

Name: _____

"Dulce et Decorum Est" -by Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,

Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.



On March 18, 1893, Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was born in Shropshire, England. Interested in the arts at a young age, Owen began to experiment with poetry at 17. After failing to gain entrance into the University of London, Owen spent a year as a lay assistant to Reverend Herbert Wigan in 1911 and went on to teach in France at the Berlitz School of English. By 1915, he had become increasingly interested in World War I and enlisted in the Artists' Rifles group.

After training in England, Owen was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He was wounded in combat in 1917 and evacuated to Craiglockhart War Hospital near Edinburgh after being diagnosed with shell shock. There he met another patient, poet Siegfried Sassoon, who served as a mentor and introduced him to well-known literary figures such as Robert Graves and H. G. Wells.

It was at this time Owen wrote many of his most important poems, including "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and "Dulce et Decorum Est." His poetry often graphically illustrated the horrors of warfare, the physical landscapes that surrounded him, and the human body in relation to those landscapes.

Owen rejoined his regiment in Scarborough in June 1918, and in August, he returned to France. He was awarded the Military Cross for bravery at Amiens. He was killed on November 4 of that year while attempting to lead his men across the Sambre-Oise canal at Ors. He was 25 years old.

Source: www.poets.org

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<u>Title</u> (Predict what the poem will be about before you read it.)	
<u>Paraphrase</u> (In your own words, explain what the poem is saying.)	
<u>Literary and Poetic Devices</u> (List what devices are being used in the poem).	
<u>Attitude</u> (What is the author's attitude/tone in the poem?)	
<u>Shift</u> (Where does the poem shift to a resolution or new subject?)	
<u>Theme</u> (Write a theme <u>statement</u> for the poem).	
<u>Title</u> (Revisit the title of the poem after you've read it. What does the title mean to you now?)	

1. Choose ONE of the literary or poetic devices you listed above. Explain why you think the author used that device. What's the purpose of it, and how is it functioning in the poem?
2. How might you connect this poem to "The Sniper"? How is the sniper character similar to the speaker in Owen's poem? Do the texts share a common theme? If so, what is it?
3. Read the short biography under the picture of Wilfred Owen if you haven't already. How has Owen's personal life influenced the poem?

