

## Discussion cards for 'The Clown Punk'

Cut the cards up and hand out for students to discuss in pairs, threes or fours. Give students five or ten minutes to share their ideas and then, when they move on, make sure one person remains with the card and the ideas at the table as the 'expert' for the next group. Ensure each student only stays on once at each discussion card as the expert.

Find all the words and phrases in the poem that describe the man's appearance. DISCUSS the sort of impression the words give of him. DISCUSS what sort of personality you think the man has and why you think this.

The poem is in FREE VERSE – it doesn't have a strict rhyme scheme – and it uses a lot of ENJAMBEMENT – where the lines run into one another.

DISCUSS why you think this might be.

DISCUSS who you think the speaker is in the poem. Are they an adult or a child? Are they a man or a woman? Are they alone? What sort of feelings do they have towards the man? Who are they addressing as they speak the poem? Why do they tell the story of the clown punk?

The poem is EPONYMOUS – it is named after the person it is about.

DISCUSS why you think this might be.

The poem is a SONNET – traditionally a 14 line love poem.

DISCUSS why you think the poet chose this form and structure for his poem.

DISCUSS why the poem opens with the line, 'Driving home through the shonky side of town,' and why it ends, '... remember the clown punk with his dyed brain, / then picture windscreen wiper and let it rain.' Think about why the poet chooses to give the man a location and why he seats the speaker in a car. What does the ending suggest about how the speaker feels about the man and how much of his time he takes up?