**Do now:**

1. **What is free verse?**
2. **What theme do we associate with a sonnet most of all?**
3. **What is the difference between metaphor and simile?**

**Unseen Poetry – analysing poems**

As soon as you get a poem read the title, note any connotations of the words used. Write them on the poem – annotate as you go. Always keep your pen ready in your hand, be an active learner.

Next read the question, does this change your view of the title? Write this down too, next to the notes you have already made.

Read the poem through twice then immediately write your thoughts and feelings. Anything at all, it doesn’t matter if it seems silly or wrong, just note how you feel and the imagery it creates in your mind. Remember these notes are for your eyes only and cannot be a mistake; it is what all the elements of this poem have created in you.

**It is just as valid to say how a poem makes you feel as what it means.**

**Poets do everything on purpose – for effect.**

**All writers use imagery.**

**Key vocabulary – stanza, caesura, enjambment, perspective, free verse, rhyme scheme, repetition**

**Read the following poem and then answer these questions** *(in complete sentences)***:**

1. What is the main idea in this poem?

2. Why might the speaker use plain and simple language in this poem?

3. Why is the word ‘smile’ repeated?

4. What technique is in lines 2, 5 and 7?

5. Why might the speaker address their ex-partner directly instead of telling us the reader about her feelings?

What might flowers represent? Is this a poem about nature perhaps? Not if you read the question first.

Are the flowers here a token of love?

**Flowers**

****Some men never think of it.

The poem is written in free verse from 1st person perspective, but often uses second person when she talks to ‘you’. It seems like the speaker really wants to talk to her ex-lover again. The tone is very calm, and the writer uses simple language to make the flowers (or lack of flowers) the main focus.

You did. You’d come along

And say you nearly bought me flowers

But something had gone wrong

The shop was closed. Or you had doubts

caesura – a stop in the middle of a line of poetry. Makes the reader briefly pause and reflect on the words just read/spoken. Why might the speaker pause and focus on the shop being closed here? The next word is ‘or’…like she didn’t believe that the shop was shut.

The sort that minds like ours

Dream up incessantly. You thought

I might not want your flowers.

It made me smile and hug you then.

The way she says she can only smile now, not hug him, suggests they have broken up. The flowers he ‘nearly brought have lasted’ is humorous…it reminds the reader that flowers, although romantic, do not last forever-much like many relationships.

Now I can only smile.

But, look, the flowers you nearly brought

Have lasted all this while.

Repetition of the verb ‘smile’ suggests that she looks back fondly on the relationship, remembers happy times.

*Wendy Cope*

*incessantly – constantly, without being interrupted*

**Exam question:**

**How does the writer of ‘Flowers’ present the end of a relationship?**

Model answer:

It feels as if the speaker still has fond memories of their ex-partner when she says ‘It made me smile and hug you then./Now I can only smile.’ In other words the poet makes us feel that the speaker might wish the relationship had not ended. More specifically the repetition of the verb ‘smile’ suggests that there were previously good times and implies the speaker is sad that the man in their life has gone.

**Now your turn** (aim for at least two, preferably three paragraphs)…