

National 5 English – Critical Reading
Critical Essay Questions – Poetry

Specimen A

1. Choose a poem which made a lasting impression on you.
Explain briefly what the poem is about, then, by referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poem has made this lasting impression.
2. Choose a poem which features an encounter or an incident.
By referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poet's development of the encounter or incident leads you to a deeper understanding of the poem's central concerns.

Specimen B

1. Choose a poem which describes a person's experience.
By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the description of the experience makes the poem more interesting.
2. Choose a poem which has as one of its central concerns a personal, social or religious issue.
By referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poem increases your understanding of the issue.

Specimen C

1. Choose a poem in which the poet creates a particular mood or atmosphere.
By referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poet creates this mood or atmosphere.
2. Choose a poem which could be considered as having a powerful message.
By referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poet effectively conveys this message

Specimen D

1. Choose a poem which reflects on an aspect of human behaviour in such a way as to deepen your understanding of human nature.
Describe the aspect of human behaviour which you have identified and, by referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poem brought you to a deeper understanding of human nature.
2. Choose a poem which portrays an interesting character.
By referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poet makes the character interesting.

Specimen E

1. Choose a poem which deals with the passing of time.
By referring to appropriate techniques, describe how the poet helps you to appreciate the treatment of this theme.

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2. Choose a poem which creates a strong emotional response.
Explain briefly what the poem is about, then, by referring to appropriate techniques, show how the poem creates this response in the reader.

Specimen F

1. Choose a poem which describes a character or person who creates an emotional response in the reader.
Explain briefly who this person is and then describe how the use of poetic techniques influences your response to this person.
2. Choose a poem in which setting is a significant feature.
Explain briefly what this setting is and then go on to describe the importance of the setting to the poem's central concerns.

Specimen G

1. Choose a poem which tells a story.
By referring to appropriate techniques, explain the nature of this relationship, then go on to show how the playwright portrays the development of this relationship.
2. Choose a poem which explores a theme that made an impression on you.
Explain briefly what the theme is then, by referring to appropriate techniques, show how the writer explores this theme.

2014

1. Choose a poem which you find particularly thought-provoking.
By referring to poetic techniques, explain how the poet makes this poem so thought-provoking.
2. Choose a poem which deals with human experience.
By referring to poetic techniques, show how the poet makes this experience come alive and helps you appreciate the poem as a whole.

2015

1. Choose a poem in which setting is an important feature.
By referring to poetic techniques, show how setting contributes to your appreciation of the poem as a whole.
2. Choose a poem which makes you think more deeply about an aspect of life.
By referring to poetic techniques, show how the poet explores this aspect of life.