

# A level English Literature

Summer 2020 Webinar 2

Contemporary unseen poetry  
choices

[Link to the webinar recording](#)





# Agenda

- Check-in and group profile
- Wordsmithery and the art of the nuanced
- How students read poetry
  - unseen poems Paper 3
  - 2019 and 2017 unseen poems – student responses
- ‘Leap Day’, Jean Sprackland
- ‘The Bottle’, Alan Brownjohn
- ‘The Missing’, Roger Robinson
- Links and connections (AO4)

*NB: we are unable to include hard copies of the poems with this PowerPoint presentation for copyright reasons. Please source these separately.*



# Poll

Which description best fits your experience?

- New to A level teaching.
- New to delivering Unseen/Forward poetry, but not new to teaching A level.
- Delivered Unseen/Forward poetry before on this qualification.



# Poems of the Decade – Unseen: Assessment requirements

## Component 3

**Section A – Post-2000 Specified Poetry:** one comparative essay question on an unseen modern poem written post-2000 and one named poem from the studied contemporary text (AO1, AO2, AO4 assessed)

30 marks

50% of a 2 hours and 15 minute paper

15% of the overall qualification



# Words for today

Please add to the list...be as creative as you like!

Nuanced    Oblique    Intangible    Suspended...

# Criticality can be developed through shared creative practices...

(Edexcel English conference keynote 2019)

Teachers should play the game of poetry too - not just be the referee:

- **‘Teachers encourage... writing by writing it themselves; unless teachers do that they are tailor’s dummies in a nudist colony - very bad manners’ (Stibbs 1981)**
- ‘Children need to know that adults too, struggle with words’ (Nicholls 1990)



# Poetry is...

**‘solving the riddle...finding the secret...what does it really mean?’**

*‘all readers...should be allowed to take a precious, quiet moment to think whenever they see or hear a new poem for the first time - it can only ever happen once. Sadly this moment of reflection can be neglected in the anxiety to begin an activity. When this happens, a poem can be set ablaze with highlighting or contorted by acronym-related annotations. The space around the poem can not only become squeezed but, more importantly, the reader and the ‘new’ poem move on to a new stage in their relationship.’*

*Anthology Making, Sue Dymoke 2019*

*‘Analysing is not dissecting. Dissection destroys a dead animal’s body but analysing a poem is more like turning a spotlight on a living creature. With a live animal, studying its nerves, shape, movement, cells, skin, psychology and social being by touching or watching it, enhances your sympathy and pleasure in it as well as your knowledge.’*

*52 Ways of Looking at a Poem, Ruth Padel*



# Past poems

## Two trees

They were trees, and trees don't weep or ache or shout.  
And trees are all this poem is about.

## When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day Has Passed

When the sun has risen and set over the same dishes  
and the predicted weather is white cloud,  
the baby steadies her head which is the head of a drunk's  
and holds me with her blue eyes,



# Examiners' feedback

*'Better answers read closely, ...were able to explore (without jumping immediately to conclusions) the significance of the repeated denials in the closing lines of Paterson's poem...These lines, in particular, invited students to consider the idea of the poem as a construct – though most responses assumed that Paterson was writing metaphorically throughout.'*

## **Examiners' report 2019**

*'Partial readings and misunderstandings produced some unconvincing and unhelpful speculation, such as that the baby had been abandoned or died, or that the line 'the baby steadies her head which is the head of a drunk's' meant that one or both parents were abusive alcoholics.'*

## **Examiners' report 2017**

## Selecting poems for unseen practice

‘Leap Day’, Jean Sprackland

‘The Bottle’, Alan Brownjohn

‘The Missing’, Roger Robinson





# 'Leap Day' – starting points

<b>Voice: who is speaking and who/what is being addressed?</b>	<b>Title (and its reference)</b>	<b>Mood/tone</b>
<b>Form: space/shape on the page/</b>	<b>Words: Themes/strings/patterns</b>	

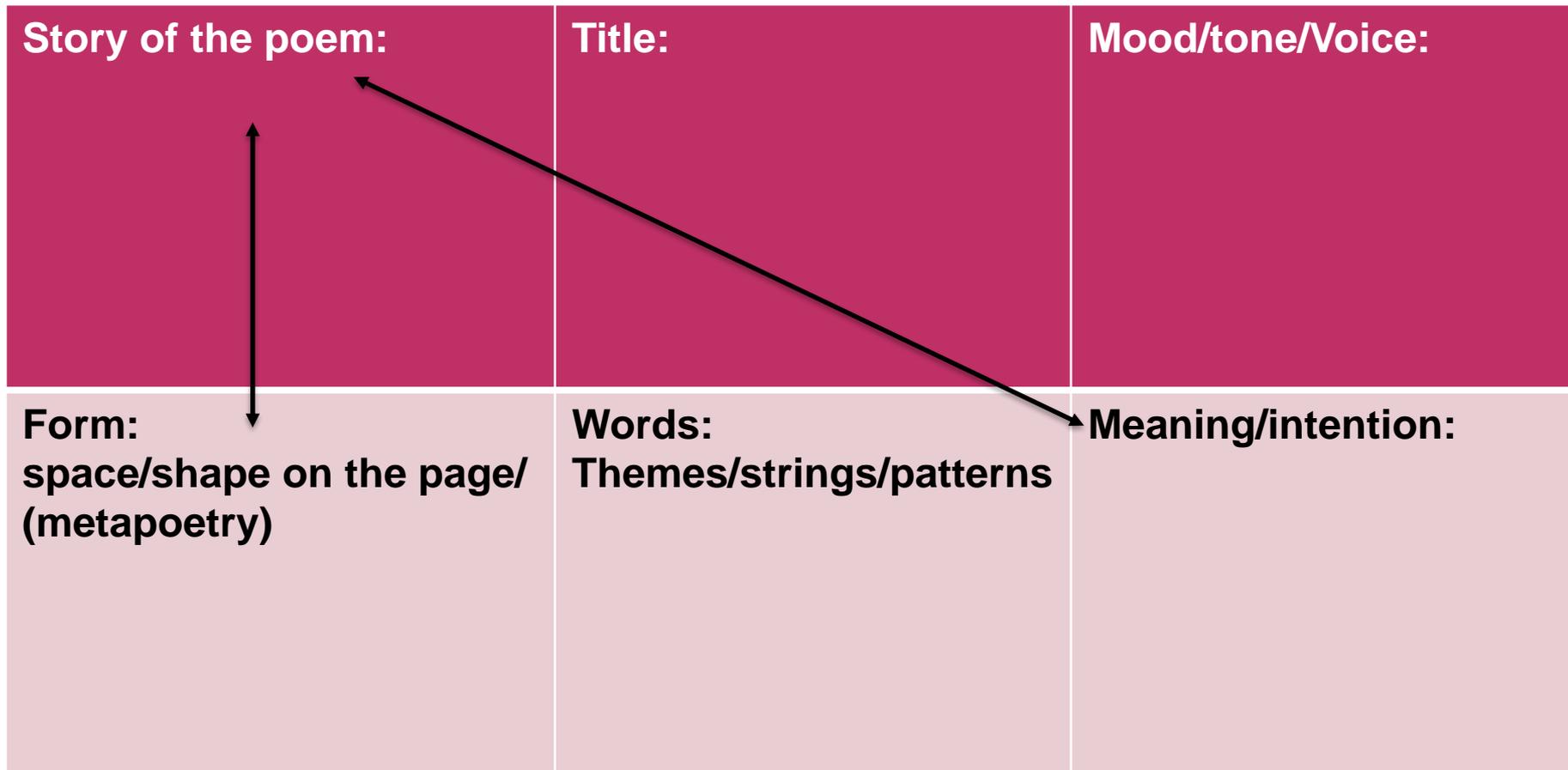


# Listening activity: 'The Bottle'

Listen to the poet's intention



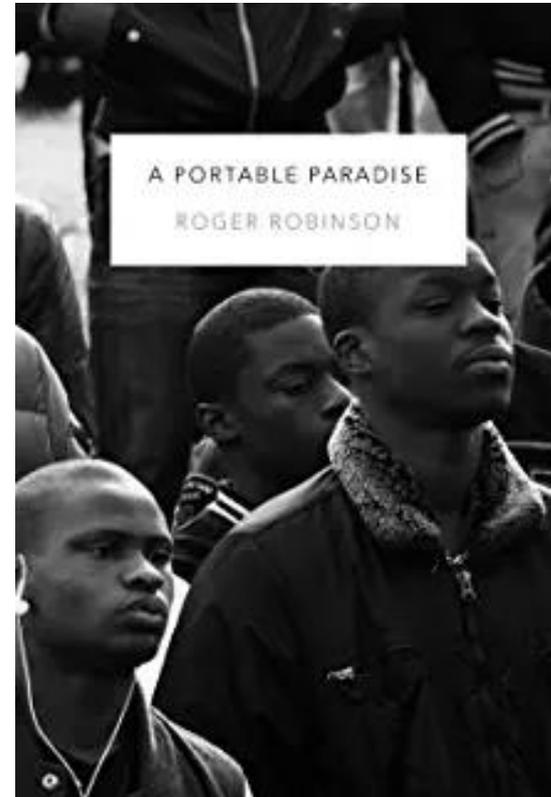
# Breakout groups





# 'The Missing', Roger Robinson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuk-MA1FY8w>





# Discussion

<b>Story of the poem:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Mood/tone/Voice:</b>
<b>Form: space/shape on the page/</b>	<b>Words: Themes/strings/patterns</b>	<b>Meaning/intention:</b>

Take one aspect and craft a carefully worded analytical comment – focus where possible on the aspects that we started this session on – the ‘intangible’...



# Final discussion – poem pairings

## EITHER

- 1 Read the poem *Two Trees* by Don Paterson on page 2 of the source booklet and reread the anthology poem *Eat Me* by Patience Agbabi (on page 3).

Compare the methods both poets use to explore relationships.

**(Total for Question 1 = 30 marks)**

## OR

- 2 Read the poem *Two Trees* by Don Paterson on page 2 of the source booklet and reread the anthology poem *Giuseppe* by Roderick Ford (on page 4).

Compare the methods both poets use to explore unusual events.

**(Total for Question 2 = 30 marks)**

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Which prescribed poems ('Poems of the Decade') would you pair with any of the 3 we have discussed today?

What focus would the question have?

Please share your ideas via the discussion.

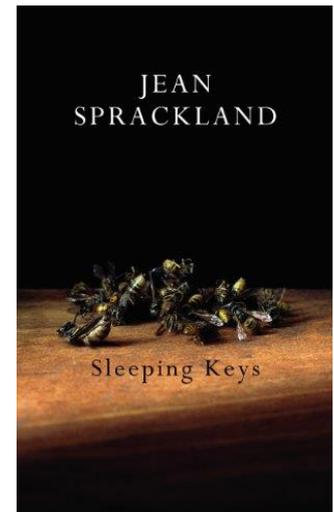
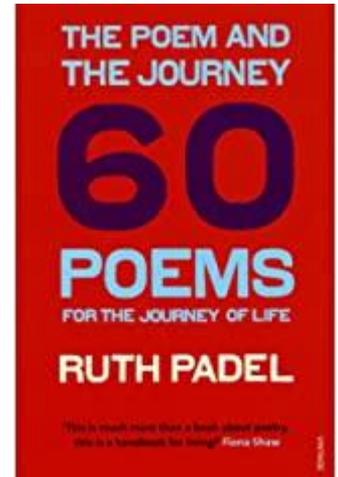
# Support and resources





# Further reading

- Ruth Padel: two books with poems and analysis
- WRITE where we are NOW: MMU
- The Guardian: The Saturday Poem
- Anthony Wilson: Lifesaving Poems





# Your Subject Advisor

## Clare Haviland

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- Twitter: @PearsonTeachEng
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# New Mocks Marking Service

## Pearson Edexcel GCSE and A level Mocks Service

Following a successful pilot with The Dean Trust, our new Mocks service will provide schools and colleges with Pearson Edexcel GCSE and A level exam papers for use in mock examinations. The papers are sat by students and marked by either Pearson examiners or the school teaching staff, with the results and item level analysis being made available via ResultsPlus.

Available for GCSE and A level: English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Computer Science (GCSE only).

We'll be providing three levels of service:

- Paper-based Pearson-marked for GCSE and A level
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*"The Mocks service provided us with the assurance that the assessments were consistent, that there was no unconscious or conscious bias and that they were marked and validated by a recognised and highly regarded awarding body. Exceeded our expectations."*

Andrew Shakos, Trust Director of Operations,  
The Dean Trust



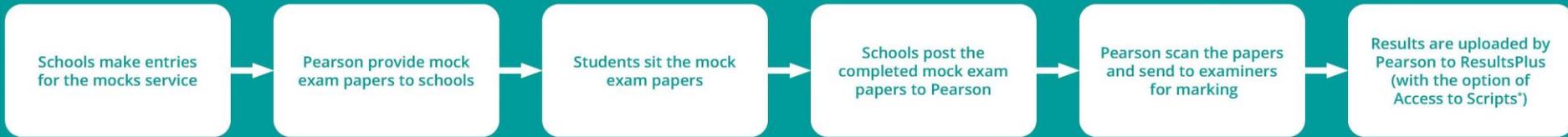


# New Mocks Marking Service

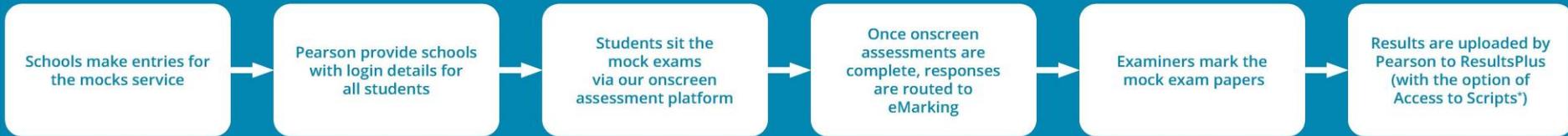
[Find out more](#)

## Mocks Service: how does it all work?

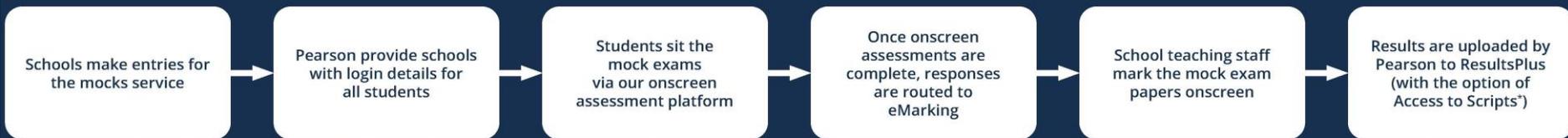
**Paper-based Mocks Service – Pearson-marked, GCSE and A level.** GCSE £9.00, A level £14.00 per exam paper<sup>†</sup>.



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Pearson will provide training for teachers on how to use the onscreen assessment platform. In addition we will also provide training to help teachers understand the mark scheme for their subjects.

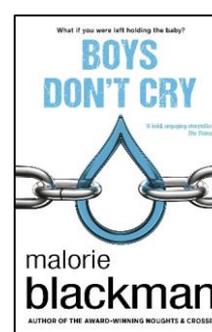
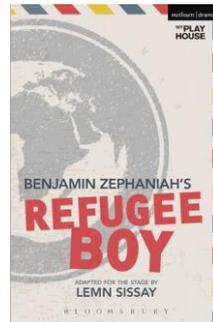
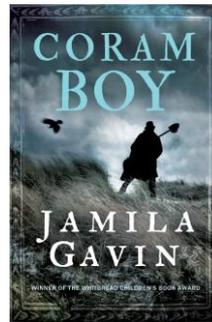
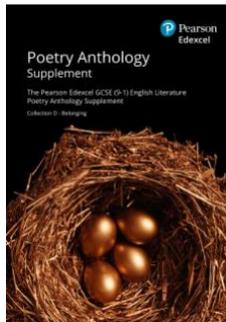
<sup>†</sup>Access to Scripts is a free service that enables you to take a look at your students' mock exam papers so you can see the answers they've written and the marks they have scored for each question. Pricing is correct as of August 2020, but may be subject to change.

# GCSE English Literature 1ET0

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Recognising the  
importance of diversity  
within literature

Letitia Elizabeth Landon  
Jamila Gavin John Clare  
Tanika Gupta Malorie Blackman  
William Wordsworth Benjamin Zephaniah  
Robert Bridges Imtiaz Dharker  
Thomas Hood Kayo Chingonyi  
Raymond Antrobus Emily Brontë  
Zafar Kunial Choman Haidar  
Amy Blakemore  
Carol Rumens  
Grace Nichols



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