

'A Wife in London'

Thomas Hardy

"A Wife in London" relates to the Boer War (1899-1902) which took place in South Africa and related to disputed lands. It involved the British and the Boer people, who originated from Holland.

1) Language and Structure:

Complete the grid below with three examples of how language and structure might impact upon the reader's perceptions – pick examples that create a reaction or response in the poem.

	Example:	Explanation (how does it create meaning or effect?)
Language:	1) 2) 3)	1) 2) 3)
Structure:	1) 2) 3)	1) 2) 3)

2) Making Notes

Add the notes below to your anthology, plus find a secondary bit of evidence or a second method that supports these interpretations. On this sheet, write down any arguments or alternative interpretations next to the notes; where does your opinion differ?

- The city fog, “the tawny vapour” as a **symbol** of concealment – she is unaware of her husband’s death.
- **Support/alternatives:**

- The atmosphere is depressing and the **simile** “Like a waning taper/The street lamp glimmers cold” reinforces this as the lamp’s inability to cut through the fog is highlighted; it offers no comfort to the wife.
- **Support/alternatives:**

- The harsh and unfeeling way in which the wife is given the news of her partner’s death is announced by a messenger whose “knock cracks smartly”. The use of the **onomatopoeic verb** “cracks” contrast with the stifling nature of the fog in the first stanza.
- **Support/alternatives:**

- The poem is structure in to distinct halves; the second part, labelled “The Irony”, does describe the cruel **irony** of the wife receiving a letter of hope from her husband.
- **Support/alternatives:**

- The **mood** of the letter in is direct contrast to the mood created in the first stanza because the husband writes optimistically of “home-planned jaunts”. It creates **pathos as** “jaunts” conjures up such the notion of playful, innocent trips to the countryside, something that the wife will never experience with him again.
- **Support/alternatives:**

3) Compare and Contrast

Remember, your job with the poems is to compare a named poem with a second poem. Using the grid below, how would you compare this poem to 'Dulce et Decorum Est'? Re-read the poem and complete the grid.

	<u>Dulce</u>	<u>Wife</u>
Quotation:		
How they compare/contrast:		
Quotation:		
How they compare/contrast:		
Quotation:		
How they compare/contrast:		

4) EXTENSION:

Write up your comparisons as a full paragraphed response using the task below:

Compare the presentation of the horrors of war in your chosen poem to the presentation of the horrors of war in The Soldier. [25 marks]

In your answer to part (b) you should compare:

- the content and structure of the poems – what they are about and how they are organised;
- how the writers create effects, using appropriate terminology where relevant;
- the contexts of the poems, and how these may have influenced the ideas in them.