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| **•** *the content of the poems – what they are about;* | Tell ‘the story’ of the poem. Who, what, where, why |
| **•** *the ideas the poets may have wanted us to think about;* | This is the ‘big picture’ stuff. It’s hinted at in the question. If the question says poems are about life, the ideas may be about aging, death, family, experiences, etc. |
| ***•*** *the mood or atmosphere of the poems;* | Feelings of people in the poem OR sometimes also the feelings it makes readers experience |
| ***•*** *how they are written – words and phrases you find interesting, the way they are organised, and so on;* | Picking out quotations and discussing why the writer has used them and how/why they are effective.  Look for: similes, metaphors, repetition, contrast, ‘odd’ choices of words |
| ***•*** *your responses to the poems, including how they are similar and how they are different.* | Whatever the poem made you think about and feel. You may also be able to relate it to your own life. Also consider if it has ‘taught’ you anything or whether it contains deeper messages/morals/lessons. |

*You may wish to include some or all of these points:*

You need to do this for each poem (2 poems) and then compare the bullet points between each other at the end, so you have 3 sections of writing in total for this question.

You will have an hour on the question. Each of the 3 sections should have nearly a page written about them. You should be writing 2.5 – 3 pages in total in 1 hour.

Spend the first 5 minutes of the hour reading/highlighting/annotating the poems.

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| **Tramp**  This mad prophet  gibbers\* mid-traffic,  wringing his hands  whilst mouthing at heaven.  No messages for us.  His conversation is simply  a passage through time.  He points and calls.  Our uneven stares dissuade\*  approach. We fear him, his  matted hair, patched coat,  grey look from sleeping out.  We mutter amongst ourselves  and hope he keeps away. No  place for him in our heaven,  there it’s clean and empty.  *\* gibbers – speaks so fast it sounds like nonsense*  *\*dissuade – persuade against* | Mr Tait’s sample response to one poem:  This poem is about a tramp who is wandering around a town acting in a crazy way, talking to himself and scaring people. It seems to show what happens when you’re homeless and how it can badly affect you.  The writer is showing the issue of homelessness in a way that makes us question it. He talks about how we “fear him” and how we probably stay away, which makes things worse. He also talks about how we don’t want him in our world because it says about him keeping away from our “clean heaven”, almost making him sound less than human because he isn’t wanted.  The atmosphere is one of pity for the tramp, but also frustration at the way people treat him and other homeless people. The writer wants us to care about them a bit more. He feels as though we should put aside our judgements and welcome him into our society.  His word choice shows how the tramp is crazy (“wringing his hands whilst mouthing at heaven”) as he’s talking to himself, but also it shows how maybe he’s desperate – maybe no other people will help him, so he’s turning to God and seeking assistance. It also shows how the tramp is ignored and invisible as his language is a conversation which is “simply a passage through time”. Whilst sympathy is created for his physical appearance because of his “matted hair, patched coat, grey look from sleeping out”, saying that his situation is hurting him and perhaps with “grey” bringing a hit of upcoming death. A lack of colour also suggests the lack of hope or happiness in his world.  This poem made me feel guilty for all the times I have ignored homeless people or seen them as being ‘different’. It’s made me question what’s important in life and how I should treat people. |

You would then need to write a response to the second poem and then do a third section comparing the two.

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| **Decomposition**  I have a picture I took in Bombay  of a beggar asleep on the pavement:  grey-haired, wearing shorts and a dirty shirt,  his shadow thrown aside like a blanket.  His arms and legs could be cracks in the stone;  routes for the ants’ journeys, the flies’ descents.  brain-washed by the sun into exhaustion,  he lies veined into stone, a fossil man.  Behind him, there is a crowd passingly  bemused by a pavement trickster and quite  indifferent to this very common sight  of an old man asleep on the pavement.  I thought it was a good composition  and glibly called it The Man in the Street,  remarking how typical it was of  India that the man in the street lived there.  His head in the posture of one weeping  into a pillow chides me\* now for my  presumption at attempting to compose  art out of his hunger and solitude.  *\*chides me – tells me off*  *Zulfikar Ghose* |  |