**EXEMPLAR**

**LOG ENTRY ONE ;**

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| **Title: Dulce Et Decorum Est**  **Author / Director: Wilfred Owen**  **Date:** |

**Brief Synopsis:**  Give a brief summary of the text you have read.

The poem was written in World War One and describes the horrible conditions the soldiers had to fight and survive in when they were fighting in the trenches. It describes their physical state of utter exhaustion and then a Gas attack and the aftermath. The gas used in the war was chlorine gas and this dissolved your lungs if you weren’t wearing a gas mask. The poet, Owen, describes how he can never forget the sights he has seen and they have left a huge mark on him. He actually fought in the war and would have been able to be accurate and realistic, which is probably why the poem is so real. At the end of the poem he talks to those back at home who are sending young men to fight, persuading them by telling them it is a really cool and glorious thing to fight for your country. This is wrong, says Owen, they should be told the truth. The lie is Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori, which is Latin for, ‘ it is sweet and glorious to die for your country”. It was originally said by Horace, an ancient writer, and has been used ever since to persuade young men to fight.

**Ideas / Themes:**  Identify the main ideas and themes in the text, provide specific details from the text to support these, comment on the effect created, why they were used, and give your response as to their purpose.

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| **WHAT** | **HOW** | | **WHY** |
| **Idea / Theme** | **Evidence** | **Effect of** | **Purpose** |
| 1. The horrors of trench warfare, which had both physical and mental effects on soldiers. 2. Politicians and people in power often use dubious methods to get people to fight or to die for political gain. There is a degree of duplicity in politics. | He describes a gas attack and how one man didn’t get his gas mask on and was ‘floundering ‘ in the gas and mud and then suffered his lungs being dissolved.  Owen talks about how he cannot forget what this looked like ever when he says “ in all my dreams, before my helpless sight..”  The title of the poem, Dulce et Decorum est refers to a quote from an ancient Roman poet called Horace who was describing the calls made by politicians to get young men to fight, namely it is a great thing to die for your country, kind of you can be a hero and that’s great. Owen talks to a recruitment person and condemns him for using the same thing. | To paint, in real detail just what a gas attack did to the victims if they didn’t have masks on, which stressed how hideous it was to have your lungs dissolve and then choke in your own fluids.  Also to clearly show that seeing these things had a lasting effect on those who were there, who felt powerless to help.  The first effect is that we realise just how long this particular lie has been used by people in power and how they need to see that it is wrong, especially when they have no idea of just what fighting and dying for their country means. | The main point of the poem was to expose to people who had never been to the front line just what the conditions the soldiers were fighting in were like so they could feel for the men and also not want them to go and fight.  Owen spoke of wanting to show the ‘pity of war’, that compassion for the hellish suffering and the best way to do this was to paint a vivid picture of just what it was like, which he did in the gas attack description.  Owen wants us to see how perfidiously the sentiment has been used by politicians and to be very wary of anyone who has no idea of what war is really like, using such a phrase. In other words he wants us to understand that giving reasons like this for men to fight is dealing with lies. |

**Audience and Purpose:**

Comment on the author’s purpose in the text and the intended audience. Provide evidence for your comments.

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| Audience and Purpose | Evidence |
| The audience originally would have been both the soldiers who had experienced the horrors Owen speaks about and those back home who had little or no idea.  One of the things Owen said about his poetry and being a poet was that the only thing a poet could do was warn. So to his own and also subsequent generations he provides in the poem a warning not only about the realities of war but also the ploys of men in power to promote it.  He also hoped to arouse a degree of pity in the hearts and minds of the readers and surely the recruiters, for if they felt a degree of pity then they wouldn’t be so keen to persuade young men to fight be telling them lies. | Owen by describing gas attacks and the physical fatigue of day after day fighting would have been a kind of voice for all of those who had been there but didn’t have the ability to write about it. There was rigorous censorship of any letters back home and so the poem provides a way of explaining.  The poem consists of some very graphic descriptions of suffering ;‘ drunk with fatigue’, ‘white eyes writhing’, ‘blood come gargling from the froth corrupted lungs’ to name a few and all of these serve as reminders of effects we would want to avoid.  He also speaks directly to the recruiter “ My friend, you would not tell with such high zest to children ardent for some desperate glory, the old lie, Dulce et decorum est Pro patri mori. This clearly shows he understands what is happening and that it is wrong and it should be stopped.  The fact that he calls the man ironically a friend means he is trying to open his eyes rather than roundly condemning him, which would be more likely to make the recruiters think. The pictures he has painted in words also are designed to be so hideous that readers would have felt compassion for the men who fought. |

**Structure:** Comment on the structure used by the author / director to communicate ideas and provide evidence and comment on the effect. Eg. part text, whole text, narrative sequence, beginnings and endings, turning points, denouement.

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| **WHAT** | **HOW** | | **WHY** |
| **Structural feature** | **Evidence** | **Effect** | **Purpose** |
| Stanzas/ verse structure | The poem is written in four verses with a different focus in each.  The first looks at the soldiers returning from a day fighting totally exhausted.  The second describes how as they were going over No Man’s Land there was a gas attack and while most of the soldiers got their masks on one didn’t and started suffocating and was desperately trying to get the help of the others.  The third is a couplet where Owen in almost an aside tells us he can never forget the sight.” In all my dreams before my helpless sight, he plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.”  The last verse concerns Owen having a conversation with the reader telling him/her that if they had been able “ to pace behind the wagon that we flung him into “ and heard and seen what the soldiers had then they wouldn’t be able to tell the old lie “Dulce…….” About it being a great thing | Allows Owen to build a clear picture of several horrible events and what he has experienced in our heads and then move on to expanding on his message.  The descriptions intensify in the second verse and then in the couplet we get a clear picture of just how this has affected him and so would affect us too. The build to the last verse pushes home the meaning of the message he is trying to convey. | It is never enough to just state something if you want a vivid reaction. The way to do it is to paint as vivid and as vital a picture as you can and then show by personal experience what the effect of this is.  Owen by using this structure manages to generalise with the opening picture, personalise it with his thoughts in the couplet and then make his conviction clear when he has established his credentials as someone who has been there and also as someone who is speaking directly to us. |

**Language Features:** Identify particular language features used by the author / director. Provide examples and comment on the effects of these and their purpose. Language features include eg: visual features and verbal features.

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| **WHAT** | **HOW** | | **WHY** |
| **Language Technique** | **Example** | **Effect** | **Purpose** |
| Figurative language: Metaphor  Simile | Drunk with fatigue  Limped on blood shod  Bent double, like old beggars under sacks | Describes how the men walk as if they are drunk because they are so incredibly tired.  Gives a picture of the men’s feet which are bleeding from wounds they have received in the mud after their boots have been blown off or sucked off by the huge mud pools.  Have the comparison of men so tired they can no longer walk upright and are doubled over, with old beggars carrying their lives in sacks. Also the suggestion they are old in contrast with the reality, they are young. | To give us a comparison with something we know about so we get a very clear picture of the effects of the tiredness.  To graphically reinforce the notion of the suffering that is being experienced. The fact that they have lost their boots and are bleeding but are still walking on, albeit limping, shows clearly they are in a zone that has exceeded what we have experienced and so Owen’s purpose is to show us that.  To again give us a picture that is really vivid and so enable us to understand how they have been transformed from young and vital men into old and battered ones which reinforces the idea that the conditions are appalling. A subtle but effective way of touching our sensibilities. |

**Thematic Connection:**  Briefly summarise how your text explores your chosen theme or aspect and make links with other texts already reported on.

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| **Connection to overall theme/ aspect**  **I am looking at the way conflict changes the way we see things.**  This poem shows the graphic and utter reality of the way things were for soldiers in the war and also the way people in positions of power manipulated things.. Owen uses a structure that allows us to see this in close detail; he takes us through an experience and then his feelings about the situation and  then the message he wants us to learn. He uses a variety of techniques to show this also and through the use of similes and metaphors etc., he creates vivid pictures which allow us to understand exactly what was happened which for those of us who weren’t there are valuable, and could change our own views, which must have been Owen’s point.. Indeed he wanted a wide audience and his purpose was to let us all reflect on what happened and how hideous war is. |
| **Connection to other texts** |