

Love & Relationships

AQA Poetry

Last Minute Revision



- **Model Answers**
- **Practice Questions**
- **Key Quotes**



Model Answers

Compare the ways that independence is presented in ‘Walking Away’ and one other poem.

It is eighteen years ago, almost to the day –
A sunny day with leaves just turning,
The touch-lines new-ruled – since I watched you play
Your first game of football, then, like a satellite
Wrenched from its orbit, go drifting away

Behind a scatter of boys. I can see
You walking away from me towards the school
With the pathos of a half-fledged thing set free
Into a wilderness, the gait of one
Who finds no path where the path should be.

That hesitant figure, eddying away
Like a winged seed loosened from its parent stem,
Has something I never quite grasp to convey
About nature’s give-and-take – the small, the scorching
Ordeals which fire one’s irresolute clay.

I have had worse partings, but none that so
Gnaws at my mind still. Perhaps it is roughly
Saying what God alone could perfectly show –
How selfhood begins with a walking away,
And love is proved in the letting go.

The poem ‘Walking Away’ by Cecil Day-Lewis presents independence as a necessary yet painful and unbearable experience for the father, whilst ‘Mother Any Distance’ by Simon Armitage presents independence as a promised-filled opportunity for the son who has left his parental home to move into a new home. The poets use a variety of literary techniques to present independence in both poems and this essay will examine how both poems illustrate independence.

appears to believe that all his future relationships will inevitably end in failure and misery. He appears to believe he was previously naïve in trusting his lover and believing in the longevity of love, when relationships are doomed to fail. He closes the door and the opportunity to any new relationships or new beginnings. This is emphasised by the fact that the poem is neat and organised in its form-using quatrains. This suggests a methodical approach towards the relationship on the part of the speaker. The distance in time from the breakup has meant that the speaker can reflect on and discuss the relationship in a structured and clear way. Yet, it also shows the finality and certainty that the speaker will never trust in love again and he is demolishing any opportunity or way to fall in love.

In conclusion, the narrators in both 'When We Two Parted' and 'Neutral Tones' have suffered the sudden end of their relationships and this essay has examined how both Byron and Hardy have used a range of language and structural devices to present the end of relationships. While 'When We Two Parted' views the end of the relationships as deeply saddening, 'Neutral Tones' presents a dark and pessimistic view of relationships as doomed to always end. This essay has examined in depth how both poets effectively presented the ending of these relationships.

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