*poem by poem* QUESTIONS

***Bayonet Charge***byTed Hughes **AOs: 1 2 and 3**



**Read ‘The Basics’ about *Bayonet Charge,* then re-read the poem before answering the following questions:**

**1. Look at the way that the poem is set out: thinking about stanzas and line-lengths, as well as rhythm and rhyme, would you say that the overall form of the poem was regular or irregular? Why would the poet make these choices with this poem?**

**2. List three things that we learn about the soldier in the first three lines of the poem. Back up your points with evidence from the text.**

**3.In the first stanza, pick out three words which suggest that the soldier is feeling clumsy. Say what part of speech (eg. verb, adjective) the word is in each case.**

**4. Why do you think the soldier ‘almost stopped’ in the second stanza? How is he feeling at this point of the poem?**

**5. In your own words, try to explain what Ted Hughes means by lines 11-15. Are there any alternative explanations for this, and are there any words or phrases that you don’t understand? (You might ask your teacher to help you with this!)**

**6. What do you think it is that ‘threw up’ the hare in the final section of the poem? What point is being made by presenting the reader with this horrific image of an animal suffering?**

**7. In line 20, Hughes explains what the soldier feels he is losing at the end of the poem. What does he mean by this, and what is the effect of the word ‘etcetera’ after this list?**

**8. Identify two metaphors in the final two lines of the poem. What do you think Hughes means by these, and why end the poem in this way? What do you think happens to the soldier at the end of the poem?**

**9. Find and list references to HEAT and LIGHT in the poem. Why do think these images are so important?**

**EXTENSION: Hughes’ and Tennyson’s poems are both about ‘charges’ at the enemy. Draw up a table that lists similarities and differences between the poems, and try to support these with examples in each case. For example: a similarity is that both poems deal with the sounds and weaponry of warfare. However, a key difference is that one writes about a whole group of men, the other about an individual. See how many more points you can make, and think about whether this helps with your understanding of what the poets are trying to achieve in each case.**