Unseen Poetry Knowledge Organiser

FLIRTS:

Form

What type of poem is it: Narrative? Sonnet? Ballad? Dramatic Monologue?

Language

What words or punctuation marks have been chosen carefully to have an impact?
What sentence choices stand out: single word? Interrogative? Imperative?

Imagery

Any sensory pictures?
Any simile/ metaphor/ personification/ symbolism?
Allusions to other texts or figures – historical, literary?

Rhythm / Rhyme

Is there a regular or irregular rhythm / rhyme scheme?
Is there end of line rhyme, internal line rhyme, or alternate line rhyme?

THEME

What are the main ideas/ feelings expressed?

Structure

How are the ideas organised/ sequenced/ grouped in the poem?
Any recurring motif? line? Word or grammar patterning?

Remember this is NOT a checklist. Flirt with it!
What attracts you in the poem?
Never say 'there is no…..'. Write about what IS in the poem and suggest reasons for these choices that are linked to the main theme/idea.

EXAM ADVICE

1. Read the question first and highlight the **focus**: Love? Relationships? Growing up? Anger? Power? Change?
2. Read through the poem once to get a sense of the main ideas and **theme** that links to the focus of the question. Ask yourself:
   - What is happening in the poem? (Don't ignore the title here!)
   - Who seems to be speaking, to who? (Pronouns can help you here)
   - What tone is the poem – Confrontational? Sorrowful? Excited? Pleading?
3. Read through the poem a second time and highlight the **methods** that help to bring out that theme:
   - **Form**
   - **Language**
   - **Imagery**
   - **Rhythm and Rhyme**
   - **Structure**
4. Organise/number your methods so you can analyse your **2 best language points and 1 form or structure point** (or three language points) and write these up as **WHAT/HOW/WHY** paragraphs.
5. Leave 2-5 mins to check your ideas. Often, by the end of your writing, you've discovered more meaning in the poem and can improve your first paragraph

TOP TIPS:

- ✓ Say a lot about a little
- ✓ Link every idea to the question focus / main theme
- ✓ Choose 'juicy' or 'diveable' quotes that will allow you to consider layers of meaning
- ✓ Refer to the 'speaker' in the poem when you are commenting on what seems to be said in the poem: 'The speaker seems to want….'
- ✓ Refer to the poet by their surname when you comment on methods used: 'Armitage might choose to use the simile of a … to emphasise'
- ✓ Use tentative language 'could', 'maybe', 'perhaps', 'might', 'may' to make suggestions about meaning
- ✓ Look for alternative meanings – 'or' is a magic word in analysis

SENTENCE STEMS:

What? (Point & Evidence)

On first reading… The speaker perhaps wants… The poet seems to suggest…
A significant line is… This is evidenced by… The line/ phrase '?' seems to mean…

How? (Technique Analysis)

The poet perhaps uses/chose [method] to suggest/ mimic/ represent…
The word '?' means …. which could imply/ emphasise/ illustrate/ link with …
There are lots of examples of ? in the poem which…
(To develop) Furthermore, … Moreover, …. Further support for this can be found in…
(To explore) Alternatively, … …or… (To evaluate) This is effective in making the reader…

Why? (Link)

The poet may be trying to… or wants the reader to… The poet's message seems to be that…

Poetic Terms

Alliteration: words that begin with the same initial sound, e.g. 'flowing flakes that flock'

Allusion: reference to another text or idea, e.g. 'the valley of Death'

Ambiguous: when something is left deliberately unclear, e.g. the final lines of Bayonet Charge.

Anaphora: repetition of a phrase at the start of a line or sentence, e.g. "Cannon to", "Dem tell me"

Assonance: words that share the same vowel sound, e.g. 'wearied we keep awake because'

Caesura: a pause in a line of poetry, e.g. 'Nothing beside remains. Round the decay'

Connotations: what a word or phrase suggests, e.g. 'black' usually connotes darkness, evil or death.

End stopped line: opposite of enjambment, where a line stops, e.g. 'We are bombarded by the empty air.'

Enjambment: where a line has no punctuation at the end and breaks onto a new line, but carries on an idea, e.g. 'One of my mates goes by / and tosses his guts back into his body.'

Hyperbole: deliberate exaggeration, used to emphasise a point.

Iambic pentameter: a line of poetry with 10 syllables, e.g. 'The lone and level sands stretch far away.'

Juxtaposition: placing two opposite images or ideas together for effect

Metaphor: describing something by saying it is something else, e.g. 'mind-forged manacles',

Monologue: one person speaking (dramatic monologue), e.g. My Last Duchess.

Motif: a repeated idea or theme.

Narrative: writing that tells a story.

Onomatopoeia: use of words which echo their meaning in sound, e.g. 'thunder'd'

Oxymoron: two words that seem to contradict each other, e.g. 'exploding comfortably'

Personification: giving an object or animal human characteristics, e.g. 'the wind's nonchalance'

Poetic Persona: when the poet takes on a voice in the poem

Quatrain: a group of four lines

Refrain: repeating of a single or group of lines in a poem, e.g. 'Rode the six hundred.' 'But nothing happens.'

Repetition: repeating the same word or phrase, e.g. 'a huge peak, black and huge', 'I struck and struck again', 'Half a league, half a league / Half a league', 'his bloody life in my bloody hands'

Rhyme Scheme: abbcca etc

Rhyming couplets: Two lines that rhyme next to each other, e.g. 'Plunged in the battery-smoke / Right thro' the line they broke'

Rhythm: is the beat or pace of the words. It can be regular or irregular, slow or fast, depending on the effect the poet wants to create.

Sibilance: repetition of 's' or 'sh' sounds, e.g. 'Storm'd at with shot and shell'

Simile: imagery comparison using as or like, e.g. 'little fishing boats / strung out like bunting'

Stanza: is a section of a poem sometimes referred to as a verse

Symbolism: when object stands for something else, e.g. ' dove' = peace and hope.

Tone: mood or feelings suggested by the poem.

Volta: a turning point in a poem often signalled by a discourse marker eg 'But…' or 'Then…'