

Knowledge Organiser: Power and Conflict Poetry

Conflict		
<p>Charge of the Light Brigade</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British soldiers are ordered to ride towards the Russian enemy. The Russians shoot at them from all sides but the British soldiers are brave and keep going. They fight but the Russians are too strong. Hundreds of British soldiers die. The poet tells us to remember and respect the British soldiers for being brave and heroic. 	<p>“Boldly they rode and well, Into the jaws of Death, Into the mouth of Hell”</p>
<p>Exposure</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British soldiers are in a trench in the freezing snow, waiting for the Germans to attack. They hear guns and bullets in the distance, but are more worried about the cold. They think about people at home and worry they have forgotten about them. The soldiers start to lose their faith in God, and begin to feel dead inside. 	<p>“Our brains ache in the merciless iced east winds that knive us...”</p>
<p>Bayonet Charge</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A soldier runs towards the enemy holding his weapon, a bayonet, in front of him. He runs fast but he becomes confused and frightened in the rush. He suddenly questions why he is running towards the enemy and why he is fighting the war. He does not have time to think more and he continues to run even though he is terrified. 	<p>“King, honour, human dignity, etcetera Dropped like luxuries in a yelling alarm”</p>
<p>Poppies</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mother sees poppies on the graves of soldiers. She remembers how she gave one to her son when he left to go to war. She had to stop herself from being too emotional so she could be strong for him. She stopped herself saying all the things she wanted to so he would not be upset. She could see he was excited to go off to war. Long afterwards, she goes to the church to remember her son now that he has died. 	<p>“all my words / flattened, rolled, turned into felt / slowly melting.”</p>
<p>Kamikaze</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman tells the story of her father. He was ordered to fly his plane into the enemy but he decided not to. She tries to imagine why he turned back. When he comes home, his family stop talking to him because they are embarrassed. The woman tries to imagine his feelings when his family and friends ignored him. She asks whether it is worse to die in battle or to remain alive but be entirely alone. 	<p>“only we children still chattered and laughed till gradually we too learned to be silent”</p>
<p>War Photographer</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A war photographer develops pictures he has taken in wars across the world. He is now safe and home in England. He looks at a photo and remembers watching the man's death. He thinks that people feel sad at first when they see the photos but he thinks they quickly stop caring. He wonders whether he is right or wrong to take photos of other people's pain. 	<p>“a priest preparing to intone a Mass. Belfast. Beirut. Phnom Penh. All flesh is grass.”</p>
<p>The Emigrée</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman talks about how she had to leave her home country when she was a child. She says she always remembers her home in a positive way even though it is now at war. As time passes, she imagines her home as more and more perfect in her mind. She can't ever go back home in reality, but she can go there in her mind. Where she lives now, people alienate her. ...but the woman is comforted by her memory of home. 	<p>“There once was a country ... I left it as a child but my memory of it is sunlight-clear.”</p>
<p>Remains</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A soldier is telling a story about seeing someone that he thought was a bank robber. The soldier and his friends shoot the man, and his destroyed body is taken away. But even when he's back home, the soldier can't stop thinking about killing this man. At the end, the soldier admits he feels responsible and guilty for the man's death. 	<p>“Then I'm home on leave. But I blink and he bursts again through the doors of the bank.”</p>

Power of people				
<p>Ozymandias</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A traveller talks about a statue in a desert. The statue only has the legs and head left. The statue is of the long-dead king Ozymandias. The unkind facial expression of the statue shows how cruel he was when he was alive. Underneath the statue the king has written a message boasting about his achievements. The traveller looks around, but there is nothing to see. Nature has slowly destroyed the king's city. 	<p>“My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings; Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!”</p>		
<p>My Last Duchess</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A duke shows a picture of his wife to a visitor. He hides the painting behind a curtain. He thought his wife was beautiful but became jealous when his wife interacted with other men, including the artist of the picture. He wanted her to be grateful to him for marrying her. He says he gave orders and that she stopped smiling. He talks about choosing his next wife. 	<p>“...This grew; I gave commands; then all smiles stopped together”</p>		
<p>London</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker walks through the streets of London. He sees lots of miserable, unhappy people. People in power ignore the suffering poor people instead of helping them. Worst of all, as a result of all this, children grow up in a cruel, unkind world. 	<p>“How the Chimney-sweeper's cry Every blackning Church appalls”</p>		
<p>Tissue</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker thinks about paper in books. It has writing on it which is important to us. They think about different uses for paper in our lives: maps, receipts for what we buy. They imagine that buildings could be made of paper instead of bricks and stone. They think that it would be beautiful and natural. They say that paper is precious, like our own skin. 	<p>“paper smoothed and stroked and thinned to be transparent, turned into your skin.”</p>		
<p>Checking Out Me History</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker talks about their history lessons as a child growing up in the Caribbean. They feel angry about the things teachers taught them. They only learned about white people from other countries. He gives examples of this. He also gives examples of the people he wanted to learn about instead, from Caribbean history. Now that he is older, he chooses to learn more about his own history and culture. 	<p>“Dem tell me / wha dem want to tell me / bandage up me eye / with me own history / blind me to me own identity”</p>		
Power of nature				
<p>The Prelude</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker remembers how they stole a rowing boat when they were a child. He rowed into a lake in the moonlight. He started to feel guilty. The mountains suddenly seem frightening, like a monster. He rows back and returns the boat, but is haunted and troubled by the memory. 	<p>“a huge peak, black and huge ... / Upreared its head.”</p>		
<p>Storm on the Island</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker describes a remote island which often experiences storms. They people think they are well-prepared because they have strong houses and few possessions that can be blown away. Despite this, they are shocked at the power of the storm when it hits. They feel attacked and afraid, even though the fear is mostly in their own minds. 	<p>“But no. When it begins, the flung spray ... spits like a tame cat / turned savage.”</p>		
Vocabulary				
ambiguous	celebratory	dramatic	haunting	sombre
bleak	critical	harrowing	psychological	tragic