***Exposure* by Wilfred Owen**

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| ***Groups:*** | War, Fragile Life, Violence, Nature, Decay |
| ***Good poems to link with:*** | *London, Remains, War Photographer, The Charge of the Light Brigade, Bayonet Charge, Tissues* |
| **Bio and Context:** Transferred from the front line to Craiglockhart hospital in Scotland, due to severe shell-shock during the First World War, Owen met poet and fellow soldier Siegfried Sassoon. Sassoon encouraged Owen to write war poetry; and Owen went on to become the best known of the ‘trench poets’. This poem was completed in September of 1918, just weeks before Owen was killed in battle, still only a young man. | |
| ***Summary:***  Wilfred Owen 2.png | The first two stanzas describe the appalling conditions of the Winter of 1917. Owen and his fellow soldiers wait nervously through the night, hearing distant battles while, for them, ‘nothing happens.’ Over the next stanzas, the morning brings no comfort, only conflict edging nearer as the snow takes hold of their senses. Stanzas five and six become more abstract and unusual, as the delirious men start to think of distant home, and how they are forgotten by loved ones and by God. In the chilling final stanza, Owen considers the next night ahead, where the cold will claim more victims while, still, ‘nothing happens’. |
| **Interesting Features:**   * Regular stanzas and long, drawn out lines * Half-rhyme * Abstract and unusual imagery | |
| **In a Nutshell:** This masterpiece captures the horrific conditions of the front line in Winter. The men are at the mercy of the bitter weather, as the war ‘rumbles’ in the distance. Throughout the poem, Owen brings attention that nothing is happening, and conditions are worsening. He reflects that the men will not be welcomed home – their place is on the battlefield and God seems to have deserted them. Owen uses a multitude of powerful images, experimental vocabulary, and sharp poetic technique to rage against the brutality of modern warfare. | |