

Year 7: World War One Poetry

In this unit you are exploring the historical context of World War 1 and understanding attitudes expressed in the literature of the period, including poetry.



Read the **Extract from *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*** by Siegfried Sassoon, who was a poet and soldier in World War 1.

Choose **two** tasks from the following options.

Challenge rating	Task
Mild 	<p>A trench was a long, narrow hole dug in the ground for soldiers to shelter in from passing bullets. Using the words underlined, draw what Sassoon is describing about life in the trenches during World War One from what you have understood from the extract.</p> <p><i>Challenge: label the features in your drawing with quotes that show that your drawing is accurate eg “the shells...overhead”.</i></p>
Spicy 	<p>Read the section of the extract in bold. Many readers might think Sassoon’s ‘daydream’ about England is an exaggeration of what England is really like, away from war and the trenches. Explain in detail <i>why</i> you think the writer may have exaggerated? Explain in your own words and support your ideas with quotations from the text.</p>
Hot 	<p>Although the extract is not a poem, poetic techniques are still used to create an impact on the reader. Give three examples of poetic techniques which have been used in this extract and write in your own words what effect you think each one has. Think carefully about what the writer is attempting to make us feel.</p>
Wow! 	<p>Based on this extract, what do you think Sassoon’s view of war is? Does he feel he is doing a service to his country (patriotic) or is he feeling helpless and vulnerable? Use quotations from the extract to support your ideas and explain your view carefully in 3 or 4 detailed paragraphs.</p>

You will be rewarded for your homework! Look carefully at what you have to do to get House points!

1 house point	2 house points	3 house points
Your work has been handed in on time and you have applied your knowledge and understanding from class.	Your work is handed in on time, well presented. You have clearly read the success criteria and worked to the best of your ability.	Your work has been handed in on time and you have gone above and beyond carrying out relevant research in a number of places. You have read and applied the success criteria and have taken on appropriate challenge options.

Success Criteria (AO1 = AO2) Analysing

CONFIDENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You show a clear understanding of the text you've read• You make a range of inferences to allow you to interpret meaning• You support all your points with quotations• You clearly explain the effects of some of the writer's choices of language• You use subject terminology
SECURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are able to make a range of simple points about the text you've read.• You can sometimes read between the lines to find deeper meaning (not always successfully)• You usually use a quote in your responses not always supporting• You briefly explain how a quote proves a point• You use some simple subject terminology
NOVICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are able to make a simple point about the text you've read• You sometimes use a quote in your responses• You sometimes explain how a quote proves a point• You can use basic subject terminology

Need some help?

Let your English teacher know before the deadline and they will be happy to support!
In addition, you could use one of these websites to help:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/0/ww1/25626530> This gives an easy-to-read overview of what life in the trenches was like. It includes an interactive experience of what it felt like for the soldiers in the trenches.

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/features/trenchlife.htm> This website shows images of life in the trenches. It explores the daily routines of the soldiers and gives more details about the difficulties of living in the conditions of the trenches.

<https://outlook.office.com/owa/?realm=swr.gloucs.sch.uk&exsvurl=1&ll-cc=2057&modurl=0> This gives an overview of the life of Siegfried Sassoon. This may help to work out what his views of the war were!

Read the following extract by the poet Siegfried Sassoon:

Extract from *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* by Siegfried Sassoon

New Trench, which we took over, had been a good deal knocked about, but we passed an unharassed night. We were opposite Sunken Road Trench, which was 300 yards away up a slope. Gaps had been cut in our wire for the attacking battalion to pass through.

Early on the next afternoon Kinjack came up to inspect the gaps. With the assistance of his big periscope he soon discovered that the wire wasn't properly cut. It must be done that night, he said. Barton brought me the news. I was huddled up in a little dog-kennel of a dug-out, reading *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and trying to forget about the shells which were hurrying and hurrooshing overhead.

I was meditating about England, visualising a grey day down in Sussex; dark green woodlands with pigeons circling above the tree-tops; dogs barking, cocks crowing, and all the casual tappings and twinklings of the countryside. I thought of the huntsman walking out in his long white coat with the hounds; of Parson Colwood pulling up weeds in his garden till tea-time; of Captain Huxtable helping his men get in the last load of hay while a shower of rain moved along below his meadows.

It was for all that, I supposed, that I was in the front-line with soaked feet, trench-mouth, and feeling short of sleep. Barton's head and shoulders butting past the gas-blanket in the dug-out doorway wrecked my reverie; he wanted me to come out and have a squint at the uncut wire, which was no day dream since it was going to affect the fortunes of a still undiminished New Army Battalion.

Unharassed = undisturbed / not troubled

Battalion = a large group of troops ready for battle

Shells = bullets

Reverie = daydream



