

# Poetry of wilfred owen

Profession, Poet



c) In continuous prose (that is, in paragraph form rather than bulleted points or notes), write an account of this poem, showing how the techniques used created the effects that lead to your interpretation of the meaning of the poem.

The effect the poem has on the reader gives rise to feelings about the content. These are enhanced by the techniques used by the author. When the context is understood the meaning becomes clearer.

As a soldier participating in the drama Owen is able to give resonance and believability to his words. Owen concentrates at the beginning of the poem on the effect that war has on young men, making them old before their time in defence of their country. The use of similes in the opening stanza creates a powerful image of the soldiers' pitiful state as they leave the battlefield with the hoots of the shells falling behind them. The use of hyperbole here creates the sound of the shells falling. He then recounts a gas attack creating the urgent need for haste and heightening tension with the use of alliteration and punctuation, "Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!" (Line 9) We are then assaulted with the image of the dying soldier "flung like cattle into the wagon" (Line 18).

The effects of the gas are described with shocking language using alliteration in "watch the white eyes writhing in his face" (Line 19) and simile in "Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud" (Line 23). In lines 25 and 26 Owen makes an appeal to the reader to resist the desire to encourage the young to participate in war, because his experiences are that serving your country in war is not glorious. In conclusion, the evidence would suggest that

throughout the poem Owen is using imagery to paint a horrific picture of what war is actually like. As someone who was there he believes he was well placed to retell its affect on young men who had answered the call to arms. He is recounting his experiences to discourage those at home who wage war, without knowing its affects, and for them not to zealously encourage young men to see this as a glorious opportunity.