

## September Focus: Unseen Poetry (20% of Literature grade)

Daily revision: these are intended to be short tasks to support your revision. Your teacher may wish to see evidence of some or all of these tasks.

1. Make a list of poetical terms, e.g. metaphor, with clear definitions. Write the terms in capital letters or colour.
2. Add your own (and researched) examples to every item on the list above, e.g. 'The girl was a lion in battle - metaphor.
3. Refer back to this list of poetical devices. Learn all of them and their definitions.
4. Using the two poems on the next page, underline and label 5 metaphors, 5 similes, 5 areas where the placement of the lines is of interest and 5 powerful descriptions.
5. Now focus on just one poem. Select two powerful descriptions and explain how and why they have impact. Write 100 words.
6. Read the poem, 'Mid-term Break' three times. What is the **story** of the poem? Write 100 words.
7. Looking at 'Mid-term Break', **explain** what the line 'And candles soothed the bedside' suggests about the way Heaney feels.
8. Read the poem, 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class' three times. How does Duffy use **language** to describe the classroom? Write 100 words.
9. Looking at 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class', explain what the lines 'The classroom glowed like a sweet shop' and 'Three frogs hopped in the playground' suggest. What images of school-life do they conjure up? Write 100 words.
10. Using both of the poems, write 100 words to **describe** the childhood experience in each. Use quotes to support your answer.

## Mid-Term Break

BY SEAMUS HEANEY

I sat all morning in the college sick bay  
Counting bells knelling classes to a close.  
At two o'clock our neighbours drove me home.

In the porch I met my father crying—  
He had always taken funerals in his stride—  
And Big Jim Evans saying it was a hard blow.

The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram  
When I came in, and I was embarrassed  
By old men standing up to shake my hand

And tell me they were 'sorry for my trouble'.  
Whispers informed strangers I was the eldest,  
Away at school, as my mother held my hand

In hers and coughed out angry tearless sighs.  
At ten o'clock the ambulance arrived  
With the corpse, stanced and bandaged by the nurses.

Next morning I went up into the room. Snowdrops  
And candles soothed the bedside; I saw him  
For the first time in six weeks. Paler now,

Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple,  
He lay in the four-foot box as in his cot.  
No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four-foot box, a foot for every year.

## 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class'

by Carol Ann Duffy

You could travel up the Blue Nile  
with your finger, tracing the route  
while Mrs Tilscher chanted the scenery.  
Tana. Ethiopia. Khartoum. Aswan.  
That for a hour, then a skittle of milk  
and the chalky Pyramids rubbed into dust.  
A window opened with a long pole.  
The laugh of a bell swung by a running child.

This was better than home. Enthralling books.  
The classroom glowed like a sweet shop.  
Sugar paper. Coloured shapes. Brady and Hindley  
faded, like the faint, uneasy smudge of a mistake.  
Mrs Tilscher loved you. Some mornings, you found  
she'd left a good gold star by your name.  
The scent of a pencil slowly, carefully, shaved.  
A xylophone's nonsense heard from another form.

Over the Easter term, the inky tadpoles changed  
from commas into exclamation marks. Three frogs  
hopped in the playground, freed by a dunce,  
followed by a line of kids, jumping and croaking  
away from the lunch queue. A rough boy  
told you how you were born. You kicked him, but stared  
at your parents, appalled, when you got back home.

That feverish July, the air tasted of electricity.  
A tangible alarm made you always untidy, hot,  
fractious under the heavy, sexy sky. You asked her  
how you were born and Mrs Tilscher smiled,  
then turned away. Reports were handed out.  
You ran through the gates, impatient to be grown,  
as the sky split open into a thunderstorm.

