**War Poetry – Key Words and analysis**

1. “The Soldier” by R. Brooke
2. “Dulce Et Decorum Est” by W. Owen
3. “The Glory of Women” by S. Sassoon
4. “They” by S. Sassoon
5. “Last Post” by C. A. Duffy

**“The Soldier” by R. Brooke**

From reading the title you can note that it consists of one single word "they" and can suppose that the main characters of this poem are a lot of people who are different from the speaking voice! The personal pronoun underlines the distance between he who speaks and "they". The poem consists of 12 lines where the poet, Siegfried Sassoon, explains the results of a war and the soldiers' emotion.  
The poem is organized into a dialogue where a Bishop talks with some boys who have fought in the First World War. He tells that the boys come back home from war and so they are not the same. In fact they have fought against risking their life.  
The boys answer to the Bishop and they say that they are really different: George lost his legs, Bill lost his eyes, Jim was shot in his lungs and Bert became syphilitic.  
In the end, the Bishop states that the ways of God are strange. in my opinion he wants to underline how difficult our life is.

Before drawing any conclusion the reader must analyze the connotative level. First of all it is important to underline the rhyme scheme: it connects some words like "back" with "attack", "fought" with "bought", "race" with "face", "reply" with "die", "blind" with "find" and "change" with "strange".  
The words underline the semantic field of war, even if there are others words inside the poem like "comrades", "legs" and "syphilitic" or verbs like "lead", "lost" and "served" which recall it.

In addition the poet exploits the sound "S" to remember the soldiers' tenseness and worry at the end of the war.  
You can also note the semantic field of abstract values underlined by the Bishop with words like "Anti-Christ", "honour", "just cause" and "God". The Bishop is a religious man and so he uses a religious language to tell about war: he provides the soldiers a positive consideration of war.

Here there are two points of view about war: the Bishop's point of view is idealistic. He didn't fight and he didn't see what the war really was like. War is a source of moral change for the soldiers because when they come back home, they will have honour and they will be considered heroes.  
You can note this by the use of abstract words, like "cause"," Anti-Christ" and "race".  
In opposition to what the Bishop thinks, the soldiers have a negative consideration about war. They are the ones who fought at the war. As a matter of fact they are beyond hope!  
Why? Because they have lived in war and so they have known that reality as you can see from the description of the soldiers' phisycal conditions. In fact the poet, who explains his point of view through the soldiers' point of view and seems to agree with them.So, in conclusion, the Bishop's point of view relies on opinion, while the soldiers' point of view relies on facts. It is interesting to understand the last line of the poem: "the ways of God are strange". It could be understood as a parody by the soldiers because it seem as if the Bishop used these words like weapons. Maybe he wants to underline the adversities of life but also the presence of God in it.

**“The Glory of Women” by S. Sassoon**

From reading the title you can note that it consists of two important words: glory and women. Glory is an abstract noun that underlines the importance the people give someone. Women underlines the possible main characters of the poem.  
The poem is organized into 12 lines where the poet, Sigfried Sassoon, explains the soldiers' point of view about women's reactions when they fight in war.  
Sassoon wants to underline the ignorance of women in front of the atrocity of war: women love the soldiers when they are heroes, they weep their death, they are moved in front of their tales and they prepares socks ignoring their suffering.  
Considering the connotative level, you must analyze the rhyme scheme: it connects words like "leave" with "believe", "place" with "disgrace", "delight" with "fight", "thrilled" with "killed", "retire" with "fire", "run" with "mud" and "blood" with "son".  
Some of this words uderline the semantic field of war, even if there are a lot of words inside the poem like "heroes", "wounded", "chivarly", "danger", "troops", "horror" and "corpses" which recall it.

Moreover the reader can understand the meaning of words through the use of run-on line in which the logical and grammatical sense continues without a pause into the next line, as you can see from the lines 3 and 4. Here the accusative tone of the soldiers is underlined very well.  
In all the poem, the poet exploits the sound "T" to show the soldiers' "sarcasm" in front of women's behaviour.

It is important to remember the two points of view inside the poem: the soldiers' point of view and the women's point of view .  
The poem seems to consist of a monologue where the soldiers explain all their considerations, but in reality two points of view stand out through their words.  
You can note how the soldiers entertain the experience of war. They know what war is in reality and so they can't stand every positive attitude about it.

Women have a different conception of war: for them, war is an occasion to underline the soldier's honour because they have served their homeland in it.  
The poet seems to be interesting about the monolologue as you can see from the last part of the poem.

**“They” by S. Sassoon**

Just reading the title the reader is attracted by it for 2 reasons: first of all it is composed of just one word: In addition to this the word gives the reader the idea the poem could be about some people who are not ordinary people and seems to create curiosity.

The personal pronoun “They” suggests the idea of distance from the speaking voice.  
Just considering the lay out of the poem, it turns out clear that it is organized into two stanzas which may have specific functions.  
Relevant to consider is the “Bishop tells us” which clearly makes the reader understand the addressee of the poem: the soldiers.  
The Bishop expresses his the idea of war by saying that when they come back from war, they "will not be the same".  
According to the Bishop, war is a positive experience since soldiers fight for a “just cause”.

In other words, in his opinion soldiers should be proud of fighting for a future more "honorable race".  
The real consequences of the war come out of the second stanza and namely in the boys' reply: "we are none of us the same”.  
Reading the lines the reader gets the idea of the real experience of war and he/she understands the war has changed them both physically and in their minds.  
As a matter of fact, some soldiers got injuries and they all suffered psychologically because of the tragic experience.

Thanks to the study of the poem two different ideas of war have came to surface and in conclusion it can be said that the change in the choice of register seems to well point out the vision of war.  
Last but not least, the poem turns out ironic and it seems to criticize people who conceive of war as something related to honor without considering the realistic dimension of war.

**Key words**

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|  | War | Women |
| ***“The Soldier”***  *by R. Brooke* | Celebration, dreams,  dust , heart, Homeland |  |
| “***Dulce Et Decorum Est”***  *by W. Owen* | Blood, Mud, , Nightmare, dreams, sacrifice |  |
| ***“The Glory Of Women”***  *by S. Sassoon* | Dirt, Danger, dreaming, Mud, Blood | Superficiality, Yearning, Veneration, Naivety, Glory |
| ***“They”***  *by S. Sassoon* | Death , Horror, Blood, Death, honourable |  |
| ***“Last Post”***  *by C.A. Duffy* | Blood, Mud, Death, Deprivation, poetry |  |