

# Year 9 Words That Burn Knowledge Organiser



Name

Tutor group

English Teacher

Contents:

1. How to use your knowledge organiser
2. A Wife in London Dulce Et Decorum Est
3. Still I Rise Hollow
4. Mametz Wood Manhunt
5. Not My Business War Photographer
6. London Mametz wood
7. Good Bones
8. What the titles tell us
9. Key Terms
10. New Terminology

### How to use your knowledge organiser

This booklet has all the most important knowledge that you need for each of the poems in your **poetry anthology**; you need to know these well in order to apply your knowledge to an exam question.

A really good way of revising and learning the poems is to self-quiz on them as part of your revision schedule.

**What is self-quizzing?** When you have studied the poetry aspect of the course, you need to keep the information fresh in your brain. Schedule time into your homework and revision timetable to revisit the poems and then practise the suggested exercises to see how much you can recall, what knowledge you have retained and which elements you still need to revise.

### Ideas to use

1. Look, cover, write, check and correct  
Read part of the organiser carefully, cover it up, write down all that you remember then check what you have missed and add this in.
2. Key terms and definitions  
Write out the key terms given for each poem, close your KO and look at the poem. Write out an example from the poem of each term.

### Ideas to use

3. Dual coding  
Draw everything you remember from the poem in picture form or come up with images that capture ideas and themes.
4. Concept map  
Turn the information on the poem into a mind map for each of the sections. Add images and quotes.
5. Write a quiz and answer  
Construct quiz questions from the material in the knowledge organiser and answer these yourself.
6. Summarise the poem  
In your own words write a 200 word summary of each poem; where you can embed short quotations.
7. Storyboarding  
Show you remember the poem's story by making a storyboard of the events.
8. Construct a paragraph  
Write a paragraph that explains a key theme or element of context from the text and underline the key words you have used.



## 2. The poems

### 1. The Manhunt by Simon Armitage: The one about the scarred soldier.

- "frozen river"
- "foetus of metal"
- "unexploded mine"



**Content:** The wife of a soldier gets to know her husband again after he returns home injured from the war. Her husband is physically scarred by the injuries he sustained in the war, but he also has deeply buried psychological scars as a result of his traumatic experiences. The poem traces his physical scars and explores deeper into the "unexploded mine" of PTSD. Physically, they can remain close, but there is a gap between them now emotionally as he struggles to let her in.

**Context:** *The Manhunt* is a **contemporary poem** and was originally aired as part of a Channel 4 documentary, *Forgotten Heroes: The Not Dead*. In the film, the poem is read by Laura, the wife of Eddie Beddoes, who is the subject of the poem. He served as a peace-keeper in Bosnia before being discharged due to injury and depression. Armitage wrote the poem after interviewing veterans returning from war and as a means of exploring the psychological impact on those who survived intense trauma.

**Form:** The poem is written in **couplet-long stanzas**, which have lines of varying length, from **Laura's perspective**. At the start, the couplets rhyme, but the **rhyme** breaks down making the poem feel disjointed and conveys the theme of brokenness. It may reflect their struggle to reconnect and how she will have to learn who her husband now is.

**Structure:** Each **couplet** introduces a different injury and the reader explores the body and mind of the soldier alongside his wife, experiencing the process at the same time. The use of **enjambment** mimics the way she traces the injuries that run continuously across his body and explores the damage done. It demonstrates the slow progress she is carefully making.

#### **Language Features:**

- The soldier's body is described by using **adjectives of damage** to show how broken war has left him.
- Parts of the body and mind are described using **metaphors** suggesting his is compiled of broken objects and that part of his humanity has been erased.
- **The verbs** express her tenderness and caution in how she approaches him.
- The final **metaphor of the "unexploded mine"** refers to the tension and stress his memories cause which he has not come to terms with yet.

#### **Key Themes:**

- War and its lasting effects
- Love and relationships
- Pain and suffering
- Loss and change

#### **Good to compare with:**

- Dulce, Ma Metz Wood
- A Wife in London
- London
- As Imperceptibly a Grief

**10. A Wife in London** by Thomas Hardy

*The one with the tragic telegram and the ironic letter.*

- "She sits in tawny vapour"
- "The street lamp glimmers cold"
- "He—has fallen - in the far South Land..."
- "His hand, whom the worm now knows"



**Content:** The poem opens with a description of a wife sitting at home alone in London, against the backdrop of fog and misery which enfolds her. A sharp knock at the door brings her to her senses, and a messenger delivers a telegram with the tragic news that her husband, who is at war in a distant country, has been killed. The poem moves to the following day. Here a letter is delivered to her from her husband who wrote it before he died. He talks with enthusiasm of his hopes for coming home and their future together. The joy and optimism with which he speaks serves to emphasise the terrible waste of his life and the wife's desolation and sadness.

**Context:** In the poem, Hardy speaks as an **observer** and chooses to focus on those left behind at home at times of war. The war he is speaking about is **the Boer War** – a series of campaigns fought against the Boers (or Dutch) over territory in the **south of Africa**. The war was a **distant one** and one many thought was unnecessary and wasteful of life, as many men died needlessly of diseases like enteric fever. He uses the isolation of the wife to emphasise her helplessness in the face of her separation from her husband – she could be anyone of any number of wives left behind – and employs the letter "page full" of hope to show the futility of war and how many died in their prime.

**Form:** The **persona** in the poem is an observer who watches in a detached manner contributing to the helpless and melancholy tone. **The irregular rhythm** and dashes create pauses and reflect the disbelief of the wife at the news. There is an **asymmetrical rhyme scheme (ABBAB)** which is broken once in the half rhyme of "smartly" and "shortly" – reflecting the wife's struggle to absorb the news.

**Structure:** Hardy **deliberately divides** the poem into two opposing halves – **The Tragedy and The Irony**. The **first 2 stanzas** accentuate the wife's loneliness trapped in the web of London's fog and build to climax of anticipation with the tragic news. The second 2 stanzas **juxtapose** the news of the husband's death with his joyful prose, fresh and firm. Hardy does this to show how war can crush hope and joy.

**Language Features:**

- Hardy uses **visual imagery** and the **pathetic fallacy** of the fog to distil the wife's isolation and grief. The fog encloses her and foreshadows the grip of death into which she will fall, and **imagery of light** offers no warmth, hope or consolation.
- **The contrast** of the **opening imagery** with the husband's joyful language, punctuated by powerful **alliteration**, creates a deep sense of irony and loss.
- **The graphic imagery** of his "hand" once "fresh" and "firm" now intimately acquainted with the worm focuses on his physical decay and the horror of war.

**Key Themes:**

- Love and relationships
- Pain and suffering – Death and Loss
- The impact of war on the individual

**Good to compare with:**

- The Manhunt
- As Imperceptibly as Grief
- Dulce/ Ma Metz Wood

## 15. Dulce et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen

The famous one about the horrific effects of a gas attack.

- "Bent double like old beggars... coughing like hags"
- "All went lame; all blind"
- "As under a green sea, I saw him drowning"
- "Obscene as cancer"



**Content:** The persona describes the suffering of the exhausted soldiers, which he is one of, as they march away from battle back to their rest camp. They are broken, injured and so tired they appear drunk. Suddenly, the shout of "Gas!" rings out. A chlorine gas shell has been dropped and the soldiers scramble to get their gas masks on. One soldier is unable to and flounders toward the persona choking on gas. The persona recounts how in all his dreams he still sees the man's face plunging towards him. He directly asks the reader if he had seen young men die in such an obscene way could they ever say to others that it is sweet and fitting to die for your country. He calls this a lie.

**Context:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Wilfred Owen was a decorated soldier, who won the highest honour of the **Military Cross** for bravery in the front line of battle in **the First World War**. Unlike, Brooke he experienced the horror and depravity of battle first hand and felt that his one duty as a poet was to tell the **"truth."** He wasn't unpatriotic, in fact after treatment for shell shock (PTSD) he returned to the front, but was sadly killed in action on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 1918, 7 days before the war ended. The **Latin phrase** in his poem means *It is sweet and fitting to die for your country*. It was often displayed in military training camps to inspire trainee soldiers to greater patriotism. Owen criticises this as a lie told by the establishment which he finds disgraceful.

**Form:** The poem has some **regular and irregular features**. The **regular ABAB rhyme scheme** reflects the relentless trudge and suffering of the soldiers plight; however the **stanzas are of irregular length** and the **iambic pentameter falters** at times, perhaps showing the unpredictability of war or the soldiers exhaustion. It can seem disjointed, fragmented and confusing – like war.

**Structure:** It is written in the **first person** and is almost certainly **autobiographical** in nature. It starts with a **past tense** description of the long trudge of the soldiers back to rest camp, and **develops** to the panic of the gas attack. It **then flashes forward** to the present and the horrific dreams the persona still has of the incident. **It ends** with a **graphic description** of the soldier's death on the back of cart and **questions** the honesty and integrity of those who spread the "old lie" to the young.

### **Language Features: (there are almost too many)**

- **Similes** are used extensively by Owen to describe the condition of the men and the experience of the gas attack.
- **Graphically violent imagery** to describe the soldier's hideous death, including powerful **adjectives and verbs** convey the brutal, shocking reality of war.
- **Direct address** – "My friend" challenges the reader, authorities and other poets (including Jessie Pope) to consider the falsehood they peddle to youth of Britain.

### **Key Themes:**

- War and its impact**
- Pain, suffering, death, loss and PTSD**
- Negative Emotions**

### **Good to compare with:**

- Mameluke Wood
- The Manhunt
- London

**17. Mametz Wood by Owen Sheers**

*The one where a mass grave of dead soldiers is unearthed.*

- "the wasted young"
- "blown and broken bird's egg of a skull"
- "a wound working a foreign body to the surface of the skin"



**Content:** The persona in the poem describes that how even now the farmers in France are still finding the remains of soldiers who died on the battlefields of the **First World War** in the earth as they plough. The remains seem to be near a place called **Mametz Wood** where a particularly brutal battle, that cost many lives, took place. The narrator references how they were commanded to walk into battle and face the devastating machine guns. The poem moves to the present and the discovery of a mass grave of soldiers that has just been discovered and recounts how they are linked arm in arm and how their mouths seem to be open as if they are mid song.

**Context:** *Mametz Wood* was written in 2005 by British poet Owen Sheers. Mametz is a village in Northern France; the woodland nearby was the site of an especially bloody battle during **World War I**, in which around 4,000 men from the British Army's Welsh Regiment were killed. Sheers's poem is set many years later, and considers the way that, even a century after the conflict, the land around Mametz Wood is still filled with fragments of the dead soldiers' bodies. The poem is thus a consideration of the horrors of war, its lasting effects, the fragility of life, and the time it takes nature to heal from such atrocities. It is a commemorative and **elegiac** in tone.

**Form:** The poem is written in **tercets** (3 line stanzas) that seem a little less robust than a quatrain, perhaps hinting at the delicate balance between life, death and nature. Sheers chooses to write in the **3<sup>rd</sup> person**, which creates a sense of distance and detachment. He uses **enjambment** within and between stanzas, which could reflect the slow unearthing and passing of time as the pieces are dug up. It creates a reflective tone.

**Structure:** The **first 3 stanzas** focus on the "years" after the war and how farmers found the fragile remains of the "wasted young" leading the narrator to reflect on their death at the mercy of machine guns. The **4<sup>th</sup> stanza** brings us to the **present day** and how "even now" the earth is still healing from the horror. The **final 3 stanzas are written "this morning"** and create a sense of immediacy around the horrific discovery of a mass grave – a reminder that this war is forever present in our history.

**Language Features:**

- The earth is **personified** as a "sentinel" who guards the remains of the soldiers and ensures they do not slip from memory. It is also described as wounded, suggesting how it still needs to heal from the horror of war.
- **Images of brokenness and fragility** such as the **symbolism** of the "bird's egg" emphasise the fragility of life but also how war can **dehumanise** those who fight in it.
- **Graphic imagery** is used to describe the mass grave to suggest the horrific manner of their death, but is contrasted with the **metaphor** of the "mosaic" emphasising their beauty and delicacy.

**Key Themes:**

- Attitudes to war/ death and loss
- The passage of time/ the past
- Nature

**Good to compare with:**

- Dulce
- The Manhunt/ A Wife in London

### 3. What the title tells us.

Title	Explanation	Title	Explanation
1. The Manhunt	The title is a pun or play on words. A manhunt is an organised search for a criminal. In this case, it's the wife's search for the man she knew and her relentless, yet tender, exploration of his inner trauma that leads to a new understanding of him.	10. A Wife in London	The most important word here is the indefinite article "A" – this could be any wife in London at the time. It emphasises the universality of this experience for women, who were alone and separated from their husbands who were thousands of miles away at war. In this poem, the impact of war on women left behind is central.
		15. Dulce et Decorum Est	A Latin phrase meaning that it is "sweet and fitting to die for your country," that was used to inspire patriotism. It is used ironically by Owen and challenged as a "lie" used to manipulate young soldiers into believing death in battle was glorious. Therefore, the title is undermined by the graphic horror of the poem.
		16.	
8.		17. Mametz Wood	This was the scene of a violent and bloody battle of The First World War, but how many of you had heard of it? The title therefore situates the poem in a scene of horror and commemorates the battle. It is written in memoriam to the soldiers. The omission of the qualifying "The Battle of" suggests the restorative power of nature to heal the wounds and destruction of war.
9.		18.	

## 6. Key Terminology.

Term	Example	Term	Example
<b>alliteration:</b> repetition of the same letter or sound at the start of consecutive words		<b>oxymoron:</b> a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction	
<b>anaphora:</b> the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses		<b>pathetic fallacy:</b> to give human feelings and responses to inanimate things, especially the weather	<b>A Wife in London:</b> "She sit in <b>tawny vapour... webby fold</b> "
<b>caesura:</b> a pause or break the middle of a line of poetry		<b>personification:</b> to give something non-human or abstract human characteristics and form	
<b>contrast:</b> placing ideas or words that are strikingly different close together for effect		<b>repetition:</b> repeating something that has already been written	
<b>couplet:</b> a pair of successive lines of verse, typically rhyming and of the same length	<b>The Manhunt:</b> " <b>and feel the hurt of his grazed heart.</b> "	<b>rhyme:</b> correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially at the end of lines	
<b>end-stopped line:</b> a line in verse which ends with punctuation, to show that phrase has ended		<b>rhythm:</b> the beat or cadence of a poem	
<b>enjambment:</b> the continuation of a sentence without a pause beyond the end of a line, couplet, or stanza		<b>sibilance:</b> the repeated use of the "s" sound close together	
<b>hyperbole:</b> exaggerated statements or claims said for effect		<b>simile:</b> a direct comparison between two things using as or like	<b>Dulce et Decorum Est:</b> "Bent double like old beggars"
<b>imagery:</b> visually descriptive or figurative language, such as similes or metaphors		<b>sonnet:</b> a 14 line poem typically on the subject of love	
<b>irony:</b> using language that normally signifies the opposite of what it means	<b>Dulce et Decorum Est:</b> " <b>Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori</b> "	<b>stanza:</b> a verse of poetry made up of poetic lines	All of the poem uses <b>stanzas</b> for differing effects. Ensure you know why.
<b>juxtaposition:</b> two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect		<b>symbolism:</b> using a symbol or object to represent an abstract idea or concept	
<b>metaphor:</b> a comparison between two things where one thing is said to be another for effect	<b>Mametz Wood:</b> "a <b>broken mosaic</b> of bone"	<b>synaesthesia:</b> the blending of the different senses in a piece of poetry	



