between the lines

A lesson written for every student in the room

FREE LESSON SAMPLER

Poetry of the First World War: Who's for the trench?

How does Pope persuade young men to join up?

Lesson 3 of 14 from the scheme of learning

Teacher notes, slides and student pages at all three levels

Written for the English national curriculum at Key Stage 3



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What is in this sampler

This is one complete lesson from our Poetry of the First World War scheme for Year 8. It comes exactly as it appears in the full scheme, so you can teach it next week and see how our lessons work.

Teacher notes	Timings with slide numbers, Do Now answers, the exploded quotation, the hinge question and what each answer tells you, the task at three levels, a model paragraph and notes on misconceptions and adapting the lesson (next pages).
Slides	The editable PowerPoint deck for Lesson 3, with teacher notes on every slide (separate file).
Student pages	The lesson's pages from the student booklet: one question, with the Securing, Strengthening and Soaring support side by side (at the end of this document).

How every lesson works

Know	Do Now from memory, vocabulary, then the reading. The five Do Now questions build on what students learned in Lessons 1 and 2 of the full scheme.
Apply	Explode one quotation together; a hinge question checks understanding.
Master	One shared question answered as a What–How–Why paragraph, with Securing, Strengthening and Soaring support; then a model paragraph and an exit ticket.

Three levels of support

Every student answers the same question in every lesson. What changes is the support on the page, so the whole class does the same lesson:

Securing	The most support: a word bank, a choice of quotations, a worked example and sentence starters.
Strengthening	Some support: prompts for What, How and Why, a planner and a checklist.
Soaring	The most challenge: a debatable statement, prompts to think further and an argument planner.

The names describe the support, never the student. The hinge question shows who might start where, and students move between levels from lesson to lesson.

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In the full scheme

- 14 lessons like this one, with editable slides and a teacher handbook (lesson notes, unit map, assessment guide and knowledge bank)
- A student booklet with every lesson and all three levels of support, plus the same lessons as one pack per level
- Six weeks of independent practice homework at three levels
- A checkpoint (Feedback Loop kit) with a whole-class feedback sheet and improvement tasks
- A two-part end-of-unit assessment with a teacher guide, band guidance and annotated models
- A catch-up sheet for every lesson, for students who missed it
- An inclusion guide: pre-teaching, SEND, EAL and pupil premium notes for every lesson

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Lesson 3: Who's for the trench?

SEQUENCE 1: THE CALL TO FIGHT AND THE TRENCHES · 60 MINUTES

How does Pope persuade young men to join up?

By the end of the lesson, students can

- Explain how Pope uses rhetorical questions and a refrain to put pressure on the reader
- Analyse how shame and reward build from the first stanza to the last
- Write a What–How–Why paragraph that follows how the poem's persuasion builds

Lesson at a glance

Time	Phase	What happens	Slides
0–8	Know	Do Now: five quick questions on the context for the poem and on earlier lessons. Students check their answers from the answer slide.	2–3
8–20	Know	Pre-teach "recruit", "propaganda", "rhetorical question" and "refrain". Read the poem aloud twice, once for the questions and once for the refrain. Students underline every question and circle "my laddie" each time it comes back.	4–7
20–28	Apply	Explode the quotation together. Think aloud about the idiom "save his skin", then students annotate their copy. Before you reveal any notes, students try the four empty boxes on the first explode slide, on their own or after you model one box.	8–9
28–33	Apply	Hinge question on mini-whiteboards. Use the answers to decide who starts on which level of support.	10–11
33–53	Master	Students write one What–How–Why paragraph using their level of support in the student booklet. Share the model paragraph in the last five minutes.	12–13
53–60	Master	Exit ticket. Collect and sort into three piles to plan the start of Lesson 4.	14

Do Now answers

1	What did the British army rely on for new soldiers in 1914?	**Volunteers**
2	In which year did conscription begin?	**1916**
3	A volunteer joins by choice. What does conscription do instead?	**It makes men of military age join the forces**
4	Which poet wrote five sonnets at the end of 1914 and died in April 1915?	**Rupert Brooke**
5	Which poet, too old to fight, dated a poem 5 September 1914?	**Thomas Hardy**

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Vocabulary

recruit	to get people to join the army, or a person who has just joined
propaganda	words or pictures made to change what people think or do
rhetorical question	a question asked to make a point, not to get an answer
refrain	a line or phrase that comes back again and again in a poem

Reading

The Call

When the war began in 1914, the British army relied on volunteers. Jessie Pope wrote cheerful, persuasive poems for newspapers. Read to see how she makes the reader feel picked out.

Who's for the trench—
Are you, my laddie?
Who'll follow French—
Will you, my laddie?
Who's fretting to begin,
Who's going out to win?
And who wants to save his skin—
Do you, my laddie?

Who's for the khaki suit—
Are you, my laddie?
Who longs to charge and shoot—
Do you, my laddie?
Who's keen on getting fit,
Who means to show his grit,
And who'd rather wait a bit—
Would you, my laddie?

Who'll earn the Empire's thanks—
Will you, my laddie?
Who'll swell the victor's ranks—
Will you, my laddie?
When that procession comes,
Banners and rolling drums—
Who'll stand and bite his thumbs—
Will you, my laddie?

Jessie Pope, 'The Call', Jessie Pope's War Poems (1915)

Word help **khaki**: the brown-green colour of army uniforms · **grit**: courage that keeps going · **victor**: a winner · **bite his thumbs**: sulk and fret on the sidelines

Explode the quotation

Method
A rhetorical question that shames. It does not ask for an answer, only for the reader to feel it.

Zoom in
The selfish idiom "save his skin" makes a man who stays at home sound as if he is only looking after himself. The dash leaves the question hanging.

"And who wants to save his skin—"

Effect
The reader has to answer in his head. Saying no would make him the man in the question.

Purpose
Pope wants volunteers. Making the stay-at-home man look like a coward is one way she persuades.

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Hinge question

Every stanza of 'The Call' ends with the words "my laddie". What does this refrain do?

A. It shows that the speaker comes from Scotland.

B. It shows that the reader has already joined up.

C. It sounds friendly and close, so each question seems aimed at one young man. (the right answer)

What the answers tell you

A means the student has noticed the word but not its effect: ask who is being spoken to. B means the student has not read the questions: ask what they ask the reader to do. These may be your students who start on Securing.

Why the answer is right

The friendly words make each question sound personal, so the reader finds it harder to say no.

Master task

How does Pope persuade young men to join up? Show how her methods build from the first stanza to the last.

Securing the most support

Quotations to choose from

"Who's for the trench—"

"Who'll earn the Empire's thanks—"

"Who'll stand and bite his thumbs—"

Starters

Pope persuades young men to join up by ____ and by ____. She writes "____". The ____ (adjective) ____ (word class) "____" suggests ____. In the last stanza, "____" ____. Pope wants young men to feel ____ because ____.

Strengthening some support

Prompts

What: Make a clear point about how Pope persuades, and how this builds across the poem.

How: Choose a quotation from an early stanza and one from the last. Name the method each time and zoom in on one word. How does the pressure change?

Why: What does Pope want young men to feel, and why would a newspaper in 1914 print a poem like this?

Soaring the most challenge

The debate

"Pope's poem is more about shame than about glory."

Write two paragraphs. In the first, argue for the statement. In the second, give a different view and say which is stronger. Hardy's marching soldiers answer a doubter with the line "Nay. We well see what we are doing,". Say how Pope treats the doubter differently.

Model paragraph

What	Pope persuades young men to join up by shaming those who stay at home and promising a reward to those who go. The pressure grows from stanza to stanza.
How	In the first stanza the selfish idiom "save his skin" makes staying at home sound cowardly. By the last stanza the questions promise a prize: "Who'll earn the Empire's thanks—" promises praise and a procession. The refrain "my laddie" sounds friendly, so each question seems aimed at one boy.
Why	Pope wants volunteers, so she makes saying no feel like shame and saying yes feel like glory. She ends on "Who'll stand and bite his thumbs—", which leaves the doubter alone while the drums roll.

Exit ticket

Pope's poem makes it hard to say no because…

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