*poem by poem* QUESTIONS

***Charge of the Light Brigade***

byAlfred, Lord Tennyson

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

1. The length of the valley is ‘half a league’. Find out how long this is in modern measurements; why do you think Tennyson repeats it three times at the start of the poem?

2. Copy down the commands / imperative verbs in lines 5 and 6. What do you think this suggests about the way orders were given and obeyed here?

3. In Stanza 2, where does the poet suggest that a mistake was made by the commanding officer? What are his views about how they respond to this command, and do you agree with him?

4. List all the words to do with sound in stanza 3. What other poetic techniques does Tennyson use to create the sounds of the battlefield?

5. The fourth stanza is also full of the action of battle. Pick three phrases that stand out, list any specific poetic techniques used, and say why you think they are effective in each case.

6. Between stanzas 4 and 5, there seems to be a change in fortunes for the Light Brigade. Find two statements, one from each stanza, which show contrasting fortunes during the battle. How does this add to the tension overall?

7. In stanza 5, copy out the metaphors that Tennyson uses (lines 46 and 47) to describe the valley. Why does he choose this image, and what does it say about the risks that the men took?

8. Pick out all of the positive words that Tennyson uses in the final stanza. What part of speech is each (ie. verb, noun, adjective, etc), and why does Tennyson choose to end on this note?

**EXTENSION: Overall, how would you describe Tennyson’s attitude and tone towards this event? Why would he record it in this way? If this were an event of modern warfare, how do you think it would be recounted by a) the media and b) a modern poet? (NB The *Get Creative* sheet on this poem explores this idea further!)**

