

# Wilfred Owen: Investigating *The Send-Off*

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## Investigating *The Send-Off*

- ❖ Make a time map or a flow chart of the journey Owen takes us through in this poem from the initial send off to the final return.
  - Is there a circular movement in the poem?
  - In what way does it end where it began?
- ❖ *The Send-Off* was crafted and re-crafted by Owen until he was satisfied.
  - In your view which is the better title: *The Send-Off* or 'The Draft'?

## Investigating language and tone in *The Send-Off*

- ❖ To help you appreciate the simple power of the language, make a grammatical analysis of the words used by Owen. First list the nouns (names of things) and the verbs (the words that describe actions).
  - Next spot which adjectives Owen uses to describe the nouns and which adverbs he chooses to tell us more about the verbs.
  - What impact do Owen's choices of adjectives and adverbs have on you?

## Investigating structure and versification in *The Send-Off*

- ❖ Poems are designed to be read aloud. Read it to yourself or find a friend and read it to each other. What happens when one of you reads the 'long' line and the other the 'short'?
  - What is added to your understanding of the verse and structure? Explore how the long and short lines are tied up with the long and short rhymes.
  - See if you are able to memorise some of the lines. It isn't hard as the patterns in rhyme and rhythm lend themselves to being learnt off by heart.

## Investigating imagery and symbolism in *The Send-Off*

- ❖ In this poem every image or picture seems to have symbolic significance. Pick out an image in the poem and explore its importance.
- ❖ Explore Owen's use of personification in *The Send-Off*.
  - How does it add to our understanding of his views on war?
- ❖ Explore your own ideas about lanes and roads. Think of the number of proverbial phrases to do with roads in the English language.
- ❖ What part of the poem moves you most?
  - Try to say why, and show how Owen's technique has given rise to this feeling.

## Investigating themes in *The Send-Off*

- ❖ In the planned introduction to Owen's book of war poems (which he never saw published), he wrote: 'My subject is war and the pity of war. The poetry is in the pity'. Review *The Send-Off* using the following headings:
  - How Owen writes about the theme of war in *The Send-Off*.
  - How he makes us feel 'the pity of war' in this particular poem.
- ❖ Remind yourself of the ending of *Spring Offensive*. What does it have in common with *The Send-Off*?