

'Exposure' and 'Strange Meeting' by Wilfred Owen

Look at the following essay title and then answer the questions that follow to help you plan an effective answer:

Compare the poems 'Exposure' and 'Strange Meeting' by Wilfred Owen. Look in particular at the ways in which Owen conveys his feelings about the war.

1. Read through both poems and decide your initial (first) impressions of Owen's feelings about the war as expressed in these two poems? Use quotations as evidence.
2. Explain who the enemy in 'Strange Meeting' might be. There are at least three possibilities.
3. There is personification in 'Exposure'. What is it that Owen has personified and for what purpose?
4. What is para-rhyme and why has Owen used it in 'Exposure' and 'Strange Meeting'?
5. What is an ellipsis and why has Owen used it in 'Exposure'?
6. There is a rhythm to the poem 'Strange Meeting'. Comment on this in as much detail as you can.
7. In 'Exposure' there is an identifiable rhyme scheme to the poem, which is regular throughout the poem. Describe the rhyme scheme and comment on its effect.
8. There are two speakers in 'Strange Meeting' but one voice is dominant. Whose voice do you think it is and whose opinions is he expressing?
9. What similarities in imagery are there in the two poems?
10. There is an extended metaphor in 'Strange Meeting'. What is it and why has Owen chosen it?
11. Owen has used similar verbs to describe the soldiers' movements and behaviour in the two poems. List some of them and explain their significance.
12. In what ways are the settings or scenes of the poems similar?

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13. How does Owen highlight the soldiers' alienation from people at home in the poems?
14. Now revisit the first question and decide if you have any further comments to make about Owen's attitudes towards the war. You might have changed your mind completely or just need to edit, or add to, your first impressions.
15. Write an introductory paragraph to answer the essay question. Remember, you need to introduce the two poems briefly and give an overview of 'where you are going' with your answer: a bit like showing someone a roadmap before you set off on a journey.
16. Once you have written your paragraph swap with a partner and discuss the positive aspects of the two introductions. Share constructive advice about the answers could be improved.