

# Year 10 Home Learning



Hello there Year 10. This term you will be studying, in class, poetry and the skills needed for the C1 English Language paper. To support this here are some tasks to help support that learning. Task ONE: Read the extract below. There are two reading questions and a writing task to follow.

The following text is the opening to *The Bell Jar*, a book written in 1963 by Sylvia Plath. It tells the story of Esther Greenwood, a young woman from the suburbs of Boston, who gains a summer internship at a magazine in New York.

1 It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York. I'm stupid about executions. The idea of being electrocuted makes me sick, and that's all there was to read about in the papers - goggle-eyed  
5 headlines staring up at me on every street corner and at the fusty, peanut-smelling mouth of every subway. It had nothing to do with me, but I couldn't help wondering what it would be like, being burned alive all along your nerves.

I thought it must be the worst thing in the world.

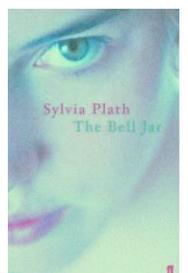
10 New York was bad enough. By nine in the morning the fake, country-wet freshness that somehow seeped in overnight evaporated like the tail end of a sweet dream. Mirage-gray at the bottom of their granite canyons, the hot streets wavered in the sun, the car tops sizzled and glittered, and the dry, cindery dust blew into my eyes and down my  
15 throat.

I kept hearing about the Rosenbergs over the radio and at the office till I couldn't get them out of my mind. It was like the first time I saw a cadaver. For weeks afterward, the cadaver's head - or what there was left of it - floated up behind my eggs and bacon at breakfast and behind  
20 the face of Buddy Willard, who was responsible for my seeing it in the first place, and pretty soon I felt as though I were carrying that cadaver's head around with me on a string, like some black, noseless balloon stinking of vinegar.

25 I knew something was wrong with me that summer, because all I could think about was the Rosenbergs and how stupid I'd been to buy all those uncomfortable, expensive clothes, hanging limp as fish in my closet, and how all the little successes I'd totted up so happily at college fizzled to nothing outside the slick marble and plate-glass fronts along Madison Avenue.

30 I was supposed to be having the time of my life.

I was supposed to be the envy of thousands of other college girls just like me all over America who wanted nothing more than to be tripping about in those same size-seven patent leather shoes I'd bought in Bloomingdale's one lunch hour with a black patent leather belt and  
35 black patent leather pocketbook to match. And when my picture came out in the magazine the twelve of us were working on - drinking martinis in a skimpy, imitation silver-lamébodice stuck on to a big, fat cloud of white tulle, on some Starlight Roof, in the company of several anonymous young men with all-American bone structures hired or loaned for the occasion - everybody would think I must be having a real  
40 whirl.



**BOTH writers feature heavily in the GCSE specification**



Question 1 [Read again the first part of the source, lines 1 to 8. List four things from this part of the source that you learn about the narrator. [4 marks]

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Question 2 Look in detail at this extract from lines 3 to 15. How does the writer use language here to describe New York? [5 marks]

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Question 3

Write a story, or a poem, or even just a vivid description in the first person, as someone who moves to a a very different environment. This might be a child who moves from a big city to the seaside, a mother who has recently moved her entire family across the other side of the world or even here or a young man starting at university. In a city a long way from home. You decide. WE want to see the detail and how your character sees this place from their perspective. Your story title is, 'There is no place like home.'



## Resistance

It's war again: a family  
carries its family out of a pranged house  
under a burning thatch.

The next scene smacks  
of archive newsreel: platforms and trains  
(never again, never again),

toddlers passed  
over heads and shoulders, lifetimes stowed  
in luggage racks.

It's war again: unmistakable smoke  
on the near horizon mistaken  
for thick fog. Fingers crossed.

An old blue tractor  
tows an armoured tank  
into no-man's land.

It's the ceasefire hour: godspeed the columns  
of winter coats and fur-lined hoods,  
the high-wire walk

over buckled bridges  
managing cases and bags,  
balancing west and east - godspeed.

It's war again: the woman in black  
gives sunflower seeds to the soldier, insists  
his marrow will nourish

the national flower. In dreams  
let bullets be birds, let cluster bombs  
burst into flocks.

False news is news  
with the pity  
edited out. It's war again:

an air-raid siren can't fully mute  
the cathedral bells -  
let's call that hope.

*Simon Armitage*

Most of you will have been studying your first poem in the anthology, *The Manhunt*. This is a new poem by the same poet.

- a) How can we tell that this poem is about the current war in Ukraine? Find clues...
- b) Armitage also presents us with very typical images of war in his poem. Chose 2 and write about how they effect the reader.
- c) How does Armitage show that the people and the country are suffering using language?
- d) Why does he repeat the phrase 'it's war again?'
- e) EXT task. Can you be AFLIRT with this poem as if it were an exam poem in your anthology?