



Studying IB Literature: An Introduction

We are delighted that you have decided to continue your study of Literature in the Sixth Form at Bexley Grammar. We are confident you will not regret it! You will enjoy the opportunity to read, explore and discuss a variety of fantastic poems, plays, novels and stories from around the world. You will also have the chance to hone your analytical, evaluative, writing and speaking skills.

As preparation for the course, please read and think carefully about the questions and information contained here. In September, you will receive a paper copy of all this as a workbook. On the final few pages are three poems and three short stories – these will form the basis of the first few lessons of the course. You might want to have a read of them now. At the end of the course, one of the exams (worth 35% of your overall Level) is on Unseen Poetry and Prose. It is therefore really important that you develop your close reading skills of untaught material.

The very first lesson will deal with three fundamental questions. Have a think about them now in preparation:

- 1. What is literature?**
- 2. Why should we study it?**
- 3. What is the value of studying Literature from around the world, including works in translation?**

English Learner Portfolio

- ★ This Google Doc will be a **space for reflection** about the texts you are learning in lessons.
- ★ This is a document to use as you wish: you can fill it with writing, images, colour, links to interesting things- **be as creative as you dare!** You can take pictures of work completed in lessons to add to the document too.
- ★ This document should be a **consistent collection of pages** and will be permanently shared with your teacher.
- ★ **Your teacher will check it every half-term** to ensure you are using it correctly and contributing to it regularly.
- ★ This is a **requirement of the IB.**

Here are a few activities to get you started: (when you do an activity don't forget to number it in your document)



- 1) Decide which area of exploration your text suits (remembering it will always be Area 1) and answer the questions as creatively as you can...
- 2) After you complete each reading/chapter/poem answer the following questions, and repeat...
 - Summarise in 20 words the content of the plot during that reading.
 - Was it what you expected? Explain.
 - What Went Well? Even Better If?
- 3) **Create a mood board of images for the locations/settings/ideas/feelings linked to the text.**
- 4) Choose a character and write a stream of consciousness journal. Set a timer for 10 minutes and write as that character at whatever stage you are at in the text. You may want to repeat this process as the text develops.
- 5) What do others say about the text? Gather 3 different opinions from reviewers/critics/scholars - online and in books in library/that your teacher gives you and reply to them: do you agree/disagree? Why might they think the way they do? Be critical and evaluative.
- 6) Can you create a flow-chart to explore the structure of the novel, or a symbol timeline of the poems studied or a thermometer of tension for the protagonist?
- 7) What music reminds of the text? Use youtube to collect some links and explain your choices below each link

8) What does Tedtalks have to say about the themes in the text? Collect some links and explain your choices below each link.

English Literature Reading List – IB (YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO READ ALL OF THESE!)

The texts you study will depend on your teacher next year, but they will be from this list (13 if you are Higher, 9 if you are Standard) The ones in **bold** are commonly taught, and you might want to read them over the summer (but you don't have to!).

PROSE (novels, graphic novels and short stories) and Non-Fiction

<i>Enduring Love</i>	Ian McEwan
<i>Atonement</i>	Ian McEwan
<i>1984</i>	George Orwell
<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	F Scott Fitzgerald
<i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>	Robert Louis Stevenson
<i>This Boy's Life</i>	Tobias Wolff
<i>The Watchmen</i>	Alan Moore
<i>A Clockwork Orange</i>	Anthony Burgess
<i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>	Khaled Hosseini
<i>The Bell Jar</i>	Sylvia Plath
<i>Selected Short Stories</i>	D H Lawrence
<i>Selected Short Stories</i>	Katherine Mansfield
<i>The Bloody Chamber</i>	Angela Carter
<i>One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>	Ken Kesey
<i>Things Fall Apart</i>	Chinua Achebe
<i>Jane Eyre</i>	Charlotte Bronte
<i>A Wide Sargasso Sea</i>	Jean Rhys
<i>In Cold Blood</i>	Truman Capote
<i>Persepolis</i>	Marjane Satrapi
<i>The End of Eddy</i>	Edouard Louis
<i>Tess of the D' Urbervilles</i>	Thomas Hardy
<i>Dracula</i>	Bram Stoker
<i>Small Island</i>	Andrea Levy
<i>Conversations with Friends</i>	Sally Rooney
<i>The God of Small Things</i>	Arundhati Roy
<i>Wuthering Heights</i>	Emily Bronte

Texts in Translation

<i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i>	Alexandr Solzhenitsyn	Russia
<i>The Elephant Vanishes</i>	Haruki Murakami	Japan
<i>Miss Julie</i>	August Strindberg	Sweden
<i>The Reader</i>	Bernhard Schlink	Germany
<i>Midaq Alley</i>	Naguib Mahfouz	Egypt
<i>A Doll's House</i>	Henrik Ibsen	Norway
<i>Season of Migration to the North</i>	Tayeb Salih	Sudan

POETRY

<i>Collected Poems</i>	Seamus Heaney
<i>Rapture</i>	Carol Ann Duffy
<i>Collected Poems</i>	John Donne
<i>Collected Poems</i>	U A Fanthorpe
<i>Collected Poems</i>	Sylvia Plath
<i>Collected Poems</i>	Ted Hughes
<i>Collected Poems</i>	Pablo Neruda
<i>Collected Poems</i>	Gwendolyn Brooks

PLAYS

<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	Tennessee Williams
<i>Othello</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Hamlet</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Measure for Measure</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>	Edward Albee
<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	Arthur Miller
<i>Our Country's Good</i>	Timberlake Wertenbaker
<i>A View from the Bridge</i>	Arthur Miller
<i>A Woman of No Importance</i>	Oscar Wilde
<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	John Webster
<i>Hedda Gabler</i>	Henrik Ibsen
<i>Death and the King's Horseman</i>	Wole Soyinka
<i>A Taste of Honey</i>	Shelagh Delaney

INQUIRY QUESTIONS for AREAS OF EXPLORATION

The texts in the reading list above will be taught with reference to the three Areas below.

- When you approach a new text you might use the questions in area 1 to guide your initial understanding of the text.
- When you approach a text written in translation OR from a historical time period you might use the questions in area 2 to further your understanding of the text within its context.
- Finally when you study texts in comparison for your Paper 2 Exam you might use the questions in area 3 to help you to build connections between these texts.

You should also use these questions for your own reflections on a text in your Learner Portfolio.

AREA 1: READERS, WRITERS, TEXTS

1. Why and how do we study literature?
2. How are we affected by literary texts in various ways?
3. In what ways is meaning constructed, negotiated, expressed and interpreted?
4. How does language use vary amongst literary forms and genres?
5. How does the structure or style of a literary text affect meaning?
6. How do literary texts offer insights and challenges?

AREA 2: TIME AND SPACE

1. How important is cultural or historical context to the production and reception of a literary text?
2. How do we approach literary texts from different times and cultures to our own?
3. To what extent do literary texts offer insight into another culture?
4. How does the meaning and impact of a literary text change over time?
5. How do literary texts reflect, represent or form a part of cultural practices?
6. How does language represent social distinctions and identities?

AREA 3: INTERTEXTUALITY – CONNECTING TEXTS

1. How do literary texts adhere to and deviate from conventions associated with literary forms or genres?
2. How do conventions and systems of reference evolve over time?
3. In what ways can diverse literary texts share points of similarity?
4. How valid is the notion of a “classic” literary text?
5. How can literary texts offer multiple perspectives of a single issue, topic or theme?

6. In what ways can comparison and interpretation be transformative?

IB Timetable and assessment requirements

HIGHER STUDENT



TERM	Year 12 HIGHER (NEW SPEC)	Assessment requirements
Autumn term 1 2020	Course Introduction Unseen Assess 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 13 texts ● 4 texts in translation ● 4 forms (Prose, Poetry, Play, Literary non-fiction) ● 4 teacher free choice ● 3 periods ● 4 places (incl. 2 continents)
Autumn term 2 2020	<i>In house Mock IO</i>	5 mins presentation on text studied so far. Should be literary in focus, exploring presentation of a Global Issue. 5 bullet point plan.
Spring term 1 2021	Unseen Assess 2	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Spring term 2 2021	Unseen Assess 3	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Summer term 1 2021	Paper 1 Mock exam 2hrs 15mins 21st April- 1st May 2020	Unseen guided analyses, written in response to a question. 2 unseen texts from ANY form, 2 separate answers.
Summer term 2 2021	Individual Oral (20%) IA 10 mins, with 5 mins for teacher questions. 3rd July- 10th July 2020	Oral discussing two works on the basis of a common global issue. One text in translation required. The oral is pre-prepared with a 10 bullet point planning form., 2 extracts are chosen and taken into the exam (clean copies).
	YEAR 13 (NEW SPEC)	
Autumn term 1 2022	Higher Level essay (20%) Externally assessed Unseen Assess 4	1200-1500 word essay on a work studied, exploring the work using one of the 7 concepts.
Autumn term 2 2021	Paper 1 Mock exam (35%) 2hrs 15mins	Unseen guided analyses, written in response to a question. 2 unseen texts from ANY form, 2 separate answers. 2hrs 15mins.
Spring term 1 2022	Unseen Assess 5	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Spring term 2 2022	Paper 2 Mock exam (25%) 1 hr 45 mins	Choice of 4 questions on general aspects of literary technique and effect. Can use any form of text. 1 essay. Comparative answer on at least 2 texts.

IB Timetable and assessment requirements

STANDARD STUDENT



TERM	Year 12 HIGHER (NEW SPEC)	Assessment requirements
Autumn term 1 2020	Course Introduction Unseen Assess 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 texts • 3 texts in translation • 3 forms (Prose, Poetry, Play, Literary non-fiction) • 2 teacher free choice • 3 periods • 3 places (incl. 2 continents)
Autumn term 2 2020	<i>In house Mock IO</i>	5m mins commentary on extract from text studied so far. Can be delivered in pairs Should be literary in focus.
Spring term 1 2021	Unseen Assess 2	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Spring term 2 2021	Unseen Assess 3	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Summer term 1 2021	Paper 1 Mock exam 1hr 15mins 21st April- 1st May 2020	Unseen guided analyses, written in response to a question. Choice of 2 unseen texts from ANY form, 1 answer.
Summer term 2 2021	Individual Oral (30%) IA 10 mins, with 5 mins for teacher questions. 3rd July- 10th July 2020	Oral discussing two works on the basis of a common global issue. One text in translation required. The oral is pre-prepared with a 10 bullet point planning form., 2 extracts are chosen and taken into the exam (clean copies).
	YEAR 13 (NEW SPEC)	
Autumn term 1 2021	Unseen Assess 4	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Autumn term 2 2021	Paper 1 Mock exam (35%) 2hrs 15mins	Unseen guided analyses, written in response to a question. Choice of 2 unseen texts from ANY form, 1 answer.
Spring term 1 2022	Unseen Assess 5	Unseen guided analysis with IB mark scheme
Spring term 2 2022	Paper 2 Mock exam (35%) 1 hr 45 mins	Choice of 4 questions on general aspects of literary technique and effect. Can use any form of text. 1 essay. Comparative answer on at least 2 texts.

SHORT STORY 1 – ‘Girl’ by Jamaica Kincaid

Wash the white clothes on Monday and put them on the stone heap; wash the color clothes on Tuesday and put them on the clothesline to dry; don't walk barehead in the hot sun; cook pumpkin fritters in very hot sweet oil; soak your little cloths right after you take them off; when buying cotton to make yourself a nice blouse, be sure that it doesn't have gum on it, because that way it won't hold up well after a wash; soak salt fish overnight before you cook it; is it true that you sing benna in Sunday school?; always eat your food in such a way that it won't turn someone else's stomach; on Sundays try to walk like a lady and not like the slut you are so bent on becoming; don't sing benna in Sunday school; you mustn't speak to wharf-rat boys, not even to give directions; don't eat fruits on the street—flies will follow you; *but I don't sing benna on Sundays at all and never in Sunday school*; this is how to sew on a button; this is how to make a button-hole for the button you have just sewed on; this is how to hem a dress when you see the hem coming down and so to prevent yourself from looking like the slut I know you are so bent on becoming; this is how you iron your father's khaki shirt so that it doesn't have a crease; this is how you iron your father's khaki pants so that they don't have a crease; this is how you grow okra—far from the house, because okra tree harbors red ants; when you are growing dasheen, make sure it gets plenty of water or else it makes your throat itch when you are eating it; this is how you sweep a corner; this is how you sweep a whole house; this is how you sweep a yard; this is how you smile to someone you don't like too much; this is how you smile to someone you don't like at all; this is how you smile to someone you like completely; this is how you set a table for tea; this is how you set a table for dinner; this is how you set a table for dinner with an important guest; this is how you set a table for lunch; this is how you set a table for breakfast; this is how to behave in the presence of men who don't know you very well, and this way they won't recognize immediately the slut I have warned you against becoming; be sure to wash every day, even if it is with your own spit; don't squat down to play marbles—you are not a boy, you know; don't pick people's flowers—you might catch something; don't throw stones at blackbirds, because it might not be a blackbird at all; this is how to make a bread pudding; this is how to make doukona; this is how to make pepper pot; this is how to make a good medicine for a cold; this is how to make a good medicine to throw away a child before it even becomes a child; this is how to catch a fish; this is how to throw back a fish you don't like, and that way something bad won't fall on you; this is how to bully a man; this is how a man bullies you; this is how to love a man; and if this doesn't work there are other ways, and if they don't work don't feel too bad about giving up; this is how to spit up in the air if you feel like it, and this is how to move quick so that it doesn't fall on you; this is how to make ends meet; always squeeze bread to make sure it's fresh; *but what if the baker won't let me feel the bread?*; you mean to say that after all you are really going to be the kind of woman who the baker won't let near the bread?

Short Story 2 – ‘The Story of an Hour’ by Kate Chopin

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of "killed." He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.

She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.

There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.

There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.

Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will--as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her

breath: "free, free, free!" The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

And yet she had loved him--sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

"Free! Body and soul free!" she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for admission. "Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door--you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven's sake open the door."

"Go away. I am not making myself ill." No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long.

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister's importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister's waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting for them at the bottom. Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident, and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine's piercing cry; at Richards' quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.

When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease--of the joy that kills.

Short Story 3 – 'Bullet in the Brain' (1995) by Tobias Wolff

Anders couldn't get to the bank until just before it closed, so of course the line was endless and he got stuck behind two women whose loud, stupid conversation put him in a murderous temper. He was never in the best of tempers anyway, Anders - a book critic known for the weary, elegant savagery with which he dispatched almost everything he reviewed.

With the line still doubled around the rope, one of the tellers stuck a "POSITION CLOSED" sign in her window and walked to the back of the bank, where she leaned against a desk and began to pass the time with a man shuffling papers. The women in front of Anders broke off their conversation and watched the teller with hatred. "Oh, that's nice," one of them said. She turned to Anders and added, confident of his accord, "One of those little human touches that keep us coming back for more."

Anders had conceived his own towering hatred of the teller, but he immediately turned it on the presumptuous crybaby in front of him. "Damned unfair," he said. "Tragic, really. If they're not chopping off the wrong leg, or bombing your ancestral village, they're closing their positions."

She stood her ground. "I didn't say it was tragic," she said. "I just think it's a pretty lousy way to treat your customers."

"Unforgivable," Anders said. "Heaven will take note."

She sucked in her cheeks but stared past him and said nothing. Anders saw that the other woman, her friend, was looking in the same direction. And then the tellers stopped what they were doing, and the customers slowly turned, and silence came over the bank. Two men wearing black ski masks and blue business suits were standing to the side of the door. One of them had a pistol pressed against the guard's neck. The guard's eyes were closed, and his lips were moving. The other man had a sawed-off shotgun. "Keep your big mouth shut!" the man with the pistol said, though no one had spoken a word. "One of you tellers hits the alarm, you're all dead meat. Got it?"

The tellers nodded.

"Oh, bravo, " Anders said. "Dead meat." He turned to the woman in front of him. "Great script, eh? The stern, brass-knuckled poetry of the dangerous classes."

She looked at him with drowning eyes.

The man with the shotgun pushed the guard to his knees. He handed up the shotgun to his partner and yanked the guard's wrists up behind his back and locked them together with a pair of handcuffs. He toppled him onto the floor with a kick between the shoulder blades. Then he took his shotgun back and went over to the security gate at the end of the counter. He was short and heavy and moved with peculiar slowness, even torpor. "Buzz him in," his partner said. The man with the shotgun opened the gate and sauntered along the line of tellers, handing each of them a Hefty bag. When he came to the empty position he looked over at the man with the pistol, who said, "Whose slot is that?"

Anders watched the teller. She put her hand to her throat and turned to the man she'd been talking to. He nodded. "Mine," she said.

"Then get your ugly ass in gear and fill that bag."

"There you go," Anders said to the woman in front of him. "Justice is done."

"Hey! Bright boy! Did I tell you talk?"

"No," Anders said.

"Then shut your trap."

"Did you hear that?" Anders said. "'Bright boy.' Right out of 'The Killers'."

"Please be quiet," the woman said.

"Hey, you deaf or what?" The man with the pistol walked over to Anders. He poked the weapon into Anders' gut. "You think I'm playing games?"

"No," Anders said, but the barrel tickled like a stiff finger and he had to fight back the titters. He did this by making himself stare into the man's eyes, which were clearly visible behind the holes in the mask: pale blue, and rawly red-rimmed. The man's left eyelid kept twitching. He breathed out a piercing, ammoniac smell that shocked Anders more than anything that had happened, and he was beginning to develop a sense of unease when the man prodded him again with the pistol.

"You like me, bright boy?" he said. "You want to suck my dick?"

"No," Anders said.

"Then stop looking at me."

Anders fixed his gaze on the man's shiny wing-top shoes.

"Not down there. Up there." He stuck the pistol under Anders' chin and pushed it upward until Anders was looking at the ceiling.

Anders had never paid much attention to that part of the bank, a pompous old building with marble floors and counters and pillars, and gilt scrollwork over the tellers' cages. The domed ceiling had been decorated with mythological figures whose fleshy, toga-draped ugliness Anders had taken in at a glance many years earlier and afterward declined to notice. Now he had no choice but to scrutinize the painter's work. It was even worse than he remembered, and all of it executed with the utmost gravity. The artist had a few tricks up his sleeve and used them again and again - a certain rosy blush on the underside of the clouds, a coy backward glance on the faces of the cupids and fauns. The ceiling was crowded with various dramas, but the one that caught Anders' eye was Zeus and Europa - portrayed, in this rendition, as a bull ogling a cow from behind a haystack. To make the cow sexy, the painter had canted her hips suggestively and given her long, droopy eyelashes through which she gazed back at the bull with sultry welcome. The bull wore a smirk and his eyebrows were arched. If there'd been a bubble coming out of his mouth, it would have said, "Hubba hubba."

"What's so funny, bright boy?"

"Nothing."

"You think I'm comical? You think I'm some kind of clown?"

"No."

"You think you can fuck with me?"

"No."

"Fuck with me again, you're history. *Capiche?*"

Anders burst out laughing. He covered his mouth with both hands and said, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," then snorted helplessly through his fingers and said, " *Capiche* - oh, God, *capiche*," and at that the man with the pistol raised the pistol and shot Anders right in the head.

The bullet smashed Anders' skull and ploughed through his brain and exited behind his right ear, scattering shards of bone into the cerebral cortex, the corpus callosum, back toward the basal ganglia, and down into the thalamus. But before all this occurred, the first appearance of the bullet in the cerebrum set off a crackling chain of ion transports and neurotransmissions. Because of their peculiar origin these traced a peculiar patter, flukishly calling to life a summer afternoon some forty years past, and long since lost to memory. After striking the cranium the bullet was moving at 900 feet per second, a pathetically sluggish, glacial pace compared to the synaptic lightning that flashed around it. Once in the brain, that is, the bullet came under the mediation of brain time, which gave Anders plenty of leisure to contemplate the scene that, in a phrase he would have abhorred, "passed before his eyes."

It is worth noting what Anders did not remember, given what he did remember. He did not remember his first lover, Sherry, or what he had most madly loved about her, before it came to irritate him - her unembarrassed carnality, and especially the cordial way she had with his unit, which she called Mr. Mole, as in, "Uh-oh, looks like Mr. Mole wants to play," and "Let's hide Mr. Mole!" Anders did not remember his wife, whom he had also loved before she exhausted him with her predictability, or his daughter, now a sullen professor of economics at Dartmouth. He did not remember standing just outside his daughter's door as she lectured her bear about his naughtiness and described the truly appalling punishments Paws would receive unless he changed his ways. He did not remember a single line of the hundreds of poems he had committed to memory in his youth so that he could give himself the shivers at will - not "Silent, upon a peak in Darien," or "My God, I heard this day," or "All my pretty ones? Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?" None of these did he remember; not one. Anders did not remember his dying mother saying of his father, "I should have stabbed him in his sleep."

He did not remember Professor Josephs telling his class how Athenian prisoners in Sicily had been released if they could recite Aeschylus, and then reciting Aeschylus himself, right there, in the Greek. Anders did not remember how his eyes had burned at those sounds. He did not remember the surprise of seeing a college classmate's name on the jacket of a novel not long after they graduated, or the respect he had felt after reading the book. He did not remember the pleasure of giving respect.

Nor did Anders remember seeing a woman leap to her death from the building opposite his own just days after his daughter was born. He did not remember shouting, "Lord have mercy!" He did not remember deliberately crashing his father's car in to a tree, or having his ribs kicked in by three policemen at an anti-war rally, or waking himself up with laughter. He did not remember when he began to regard the heap of books on his desk with boredom and dread, or when he grew angry at writers for writing them. He did not remember when everything began to remind him of something else.

This is what he remembered. Heat. A baseball field. Yellow grass, the whirr of insects, himself leaning against a tree as the boys of the neighborhood gather for a pickup game. He looks on as the others argue the

relative genius of Mantle and Mays. They have been worrying this subject all summer, and it has become tedious to Anders: an oppression, like the heat.

Then the last two boys arrive, Coyle and a cousin of his from Mississippi. Anders has never met Coyle's cousin before and will never see him again. He says hi with the rest but takes no further notice of him until they've chosen sides and someone asks the cousin what position he wants to play. "Shortstop," the boy says. "Short's the best position they is." Anders turns and looks at him. He wants to hear Coyle's cousin repeat what he's just said, but he knows better than to ask. The others will think he's being a jerk, ragging the kid for his grammar. But that isn't it, not at all - it's that Anders is strangely roused, elated, by those final two words, their pure unexpectedness and their music. He takes the field in a trance, repeating them to himself.

The bullet is already in the brain; it won't be outrun forever, or charmed to a halt. In the end it will do its work and leave the troubled skull behind, dragging its comet's tail of memory and hope and talent and love into the marble hall of commerce. That can't be helped. But for now Anders can still make time. Time for the shadows to lengthen on the grass, time for the tethered dog to bark at the flying ball, time for the boy in right field to smack his sweat-blackened mitt and softly chant, *They is, they is, they is.*

Poem 1 The Bat by *Ruth Pitter*

Lightless, unholy, eldritch(1) thing,

Whose murky and erratic wing

Swoops so sickeningly, and whose

Aspect to the female Muse(2)

Is a demon's, made of stuff 5

Like tattered, sooty waterproof,

Looking dirty, clammy, cold.

Wicked, poisonous, and old;

I have maligned thee! . . . for the Cat

Lately caught a little bat, 10

Seized it softly, bore it in.

On the carpet, dark as sin

In the lamplight, painfully

It limped about, and could not fly.

Even fear must yield to love, 15

And pity make the depths to move.

Though sick with horror, I must stoop,

Grasp it gently, take it up,

And carry it, and place it where

It could resume the twilight air. 20

Strange revelation! warm as milk,

Clean as a flower, smooth as silk!

O what a piteous face appears,

What great fine thin translucent ears

What chestnut down and crapy(3) wings, 25

Finer than any lady's things —

And O a little one that clings!

Warm, clean, and lovely, though not fair,

And burdened with a mother's care;

Go hunt the hurtful fly, and bear 30

My Blessing to your kind in air.

Ruth Pitter, 'The Bat', in *Collected Poems* (1996)

1 **eldritch**: weird and sinister or ghostly

2 **Muse**: a source of creative inspiration

3 **crapy**: delicately wrinkled, also spelled "crepey"

Poem 2- The Queen by Pablo Neruda

I have named you queen.

There are taller than you, taller.

There are purer than you, purer.

There are lovelier than you, lovelier.

But you are the queen.

When you go through the streets

No one recognizes you.

No one sees your crystal crown, no one looks

At the carpet of red gold

That you tread as you pass,

The nonexistent carpet.

And when you appear

All the rivers sound

In my body, bells

Shake the sky,

And a hymn fills the world.

Only you and I,

Only you and I, my love,

Listen to it.

Poem 3 – 'Blackberry Picking' by Seamus Heaney

Late August, given heavy rain and sun
For a full week, the blackberries would ripen.
At first, just one, a glossy purple clot
Among others, red, green, hard as a knot.
You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet 5
Like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for
Picking. Then red ones inked up and that hunger
Sent us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots
Where briars scratched and wet grass bleached our boots. 10
Round hayfields, cornfields and potato-drills
We trekked and picked until the cans were full
Until the tinkling bottom had been covered
With green ones, and on top big dark blobs burned
Like a plate of eyes. Our hands were peppered 15
With thorn pricks, our palms sticky as Bluebeard's.
We hoarded the fresh berries in the byre.
But when the bath was filled we found a fur,
A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache.
The juice was stinking too. Once off the bush 20
The fruit fermented, the sweet flesh would turn sour.
I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair
That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.
Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.

