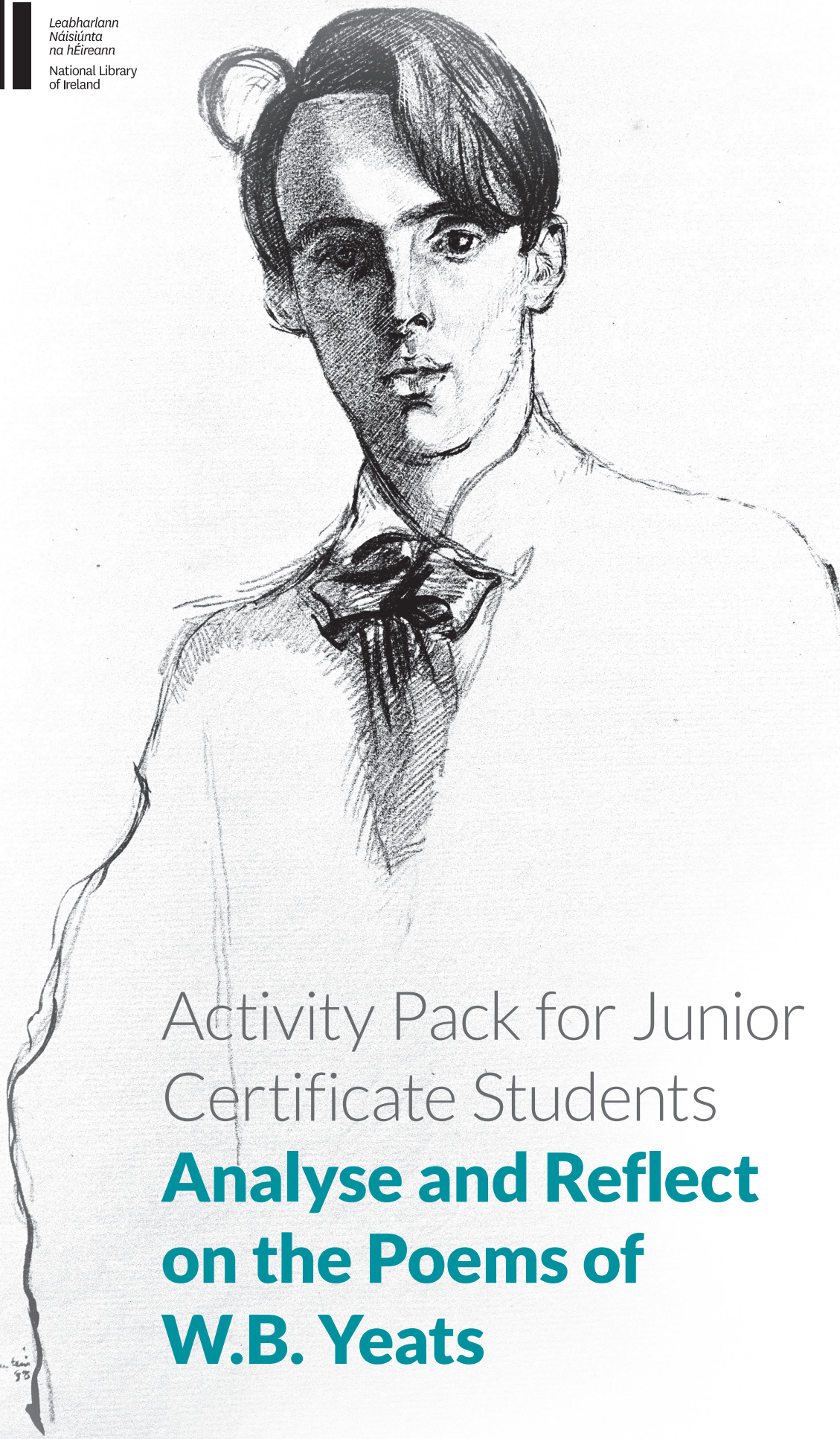


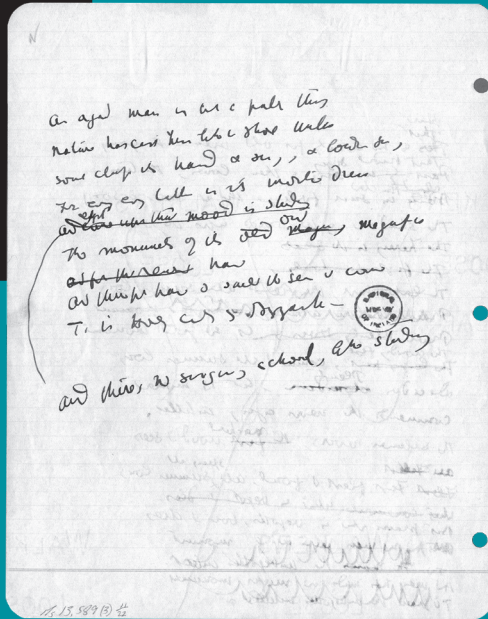


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Activity Pack for Junior
Certificate Students
Analyse and Reflect
on the Poems of
W.B. Yeats

Reading and Responding to Poems from the Exhibition



Manuscript of the poem "Sailing to Byzantium", with edits in Yeats's hand.



Photograph of W.B. Yeats.



Lough Gill in Co. Sligo was the inspiration for Yeats's famous poem "The Lake Isle of Innisfree."

Poem 1

Read the below poem aloud, and think about how it sounds.

“Lake Isle of Innisfree”

— by William Butler Yeats

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.

Reflect on and analyse the poem through the below questions:



1 What is your favourite line (or lines) from this poem and what do you like about the line/s?

Empty dotted-line box for answer 1.

2 What is your favourite image (or images) in the poem and why?

Empty dotted-line box for answer 2.

3 List at least two examples of poetic techniques used in this poem.
(For a refresher on terms relating to poetic techniques, see the end of the worksheet)

Empty dotted-line box for answer 3.

Poem 2

Read the below poem aloud, and think about how it sounds.

“He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven”

— by William Butler Yeats

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

Reflect on and analyse the poem through the below questions:



1 What is your favourite line (or lines) from this poem and what do you like about the line/s?

Empty dotted-line box for answer 1.

2 What is your favourite image (or images) in the poem and why?

Empty dotted-line box for answer 2.

3 List at least two examples of poetic techniques used in this poem.
(For a refresher on terms relating to poetic techniques, see the end of the worksheet)

Empty dotted-line box for answer 3.

Poem 3

Read the below poem aloud, and think about how it sounds.

“Easter, 1916”

— by William Butler Yeats

I have met them at close of day
Coming with vivid faces
From counter or desk among grey
Eighteenth-century houses.
I have passed with a nod of the head
Or polite meaningless words,
Or have lingered awhile and said
Polite meaningless words,
And thought before I had done
Of a mocking tale or a gibe
To please a companion
Around the fire at the club,
Being certain that they and I
But lived where motley is worn:
All changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

That woman’s days were spent
In ignorant good-will,
Her nights in argument



Until her voice grew shrill.
What voice more sweet than hers
When, young and beautiful,
She rode to harriers?
This man had kept a school
And rode our wingèd horse;
This other his helper and friend
Was coming into his force;
He might have won fame in the end,
So sensitive his nature seemed,
So daring and sweet his thought.
This other man I had dreamed
A drunken, vainglorious lout.
He had done most bitter wrong
To some who are near my heart,
Yet I number him in the song;
He, too, has resigned his part
In the casual comedy;
He, too, has been changed in his turn,
Transformed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

Hearts with one purpose alone
Through summer and winter seem
Enchanted to a stone
To trouble the living stream.
The horse that comes from the road,
The rider, the birds that range
From cloud to tumbling cloud,
Minute by minute they change;
A shadow of cloud on the stream
Changes minute by minute;

A horse-hoof slides on the brim,
And a horse plashes within it;
The long-legged moor-hens dive,
And hens to moor-cocks call;
Minute by minute they live:
The stone's in the midst of all.

Too long a sacrifice
Can make a stone of the heart.
O when may it suffice?
That is Heaven's part, our part
To murmur name upon name,
As a mother names her child
When sleep at last has come
On limbs that had run wild.
What is it but nightfall?
No, no, not night but death;
Was it needless death after all?
For England may keep faith
For all that is done and said.
We know their dream; enough
To know they dreamed and are dead;
And what if excess of love
Bewildered them till they died?
I write it out in a verse—
MacDonagh and MacBride
And Connolly and Pearse
Now and in time to be,
Wherever green is worn,
Are changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born.

Reflect on and analyse the poem through the below questions:



1 What is your favourite line (or lines) from this poem and what do you like about the line/s?

Empty dotted-line box for answer 1.

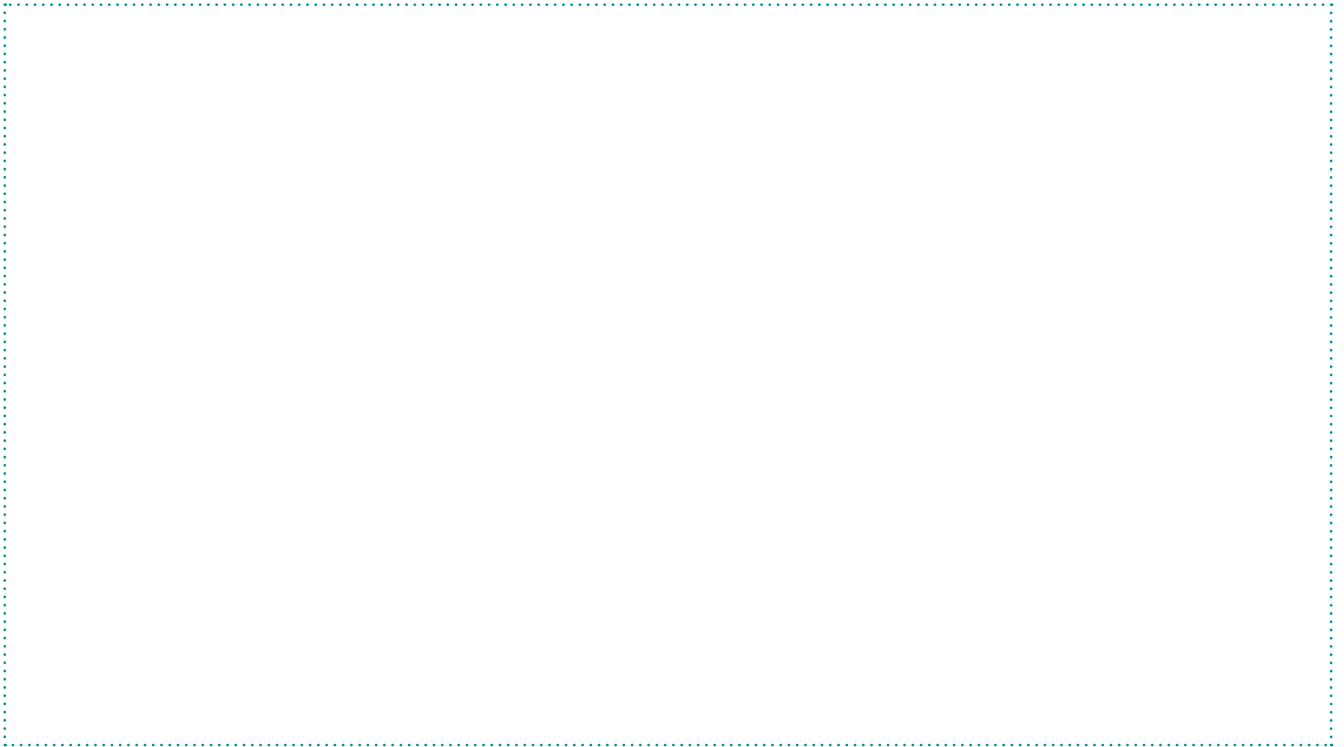
2 What is your favourite image (or images) in the poem and why?

Empty dotted-line box for answer 2.

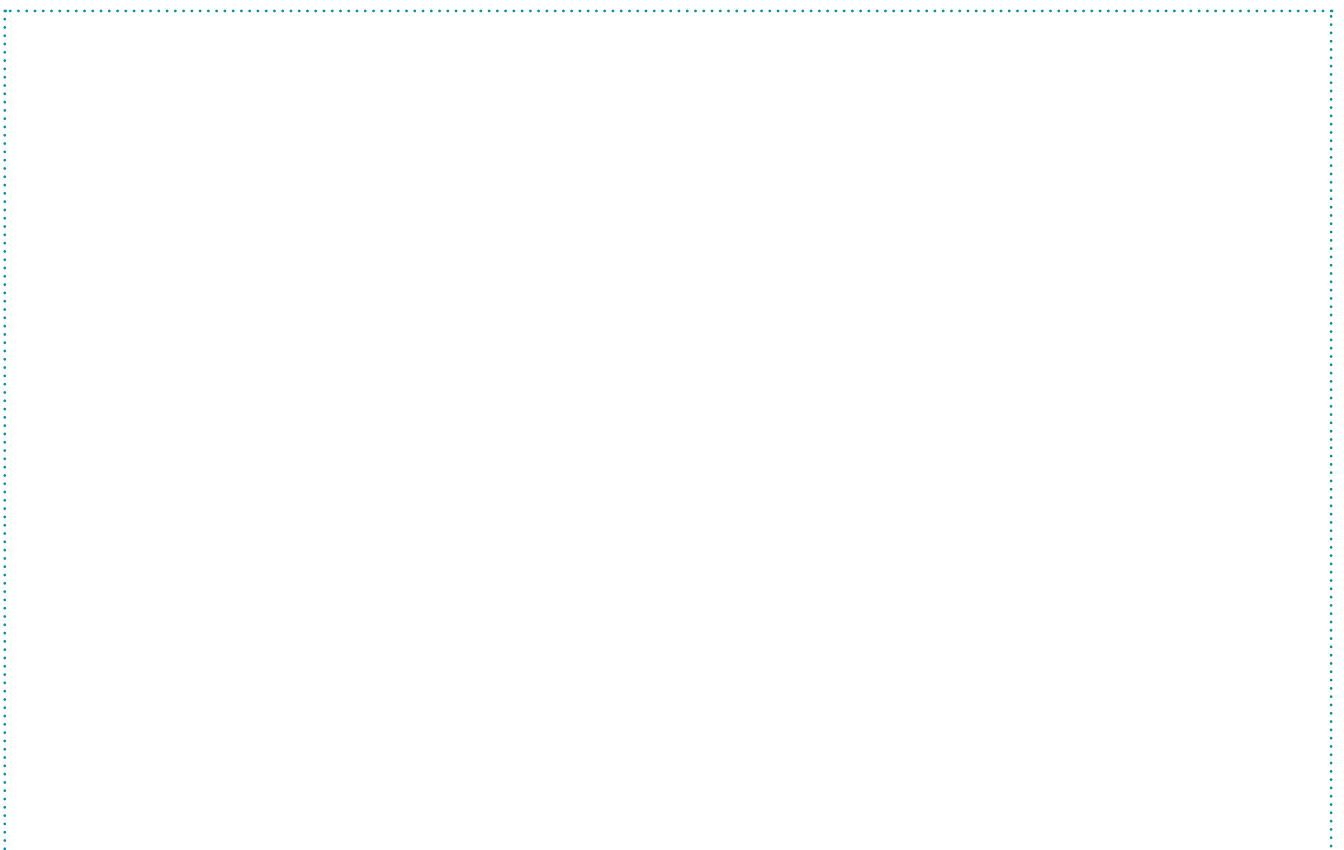
3 List at least two examples of poetic techniques used in this poem.
(For a refresher on terms relating to poetic techniques, see the end of the worksheet)

Empty dotted-line box for answer 3.

4 Yeats often used antinomies, or paradoxes, in his work. Can you find an example in "Easter, 1916"?



5 Yeats's interest in numerology is sometimes apparent in his poems. Do you notice anything about "Easter, 1916" that might be related to this? (Hint- Pay attention to the number of lines in each stanza. The Easter Rising commenced on the 24th of April, 1916.)



Creative Response through Visual Art

Selecting one of your favourite images from the three poems, illustrate an interpretation of an image from one of W.B. Yeats poems below.

3

Taking inspiration from the poems of W.B. Yeats, write your own poem using at least two of the poetic techniques you identified earlier. For example, you could write a poem about:

- A place that you love
- A friend or family member who is dear to you
- A significant event that has taken place during your lifetime

Remember to use your poetic techniques!

A large rectangular area enclosed by a dotted teal border, intended for writing a poem.



When you are finished, perhaps share your poem aloud with your classmates!

4

Poetic Terms

Alliteration:

repetition of consonant sounds

Allusion:

a reference to another text or subject

Assonance:

the effect created by placing words with the same vowel sounds close together

Enjambment:

continuing a sentence across a line break, also known as a run-on-line

Form:

the physical structure of the poem

Image:

An element in a poem that activates the senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell)

Lyrical:

having the musical and rhythmic quality of a song (when referring to poetry)

Metaphor:

an imaginative implied comparison, which does NOT use “like”, “as” or “than”

Onomatopoeia:

words that sound like their meaning

Personification:

when human qualities are applied to inanimate objects

Rhyme:

when words have the same sound pattern

Rhythm:

the movement or beat in a poem

Sibilance:

a type of alliteration in which an ‘s’ sound is repeated, creating a soft sound

Simile:

a comparison using as, like or than

Stanzas:

section of a poem separated from other sections by line spacing

Symbol:

words or images signifying more than they literally represent