

## Table of Past Questions on Studied Poetry

This table may help you to get an idea of the types of questions asked in previous Junior Certificate examinations.

Topics	'12	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01
Poem which deals with an important issue.			X									
Poem you would recommend.		X	X						X			
War or peace.				X								
Interesting place or time.		X		X				X			X	
Person.		X			X					X	X	
Sound effects or musical qualities.					X							
Poem which captures the imagination.						X						
Interesting title / features/imagery.						X				X		
Wishes / thoughts/feelings	X						X					
Favourite poet.	X						X				X	
Compare two poems with a similar theme.												X
Youth or old age.									X			
Love.									X			
Interesting language	X											

### Note:

- You are always asked to give the name of the poem(s) and the name of the poet.
- You cannot use the unseen poem as your studied poem. However, examiners are well aware of the poems frequently chosen for study in the Junior Cert, so are unlikely to choose one of those as an unseen poem. If it should happen that the unseen poem is one you have studied, then you must choose another poem to use in your Studied Poetry answer. This should not pose a problem, as most students have a good knowledge of between six and twelve poems.
- Always check the marks allotted to each part of each question. These can vary from year to year.
- You will almost certainly be asked to comment on the language used in the poem. Even if you are not overtly asked to do so, it would be appropriate to devote at least one paragraph of your answer to the language, or mention it in each point if possible.
- Learn and use your key literary terms. (See page 195 in my book for a list of these.)

## Sample Answers

**Note:** All the poems used in the sample answers are printed in full in this booklet.

### **The Lake Isle of Innisfree**

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;  
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

*W.B. Yeats*

### **Glossary**

Wattles – Wooden poles, intertwined with thin branches to form a wall or roof.

Glimmer – flicker of light (here used to mean the twinkle of stars).

Linnet – a small song bird, once commonly kept as a cage bird because of its beautiful singing.

### **Background**

Yeats wrote this poem in 1888 when he was a young man, living in London. He was lonely and homesick for Ireland at the time. Looking in a shop window, he saw a toy fountain and the sound of the water reminded him of lake water. Inspired by this, he wrote 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'

**2010** Imagine you have to recommend one poem that you have studied for a new publication entitled, *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

Name the poem you would choose and explain why this particular poem would be suitable for inclusion in this collection.

In your answer you may wish to consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc.  
(30)

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**Note:** This is a good option to choose because the question contains the bones of the plan you could use: '... consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc.'

You should read the question very carefully before you begin planning your answer. Notice the way you are asked to choose a poem which would be suitable for young people. Every point you make about the poem should link back to that aspect of the question.

As this is a thirty mark question, you should aim to make six points in your answer, if possible. Five strong points would be fine too, and better than repeating yourself or going off the point in order to find a sixth point. Use your own judgement and common sense here, and remember that an introduction does not count as a point. The same applies to a conclusion.

This answer is based on *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*, but you could use any poem you have studied.

**Plan:**

1. Introduction: 2006 survey – favourite poem – good reason – speaks to us all
2. Theme: all young people relate to idea of escape. Yeats wrote poem when young
3. Imagery: creates ideal world. Lovely vision and good for today's young people as it is a natural world he describes. Far from internet etc. Meditation
4. Language: beautiful, rich, evocative. No text-speak! Alliteration etc. Musical qualities
5. Structure: rhyme scheme creates a sense of harmony and peace
6. Tone: wistful and celebratory. Young people relate to former and find hope in latter
7. Overall effect: uplifting, food for thought in today's fast-paced world etc
8. Conclusion: poem deserves its place, would like to see it popular for years to come.


**Sample answer 1: 2010 examination– based on *The Lake Isle of Innisfree***

**2010** Imagine you have to recommend one poem that you have studied for a new publication entitled, *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

Name the poem you would choose and explain why this particular poem would be suitable for inclusion in this collection.

In your answer you may wish to consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc. (30)


*When I was asked to choose a poem for inclusion in *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, I didn't have a moment's hesitation in picking W.B. Yeats' 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'. I am not alone in loving this poem: it topped the poll in an Irish Times survey of the nation's favourite poems in 2006, and deservedly so. While the poem has a universal appeal, I believe that its message is of particular relevance to today's young people, and the beautiful way this message is expressed makes 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' a pleasure to read.*




The opening lines of the poem reflect the wording of the question. The language is persuasive/positive.

*The theme of the poem is one to which young people can easily relate: after all, who among us has not fervently wished that we could escape our busy classrooms or study halls, and be transported to a place so peaceful that the sounds of nature could be clearly heard? Instead of the shouts of students and the rumble of traffic outside, wouldn't it be wonderful to be somewhere where the buzzing of insects would seem loud, and the whirring flight of tiny songbirds would make the evening appear 'full of the linnets' wings'?*

*Yeats' ideal is centred on nature and a simple life where he will live in a 'small cabin... of clay and wattles made', and will need nothing more to sustain him than 'nine bean rows' and 'a hive for the honeybee'. In an overly-materialistic age when young*



The use of rhetorical questions is appropriate when you are trying to persuade others to agree with your point of view.



Don't forget to use quotes to support your answer. Short quotes are best.

people are constantly under pressure to keep up with the latest and greatest developments in technology and so on, I think it is wonderful to read a young man's vision of perfection as being somewhere beautiful, natural and simple. In an era when we are constantly in contact with others on phones, Facebook and Twitter, I think we would do well to consider taking a little time out and perhaps find some time to ourselves to meditate on what is really important in life. We may not have the chance to 'live alone in the bee-loud glade', but perhaps we could switch off for a little while, at least.

The alluring images Yeats' creates in this poem are greatly enhanced by his skilful use of rich and evocative language. Again, in a time when we are bombarded with abbreviated text-speak and sloppy expression, I feel it is important for young people to see the power that language can have to fuel our imaginations and appeal to our senses. Yeats' vivid descriptions bring the Lake Isle to life for us, and we share his longing for a place where 'midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow'. This is a poem that I would encourage all young people to read aloud because of its wonderful musical qualities. The soft 'l' and 's' sounds in the alliterative 'I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore' perfectly capture the peace and communion with nature that is Yeats' dream.

Even the structure of this poem adds to its beauty. The regular ABAB rhyme scheme reflects the harmony and serenity that the poet sees in his beloved Innisfree where 'peace comes dropping slow'.

Links between paragraphs make your answer flow.

This sense of peace and Yeats' love for the place where he spent some of his happiest hours are a large part of what makes this poem so appropriate for a young audience. Like many of us, Yeats is not completely happy at the time of writing; he has no desire to be on 'the pavements grey', and he is filled with longing for the idyllic Isle of Innisfree. This wistful tone is one which I certainly relate to, and I am sure I'm not alone in this. However, the poem is, above all, a celebration of Yeats' favourite place. His vision sustains him when he is homesick, and this is a very positive message for young people. We

Be sure to use key literary terms in your poetry answer.

Short paragraphs are fine, but even in a short paragraph, you can include a quote.

You must keep referring back to the question. Explain why each point is relevant for today's young people.

too should focus on all that is good in life and when we are feeling stressed or unhappy, perhaps we will be – like Yeats – lucky enough to have somewhere special to meditate on, a place that we too can feel in ‘the heart’s deep core’.

Overall, this is an uplifting, inspirational, beautifully crafted poem which appeals to us just as it has to generations of Irish readers. Culturally, this is an important poem and I think it is appropriate for all young Irish people to learn about, and hopefully identify with, our literary heritage.

In conclusion, then, I believe that *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* deserves its place

Your conclusion should relate back to your introduction.



in any poetry anthology for today’s young people, and I am confident that its place there will ensure that it remains firmly at the top of

the list of Ireland’s favourite poems.



## Mid-Term Break

I sat all morning in the college sick bay  
Counting bells knelling classes to a close.  
At two o'clock our neighbours drove me home.

In the porch I met my father crying--  
He had always taken funerals in his stride--  
And Big Jim Evans saying it was a hard blow.

The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram  
When I came in, and I was embarrassed  
By old men standing up to shake my hand

And tell me they were "sorry for my trouble,"  
Whispers informed strangers I was the eldest,  
Away at school, as my mother held my hand

In hers and coughed out angry tearless sighs.  
At ten o'clock the ambulance arrived  
With the corpse, stanced and bandaged by the nurses.

Next morning I went up into the room. Snowdrops  
And candles soothed the bedside; I saw him  
For the first time in six weeks. Paler now,

Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple,  
He lay in the four foot box as in his cot.  
No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four foot box, a foot for every year.

*Seamus Heaney*



## The Early Purges

I was six when I first saw kittens drown.  
Dan Taggart pitched them, 'the scraggy wee shits',  
Into a bucket; a frail metal sound,

Soft paws scraping like mad. But their tiny din  
Was soon soused. They were slung on the snout  
Of the pump and the water pumped in.

'Sure, isn't it better for them now?' Dan said.  
Like wet gloves they bobbed and shone till he sluiced  
Them out on the dunghill, glossy and dead.

Suddenly frightened, for days I sadly hung  
Round the yard, watching the three sogged remains  
Turn mealy and crisp as old summer dung

Until I forgot them. But the fear came back  
When Dan trapped big rats, snared rabbits, shot crows  
Or, with a sickening tug, pulled old hens' necks.

Still, living displaces false sentiments  
And now, when shrill pups are prodded to drown  
I just shrug, 'Bloody pups'. It makes sense:

'Prevention of cruelty' talk cuts ice in town  
Where they consider death unnatural  
But on well-run farms pests have to be kept down.

*Seamus Heaney*





## **Sample answer 2: 2002 examination – based on Seamus Heaney**

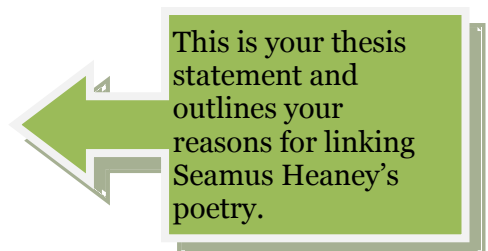
**2002.** From the poetry you have studied choose the poet you liked best of all. Explain why you liked this poet's work and support your answer by reference to his/her poetry. (30)

**Note:** This question requires you to know two or more poems by your chosen poet. The questions might be on the same theme – death in Heaney's Mid-Term Break and The Early Purges – or they might be linked because of the poet's use of powerful imagery, for example. Remember, you must have a thesis here. Why do you like this poet? List the reasons and link each one to a poem or poems. This will help you to organise your answer.

### **Plan:**

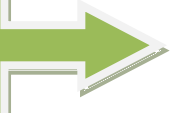
1. Poet: Heaney. Poems: MTB and TEP (*Keep your plan as brief as possible. It only has to make sense to you. Don't waste time on a neat plan or full sentences.*)  
Like – personal, sincere & powerful imagery
2. MTB - Death of brother – moving. Relate to his age, school etc.
3. Family's distress – parents vulnerable
4. Reality of death dawning – sees brother – tender and touching
5. Like MTB, boy has to grow up fast (Link)
6. TEP – much more graphic – upsetting
7. Death in this case is deliberately caused. No accident.
8. In both poems, boy has had to face harsh realities.

*The poet whose work I like best is undoubtedly Seamus Heaney. I enjoy his poetry because he deals with difficult themes such as death and loss in a sincere way, using language that is both rich in imagery and at the same time accessible and easy for me to understand.*



*The poem which made the strongest impression on me was undoubtedly 'Mid-Term Break'. The title of the poem and the setting of the opening lines in a school helped me to identify with the boy the poem. The ominous, funereal word 'knelling' to describe the ringing of the school bell struck a chilling note and made me empathise with the young Heaney sitting alone 'all morning', waiting to be brought home. I could imagine clearly how agonising this wait*

You should deal with the poet's style as well as the theme of his poems.




must have been and how the time must have dragged. The harsh alliteration at the end of the line when Heaney talks of the bell 'knelling classes to a close' emphasises the

misery he must have felt as time wore on.

The description of the scene when the poet arrives home is no less affecting. His father, a man who 'had always taken funerals in his stride' is in tears; and his mother's impotent anger at the loss of her little boy is effectively captured with the use of adjectives to describe her frustration: 'angry tearless sighs'.

Neighbours treat the poet like an adult, and all of these role reversals in his home must add to the sense of unreality and wrongness associated with Heaney's brother's untimely death. The language here is simple but no less powerful for that. I can imagine how lonely and isolated Heaney must have felt in a situation in which those from whom he would normally seek comfort were in need of comfort themselves.




Personal response is essential when answering a question like this.

It is the final section of the poem which invariably moves me the most. Finally, the poet goes to see his little brother's corpse. As at the start of the poem, he is alone. The whiteness of his dead brother's face: 'paler now' and the snowdrops in the room contrast with the vivid red of the 'poppy bruise on his left temple'. It is the final two lines of the poem which I – and I think everyone who has read the poem – remember most clearly. We finally learn that the little boy was knocked down by a car, and we hear how heartbreakingly young he was. 'No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four foot box, a foot for every year.'

That these last, unforgettable lines are the only ones in which we find full rhyme brings a sense of closure to the poem, reinforcing the end of this small boy's life.

The second of Heaney's poems which I have chosen also deals with death, and it too shows how harsh




Make sure to link the poems.

realities can shape our attitudes and force us to grow up quickly. Like 'Mid-Term Break', 'Early Purges' is a difficult poem to read, but its powerful imagery means it has stayed with me when I have struggled to remember other poems I have studied.

'Early Purges' tells us of the young Heaney's first experience of the killing of unwanted baby animals on his family's farm. A litter of kittens is placed in a metal bucket and drowned. If this sounds harsh, it is nothing compared to the graphic description of it in the poem. The description of the kittens' 'soft paws scraping like mad' to escape the bucket, and their 'tiny din' which is 'soon soused' by the flow of water is very upsetting but also very haunting.

What made the description of death in 'Early Purges' most distressing is that, unlike 'Mid-Term Break', this is no accident. The suffering is deliberately caused by adults. Dan Taggart is merely a representative of those who believe that 'on well-run farms pests have to be kept down'. His callous words in describing the newborn kittens as 'scraggy wee shits' adds to the emotional impact of the poem. I noticed, however, that Heaney distances himself from Dan Taggart's opinion by placing his description of the kittens in quotation marks. This distancing struck me as I read the later part of the poem in which the poet appears to ally himself with those who think the killing of young animals is a purely practical matter. Heaney may claim to have nothing in common with the 'false sentiments' of city people who decry animal cruelty, but his writing of this poem so long after the event proves that it has had an emotional impact on him.

Although neither poem is comfortable reading, both 'Mid-Term Break' and 'The Early Purges' made a deep and lasting impression on me and showed me the power poetry can have to recreate intensely personal experiences and the harsh realities of growing up.



Your conclusion should refer back to both of the poems you have selected to use in this answer.

## Past Questions on Studied Poetry – 2001 to 2012

### 2012 Junior Certificate Examination

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. From the poetry you have studied, choose one poem in which the poet uses interesting language to convey powerful thoughts and feelings.

(a) What powerful thoughts and feelings are conveyed by the poet in your chosen poem? Support your answer with reference to the poem. (15)

(b) Explain what you find interesting about the language used by the poet in the poem you have chosen. Support your answer with reference to the poem. (15)

**OR**

2. From the poetry you have studied choose a poet whose work impressed you.

(a) What topics or themes does the poet deal with in the poetry that you have studied? Support your answer with reference to the work of your chosen poet. (15)

(b) Explain why you find the work of your chosen poet impressive. Give reasons for your answer with reference to his or her poetry. (15)

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### 2011 Junior Certificate Examination

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. From the poetry you have studied, identify a poem in which you feel the poet brings a person, a place or a thing vividly to life.

(i) Describe the person, the place or the thing brought vividly to life by the poet. (10)

(ii) In your opinion, what words or phrases used by the poet are the most effective in bringing the person, place or thing to life? Give reasons for your answer. (20)

**OR**

2. Imagine you have been asked by your teacher to choose a poem to read to your class as part of a poetry reading event.

(i) Identify the poem you would choose and explain why you believe your class would enjoy this particular poem. (10)

(ii) Suggest ways to make the reading of your chosen poem as interesting and engaging as possible for your audience. Explain why you believe your suggestions would help to make the poem interesting and engaging for your classmates. You might consider some of the following in your answer: the use of props or costumes or visuals or music, etc. (20)

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**2010 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Choose a poem you have studied in which the poet deals with an important issue.

(a) Explain what the poet had to say about the important issue in the poem. (15)

(b) What insights into the issue did you get from studying this poem? (15)

Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

**OR**

2. Imagine you have to recommend one poem that you have studied for a new publication entitled, *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

Name the poem you would choose and explain why this particular poem would be suitable for inclusion in this collection.

In your answer you may wish to consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc.

(30)

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**2009 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Select a poem you have studied which deals with either war OR peace.

(i) What does the poet say about either war or peace in the poem? Support your answer by reference to the poem. (15)

(ii) What effect did this poem have on you? Explain your answer with reference to the poem. (15)

**OR**

2. Poetry offers us a way to explore places we have never been, foreign lands and different cultures. Choose a poem you have studied which creates such a place.

(i) Describe the place created in this poem.  
Support your answer with reference to the poem. (15)

(ii) Would you like to live there?  
Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

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**2008 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Choose any poem you have studied which created vivid images of a person in your mind.

(a) Describe what images of the person come to mind from your chosen poem.(10)

**AND**

(b) Write about how two of these images contribute to your understanding of the person in this poem.(20)

**OR**

2. Choose any poem you have studied which has interesting sound effects or musical qualities.

Describe these sound effects or musical qualities and explain how they enrich the poem. (30)

**2007 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Choose any poem you have studied which is “wonder-filled” or captures the “whoosh of the imagination”.

(i) Describe what happens in this poem. (15)

(ii) How does the poet fill the poem with wonder or show the imagination at work? (15)

**OR**

2. Choose a poem that you think has an interesting title.

(i) Considering the poem as a whole explain how the title is interesting. (15)

(ii) Name two other features of your chosen poem which appeal to you and explain why they appeal to you. (15)

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**2006 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Take any poem you have studied which deals with wishes *or* thoughts.

(a) What are the poet’s main wishes **OR** thoughts in the poem?

(b) Describe how *either* the imagery *or* the language of the poem contributes to the poet’s expression of his/her thoughts or wishes. Explain your answer with reference to the poem. (30)

**OR**

2. If you could invite a poet of your choice to your school, who would you choose?

(a) Explain your choice of poet with reference to the poet’s work.

(b) Choose your favourite poem by this poet and explain why you like it so much.

Support your answer by reference to the poem. (30)

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**2005 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. From the poetry you have studied choose a poem which is set in an interesting time or place.

(a) Describe this setting. (10)

(b) What does this setting contribute to the effectiveness of the poem?

Give reasons for your answer based on evidence from the poem. (20)

**OR**

2. From the poetry you have studied choose a poem which deals with either Youth or Old Age.

(a) What picture does this poem give of either youth or old age? (10)

(b) What is your personal response to the picture of youth or old age given in the poem?

Support your answer with reference to the poem. (20)

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**2004 Junior Certificate Examination**

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Being in love has always inspired men and women to express their feelings in verse.

Select a love poem you have studied.

(a) Describe what happens in this poem.

(b) How does the lover express her/his feelings?

(c) Would you like to have this poem written for you for St.Valentine’s Day? Give reasons for your answer. (30)

**OR**

2. It is said that every reader brings to the same poem a new life.

Choose a poem you have studied which has a special and very personal meaning for you.

(a) Explain why this poem has a special meaning for you?

Describe how the poet has made it possible for you, the reader, to identify with the message in this poem.

(b) What is there in the language and imagery of the poem that attracts you? (30)

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## 2003 Junior Certificate Examination

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. "Poetry can tell us what human beings are"-Maya Angelou.

(a) Select a poem you have studied which deals with a human being.

Outline the picture you get of this person from the poem. (15)

(b) How has the poet created this picture?

Support your answer by reference to or quotation from the poem you have studied. (15)

**OR**

2. Select a poem you have studied where imagery is very powerful.

(a) What, for you, was the message of this poem? (15)

(b) Describe how the imagery helped to develop this message.

Support your answer by reference to or quotation from the poem you have studied. (15)

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## 2002 Junior Certificate Examination

Answer EITHER 1 OR 2 which follow.

1. Michael Hartnett once said that poetry gave him the power to love and celebrate.

- Select a poem you have studied which celebrates a person, place or thing.
- Give a brief outline of the theme of the poem.
- How is the sense of celebration created?

**OR**

2. From the poetry you have studied choose the poet you liked best of all. Explain why you liked this poet's work and support your answer by reference to his/her poetry.

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## 2001 Junior Certificate Examination

Answer questions 1,2 and 3.

1. What, in your opinion, is the main point of this poem? Support your answer by reference to the poem.

2. Discuss the language **or** rhythm of the poem and say what you think the language or rhythm contributes to the effect of the poem.

3. Did you like the poem? Give reasons for your answer.

## Sample Answers

**2010** Imagine you have to recommend one poem that you have studied for a new publication entitled, *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

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In your answer you may wish to consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc.

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**Note:** This is a good option to choose because the question contains the bones of the plan you could use: '... consider some of the following; the poem's theme, the way the poet uses language, the use of imagery, tone and/or mood, the structure of the poem, etc.'

You should read the question very carefully before you begin planning your answer. Notice the way you are asked to choose a poem which would be suitable for young people. Every point you make about the poem should link back to that aspect of the question.

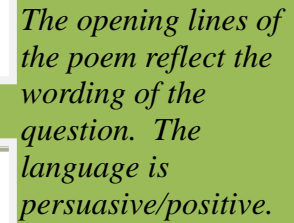
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### **Plan:**

9. Introduction: 2006 survey – favourite poem – good reason – speaks to us all
10. Theme: all young people relate to idea of escape. Yeats wrote poem when young
11. Imagery: creates ideal world. Lovely vision and good for today's young people as it is a natural world he describes. Far from internet etc. Meditation
12. Language: beautiful, rich, evocative. No text-speak! Alliteration etc. Musical qualities
13. Structure: rhyme scheme creates a sense of harmony and peace
14. Tone: wistful and celebratory. Young people relate to former and find hope in latter
15. Overall effect: uplifting, food for thought in today's fast-paced world etc
16. Conclusion: poem deserves its place, would like to see it popular for years to come

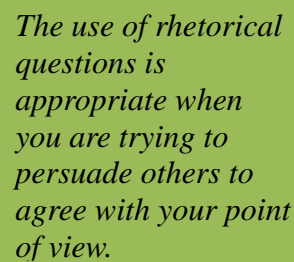
## Sample answer:

When I was asked to choose a poem for inclusion in *A Book of Favourite Poems for Young People of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, I didn't have a moment's hesitation in picking W.B. Yeats' *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*. I am not alone in loving this poem: it topped the poll in an Irish Times survey of the nation's favourite poems in 2006, and deservedly so. While the poem has a universal appeal, I believe that its message is of particular relevance to today's young people, and the beautiful way this message is expressed makes *The Lake Isle* a pleasure to read.



The opening lines of the poem reflect the wording of the question. The language is persuasive/positive.

The theme of the poem is one to which young people can easily relate: after all, who among us has not fervently wished that we could escape our busy

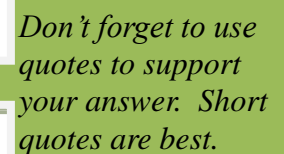


The use of rhetorical questions is appropriate when you are trying to persuade others to agree with your point of view.

classrooms or study halls, and be transported to a place so peaceful that the sounds of nature could be clearly heard? Instead of the shouts of students and the rumble of traffic outside, wouldn't it be wonderful to be somewhere where the buzzing of insects would seem loud, and the whirring flight of tiny songbirds would

make the evening appear 'full of the linnet's wings'?

Yeats' ideal is centred on nature and a simple life where he will live in a 'small cabin... of clay and wattles made', and will need nothing more to sustain him than 'nine bean rows' and 'a hive for the honeybee'. In an overly-materialistic age when young



Don't forget to use quotes to support your answer. Short quotes are best.

people are constantly under pressure to keep up with the latest and greatest developments in technology and so on, I think it is wonderful to read a young man's vision of perfection as being somewhere beautiful, natural and simple. In an era when we are constantly in contact with others on phones, Facebook and Twitter, I think we would do well to consider taking a little time out and perhaps find some time to ourselves to meditate on what is really important in life. We may not have the chance to 'live alone in the bee-loud glade', but perhaps we could switch off for a little while, at least.

The alluring images Yeats' creates in this poem are greatly enhanced by his

skillful use of rich and evocative language. Again, in a time when we are bombarded with abbreviated text-speak and sloppy expression, I feel it is important for young people to see the power that language can have to fuel our imaginations and appeal to our senses. Yeats' vivid descriptions bring the Lake Isle to life for us, and we share his longing for a place where 'midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow'. This is a poem that I would encourage all young people to read aloud because of its wonderful musical qualities. The soft 'l' and 's' sounds in the alliterative 'I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore' perfectly capture the peace and communion with nature that is Yeats' dream.

Be sure to use key literary terms in your poetry answer.

Even the structure of this poem adds to its beauty. The regular ABAB rhyme scheme reflects the harmony and serenity that the poet sees in his beloved Innisfree where 'peace comes dropping slow'.

Short paragraphs are fine, but even in a short paragraph, you can include a quote.

Links between paragraphs make your answer flow.

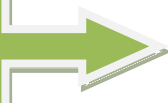
This sense of peace and Yeats' love for the place where he spent some of his happiest hours are a large part of what makes this poem so appropriate for a young audience. Like many of us, Yeats is not completely happy at the time of writing; he has no desire to be on 'the pavements grey', and he is filled with longing for the idyllic Isle of Innisfree. This wistful tone is one which I certainly relate to, and I am sure I'm not alone in this. However, the poem is, above all, a celebration of Yeats' favourite place. His vision sustains him when he is homesick, and this is a very positive message for young people. We too should focus on all that is good in life and when we are feeling stressed or unhappy, perhaps we will be – like Yeats – lucky enough to have somewhere special to meditate on, a place that we too can feel in 'the heart's deep core'.

You must keep referring back to the question. Explain why each point is relevant for today's young people.

Overall, this is an uplifting, inspirational, beautifully crafted poem which appeals to us just as it has to generations of Irish readers. Culturally, this is an important poem and I think it is appropriate for all young Irish people to learn about, and hopefully identify with, our literary heritage.

In conclusion, then, I believe that *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* deserves its place

*Your conclusion should relate back to your introduction.*



in any poetry anthology for today's young people, and I am confident that its place there will ensure that it remains firmly at the top of the list of Ireland's favourite poems.