

 ***exam* TIPS AO:1and 4**

**the ‘SMILER’ technique**

The *SMILER* technique is a really useful way of remembering how to structure your response to the exam question. It basically breaks your answer down into six main parts – one for each letter in ‘SMILER’. Within each of these sections, you compare the two poems that you are working with for that particular section. What is especially useful is that the ‘S’ (for ‘subject’) section at the start, doubles up as a good introduction to your essay, while ‘R’ (for ‘response’) acts as your conclusion! The bullet points will give you a guide to the sorts of things that you should be comparing / including – not all of them may be relevant to the poem you are looking at, and you might even think of other things to include! **It is useful, though, to try to learn this structure off by heart and apply it to any essay you write about the Anthology!**

**‘S’ for ‘Subject’**

* What are the poems about, and what is their main link to the area of focus on the title?
* Who is the narrator of each poem?
* Who are the characters in the poem?
* Why were the poems written?
* Are there any overall points or messages to the poems?

**‘M’ for ‘Movement of Ideas’**

* Whether they are split into stanzas, and how regular these are
* Whether there is a specific pattern to stanzas / line-lengths / rhythm / rhyme (and why!)
* Ideas that are contained in each stanza, and how these are sequenced, leading to the end

**‘I’ for ‘Imagery’**

* Literal images – ones that are described as they are, with no comparison
* Metaphors and similes, that use comparison for striking effect
* Symbolism – where an object or image represents something deeper or more significant

**‘L’ for ‘Language’\***

* Particularly effective parts of speech (i.e. verbs, adjectives, adverbs)
* Sounds of words used for effect – through techniques like alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia
* Words which are used together for effect, such as hyperbole, repetition, oxymoron, etc.

**‘E’ for ‘Emotions’**

* The emotions of the whoever is narrating the poems
* The emotions of other characters in the poems
* How emotions and moods change through the poems

**‘R’ for ‘Response’**

* What YOU think of each poem overall
* What you believe the significant similarities and differences between the poems are
* Your lasting impression of each poem (in the light of the area of focus in the question)