

# Year 9 – MODERNISM (Term 2)

## 1901-1957

*The Modernists were some extremely edgy lads & ladies, who made a point of offending as many people as they could in order to explore new territory in their work. It isn't surprising that one important journal that published these writers' works was called Blast. Three, two, one, Blast off: these guys meant to clear out the old as quickly & violently as possible to make way for new ways of seeing & being.*

### What is Modernism?

- Concerned with the inner-self & consciousness, defined as a rebellious period
- Rejected popular ideas associated with the Romantic period e.g. a dismissal of idealised views concerning nature & the beauty of being. Also rejected the Victorian strict moral code. BOUNCE BACK – ROMANTICISM AND VICTORIANS.
- Associated with nihilism (the rejection of all religious & moral principles, in the belief that life is meaningless) & questioning of humanity
- Concerned with decline of civilisation due to the bleakness of the industrial revolution, globalisation & the First World War.
- A highly liberating (freeing) & creative period that moved away from previous conventions e.g. modernism experimented with stream of consciousness, satire & irony.

### Profile of a modernist writer- James Joyce.

- Regarded as the modernist novel inventor – one of the most important writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Modernism focuses on something seemingly ordinary & then portrays it as if it were unfamiliar & bizarre
- The novel Ulysses (Joyce's most famous novel) focuses on one day following the protagonist Leopold Bloom (it is 783 pages long!)
- It is narrated as a stream-of-consciousness that allows the reader to trace Bloom's actions & thoughts. Consequently, the style breaks the illusion of reality.

### Profile of a modernist writer- Virginia Woolf

- Virginia Woolf, an English novelist, essayist and critic, believed that the life of the mind was always more fascinating than a person's external behaviours.
- In her life and in her art, she sought to push beyond existing boundaries in search of a deeper truth that lay beneath the surface. She also uses stream of consciousness in her writing.
- At the same time that she was experimenting with language, Woolf was also experimenting with ideas about gender and relationships between the sexes.

### War Poetry

- Between 1914 and 1918, over nine million people died. Entire cities were razed to the ground. Nations crumbled, only to be re-formed amidst political turmoil and enough bad blood to launch another war (World War II, to be precise) a few short decades later.
- Poets such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg and Ivor Gurney have a strong association with World War One. As a group, their poems are often violent and realistic, challenging earlier poetry which communicated a pro-war message. The first-hand experience of war is maybe one reason why there is such a shift in the attitude of poets towards war.

### Modernist form

- Stream of consciousness** - a person's thoughts & conscious reactions to events, seen as a continuous flow. The term was introduced by William James in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890).
- Satire** - the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose & criticise people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of politics & other topical issues.
- Irony** - the expression of meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic (emphasis) effect.
- The unconscious** - Freud's idea about the stormy seas of desire and animal need that are crashing about in the back of your mind *right now*.

### The role of women

- In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century women had no place in politics. The suffragettes began in 1832 & ended in 1918 when parliament passed a bill allowing all women over 30 to vote.
- Women had victories but suffered many hardships during this time, even at the hands of the police who force fed them during their hunger protests. The following people are considered influential to the cause: Emily Pankhurst & Millicent Fawcett.
- Women were presented as dangerous & villainous. The cartoons were particularly vicious.
- The industrial revolution & WW1 provided women with opportunities to prosper & be united for their country. Women, in most cases, were better represented in Literature due to their efforts in wartime.
- Anne Frank's Diary is moving text due to its autobiographical style. This authentic first-hand account of hope at a time of great darkness is truly moving.

### Possible writing purposes

Explain	<p>Q - Explain what you think about.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be factual</li> <li>Give a balanced view (but not contradictory)</li> <li>Use evidence to support your view</li> <li>Use connectives of comparison</li> <li>Write in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> person</li> </ul>
Instruct Advice	<p>Q - Advise the reader of the best way....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be factual</li> <li>Write in present tense</li> <li>Use connectives</li> <li>Use technical terms</li> <li>Write in 2<sup>nd</sup> person</li> </ul>
Argue	<p>Q - Argue the case for/against....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rhetorical questions</li> <li>Emotive language</li> <li>Counter arguments</li> <li>IAMAFORESTER</li> </ul>
Persuade	<p>Q - Persuade the writer of the statement that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IAMAFORESTER</li> <li>One-sided argument</li> </ul>

### Writing a letter

- the use of both addresses & date (top right)
- a formal mode of address e.g. Dear Sir/Madam or a named recipient
- effectively/fluently sequenced paragraphs
- an appropriate mode of signing off: Yours sincerely (if you know the person's name) OR Yours faithfully (if you don't know the person's name).

### Poetry - themes & context

#### Attack - Siegfried Sassoon

Descriptive and confronting poem about the reality of war. Siegfried Sassoon fought in WW1 himself. The poem blends a sense of horror with sympathy for the soldiers.

#### The Soldier - Rupert Brooke

Explores the legacy of men who have died in battle. The speaker informs his audience what to think should he die. He tells them only to consider that a portion of some foreign field will be "*forever England*" as a result of his death.

#### Dulce Et Decorum Est - Wilfred Owen

Possibly the most famous 'war poem', and an example of 'anti-war' poetry. The title is taken from Latin, meaning 'it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country'; a sentiment which Owen's experience in the war had proven to be an 'old lie'.

#### Anthem for Doomed Youth - Wilfred Owen

Horrors of war, death, and suffering are the major themes of this poem. The poet paints a realistic picture of the battleground.

#### In Flanders Fields - John McCrae

Its references to the red poppies that grew over the graves of fallen soldiers resulted in the remembrance poppy becoming one of the world's most recognized memorial symbols for soldiers who have died in conflict.

#### The Falling Leaves - Margaret Postgate-Cole

A tone of both calmness and sadness. The poem demonstrates that people on the home front during the war remained ignorant of what was happening. The leaves represent soldiers on the battlefield who are left to rot - forgotten and lost forever.

#### The Call - Jessie Pope

Written to persuade young men to sign up to fight in WW1. The poet accuses those who did not enlist of being cowards. She gives enlistment and fighting an air of jollity, which seems heartless and unrealistic but this was not uncommon at the beginning of the war.

#### Out of the Blue - Simon Armitage

Inspired by the 9/11 Twin Towers attacks. The narrator is a man who appears in one of the many news clips. The clip shows people high up in the burning tower, clinging to the windows as they escape the burning heat inside. One figure is clearly seen waving a white shirt around.

#### Belfast Confetti - Ciaran Carson

The aftermath of a bomb during the troubles in Northern Ireland. Carson uses the confetti metaphor to depict the nuts and bolts flying over the heads of people, just as confetti does. But this particular confetti causes chaos and confusion.

#### The Yellow Palm - Robert Minhinnick

About a man watching a parade of people down a street during a modern war: a funeral, mourners, ex-soldiers begging for money, the river, a missile and a beggar child. The poet contrasts the violence of war with the picturesque scene. Life goes on even during war.

### Grammar

#### Fronted conjunction

**Definition:** A conjunction that is being used at the start of a sentence such as "*But, you could argue that...*" or "*And it rang and rang.*"

#### Fronted adverbial

**Definition:** An adverbial that comes at the beginning of the sentence. e.g. *After dinner*, she went for a nap.

#### Bounce-back grammar from Y7 & Y8

Noun types, verb types, adjective types, adverb types, articles, simple and continuous tenses, sentence types, clause types, pronoun types, conjunctions, noun phrases

### Comparative conjunctions

**AND** – also, additionally, similarly, as, both, too, comparably, as well as, likewise

**BUT** – however, meanwhile, yet, whilst, although, in contrast, differently, although, though

### Keystone Vocabulary

- Suffrage
- Rebellion
- Stream of consciousness
- Futility
- Conflict

### Writing a biography

- The reader gains an understanding of the person's personality and life.
- Significant moments, people & places are described in detail.
- Language is descriptive to help readers build up a picture of the person's life/experiences.
- Written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person.
- Usually chronological.