



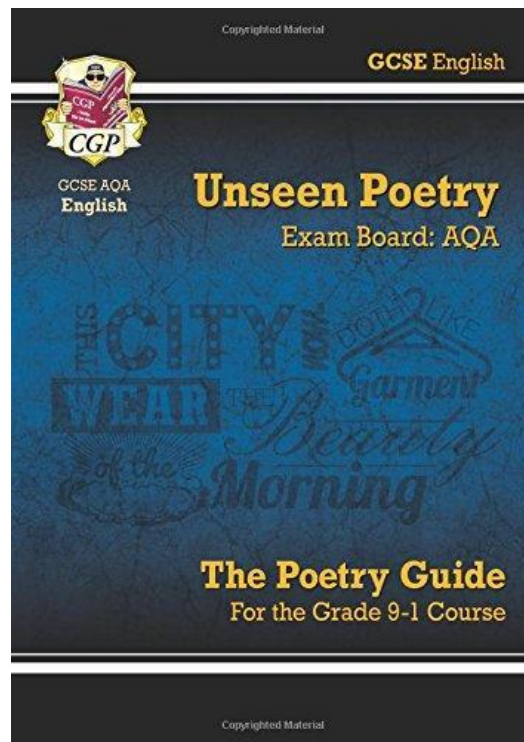
The Warriner School
English Department



GCSE English Literature

2015-2017

Sample Exam Questions Bank



Unseen Poetry

Contents

- 'Long Distance II' and 'My Grandmother'
- 'The Soldier' and 'Anthem for Doomed Youth'
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- 'The Road Not Taken' and 'The Wall'
- 'Catrin' and 'Before You Were Mine'
- 'Dawn Revisited' and 'Carpe Diem'
- 'Ex Miner' and 'In Oak Terrace'
- 'Long Distance' and 'Stop All the Clocks'
- 'My Parents Kept Me' and 'The Place's Fault'
- 'Pigeons' and 'Hedgehog'
- 'Woman Work' and 'Overheard in County Sligo'

Use these questions to practice and prepare for your English Literature Paper 2 examination.

Unseen Poetry (Part 1)

AO1	<p>Read, understand and respond to texts.</p> <p>Develop a personal response to the text; Clear exploration of comparative ideas between texts; Use quotes to support your ideas.</p>	(12 marks)
AO2	<p>Analyse the language, form and structure used to create meanings and effects, using relevant terminology where appropriate.</p> <p>Explain how your quote supports your point; Zoom in on specific words and analyse their effect; Identify techniques such as simile, metaphor, personification etc.</p>	(12 marks)

Unseen Poetry (Part 2)

AO2	<p>Analyse the language, form and structure used to create meanings and effects, using relevant terminology where appropriate.</p> <p>Compare how writers use language, structure and form; Comment on writers' effect on the reader; Identify techniques such as simile, metaphor, personification etc.</p>	(8 marks)
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Section C: Unseen Poetry

Question 27.1

In 'Long Distance II', how does the poet present different reactions to grief?

(24 marks – AO1=12. AO2=12)

Long Distance II

Though my mother was already two years dead
Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas,
put hot water bottles her side of the bed
and still went to renew her transport pass.

You couldn't just drop in. You had to phone.
He'd put you off an hour to give him time
to clear away her things and look alone
as though his still raw love were such a crime.

He couldn't risk my blight of disbelief
though sure that very soon he'd hear her key
scrape in the rusted lock and end his grief.
He knew she'd just popped out to get the tea.

I believe life ends with death, and that is all.
You haven't both gone shopping; just the same,
in my new black leather phone book there's your name
and the disconnected number I still call.

Tony Harrison

Question 27.2

In both 'Long Distance II' and 'My Grandmother' the speakers describe their feelings in response to the death of a loved one.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present their reactions to death?

[8 marks]

My Grandmother

She kept an antique shop – or it kept her.
Among Apostle spoons and Bristol glass,
The faded silks, the heavy furniture,
She watched her own reflection in the brass
Salvers and silver bowls, as if to prove
Polish was all, there was no need of love.

And I remember how I once refused
To go out with her, since I was afraid.
It was perhaps a wish not to be used
Like antique objects. Though she never said
That she was hurt, I still could feel the guilt
Of that refusal, guessing how she felt.

Later, too frail to keep a shop, she put
All her best things in one narrow room.
The place smelt old, of things too long kept shut,
The smell of absences where shadows come
That can't be polished. There was nothing then
To give her own reflection back again.

And when she died I felt no grief at all,
Only the guilt of what I once refused.
I walked into her room among the tall
Sideboards and cupboards – things she never used
But needed; and no finger marks were there,
Only the new dust falling through the air.

Elizabeth Jennings

Section C: Unseen Poetry

Question 27.1

In 'The Soldier', how does the poet present his attitude towards the sacrifices men made during the war?

(24 marks – AO1=12. AO2=12)

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:

That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,

A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

Question 27.2

In both 'The Soldier' and 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' the speakers describe the difficulties faced by soldiers during the First World War.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present these challenges?

[8 marks]

Anthem for Doomed Youth

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
— Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Wilfred Owen

Section C: Unseen Poetry

Question 27.1

In 'Valentine', how does the poet present love as a complicated emotion?

(24 marks – AO1=12. AO2=12)

Valentine

Not a red rose or a satin heart.

I give you an onion.

It is a moon wrapped in brown paper.

It promises light

like the careful undressing of love.

Here.

It will blind you with tears

like a lover.

It will make your reflection

a wobbling photo of grief.

I am trying to be truthful.

Not a cute card or a kissogram.

I give you an onion.

Its fierce kiss will stay on your lips,

possessive and faithful

as we are,

for as long as we are.

Take it.

Its platinum loops shrink to a wedding ring,

if you like.

Lethal.

Its scent will cling to your fingers,

cling to your knife.

Carol Ann Duffy

Question 27.2

In both 'Valentine' and 'A Well-Worn Story' the speakers describe the concept of love and how difficult it is to explain it.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present love.

[8 marks]

A Well-Worn Story

In April, in April,
My one love came along,
And I ran the slope of my high hill
To follow a thread of song.

His eyes were hard as porphyry
With looking on cruel lands;
His voice went slipping over me
Like terrible silver hands.

Together we trod the secret lane
And walked the muttering town.
I wore my heart like a wet, red stain
On the breast of a velvet gown.

In April, in April,
My love went whistling by,
And I stumbled here to my high hill
Along the way of a lie.

Now what should I do in this place
But sit and count the chimes,
And splash cold water on my face
And spoil a page with rhymes?

Dorothy Parker

Section C: Unseen Poetry

Question 27.1

In 'Master', how does the poet present his views on slavery?

(24 marks – AO1=12. AO2=12)

Master

From Liverpool on sinking ships
Blessed by a monarchy,
To Africa the hypocrites,
Come children see.

Master master worked the slave
Who ran for liberty,
The master made us perm and shave,
Come children see.

If slave drivers be men of words
We curse that poetry
Its roots you'll find are so absurd.
Come children see.

Master master's sons drill oil
It's all his legacy
They put the devil in the soil,
Come children, see.

Fear not his science or his gun
Just know what you can be,
And children we shall overcome,
Come children see.

Tis true that we have not now
chains
Yet we were never free,
Still masters chains corrupt our
brains
Come children see.

A word is slave for man is man
What's done is slavery,
The evils of the clan that can,
Come children see.

Master master worked the slave
The upright sort was he,
That boy dug master master's
grave
Come children see.

Some now await a judgement
day
To know his penalty,
It's blood and fire anyway,
Come children see.

Benjamin Zephaniah

Question 27.2

In both 'Master' and 'Still I Rise' the speakers describe the difficulties faced by those that are subjects of slavery.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present their ideas.

[8 marks]

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

Maya Angelou

Section C: Unseen Poetry

Question 27.1

In 'The Road Not Taken', how does the poet present the challenge of facing life's decisions?

(24 marks – AO1=12. AO2=12)

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

Question 27.2

In both 'The Road Not Taken' and 'The Wall' the speakers describe their feelings about life-changing decisions.

What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present their ideas about life?

[8 marks]

The Wall

I try and try not to think about the Wall.

Its profile, massive height and roughcut stonework
All stir up fear, gloom, exaltation, pride,
And numbness, in a jumble hard to name.

No one knows who had it built, or when;
Five hundred years ago, the locals guess;
But sunset trumpet calls depict it gold
Enough to have been there more than a thousand.

The thing held off invasions, true—but not
Always, our history records defeats.
Nowadays we never get invaders,
Or else they're us, going beyond its limits

To acquire new territory and subjects.
Though weaker stretches have sheared off and fallen,
Herders fence up their sheepfolds at the base,
And some blocks are dragged off to build new houses.

Topside, binoculars can sight its ramparts
Winding through dark-blue mountains farther north . . .
That monumental, chill indifference
Explains why boys graffiti names on it

(Or jokes), no matter if their scrawny slashes
In time begin to erode. Decades ago,
I gouged in mine, it wasn't yet forbidden.
Luckily, dense vines screen the signature,

Made at an age when we assume our name
Amounts to more than permanent stone structures.
Oh, even now it sparks a vocal reflex
When I move the leaves and read it there again.

Alfred Corn

Section C: Unseen Poetry

Question 27.1

In 'Catrin', how does the speaker present her feelings about her daughter?

(24 marks – AO1=12. AO2=12)

Catrin

I can remember you, child,
As I stood in a hot, white
Room at the window watching
The people and cars taking
Turn at the traffic lights.
I can remember you, our first
Fierce confrontation, the tight
Red rope of love which we both
Fought over. It was a square
Environmental blank, disinfected
Of paintings or toys. I wrote
All over the walls with my
Words, coloured the clean squares
With the wild, tender circles
Of our struggle to become
Separate. We want, we shouted,
To be two, to be ourselves.

Neither won nor lost the struggle
In the glass tank clouded with feelings
Which changed us both. Still I am fighting
You off, as you stand there
With your straight, strong, long
Brown hair and your rosy,
Defiant glare, bringing up
From the heart's pool that old rope,
Tightening about my life,
Trailing love and conflict,
As you ask may you skate
In the dark, for one more hour.

Gillian Clarke

Question 27.2

In both 'Catrin' and 'Before You Were Mine', the speakers describe mother and daughter relationships. What are the similarities and/or differences in the ways that those relationships are presented?

[8 marks]

Before You Were Mine

I'm ten years away from the corner you laugh on with your pals, Maggie McGeeney and Jean Duff. The three of you bend from the waist, holding each other, or your knees, and shriek at the pavement. Your polka-dot dress blows round your legs. Marilyn.

I'm not here yet. The thought of me doesn't occurin' the ballroom with the thousand eyes, the fizzy, movie tomorrows the right walk home could bring. I knew you would dancelike that. Before you were mine, your Ma stands at the close with a hiding for the late one. You reckon it's worth it.

The decade ahead of my loud, possessive yell was the best one, eh? I remember my hands in those high-heeled red shoes, relics, and now your ghost clatters toward me over George Square till I see you, clear as scent, under the tree, with its lights, and whose small bites on your neck, sweetheart?

Cha cha cha! You'd teach me the steps on the way home from Mass, stamping stars from the wrong pavement. Even then I wanted the bold girl winking in Portobello, somewhere in Scotland, before I was born. That glamorous love lasts where you sparkle and waltz and laugh before you were mine.

Carol Ann Duffy

Section C: Unseen Poetry

27.1 In 'Dawn Revisited', how does the poet present the speaker's feelings about making the most of life's opportunities?

[24 marks]

Dawn Revisited

Imagine you wake up
with a second chance: The blue jay*
hawks his pretty wares*
and the oak still stands, spreading
glorious shade. If you don't look back,
the future never happens.
How good to rise in sunlight,
in the prodigal smell of biscuits –
eggs and sausage on the grill.
The whole sky is yours
to write on, blown open
to a blank page. Come on,
shake a leg! You'll never know
who's down there, frying those eggs,
if you don't get up and see.

Rita Dove

**blue jay – a type of bird.*

**hawks his pretty wares – draws attention to itself.*

27.2 In both 'Dawn Revisited' and 'Carpe Diem' the speakers describe their thoughts on making the most of life's opportunities. What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present those feelings?

[8 marks]

Carpe Diem*

From my study window I see you
below in the garden, a hand here pruning
or leaning across to snip a wayward shoot;
a daub of powder-blue in a profusion of green, then next
moment, you are no longer there –
only to reappear, this time perfectly framed
in dappling sunlight, with an armful of ivy
you've trimmed, topped by hyacinth blooms, fragrant
survivors of last night's frost.
And my heart misses a beat at love for you,
knowing a time will come when you are
no longer there, nor I here to watch you
on a day of such simplicity.
Meantime let us make sure we clasp each shared moment in
cupped hands, like water we dare not spill.

Stewart Conn

**Carpe Diem – an expression meaning "seize the day."*

Section C: Unseen Poetry

27.1 How does the speaker in 'Ex-miner' present the problems and pleasures of the ex-miner's life?

[24 marks]

Ex-miner

The man next door to me was a miner
Until the dust filled his lungs like coal-sacks;
Now he's good for nothing so he says.
Now he walks in slippers and leans on walls,
And eats the clean air while his eyes fix on
Reaching the bottom of his garden.
His wife hides the Woodbines* 'for his own good',
The pub's half-a-day's walk away for him
And it's cruel crawling to the privy**.
So few pleasures remain to him
That he takes a grim-sour joy in rudeness
To neighbours: he savours the honorary title
Of old misery-guts like a vintage wine.
His other treat's to stand upright each day
And not to bang his head against the sky.

by Adrian Burke

*Woodbines = brand of cigarettes

**privy = outside toilet

27.2 In both 'Ex-miner' and 'In Oak Terrace', the speakers describe the lives of older people. What are the similarities and/or differences in the ways those lives are described?

[8 marks]

In Oak Terrace

Old and alone, she sits at nights,
Nodding before the television.
The house is quiet now. She knits,
rises to put the kettle on,
watches a cowboy's killing, reads
the local Births and Deaths, and falls
asleep at 'Growing stock-piles of war-heads'.
A world that threatens worse ills
fades. She dreams of life spent
in the one house: suffers again
poverty, sickness, abandonment,
a child's death, a brother's brain
melting to madness. Seventy years
of common trouble; the kettle sings.
At midnight she says her silly prayers,
And takes her teeth out, and collects her night-things.

By Tony Connor

Section C: Unseen Poetry

27.1 In 'Long Distance', how does the speaker explore the ways people are affected by loss?

[24
marks]

Long Distance

Though my mother was already two years dead
Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas,
put hot water bottles her side of the bed
and still went to renew her transport pass.

You couldn't just drop in. You had to phone.
He'd put you off an hour to give him time
to clear away her things and look alone
as though his still raw love were such a crime.

He couldn't risk my blight of disbelief
though sure that very soon he'd hear her key
scrape in the rusted lock and end his grief.
He knew she'd just popped out to get the tea.

I believe life ends with death, and that is all.
You haven't both gone shopping; just the same,
in my new black leather phone book there's your name
and the disconnected number I still call.

by Tony Harrison

27.2 In both 'Long Distance' and 'Stop all the Clocks', the speakers examine the feelings caused by the loss of a loved one. What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present these feelings?

[8 marks]

Stop all the Clocks

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message He Is Dead,
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public
doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now: put out every one;
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood.
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

W. H. Auden

Section C: Unseen Poetry

27.1 In 'The Place's Fault', how does the speaker present his feelings about his school days?

[24 marks]

The Place's Fault

Another afternoon, after a rotten day at school
Hating this place, hating them, and feeling like a fool
Sweat on my fingers, pages dirty with smears
I stumbled up the street, still swallowing my tears
Held my head high in pride I walked on the hot concrete
I blinked out to the sunlight, exhausted from the heat
At the gate they stood. Same old looks thinking I chose to stay
I looked back with disgust. Shouted swear words and walked away
"****" they called me. "Freak!" they yelled and ran
It hurt and I didn't understand. But I tried to keep it in as hard as I can
I didn't want to seem weak. And that anger started to build up
I thought I was right, yet I was punished when I tried to make it stop
that's when I knew, only I take care of myself but don't get caught.
More anger and more violence. No other choice. It was the place's fault
Time could not fix that, nothing could make these wounds heal
That's just how they damage you, my innocence they did steal
There was nothing there for me. Nothing I haven't had to learn.
Nothing I'd care to teach. A childhood lost with no return.

by Philip Hobsbaum

27.2 In 'My Parents Kept Me' and in 'The Place's Fault', both speakers write about their experiences of bullying. What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present those experiences?

[8 marks]

My Parents Kept Me

My parents kept me from children who were rough
and who threw words like stones and who wore torn clothes.

Their thighs showed through rags. They ran in the street

And climbed cliffs and stripped by the country streams.

I feared more than tigers their muscles like iron

And their jerking hands and their knees tight on my arms.

I feared the salt coarse pointing of those boys

Who copied my lisp behind me on the road.

They were lithe, they sprang out behind hedges

Like dogs to bark at our world. They threw mud

And I looked another way, pretending to smile,

I longed to forgive them, yet they never smiled.

by Stephen Spender

Section C: Unseen Poetry

27.1 In 'Hedgehog', how does the speaker present his feelings about the hedgehog?

[24 marks]

Hedgehog

Twitching the leaves just where the drainpipe clogs

In ivy leaves and mud, a purposeful

Creature at night about his business. Dogs

Fear his stiff seriousness. He chews away

At beetles, worms, slugs, frogs. Can kill a hen

With one snap of his jaws, can taunt a snake to death

On muscled spines. Old countrymen

Tell tales of hedgehogs sucking a cow dry.

But this one, cramped by houses fences, walls

Must have slept here all winter in that heap

Of compost, or have inched by intervals

Through tidy gardens to this ivy bed.

And here, dim-eyed, but ears so sensitive

A voice within the house can make him freeze,

He scuffs the edge of danger; yet can live

Happily in our night and absences.

A country creature, wary, quiet and shrewd,

He takes the milk we give him, when we're gone.

At night, our slamming voices must seem crude

To one who sits and waits for silences.

by Anthony Thwaite

27.2 In both 'Hedgehog' and 'Pigeons', the poets describe creatures in unusual and surprising ways. What are the similarities and/or differences in the methods used to bring these creatures to life for the reader?

[8 marks]

Pigeons

They paddle with staccato feet
In powder-pools of sunlight,
Small blue busybodies
Strutting like fat gentlemen
With hands clasped
Under their swallowtail coats;
And, as they stump about,
Their heads like tiny hammers
Tap at imaginary nails
In non-existent walls.
Elusive ghosts of sunshine
Slither down the green gloss
Of their necks in an instant, and are gone.

Summer hangs drugged from sky to earth
In limpid fathoms of silence:
Only warm dark dimples of sound
Slide like slow bubbles
From the contented throats.

Raise a casual hand -
With one quick gust
They fountain into air.

by Richard Kell

Section C: Unseen Poetry

27.1 In 'Woman Work', how does the poet present the speaker's feelings about being a woman?

[24 marks]

Woman Work

I've got the children to tend
The clothes to mend
The floor to mop
The food to shop
Then the chicken to fry line 5
The baby to dry
I got company to feed
The garden to weed
I've got the shirts to press
The tots to dress line 10
The cane to be cut
I gotta clean up this hut
Then see about the sick
And the cotton to pick.
Shine on me, sunshine line 15
Rain on me, rain
Fall softly, dewdrops
And cool my brow again.
Storm, blow me from here
With your fiercest wind line 20
Let me float across the sky
'Til I can rest again
Fall gently, snowflakes
Cover me with white
Cold icy kisses and line 25
Let me rest tonight.
Sun, rain, curving sky
Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone
Star shine, moon glow
You're all that I can call my own. Line 30

Maya Angelou

27.2 In both 'Woman Work' and 'Overheard in County Sligo' the speakers describe their experiences of being a woman. What are the similarities and/or differences between the ways the poets present those feelings?

[8 marks]

Overheard in County Sligo

*I married a man from County Roscommon
and I live in the back of beyond
with a field of cows and a yard of hens
and six white geese on the pond.*

*At my door's a square of yellow corn
caught up by its corners and shaken,
and the road runs down through the open gate
and freedom's there for the taking.*

line 5

I had thought to work on the Abbey stage
or have my name in a book,
to see my thought on the printed page,
or still the crowd with a look.*

line 10

*But I turn to fold the breakfast cloth
and to polish the lustre and brass,
to order and dust the tumbled rooms
and find my face in the glass.*

line 15

*I ought to feel I'm a happy woman
for I lie in the lap of the land,
and I married a man from County Roscommon
and I live in the back of beyond.*

Line 20

Gillian Clarke