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| **Collection: Relationships** | **‘A Child to his Sick Grandfather’ *Joanna Baillie*** |
| **Resources required:**   * Edexcel GCSE Poetry Anthology, page 7 * Audio A2 * Glossary PowerPoint A2 * Worksheets A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4, A2.5, A2.6 | **Assessment focuses:**  AO2  AO3 |

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| **LESSON 2** | |
| **Learning objective:**   * to understand how the poet portrays emotions within family relationships. * to understand how the poet uses language to portray emotions within family relationships | **Glossary terms:**   * stocked * corse * wot * weal * doff * aye * partlet * nod * sestet |
| **Introduction:**  ***Teacher/Context:***  Explain to students that Joanna Baillie was a revered Scottish dramatist and poet of the late 18th/early 19th century, so she was writing during the early Romantic era. Her work exerted a strong influence on leading Romantic poets Shelley and Byron. Upon moving to London in 1784, Baillie was encouraged to write poetry by her aunt, Ann Hunter, who gained her access to the literary society of London. Baillie offered this world a new way of looking at drama and poetry and, at a time when creative women’s voices were rarely heard, many contemporary writers held her in the highest esteem. This poem is taken from her first published collection: *Poems: Wherein it is Attempted to Describe Certain Views of Nature and of Rustic Manners (1790).*  ***First reading/Class discussion:***  Ask students to read the poem on page 7 of the *Poetry Anthology* while listening to *Audio A2*. Display *Glossary PowerPoint A2* as they read/listen to ensure the meaning of some of Baillie’s Scottish or archaic vocabulary is clear. Encourage students to identify the regular rhyme scheme (AABBCC). Explain that a six-line verse is known as a sestet. This term is also in the *Glossary* presentation.  ***Pairs:***  After reading the poem, ask students to discuss the overall tone in pairs. Focus, in particular, on identifying the different emotions presented in the poem through the poet’s use of language and word choices.  They could give feedback to the class and offer textual references to illustrate their points. These should recognise the different emotions presented by the poet: nostalgia and regret for the lost past filtered through the lens of deep affection from the child for his grandfather in the present as his faculties decline in old age. Explain that this emphasis on powerful emotion was a favourite theme with the Romantic poets and that you are going to explore this in greater depth in this lesson. | |
| **Development:**  ***Pairs/Groups:***  Using *Worksheet A2.1*, ask students in pairs or in small groups to write down several examples from the poem of the grandfather as he is remembered in the past and how he is now. Is there a contrast between these two presentations? How does the poet’s use of language effectively convey the changes that have taken place?  ***Whole class discussion/Pairs:***  Ask students to consider what techniques Baillie uses to powerfully evoke the child’s feelings about his grandfather’s failing health effectively? Ask pairs to identify one quotation each from the poem for each of the emotions listed on *Worksheet A2.2* and to say why these examples are so effective.  ***Independent writing:***  If needed, please inform/review and revise with the students the following information about a PEEE response:  **Point** – make a clear point about an aspect of the text and link back to the question.  **Evidence** – choose an *appropriate* quotation that supports your point.  **Explanation** – why does the particular quotation support your point? What does it suggest (e.g. *This quotation suggests…*)?  **Evaluation** – what is the intended reader reaction? Is it effective? Offer a personal opinion.  Ask students to explain in writing, making use of textual references and PEEE, how a sense of loss and sadness is established and maintained in this poem. They should consider the poet’s use of language, form and structure in their responses.  ***Pairs/Peer assessment:***  Ask students to swap their answers from the writing task with a partner. Check that they are using appropriate evidence and an appropriate explanation, including suitable technical vocabulary (e.g. in their references to language, form and structure). Students could write a comment on how their partner’s answer might have been improved. They can use *Worksheet A2.3* to help them identify possible areas for improvement.  Ask for feedback from students. You may wish to ask for example answers to be shared with the class. | |
| **Conclusion:**  ***Whole class:***  Using sticky notes, ask students to write down a word or phrase that for them best encapsulates the strongest emotion of the poem. Stick these on a copy of the poem either attached to or displayed on the whiteboard. The text of the poem is provided on *Worksheet A2.4* for this purpose.  Ask students to consider which other poem in the ‘Relationships’ collection of the *Poetry Anthology* might be most usefully compared with ‘A Child to his Sick Grandfather’. They could record their ideas on *Worksheet A2.5*. | |
| **Homework:**  Students should write a short piece of poetry or prose that focuses fondly on one of their own elderly family members, if they have any. Alternatively, they could write a short piece on the person they most admire in their lives and why. | |
| **Support:**   * Use *Glossary PowerPoint A2* to ensure less confident students have fully understood the nuances of meaning in the poem. * For the writing task, encourage students first to list all the synonyms of loss/sadness they can think of and then check how many of them are used or echoed in the poem. This may help to focus their response on appropriate key areas of the poem. | **Challenge:**   * Students could consider at least one other poem in the ‘Relationships’ collection of the *Poetry Anthology* which presents similarly strong emotions and/or family ties. * More confident and able students could consider at least three more poems in the ‘Relationships’ collection which present similarly strong emotions and/or family ties. *Worksheet A2.6* is provided for them to record their ideas. |
| Suggested answers:  *Worksheet A2.1*  Answers should focus on contrasts between past and present, and how the change is presented by the poet, e.g. use of past tense versus present and future tenses (*used to smile*/*looks so sad/I’ll lead you*); use of time connectives and adverbs to mark time passing (*when/while/then*); literal descriptions of decline (*old and frail/bended corse/lank and thin/wan and hollow/strength be fled/ailing*); symbols of life fading away (*crossing breaks/say their prayers/weary fire*); pathetically hopeful tone of child unwilling to accept the inevitable (*You will not die and leave us then?/ And when you wake/I’ll with you bide/You love a story, dad?*); repetition of conjunctions and adverbs of contrast: *but/now/yet/ne’ertheless*; repetition of ‘dad’ as of insistent child speaking to someone with hearing difficulties.  *Worksheet A2.2*  Sadness: *And everybody looks so sad –* poet depicts child as observant and sensitive to emotional reactions around him, which heightens own sense of dread at his grandfather’s weak condition: simple language and sentence structure underlines pathos of directness/starkness of child’s sorrow  Regret: *But yet, for all his strength be fled –* boy feels sorry that his grandfather is no longer the strong man he used to know, but it has not diminished his love for him in the slightest: *I love my own old dad*: placing subordinate clause at beginning of sentence emphasises the old man’s weakness  Worry: *I’m vexed to see you,dad/I wot not how it be –* show child’s natural concern at and limited understanding of ageing process: use of archaic verbs ‘vexed’ and ‘wot’ draw attention to the child’s bewilderment  Compassion: *I’ll lead you kindly by the hand/I’ll with you bide –* poet shows that boy is mature enough to intuit grandfather’s increasing reliance on his family for everyday support: future tense highlights the misplaced optimism of the boy and his firm pledge to provide love and support for as long as they are needed | |