

**Unseen Poems:
Section C
AQA Poetry**

Last Minute Practice



- **Model Answers**
- **Practice Questions**



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Answer

Question 1

In the poem, In Mrs Tilscher's class, the idea of childhood memories are presented as being quite fragile and quick to be destroyed by the harsh brutality of experience from the adult world. This essay will examine this in depth by examining how the poet uses a variety of language and structural devices to present childhood memories.

After the children's lesson in Geography: "Tana. Ethiopia. Khartoum. Aswan," they are given a "skittle of milk." The adjective "skittle" coupled with the noun "milk" illustrates just how premature and youthful the children are. The mention of "milk" has connotations of being a young, innocent newborn child and we instantly think of young babies who are very much dependent on their mother's care. This mention of "milk" conveys how childhood memories are being presented in a nostalgic way - childhood appears to be portrayed as a perfect and carefree past where people felt secure in their environment.

Furthermore, the narrator reflects that "Mrs Tilscher loved you." The use of caesura in this reflection reveals just how pure and innocent the child's internal dialogue was. This conveys the high level of innocence this child had as they saw the world in an extremely positive way where everybody appeared to care for and love them. Furthermore the child shows their pride that Mrs Tilscher left them a "gold star." The use of the colourful adjective "gold" coupled with the noun "star" is symbolic for the wish that children had for the approval of adults who they highly admired. Hence this presents childhood memories as an idealised time when young children saw adults as perfect and sought their approval.

Moreover, the idea of innocence is stripped away when a "rough boy / told you how you were born." This marked the end of the narrator's purity as he was exposed to mature topics and was therefore left "appalled." This portrays how traumatic the experience of growing up is and how quickly everything then happens. Indeed the use of enjambment is important in showing how temporary and precious childhood really is as the onset of adulthood is so rapid and the narrator appears to convey the unstoppable invasion of experience which destroys one's childhood and their innocence.

Furthermore, we learn how rapid the experience of growing up is and the paradoxical impact of losing one's childhood as well as the opportunities that experience and adulthood presents. On the one hand, it appears that the narrator seems to be increasingly sexually curious as this is shown through the sibilance "sexy sky." The adjective "sexy" on the one hand shows the allure of the experience and

Question 2:

In 'The Wild Swans at Coole', the narrator describes the swans as brilliant and majestic. This is evident in the quote "looked upon those brilliant creatures." The use of the adjective "brilliant" could suggest the narrator is in awe of the swans and that he recognises how majestic the swans are. In contrast, in 'The Tyger', the narrator describes the tiger as fearful and dangerous. This is evident in the quote "could frame thy fearful symmetry?". The use of the rhetorical question combined with the adjective "fearful" could suggest the "tyger" is difficult to control, suggesting no one could take or draw an image of it apart from a supreme and immortal being. It could also suggest the tiger is not from this earth and that no one has seen power like this before.

In 'The Wild Swans at Coole', the narrator describes the swans as threatening abandonment of the narrator. This can be seen in the quote "when I awake some day to find they have flown away?". The use of the rhetorical questions creates an ominous tone. The narrator is afraid the swans will leave him. There appears to be an overwhelming fear of abandonment. However, in 'The Tyger', the narrator presents the tiger as vicious and possibly man-eating. This is seen in the quote "dare its deadly terrors clasp!" The use of the exclamatory sentence could suggest the narrator is terrified of the tiger and that he does not want to be eaten - he is in awe of its beauty, but equally afraid of the danger it represents. It could also suggest the tiger has a death grip that no one can escape.

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