**Scottish Text Sample Questions**

Below are a list of general questions that can be used with the Duffy poems. Be aware that, due to their general nature, some question may not be suitable for all poems.

**Question on the title/opening of the poem**

1. Analyse the words in the first line. What is Duffy trying to tell the reader?
2. How do the first two lines highlight the central concerns of the poem?
3. How are these concerns developed in the rest of Stanza 1?
4. Explain why the first few lines are effective as an opening to the poem.
5. Identify a key theme of the poem. Show how the poetic techniques used in the first stanza introduce the theme.
6. Explain how the first few lines establish the speaker’s feelings.
7. Explain how Duffy has shown the impact of the events in the first stanza on the speaker of the poem.

**Questions on the middle of the poem**

1. Choose any phrase/line from the poem and explain fully what the poet means.
2. Analyse one poetic technique and explain what the author is trying to convey.
3. Identify the speaker’s attitude at one point in the poem. Explain how the poet conveys that attitude.
4. Choose one event in the poem. Explain how and why the author highlights this event.
5. How does the author develop the main theme of the poem in the middle section?
6. Explain how the author creates the mood in the poem.
7. Explain how the author creates the atmosphere in the poem.
8. Explain how the author creates the tone of the poem.
9. Explain how the author creates a change in the mood/atmosphere/tone in the poem.
10. Analyse how the author uses a specific poetic technique to evoke a specific feeling in the reader.
11. Identify two themes and explain how each is clarified through poetic techniques.
12. How does the poets use of structure help to reinforce what she is saying?
13. Analyse the author’s use of a metaphor.
14. Analyse the author’s use of a simile.
15. Analyse the use of sound and its effect.
16. Choose one phrase or line and explain how it shows the speaker’s feelings.
17. Choose and analyse one poetic technique. What does the author achieve by using this techniques?
18. Explain how the author’s use of symbolism develops the central concerns of the poem.
19. How does the author use imagery to show the speakers thoughts on a specific topic?
20. Choose one dramatic moment in the poem and explain how the author creates the tension.
21. Analyse the poet’s use of contrast at any point in the poem.
22. Explain the impression the poet creates at any point in the poem.
23. Identify and explain a turning point in the poem.
24. Explain how the author links any two stanzas.
25. Analyse the way in which the author has moved away from the ideas presented at the start of the poem.

**Questions on the end of the poem**

1. Referring to ideas and/or language, explain how the final stanza is an effective conclusion.
2. Referring to ideas and/or language, explain how the final sentence is an effective conclusion.
3. Referring to ideas and/or language, explain how the final line is an effective conclusion.
4. Explain the impression the reader is left with in the final lines of the poem.
5. Analyse the differences between the start of the poem and final stanza.
6. Analyse the similarities between last stanza and other stanzas of the poem.
7. How does the final line create an impact on the reader?

**Comparison questions**

1. By referring to this poem and at least one other, show how Duffy makes use of a persona in her poems.
2. Show how the speaker of this poem is significantly different to the speaker of at least one other poem by Carol Ann Duffy.
3. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how the importance of any one theme exemplified.
4. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how the poet uses similar structural techniques in her poetry.
5. Discuss the similar poetic techniques Duffy uses in this poem and at least one other poem you have studied.
6. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how the poet creates shocking or unusual imagery in her poems.
7. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how the poet uses her poetry to explore deeper things than the basic events in the poem.
8. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how the poet creates strong female voices in her poems.
9. Show how Duffy portrays similar ideas in this poem and at least one other poem you have studied.
10. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, explore how the poet develops the theme of Love in her poetry.
11. Discuss how Duffy portrays instability in this poem and at least one other you have studied.
12. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, explore how the poet develops the theme of Loss in her poetry.
13. Outline how Duffy uses an unexpected or surprise ending in this poem and at least one other poem you have studied.
14. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, explain how the poet explores the idea of pain and suffering in her poetry.
15. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how the poet explores emotion in her poems.
16. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how Duffy uses contrast to highlight the central concerns of her poems.
17. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, discuss how Duffy uses contrast to highlight the main concerns.
18. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how effectively she explores the joys and sorrows of a close relationship.
19. By referring to this poem and at least one other by Carol Ann Duffy, show how effectively she uses the idea of reflection to convey the central concerns.