

9ELO 03

GCE English

Language & Literature  
Coursework

**Folder )**

# **The last goodbye**

**-A short story**

The candidate establishes a clear voice for her first person narrative.

## The last goodbye

As the day on which Timothy had to leave for war drew closer, my nights became more sleepless. Thoughts of what might happen to him and how I'd survive without him being at home with me kept me wide awake at night. Time seemed to drag on forever yet, Tim slept soundly next to me. Contrastingly, days sped by, never leaving enough time to fully appreciate the short amount of time we had left together. All too soon, the day came.

Varied sentence structures employed.

The 6<sup>th</sup> of January 1915 is a date I'll never forget. Timothy and I lay still that morning, unsure how to face the day ahead. The winter sun was slowly rising, lighting up the room, confirming that the day had begun. My mind was in overdrive; is there something which I could be doing to make this day more bearable? Eventually I rolled over to face Tim. When I saw his eyes; bright and reassuring, it brought me to the realisation of just how much I would miss waking up next to him every day. However, I knew deep down there was nothing which I could do except to be strong and supportive.

Short sentence used for emphasis.

Anticipation used for emphasis.

Timothy and I used to spend most mornings together, it was our favourite time of the day, especially Sundays. It was when we were most relaxed, before we went about our daily chores and work. Yet after this day that would be no more; the war changed everything. Being aware of the changes which were coming, we decided to treat this morning like no other; I bathed first whilst Timothy read the morning paper. Then I went downstairs, casually calling out, 'What would you like for breakfast?' Although, I knew the answer already.

The sense of a shared past is created by "used to".

Direct speech used to bring the character to life.

Timothy came downstairs, humming an unfamiliar tune; it felt as if he was trying to distract himself from reality. I will always remember how handsome he looked in his uniform, slowly walking over to me. I saw him and smiled, all of my worries momentarily disappeared. We sat down at the table together both of us uninterested in our food but eating it all the same. No one knew how long the war would go on for so we savoured this morning the best we could trying our utmost to enjoy the breakfast as much as we did each other's company.

A sense of the narrator explaining Tim's feelings.

As time passed it came apparent that we were both avoiding talking about what the rest of the day held; knowing this my nerves returned. Time continued to pass and I felt as if I hadn't made full use of the morning. I began to fret over insignificant details which now looking back held no importance. Hurriedly, I carried the plates out into the kitchen accepting no help, even though it was clearly needed. Clumsily, I splashed dish water over my dress; I was beginning to feel frustrated at myself. Why was there nothing which I could do? I felt completely useless. Tim always knew how to reassure me and calm me down. He came to my side and gently said 'Just stop, stop what you're doing and come here.' The soft tones of his voice calmed my nerves and his warm embrace made me feel safe, as if we could stay this way forever. However, as I write this, I now know that everything must come to an end, even the war.

Effective use of a foregrounded adverb.

The relationship is sensitively developed.

The gentle knock on the door interrupted our embrace, dragging us both back in to reality. We were expecting Timothy's parents so I blinked back the tears and allowed him to open the door whilst I quickly made myself presentable.

Effective use of an interrogative - active is explore the narrator's emotion.

candidate shows  
awareness of social  
nuances in the early  
cont.

There was a tense atmosphere, whilst hugs, kisses and handshakes were exchanged. Everyone was glossing over the fact that Tim was leaving; putting it to the back of our minds pretending that this was just a normal family occasion. We welcomed them through to our living room Tim hanging up their coats as I went back to the kitchen to make tea. Tim's mother or Mrs Brown as I called her came to my side looking distraught. Having to say goodbye to her son is something no mother should ever have to go through. I paused what I was doing, allowing the tea to brew. Mrs Brown was usually a talkative woman making the best out of any situation yet, on this day there were no words spoken, nothing could've been said to lighten the mood. Instead, I reached out and we held each other's hands in silence. We remained this way for a few moments and in this time it felt as if we shared something with one another; becoming united. Throughout the time that Tim was away this bond only became stronger, both of us understanding how it felt to say goodbye to the one we love the most.

Once the tea was ready we balanced it all on a tray and carried it out to the men in the other room. Light conversation was made whilst tea was sipped politely. Mr Brown was never one for confrontation, as the conversation ran out he excused himself to go and start up the car for the journey. Timothy joined him; they had always had a good father and son relationship that no one could quite work out.

This left Mrs Brown and <sup>me</sup> to tidy up the mugs left from the tea; we looked out to the window to see the men standing together laughing. We paused in what we were doing to take in the moment of happiness that was being shared. Even in the dark times laughter shines light on any situation. *An interesting angle on an established metaphor.*

When we arrived at the station Tim and I got out of the car first, leaving his parents to continue driving until they found a suitable place to park the car. We agreed to meet back at platform 3 where Tim's train was going to be. However, once we entered the station we realised how obvious it was which platform we needed to head to; all the soldiers were gathered together, unmistakable in their uniform.

The atmosphere was loud; excitable even, as young men got ready to become heroes and 'make their country proud' just as the adverts suggested. It all seemed such a rush, as meaningful words and promises were exchanged over the noise.

insight into  
the morality  
of war time.

Then the Station-Master blew his whistle announcing it was time to board the train. The atmosphere became frantic. Timothy's parents said their final goodbyes before retreating into the crowd allowing me to spend a few moments alone with Tim. He held me tight and kissed me. Everyone surrounding us disappeared and the noise was muted. Then the second whistle was blown interrupting our escape from reality. Our fingers which had been tightly locked around each other's parted as the crowd pulled us apart and he was shoved on board the waiting train. I shouted helplessly 'I love you' in to the crowd as a tear slowly rolled down my face. Little did I know this would be the last thing I'd say to Tim. *foreshadowing used to involve the reader.*

The engines started and the crowd moved away from the train. Timothy was at the window facing me waving as the train gradually moved off... Then silence. All that could be heard were the sobs of mothers, daughters, girlfriends, wives and fathers, left feeling lost and alone.

judicious  
choice of adjectives.

Effective use of  
the ellipsis followed  
by a understatement  
for impact.  
Effective use of  
the word to indicate the scale  
of mourning.

Effective  
use of a  
simple sentence  
sophisticated  
explanation  
of the mood of  
the loss as  
the war  
was  
past.

The candidate demonstrates an assured understanding of the genre. She writes sensitively, creating a credible and engaging narrator. She has employed a range of techniques to present the moments leading up to and immediately

# **The forgotten faces of the Great War**

-An article for the Sunday Times

## The forgotten faces of the Great War

World War I marked the start of plastic surgery, giving soldiers new hope of recovering their original selves. This new profession was an experiment for any surgeons involved as there was very little medical experience in this area to learn from. Henry Tonks, who originally was a surgeon but trained as an artist professor also, became an official war artist in 1918. With his rare combination of professions; medical knowledge paired with artistic talent, Tonks was able to benefit the surgeons involved with his pastel drawings of the injured soldiers.

Now, in 2017 plastic surgery has made many advances due to the knowledge shared from the World War. Tonks, a British surgeon who studied medicine from 1882, and became a Professor of Fine Art at the Slade in 1892, put his talents to the best use in World War I. Firstly he became a lieutenant in the Royal Army medical corps in 1916 but then in 1918 he became an official war artist at the Queen's hospital, Sidcup. This hospital was the birth place of plastic surgery where 2000 soldiers from the battle of the Somme alone were treated. Here Gillies, who is now often known as 'the father of plastic surgery', began his work in 1917, performing 11,000 operations on over 5,000 men. The majority of these operations were performed on men with facial injuries from gunshot wounds, caused by their lack of knowledge of warfare. The advances which Gillies was making throughout the war in regards to facial reconstruction gave the men new hope of their appearance being saved. Tonks and Gillies worked alongside each other during the war, Tonks' pastel drawings displaying the soldiers' facial injuries for Gillies to operate on. Tonks' medical knowledge benefited Gillies, by painting the soldiers in their original state meaning as the surgeries progressed, the paintings could always be referred back to. However, Tonks' paintings were so influential as he didn't only paint what he saw but also displayed the soldier in a unique way which captured their personality, along with their injuries.

Injuries from The Great War were gruesome. The world wasn't ready for the effects which the injuries had on the soldiers themselves and the people around them.

Mutilation, facial misconfiguration and gas burns left the men physically and mentally scarred. At the Queen's hospital, Sidcup, mirrors were banned keeping the men unaware of their appearance. Often, they remained in hospital for years, becoming unrecognizable to even themselves once they were discharged.

Unfortunately, many soldiers never returned home to their loved ones even after surgery was complete. The face is an irreplaceable feature and for all the years which the war progressed sons, daughters, wives, mothers and fathers were waiting for their loved one to return; expecting and anticipating the face they knew and loved. Their expectations were too high or in some cases they were completely unaware of the damage which the war had done. This often led to relationships ending, engagements being cancelled and families losing contact. The war left a permanent mark on many soldiers, everyday being a reminder of the battle; jobs weren't easy to find resulting in no stable income, everyday activities were never the same constantly dealing with the look of horror on strangers' faces. The public just weren't prepared. Therefore, in Sidcup, Kent, benches were painted blue and reserved for the injured; this pre-warned surrounding people of the injured soldiers and helped minimize shock and humiliation.

Yet for many soldiers it was still too much; life wasn't worth living with the constant reminder. The loss or damage to the face just wasn't supported in the way which other injuries were, leaving the men feeling abandoned and excluded from society. Henry Tonks felt that his paintings were unsuitable for public viewings due to the disturbing nature of the injuries. Soldiers with facial disfigurement weren't praised in the same way which amputees were; noble, brave and strong. Instead, they were hidden away from the public, strangers to the world with their unrecognisable features. *Poignant & moving.*

100 years later and plastic surgery is still progressing. Perhaps, without the pioneering work of Gillies and Tonks, knowledge of facial reconstruction still wouldn't have come this far. Yet as modern weapons advance, the injuries become even more complex. Can medicine keep up with the effects of war? This is a challenge for plastic surgeons today to develop and improve techniques further in order to provide the help and support wounded veterans deserve. *The final paragraph moves the piece from the past to the present - & on to the future. A sophisticated ending.*

*successful use of an interrogative to involve the reader.*

The candidate has chosen an interesting topic which she has researched well. She has a secure understanding of the genre and her writing is assured and highly effective. The final paragraph indicates that just as veterans of WWI needed support which was not always forthcoming, so do those of the present and future: a powerful ending to a piece which could easily have been simply historic.

Secure write, contrasting with that of the fictional piece.

## Commentary

My first core text is 'My dear I wanted to tell you'; from this I wrote a non-fiction article called 'Forgotten Faces of the Great War'. This allowed me to go explore the damage which the Great War imposed on soldiers and their families, aiming to inform and celebrate their efforts. The article shares the key points in plastic surgery and how medicine has improved. The target audience of this piece is historians and people interested in the Great War, yet this may also interest people who work in medicine due to the impact of plastic surgery. My fiction piece, 'The Last Goodbye' is based on my second core text, 'Testament of Youth' by Vera Brittain. This autobiography of her life in the Great War shares her involvements throughout: a woman's struggle to be independent and being a nurse on the frontline. From this I decided to write a chapter of a novel using a first person narrative in which the speaker's husband leaves for war. This allowed me to use a range of emotive language in order to reach out and move the reader and also explore the truths of the war.

There are clear differences between my two texts. My first piece 'Forgotten Faces of the Great War' is an article aiming to inform the reader. Therefore, I have used a lexical field of medicine; 'plastic surgery', 'medical experience', 'surgeon', 'injured' and 'wounds'. This subject specific lexis helps to inform the reader by suggesting the treatments and action taken in order to nurse the soldiers. However, the article also aims to share how life changing the war was for all involved. To portray this I used a rule of three; 'Relationships ended, engagements were cancelled and families broke up.' This sentence escalates from bad to worse showing that the outcomes of the war can have permanent effects on people's lives such as, loss of communication between families, meaning their past follows them, every day being a reminder of what they've lost. I additionally used a lexical field of art; 'artist', 'pastel', 'drawings' and artistic'. This emphasises the dramatic contrast of professions, suggesting the rarity of them ever coming together. This therefore suggests to the reader just how important the development of medicine was and how much experimenting and trial and error it took to get us where we are today.

Throughout this piece I aimed to show the reader that soldiers aren't always seen as heroes and for those who suffered with facial injuries were often made an outcast from society. The use of the abstract noun 'horror' contrasts with how people would usually perceive a soldier to be: 'admirable' or 'respected'. This shows that instead these soldiers were unappreciated for their war efforts, I used the abstract noun 'shock' to portray the response which soldiers often received from the public in return for the abstract noun 'humiliation' to portray the way soldiers were often made to feel by those surrounding them. These language features in turn all lead to the reader feeling sympathetic for what the soldiers went through.

The structure of this piece follows a chronological order bringing the reader up to date with war medicine; the time phrase '100 years later' is used to inform the reader how far surgery has come, yet also suggests there's more still to be discovered. Throughout I used dates and numbers, for example; 'in 1892', '2000 soldiers', '11,000 operations' and '5000 men' This helped to show the extent of harm yet also the amount of time passed whilst the profession improved. This therefore appeals to the modern reader who is interested in developments and history of medicine. I used an interrogative 'can medicine keep up with the effects of war?' to involve the reader,

Sustained awareness of how lexical & structural choices can be used to shape the response of readers.

A03/4  
The candidate explains her core texts.

A01  
Structure of the surface analysed & explained.

A01  
Candidate explains & develops her purpose.

A02/3  
Analysis of the candidate's linguistic choices.

A02

A02/A01

Commented & insightful explanation of her methodology.

Sophisticated points.



questioning the future and allowing them to develop their own opinions on what will be the next stage in plastic surgery, yet, also reminding them that there's still things to be learnt today to continue to help those injured from war.

Although I wanted to primarily focus on the soldiers of the Great War, facial features were often irreplaceable meaning the civilians at home were also impacted by their loved ones' injuries. The pairing of the present participles 'expecting and anticipating' shows how unaware the public were of the extent of damage which could be done by the war therefore leading to disappointment. I felt it necessary to include a civilian's point of view as the lack of awareness led to further seclusion for those injured, which I presented through the abstract noun 'humiliation' suggesting the level of discomfort felt even when met with those who love and support them.

This article is suitable for publication in 2018, to celebrate a century since Tonks begun working as a war artist. This would appeal to the modern reader as the article brings you up to date; 'a challenge for plastic surgeons today', the noun 'challenge' accentuates the continuity of the profession. The article also appeals to an intellectual audience, who enjoy exploring topics which aren't covered by mainstream media.

Alternatively, my second piece 'The Last Goodbye' has a female perspective, mirroring the style of my core text Testament of Youth. Therefore, I decided to also use this first person narrative to show an individual's view of the war. Additionally, the use of direct speech makes the piece feel more realistic; 'What would you like for breakfast' this involves the reader in the situation creating an atmosphere by displaying interactions between characters.

The structure of the chapter foreshadows the later events 'I now know that everything must come to an end, even the war.' This declarative shows the certainty of the narrator. I also foreshadow future parts of the novel again later in the chapter; 'Little did I know this would be the last thing I'd say to Tim.' the use of past tense again shows the certainty of events as the narrator is looking back on her life.

Again I used a chronological order which is similar structure to my previous piece. However, this fictional text is in the past tense and instead uses a first person narrative which gives a different perspective to the reader. The penultimate paragraph develops the plot; 'left feeling lost and alone' this is used to intrigue the reader and find out if Timothy will in fact return home. The adjective 'alone' also makes the reader feel sympathetic for the families being separated by the war.

The end of the text has a list 'mothers, daughters, girlfriends, wives and fathers' this shows the magnitude/ extent of people affected by the war. This contrasts from my factual piece which focuses mainly on the effect of the war on soldiers whereas this piece shows that effects were more widespread.

This piece was aimed at people interested in the role which women played in the war and also anyone interested in history. I aimed to entertain and create sympathy for the tragedies of the war; this was shown through the use of emotive language. 'Our fingers which had been tightly locked around each other's parted' the verb 'parted' shows their lives separating and foreshadows the time they have to spend apart.

Ab1 & 2 - "Discriminating & controlled": the candidate consistently analyses her own work & explores & explains the purposes she had in writing. Discriminative examples are given. She makes careful analysis of how meaning is shaped in her own writing. Ab3 - she shows a secure awareness of how contextual factors

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#### Speech

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