between the lines

A lesson written for every student in the room

FREE LESSON SAMPLER

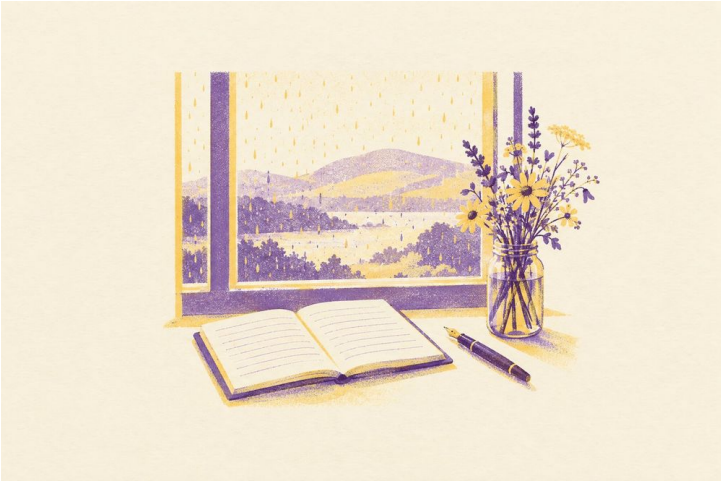
Unseen poetry: The shape of a poem

How do form and structure carry meaning?

Lesson 3 of 12 from the scheme of learning

Teacher notes, slides and student pages at all three levels

Written for the AQA specification



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What is in this sampler

This is one complete lesson from our Unseen poetry scheme for Literature Paper 2, Section C. 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. For students working towards a grade 4.
Strengthening	Prompts for What, How and Why, a paragraph planner and a checklist. For students working at grades 5 and 6.
Soaring	A debatable statement, prompts to think further and an argument planner. For students aiming at grades 7 to 9.

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.

In the full scheme

- 12 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
- Two Feedback Loop progress checks with whole-class feedback sheets and improvement tasks

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- An exam-style end-of-unit essay with a teacher guide, level guidance and annotated model answers
- 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
- The revision workbook and the model answer pack, to print for every student
- Every licence for the scheme also includes its 30 Raising Achievement drills for intervention sessions

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Lesson 3: The shape of a poem

SEQUENCE 1: READING ONE POEM · 60 MINUTES

How do form and structure carry meaning?

By the end of the lesson, students can

- Explain how a Petrarchan sonnet is built: an octave, a sestet and a volta at line 9
- Analyse how repetition and the turn at line 9 change what the speaker asks for
- Write a What–How–Why paragraph on how the poet presents the speaker's feelings about being remembered

Lesson at a glance

Time	Phase	What happens	Slides
0–8	Know	Do Now: five quick questions on Lessons 1 and 2 and on poetic terms. Students self-mark from the answer slide.	2–3
8–20	Know	Pre-teach "sonnet", "volta", "counsel" and "vestige". Read the poem aloud twice. Students number the lines, draw a line between lines 8 and 9, and count how often the word remember appears.	4–7
20–28	Apply	Explode the quotation together. Think aloud about what the word "Yet" does at line 9, 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
28–33	Apply	Hinge question on mini-whiteboards. Use the answers to decide who starts on which level of support.	9–10
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.	11–12
53–60	Master	Exit ticket. Collect and sort into three piles to plan the start of Lesson 4.	13

Do Now answers

1	In 'There Will Come Soft Rains', what is the only human event the poem names?	**The war**
2	Which season is personified in the last couplet of 'There Will Come Soft Rains'?	**Spring ("Spring herself")**
3	In 'Adlestrop', which bird sings "Close by"?	**A blackbird**
4	What is a rhyming couplet?	**Two lines next to each other that rhyme**
5	How many lines does a sonnet have?	**Fourteen**

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Vocabulary

sonnet	a fourteen-line poem with a set rhyme scheme, often about love
volta	the turn in a poem, where the thought or mood changes
counsel	to give advice
vestige	a small trace of something that has almost gone

Reading

Remember

Christina Rossetti published this poem in 1862: on a first reading, count the lines and listen for the word that keeps coming back.

> Remember me when I am gone away,
> Gone far away into the silent land;
> When you can no more hold me by the hand,
> Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
> Remember me when no more day by day
> You tell me of our future that you planned:
> Only remember me; you understand
> It will be late to counsel then or pray.
> Yet if you should forget me for a while
> And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
> For if the darkness and corruption leave
> A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
> Better by far you should forget and smile
> Than that you should remember and be sad.

Christina Rossetti (1830–1894), from Goblin Market and Other Poems (1862)

Word help **counsel**: to give advice · **corruption**: here, the decay of a body after death · **vestige**: a small trace of something that has almost gone

Explode the quotation

Method
The volta at line 9, where a Petrarchan sonnet turns.

Zoom in
“Yet” warns us that the argument is about to change. “forget” appears for the first time, after three uses of “remember”.

“Yet if you should forget me for a while”

Effect
The tone softens from command to permission, so the reader hears the speaker changing their mind.

Purpose
Rossetti uses the turn in the form to show love that can let go. The speaker wants the lover’s happiness more than their memory.

Hinge question

In lines 1–8 the speaker keeps saying “Remember me”. What changes from line 9?

A. The speaker gives up on the lover, who is sure to forget.

B. The speaker allows the lover to forget, if remembering would make them sad. **(the right answer)**

C. The speaker comes back from the “silent land” to visit.

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What the answers tell you

A means the student has seen the change but missed its kindness: ask them to read the last two lines aloud. C means "silent land" has been read literally: recap euphemisms for death: these may be your students who start on Securing.

Why the answer is right

After "Yet" the speaker says "do not grieve" and that it is "Better by far you should forget and smile", so the commands become permission.

Master task

In 'Remember', how does the poet present the speaker's feelings about being remembered?

Securing aiming for a 4

Quotations to choose from

"Remember me when I am gone away"

"Only remember me; you understand"

"Better by far you should forget and smile"

Starters

In 'Remember', the poet presents the speaker as _____. The poet writes _____. The _____ (adjective) _____ (word class) _____ suggests _____. The poet wants the reader to feel _____ because _____.

Strengthening aiming for grades 5 to 6

Prompts

What: Make a clear point about how the speaker feels, and whether that feeling changes.

How: Choose a quotation from before or after line 9. Name the method (repetition, imperative, volta, euphemism) and zoom in on one word.

Why: What does the poet want the reader to feel when the speaker lets the lover forget?

Soaring aiming for grades 7 to 9

The debate

"The speaker of 'Remember' is more selfless than selfish. How far do you agree?"

Write two paragraphs. In the second, give an alternative reading that begins with "Alternatively".

Model paragraph

What	In 'Remember', the poet presents a speaker whose wish to be remembered changes into a wish for the lover to be happy.
How	The octave is built on commands: "Remember me" is repeated at the start of lines 1 and 5, so the speaker sounds urgent, even desperate. At line 9 the volta arrives with "Yet", and the releasing verb "forget" appears for the first time. The final couplet sets "forget and smile" against "remember and be sad", so the two choices sit side by side.
Why	Rossetti uses the turn in the sonnet to show love changing as the speaker thinks aloud. The reader sees that real love can mean letting go, and the calm last line feels braver than the commands at the start.

Exit ticket

The volta at line 9 of 'Remember' matters because…

Teacher notes

Subject knowledge

'Remember' is a Petrarchan sonnet: an octave rhyming ABBAABBA and a sestet rhyming CDDECE. The octave pleads, with "remember" used three times; the volta at line 9 ("Yet") brings "forget", and the sestet gives permission to forget. Death is softened by euphemism ("gone away", "the silent land") until "darkness and corruption" names the decay of the grave. The final couplet is not a rhyming pair: "smile"

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