Possible Teaching Sequence for War Poetry

Week 1

**Lesson 1:**

**Starter:** Give students the lines from Owen poetry and ask them to read and then draw an emoticon or similar icon to represent the feelings that they think are represented in the lines.

**Introduction**: Explain the purpose of the scheme of work and make it clear that this will build on what they have learnt about poetic techniques. In order to revise these techniques, ask students to brainstorm on whiteboards the techniques that they can remember. Take feedback, asking students to explain the terms and give examples where they can. Go through the grid below and talk through the activities and the skills that will be developed.

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| **What has influenced a poet to write a poem? How have they conveyed their message?** | Discussion of emotions associated with certain lines from poetry-exploration of language.  Research context, social and historical information. Jigsaw activity to share information. Look at PPT slides on background to the war. Summarising main points from discussions. |
| **What are the themes/ideas/ attitudes in these poems? How can I represent them in a more visual format?** | Hot seating character in poetry-exploring the story. Shared annotation of poems, analysing techniques used. Writing headlines to accompany poems and justifying decisions made. Group creation of a collage/montage to represent ideas/attitudes in a poem or group of poems. |
| **Can I explore the meaning of a poem through group discussion? Am I able to further a group discussion by asking questions?** | Responding to some unseen war poetry in groups, using prompts to support. Creating ‘question boards’ based on the poems and then responding to the questions of others-developing a personal response.  Annotating a poem independently. |
| **Can I bring a poem to life by using a range of dramatic techniques?** | In groups, select a war poem and explain reasons for selection. Teacher models monologue from the perspective of the man in ‘To My Daughter Betty, The Gift of God’ by Tom Kettle or the poet Rupert Brooke in The Soldier. Students choose a dramatic techniques and use to explore and interpret a poem. Present to the class and respond to questions. |
| **Am I able to develop a character or voice in my own fiction writing based on the main ideas in a poem?** | Teacher models writing a narrative, focusing on language choices and structure. |
| **Can I write my own poem, using arrange of techniques effectively and conveying a message?** | Discuss with a partner something that is important to you. Draw up success criteria. Write poem, redraft after self assessment and accompany with a critical explanation of intended effect, using sentence starters. |

**Development**: Refer back to starter activity and ask students to explain why they chose these emotions. Can they identify key words or techniques that have contributed to the reader response? In small groups, students are given the poem Dulce et decorum est by Wilfred Owen. As a group they need to discuss the feelings that are represented in the poem and highlighting the important words if they can.

**Lesson 2:**

**Starter:** Show students the ppt slide of the Flanders Field collage. Give them a few moments to discuss what they think the poem represents and what it makes them think of, with a partner.

**Introduction:** As a class read the poem ‘In Flanders Field’. (next ppt) Does the poem give us anymore information? How does the writer feel about what he is writing about? What do the fields represent?

**Development:** Ask students to research ‘What happened in Flanders Fields?’. Discuss with a partner how their research information helps them to understand the poem. What does it tell us about why McCrae wrote the poem? What other information would they like to have so that they could fully understand the poem? What questions would they ask the poet?

**Plenary**: Ask students to consider whether it is important to understand the background of a poem or whether they can be fully appreciated in isolation.

**Lesson 3:**

**Research lesson:** Arrange students into small groups and give each group a different poem from a collection of war poets. Give students approximately 10 minutes to discuss their first thoughts about the poem. They can choose one word to describe the theme and one word to describe a feelings associated with the poem.

Explain the purpose of the research: to find out information that has informed the writer’s writing. Allow students to research and then feedback their findings to the rest of the class.

**Lesson 4**:

**Starter:** Show students images of soldiers on the ppts and ask students to choose one of the images. Using the image as a stimulus the students should write a paragraph as if they are that person, explaining how they feel and why. Students will use their creative and imaginative skills.

**Introduction:** Take some feedback from the students and ask them to explain their choices. What was in the image that gave them that information? Explain that they have used their inference skills and their creative skills here and they will be applying these to understanding poetry.

**Development:** Students create a character profile for the paragraphs they wrote including a short history of their life.

**Plenary:** What were the easiest points to decide on? Which points were more difficult? How do you decide on this information when it wasn’t as obvious?

**Lesson 5:**

**Starter:** Ask students to select the most important line from the poem Anthem For Doomed Youth by Wilfred Owen and explain why they chose it.

**Introduction:** As a class, brainstorm ideas for a narrative around the poem. Think about where the poem might fit into the narrative, eg, at the start, in the middle or at the end. How might the narrative start? What would the main events be?

**Development:** Using a storyboard students plan a story based on this war poem or another that they have looked at.

**Plenary:** Ask students to explain why they have chosen the narrative and structure that they have. How would they like the reader of the story to respond? How will they make sure the reader responds in this way? Refer back to the language and structure in the poem they chose as an example to help students.

**Lesson 6:**

**Starter:** Students write their opening paragraph of their story, thinking about the impact it will have on a reader.

**Introduction:** Teacher writes an opening, taking advice from students in order to make it more powerful. After paragraph is finished, reflect on the changes that were made and write a list of success criteria.

**Development:** Students peer assess each others opening paragraphs, giving verbal feedback and advice. Students then develop and improve their narrative.

**Plenary:** Self assess writing, highlighting most powerful sentences, circling 5 of the most powerful word choices and underlining where punctuation has been used for effect.

**Lesson 7:**

**Starter:** Recap the themes that have been covered in the war poetry studied throughout the scheme.

**Introduction:** Remind students that poets often write about things that are important to them. Show students information about Sassoon and explore why Sassoon wrote the poetry that he did. Show them Sassoon poem (on ppt) to see how his ideas influenced his poetry.

**Development:** In pairs, students discuss the themes that they would be able to write about. What is important to them? How do they feel about these themes? Brainstorm vocabulary around themes. Choose one theme that they will then write about. Students create a mood board for their poem. What images do they want to create? What colours will they include? What feelings will they explore? What are the main themes and ideas? Students work on their own poetry, using chosen AF criteria as success guidelines.