

# The field mouse analysis



**ASSIGN  
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? Compare and contrast how the poems use language to convey their thoughts and feelings.

In this essay, I am going to compare and contrast how two poems, *The Field Mouse* by Gillian Clarke and *Dulce et Decorum est* by Wilfred Owen, use language to convey thoughts and feelings. I have chosen these two poems to compare as they are both about the harsh realities of war and mans destructive side. This poem, inspired by the 1990s Bosnian crisis, emphasised the fragility of all life and mans destructive nature. The title of the poem refers to a field mouse which receives a fatal injury during the spring hay-cutting. Gillian Clarke compares the mouse to children, their bones brittle as mouse-ribs , and throughout the poem, there are echoes of conflict, pain, and death as references to the Bosnian war: snare drum, jets, terrible news, killed flowers, agony, Summer in Europe, the field??™s hurt, and many other examples. The title of the poem is an unlikely title for a poem about war and so the subject matter takes its reader by surprise forcing them to look more deeply for the message of mans destructive nature that is being conveyed though the poem. In the first stanza, a traditional British summer harvest scene is created.

Gillian Clarke uses a lot of assonance and internal rhyming words in this verse: summer, drum, hums, end, meadow, terrible, drifting, gift, and there are also more hints of the destructive message at work with the humming jets and radios terrible news. In the second stanza, the destruction is no longer at the edge of the scene but part of the scene itself: the fields hurt, children kneel in long grass, staring at what we have crushed refers literally to the injured field-mouse, but we are reminded of the death-littered streets

and towns of Bosnia and its surrounds, as well as the never-to-be-forgotten battlefields of World Wars I and II. The use of the pronoun we in the last line of that stanza causes the reader to share in some of the guilt. The final stanza leads away from the harvest scene and guilt becomes even more consuming: the field lies bleeding , The wrong that woke from a rumour of pain wont heal, and we cant face the newspapers.

This is a direct reference to the situation in Eastern Europe and how they cannot face the news stories on the radio and newspapers and how bosnia will remain ignorant to the rest of the world. the phrase my neighbour turned stranger refers to the fearful though of their own neighbours turning against them.