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

**1. What do you think the poet wishes to convey by beginning the poem with the words, ‘On another occasion…’?**

**2. The opening stanza describes the soldiers’ mission – to stop local looters raiding a deserted bank in an area that has been under attack. Why do you think it is important that the narrator describes one of the looters as being ‘probably armed, possibly not’?**

**3. In the second stanza, which two phrases show us that the speaker is keen to emphasise that he’s not making decisions alone? Why might this be important to him?**

**4. Find two metaphors in stanza 3. How would you compare them to other metaphors you have studied? What is their effect on the reader?**

**5. Why are the ‘guts’ thrown back into the body of the dead man, and his body ‘carted off’? Comment on the speaker’s use of the verbs ‘tossed’ and ‘carted’.**

**6. What does the speaker mean by ‘blood shadow’ in stanza 5? How could this metaphor be symbolic of something else that he feels?**

**7. Why are previous events being repeated in stanza 7, when the soldier is now ‘on leave’? Explain the references to the ‘drink and the drugs’.**

**8. What is the speaker trying to explain in the eighth stanza? What is the effect of the longer line and three adjectives in line 27?**

**9. Explain the meaning of the last two lines: how is he left feelings?**

**10. Armitage sets out most of the poem in neat, 4-line stanzas. Often, however, these spill into each other (a technique known as *enjambment*). How might this choice of FORM reveal something about the state of mind of the speaker in the poem?**

**EXTENSION: This poem is part of a larger collection of poems called *The Not-Dead.* Many of the poems are adapted from transcripts of army veterans who have fought in modern conflicts. Go online and research this project – you could start by comparing *Remains* to a second poem called *Manhunt.* A video exploring why the poem was written, as well as containing a reading of the poem, can be found here:**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGX4vwXvek4**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGX4vwXvek4)



*poem by poem* QUESTIONS

***Remains***bySimon Armitage