

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS POEM, THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WERE ADAPTED FROM A 2017 NCS EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER.

'NIGHTSONG: CITY' – Dennis Brutus

1.1 The word, 'restless' suggests a constant mood of unease because of the dangerous environment. The docks are a hive of activity, even at night, and there is continual movement/busyness.

[Award 2 marks only if the **element of danger** resulting in **unease** is identified.] (2)

1.2 The word suggests the staccato-like movement of the police cars as they manoeuvre through the area. This contributes to the image of the police cars' lurking in the streets. It might refer to the number of police cars in the area. The image is very disparaging (of the opinion that something is of little worth/ derogatory) of the police since cockroaches are generally regarded with disgust. (2)

1.3 Violence in the city is compared to a 'bug-infested rag', which implies that it has infused itself into the lives of the people to such an extent that there is no escape. The image suggests the speaker's disgust with the ugly conditions of life in the city. The city has become infected with the disease of violence.

[3 marks for three ideas OR 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.] (3)

1.4 Agree. A song tends to be associated with celebration and a 'nightsong' in particular might be associated with a lullaby. However, this poem deals with the sordid underbelly of life in a city. It focuses on issues of violence, fear and poverty. The poem is actually a lament.

[3 marks for three ideas OR 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.] (3)
[10]