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| **The poems**Anthology contexts | **The only context you need. You don’t always need to mention it, but a knowledge of it will help you understand the message (the ‘why’) of the poem and its story (who, what, when, where).** |
| **Hawk Roosting***The Hawk which behaves like an arrogant God and rules the forest* | The hawk is just doing what it is evolved to do. It’s showing how brutal nature can be. But that’s normal for nature. It is **NOT** about Hitler/dictators! Hughes is on record as saying so. |
| **Ozymandias***The pharaoh Rameses II thought his creations would last forever, but they crumble* | Rameses was a real pharaoh and is an example of the almost god-like power of pharaohs in Ancient Egypt. Shelley sees the same issues of power in the past as he does in his the 1800s. |
| **Living Space***The poor in India who have poor quality houses and need to believe in God to make it from day to day.*  | Has Pakistani heritage and this is reflected in her discussions of the issues facing the poor in the developing world, such as the struggle to survive and live in a safe, secure place. |
| **London***The poor in London who suffer because the church refuses to help them escape poverty.* | Blake sympathised with the plight of the poor in the late 1700s. He criticises institutions of power (the Government & the Church) and accuses them of not doing enough to help the poor.  |
| **Death of a Naturalist***The narrator wanted to become a naturalist, but lost his childish innocence as he grew up.* | Heaney uses his upbringing in rural Ireland in order to use nature to express the idea of a loss of childhood innocence.  |
| **Afternoons***The narrator doesn’t believe in traditional families and think people sacrifice too much of their own happiness for their children* | Larkin is inspired by deprivation and bitter negativity and uses that to express a depressive/miserable (or realistic?) and isolated outlook upon the world and life. |
| **The Soldier***The patriotic soldier who thinks dying for his country is noble and that he is blessed for being English* | Written in a patriotic style, but never experienced war first-hand, as Brooke died of disease on the way to the Mediterranean front in World War One  |
| **The Manhunt***The soldier’s wife tries to help him cope with PTSD after he returns home from war.* | Simon Armitage has never been to war, but he was inspired to write the poem after learning about the devastating impact of war on others, so he imagines what war does to the family/relationships of the soldier.  |
| **Dulce et Decorum Est***The poet’s experience in war taught him that it was not sweet and right to die for your country* | Wilfred Owen famously served in World War One and this directly influenced his anti-war views as he saw first-hand the brutality and horrific loss of life it caused |
| **Mametz Wood***The poet’s journey to the battlefields makes him think about how past sacrifices can resurface.*  | Sheers journeyed to the battlefields in France to see the modern day site of where the Battle of the Somme took place. He was inspired by the site of natural beauty as being a placed of destruction and also the Welsh connection he felt to some of the men who fought there. |
| **A Wife in London***The wife receives a telegram of her husband’s death, followed shortly after by a letter he wrote which was about him looking forward to coming home.* | Hardy is describing the effects that loss in the Boer War had on those waiting for them to come home. He expressed sympathy with the victims of war and was generally anti-war in his views. |
| **Cozy Apologia***A woman who realises that true love doesn’t have to be a fairy-tale and that commitment and contentment is the most important thing.* | Rita Dove writes about how she’s slightly embarrassed to be as happy as she is. That’s it! This poem is **NOT** about race/mixed race relationships! |
| **As Imperceptibly as Grief***The poet’s slide into depression as mirrored by the changing of the seasons and the disappearing of light* | Emily Dickinson suffered from depression and isolated herself in her room for many years, living in almost total seclusion. Her poems reflect that isolation and the moods she experienced as a result. |
| **Excerpt from The Prelude***The poet marvels at the beauty of nature, the excitement it brings and how he fits into the wider world.* | The Prelude is the story of Wordsworth’s life as a journey, both literally in the Lake Distract, but also metaphorically as he seeks to find his purpose. As a romantic poet, he wrote in appreciation of the world.  |
| **Valentine***The poet explores the bitterness and rejection of a love which ends badly.* | Duffy writes about how the commercialism of Valentine’s Day can be subverted and that love can leave you bitter and angry. It is **NOT** about her life and has nothing to do with her sexuality! |
| **She Walks in Beauty***The poet admires the grace and poise of a woman whose dark-haired appearance was distinctive and unusual*  | Byron writes about a woman he sees across a room at a party. His appreciation of her grace, poise and perhaps her innocence is in direct contrast to how most people thought he saw women – he was well known for his scandalous love life. |
| **To Autumn***The writer explores how he admires autumn for providing growth, giving us a harvest and being perfectly in harmony like music.* | Keats was a romantic poet, like Wordsworth, who wrote in appreciation of the natural world. He took a walk through the countryside and it inspired him to write about what nature gives to man. |
| **Sonnet 43***The poet explores the reasons for loving her partner (after falling out with her parents) and how it will only become stronger and stronger, even after death* | Browning wrote this poem (and many others) in secret about her lover, Robert Browning. She knew her father would disapprove of their relationship, but was ready for that. She views their love as being perfect and eternal.  |