**Claudius**

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father.

But you must know — your father lost a father;

That father **lost**, lost his; and the survivor **bound**

In **filial obligation**, for some term,

To do **obsequious sorrow**. But to persevere

In obstinate condolement is a course

Of impious stubbornness. 'Tis unmanly grief.

It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,

A heart **unfortified**, a mind **impatient**,

An understanding simple and **unschooled**

For what we know must be, and is, as common

As any the most **vulgar** thing to **sense**.

Why should we, in our **peevish** opposition,

Take it to heart? Fie! 'Tis a fault to heaven,

A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,

To reason most absurd —**whose** common theme

Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,

From the first corpse till he that died today,

'This must be so.' **We** pray you, throw to earth

This **unprevailing** woe, and think of **us**

As of a father. For let the world take note,

You are the **most immediate** to **our** throne.

And with no less nobility of love

Than that which **dearest** father bears his son,

Do I impart towards you. For your intent

In going back to school in Wittenberg,

It is most **retrograde** to **our** desire.

And **we** beseech you, **bend you** to remain

Here, in the cheer and comfort of **our** eye,

**Our chiefest** courtier, cousin, and **our** son.

**Gertrude**

Let not thy mother **lose** her prayers, Hamlet.

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

**Hamlet**

I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

**Claudius**

Why, **'tis** a loving and a **fair** reply.

Be **as ourself**, in Denmark. Madam, come.

This gentle and unforced **accord** of Hamlet

Sits smiling to my heart. In **grace** whereof,

No **jocund health** that Denmark drinks today,

But the great cannon to the clouds shall **tell**,

And the king's **rouse** the heavens all **bruit** again,

Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

*[Exit all except Hamlet]*

**Hamlet**

Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt,

Thaw, and **resolve** itself into a dew!

Or that **the Everlasting** had not fixed

His **canon** 'gainst self-slaughter! Oh God! God!

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable

Seem to me all the uses of this world!

**Fie on't!** Oh fie fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden

That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature

Possess it **merely**. That it should come to this!

**But** two months dead – nay, not so much, not two –

So excellent a king, that was to this

**Hyperion** to a **satyr**, so loving to my mother

That he might not **beteem** the winds of heaven

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!

Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him

As if increase of appetite had grown

By what it fed on. And yet within a month –

let me not think on't; frailty, thy name is woman! –

A little month, or **ere** those shoes were old

With which she followed my poor father's body

Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she –

Oh, God! a beast that **wants discourse** of reason

Would have mourned longer – married with my uncle,

My father's brother, but no more like my father

Than I to Hercules. Within a month,

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears

Had left the **flushing** in her **gallèd** eyes,

She married. Oh, most wicked speed, to post

With such **dexterity** to incestuous sheets!

It is not, nor it cannot come to good.

But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

**Step 5: Complete the table on the next page to deepen your understanding of each character.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Key quotations with key words highlighted** | **Subject terms (simile, hyperbole etc.)** | **What are the connotations?** | **What can we infer about the character?** | **Is there a contextual link to the tragedy genre?** |
| **Claudius** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Gertrude** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Hamlet** |  |  |  |  |  |