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## Year 8 to 9 Poetry Passport to Success

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Congratulations you survived Year 8 English!

Now to prepare you for Year 9. As part of your GCSEs, you will have to study and learn an anthology of poems. In this booklet are three, taken from the GCSE anthology.

Tasks:

1. Read the poem!
2. Annotate the poem – use the SMILE sheet to help you. You can also do some research into the poem, if you struggle to understand it.
3. Answer the questions on the SMILE sheet for each poem,

OR

Write your own, original response to the following question: How does the speaker in the poem present their thoughts and feelings?

4. Write a poem on a similar topic or in a similar style of each poem.
5. Enjoy!



## SMILE, it's POETRY

**S.M.I.L.E.** is a good Acronym to help you remember what to look for when investigating poetry.

It stands for:

Structure

Meaning

Imagery

Language

Effect



**S - STRUCTURE:** How is this piece organised?

(How many stanzas/verses)

How is the idea developed?

(what words or phrases give the images or theme emphasis or clarity)

What is the structure?

(line length/rhyme scheme? Is there any rhythm/repetition/enjambment?)

**M - Meaning:** What is the poem about?

Does it have a message?

What is the poet discussing?

Is there an overall theme and idea in the poem?



**I - IMAGERY:** What pictures do you get in your mind when you read the poem?

Does the poem contain similes/metaphors or personification?

Why do you think the poet has included these images in the poem?

**L - LANGUAGE:** what words has the poet used to create an image?

Are there any complicated words?

Is the language simple to understand?

Which words and phrases create the images? (Use quotations to prove your point).

**E - EFFECT:** What is the effect of the poem?

What does the poem make you feel/think about?

What opinion does it show about the subject?

What is the poet trying to say about their subject?

# Relationships



## 1st Date – She

I said I liked classical music.  
It wasn't exactly a lie.  
I hoped he would get the impression  
That my brow was acceptably high.

5 I said I liked classical music.  
I mentioned Vivaldi and Bach.  
And he asked me along to this concert.  
Here we are, sitting in the half-dark.

I was thrilled to be asked to the concert.  
10 I couldn't care less what they play  
But I'm trying my hardest to listen  
So I'll have something clever to say.

When I glance at his face it's a picture  
Of rapt concentration. I see  
15 He is totally into this music  
And quite undistracted by me.

## 1st Date – He

She said she liked classical music.  
I implied I was keen on it too.  
Though I don't often go to a concert,  
It wasn't entirely untrue.

5 I looked for a suitable concert  
And here we are, on our first date.  
The traffic was dreadful this evening  
And I arrived ten minutes late.

So we haven't had much time for talking  
10 And I'm a bit nervous. I see  
She is totally lost in the music  
And quite undistracted by me.

In that dress she is very attractive –  
The neckline can't fail to intrigue.  
15 I mustn't appear too besotted.  
Perhaps she is out of my league.

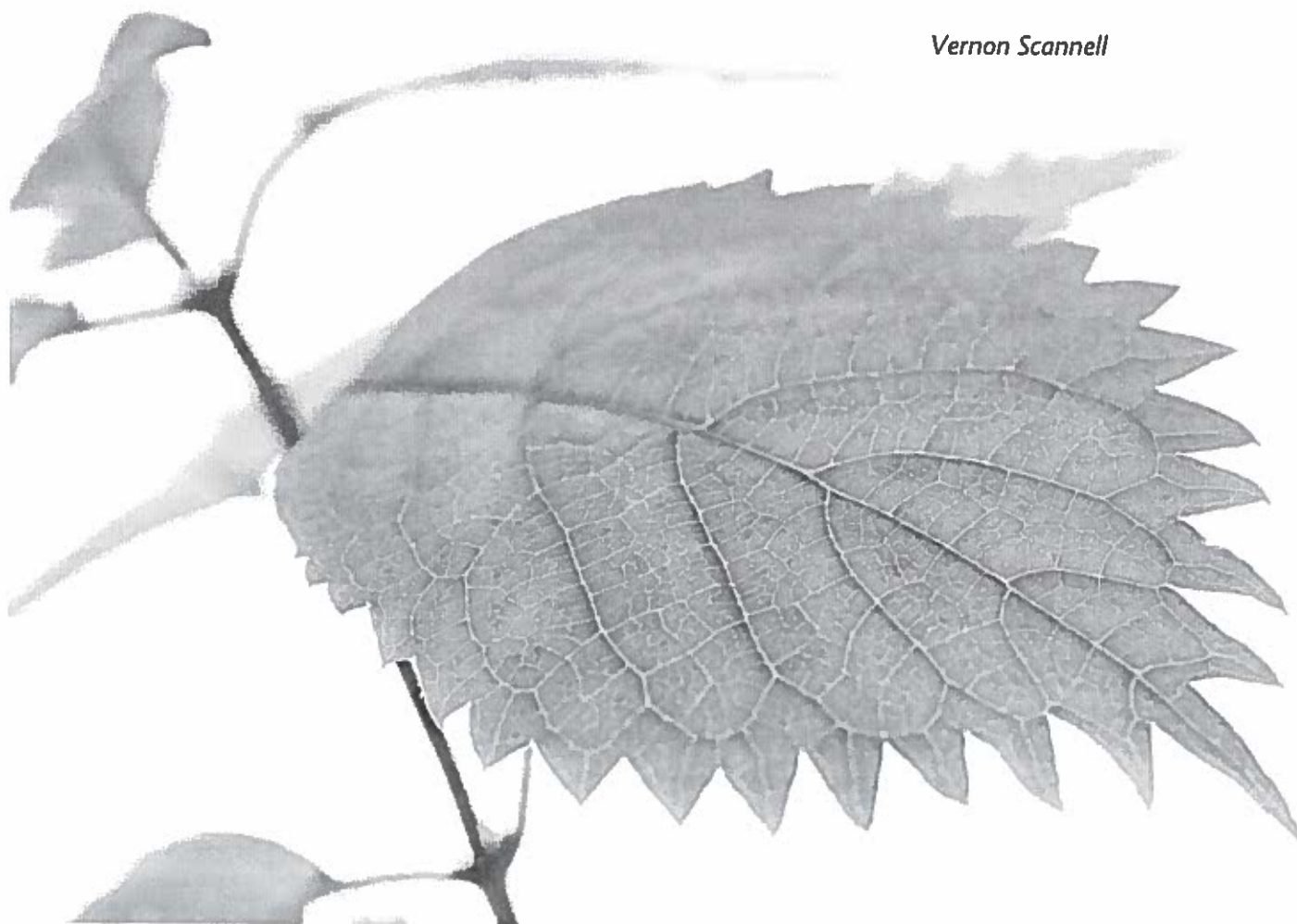
Where are we? I glance at the programme  
But I've put my glasses away.  
I'd better start paying attention  
20 Or else I'll have nothing to say.

*Wendy Cope*

## Nettles

My son aged three fell in the nettle bed.  
'Bed' seemed a curious name for those green spears,  
That regiment of spite behind the shed:  
It was no place for rest. With sobs and tears  
5 The boy came seeking comfort and I saw  
White blisters beaded on his tender skin.  
We soothed him till his pain was not so raw.  
At last he offered us a watery grin,  
And then I took my billhook, honed the blade  
10 And went outside and slashed in fury with it  
Till not a nettle in that fierce parade  
Stood upright any more. And then I lit  
A funeral pyre to burn the fallen dead,  
But in two weeks the busy sun and rain  
15 Had called up tall recruits behind the shed:  
My son would often feel sharp wounds again.

*Vernon Scannell*





## Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan

They sent me a salwar kameez  
peacock-blue,  
and another  
glistening like an orange split open,  
5 embossed slippers, gold and black  
points curling.  
Candy-striped glass bangles  
snapped, drew blood.  
Like at school, fashions changed  
10 in Pakistan –  
the salwar bottoms were broad and stiff,  
then narrow.  
My aunts chose an apple-green sari,  
silver-bordered  
15 for my teens.  
I tried each satin-silken top –  
was alien in the sitting-room.  
I could never be as lovely  
as those clothes –  
20 I longed  
for denim and corduroy.  
My costume clung to me  
and I was aflame,  
I couldn't rise up out of its fire,  
25 half-English,  
unlike Aunt Jamila.  
I wanted my parents' camel-skin lamp –  
switching it on in my bedroom,  
to consider the cruelty  
30 and the transformation  
from camel to shade,  
marvel at the colours  
like stained glass.  
My mother cherished her jewellery –

35 Indian gold, dangling, filigree.  
But it was stolen from our car.  
The presents were radiant in my wardrobe.  
My aunts requested cardigans  
from Marks and Spencers.  
40 My salwar kameez  
didn't impress the schoolfriend  
who sat on my bed, asked to see  
my weekend clothes.  
But often I admired the mirror-work,  
45 tried to glimpse myself  
in the miniature  
glass circles, recall the story  
how the three of us  
sailed to England.  
50 Prickly heat had me screaming on the way.  
I ended up in a cot  
in my English grandmother's dining-room,  
found myself alone,  
playing with a tin boat.  
55 I pictured my birthplace  
from fifties' photographs.  
When I was older  
there was conflict, a fractured land  
throbbing through newsprint.  
60 Sometimes I saw Lahore –  
my aunts in shaded rooms,  
screened from male visitors,  
sorting presents,  
wrapping them in tissue.  
65 Or there were beggars, sweeper-girls  
and I was there –  
of no fixed nationality,  
staring through fretwork  
at the Shalimar Gardens.

Moniza Alvi