

Investigating a First World War poem

What do the following words suggest to you? What 'picture' do you see when you hear these words?

bells	cattle	patter	shells	die
prayers		choirs	bugles	guns
candles	boys	eyes	girls	flowers
rifles		dusk	anger	blinds

Do any of the words seem to 'fit' into one category – that is, do some of the words seem to describe a similar event or place?

If these words are taken from a First World War poem, in what way do you think the words have been used? For example, do you think 'boys' is used to describe the soldiers? Why has the poet used the words in this way?

Now write your own poem about the First World War, including the words above. Try to use the following format for your poem:

Your poem should be 14 lines long and each line should begin as follows:

What
- Only
Only
Can
No
Nor
The
And

What
Not
Shall
The
Their
And

Before you begin bear in mind that 'what' is used to pose a question and 'no', 'nor' and 'not' imply something negative.

When you have finished give your poem a title.