


# Wilfred Owen: Investigating *The Sentry*

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### *Sentry*

#### Investigating *The Sentry*

- ❖ Owen's own role in *The Sentry* is very clear. In some ways this poem echoes *Dulce et Decorum Est*. Look at the way in which Owen writes about himself in both poems.
  - Compare the way in which Owen writes about his own responses to the suffering of one particular soldier in each of the poems.
- ❖ Compare the way in which Owen describes the details of artillery fire in *The Sentry* and *Dulce et Decorum Est*.

#### Investigating language and tone in *The Sentry*

- ❖ In *The Sentry* we hear the actual words of the wounded man but only the indirect speech of the officer/Owen. What is the impact on you as the reader of hearing the sentry's actual words in the poem?
- ❖ Remind yourself of the poem *The Dead-Beat* which also contains dialogue and look again at *The Letter*. What do these and *The Sentry* have in common in terms of Owen's use of language?
  - What have these three poems in common in terms of the tone Owen adopts?

#### Investigating structure and versification in *The Sentry*

- ❖ *The Sentry* is unusual in that Owen generally uses a regular rhyme scheme and rhythm. How do you respond to this more predictable style of poetry?
  - How does it compare with other more irregular formats – select relevant poems for your comparison
  - How effective is this regularity in helping us move through the events of the poem?

#### Investigating imagery and symbolism in *The Sentry*

- ❖ Eyes and seeing are important symbols in *The Sentry* as they are in *Strange Meeting* and in *Dulce et Decorum Est*. Explore the significance of the eye symbolism in *The Sentry*.
  - Compare it to the way Owen uses it in *Strange Meeting*.
  - What do the eyes of the victim of the gas attack represent in *Dulce et Decorum Est*?

#### Investigating themes in *The Sentry*

- ❖ How does Owen use the theme of light in *The Sentry*?
  - How does this theme add to the 'pity of war' which flows through Owen's poetry?