

14 May 2020

Analysing an unseen poem

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS POEM AND THE QUESTIONS WERE TAKEN FROM A 2018 NCS EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER.**

Using the notes that you received yesterday, analyse the unseen poem and answer the questions that follow. You can use colour pens and highlighters to practice this activity.

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

SEED – Paula Meehan

1       The first warm day of spring  
2       and I step out into the garden from the gloom  
3       of a house where hope had died  
4       to tally the storm damage, to seek what may  
5       have survived. And finding some forgotten  
6       lupins I'd sown from seed last autumn  
7       holding in their fingers a raindrop each  
8       like a peace offering, or a promise,  
9       I am suddenly grateful and would  
10      offer a prayer if I believed in God.  
11      But not believing, I bless the power of seed,  
12      its casual, useful persistence,  
13      and bless the power of sun,  
14      its conspiracy with the underground,  
15      and thank my stars the winter's ended.

Glossary: 1

lupins – flowering plants

1.1 Refer to lines 2–4: 'I step out ... the storm damage'.

Explain what these lines convey about the speaker's state of mind. (2)

1.2 Refer to lines 13–14: 'and bless the ... with the underground'.

Suggest why the speaker uses the word 'conspiracy' to describe the relationship between the sun and the soil. (2)

1.3 Refer to lines 5–8: 'And finding some ... or a promise'.

Discuss the effectiveness of the imagery in these lines. (3)

1.4 The speaker identifies with the seed.

With close reference to the poem, critically discuss the validity of this statement. (3)

[10]