Notes for teacher

It is worth getting the following extracts printed on card and laminated (enough for each group of three/four students to have one each), as they can be used for several different tasks.

For example ...

• to make links between openings on the grounds of theme, speaker, tense – whatever students notice. There is a PPT with instructions (‘Comparing texts’) that can be used for one or several lessons as part of this bundle.

• to note how narrative functions in both prose and poetry and to spark a discussion of the differences between prose and poetry.

• to look for other extracts written by the same author/poet, so that students begin to recognise the characteristics of their author/poet. The ones I’m doing are Tennyson and Jane Austen, with Browning as the other poetry text, but if you are a Teachit member and can access the Word documents, you could easily tweak this to add your own examples of your chosen author/poet.

• to discuss and recognise different types of opening – see opening fill-in sheet on back page.

Set texts extracts

Tennyson – 9, 11, 15, 19
Jane Austen – 20

Other extracts by the same author/poets

Tennyson – 21, 22, 26, 27
Jane Austen – 16, 24, 28, 30
Browning – 23, 29
<p>| 1. | My wife for six months now in sinister Tones has muttered incessantly about divorce, And, since of the woman I am fond, this dark chatter Is painful as well as a bit monotonous. |
| 2. | I would they were not mine, These thoughts that course within me. Would someone else was governed thus By the hot hand of chance |
| 3. | Turning and turning in the widening gyre The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world … |
| 4. | The trees are in their autumn beauty, The woodland paths are dry, Under the October twilight the water Mirrors a still sky; |
| 5. | The sunlight on the garden Hardens and grows cold, We cannot cage the minute Within its net of gold … |
| 6. | Why should I let the toad ‘work’ Squat on my life? Can’t I use my wit as a pitchfork And drive the brute off? |
| 7. | In Xanadu did Kubla Khan A stately pleasure-dome decree: Where Alph, the sacred river, ran Through caverns measureless to man Down to a sunless sea. |
| 8. | Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth, And danced the skies on laughter silvered wings; Sunward I’ve climbed and joined the tumbling mirth Of sun-split clouds – |
| 9. | On either side the river lie Long fields of barley and of rye, That clothe the world and meet the sky; And thro’ the field the road runs by To many towered Camelot; |
| 10. | It was late September, I’d just poured a glass of wine, begun to unwind, while the vegetables cooked. The kitchen filled with the smell of itself, relaxed, its steamy breath gently blanching the windows. |</p>
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| **11.** | ‘Courage!’ he said, and pointed towards the land,  
‘This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon.’  
In the afternoon they came into a land  
In which it seemed always afternoon. |
| **12.** | I thought I’d been to Africa.  
I told my class I had.  
Early Bird, our teacher, stood me in front of the British flag – |
| **13.** | The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,  
The vapours weep their burden to the ground,  
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,  
And after many a summer dies the swain. |
| **14.** | It was roses, roses, all the way,  
With Myrtle mixed in my path like mad:  
the house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,  
The church-spires flamed, |
| **15.** | Like most people I lived for a long time  
with my mother and father.  
My father liked to watch the wrestling,  
my mother liked to wrestle;  
it didn’t matter what. |
| **16.** | Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever and rich, with a  
comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some  
of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty- 
one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her. |
| **17.** | Now what I what is, Facts.  
Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts.  
Facts alone are wanted in life. |
| **18.** | We slept in what had once been the gymnasium.  
The floor was of varnished wood, with stripes and circles  
painted on it,  
for the games that were formerly played there; |
| **19.** | With blackest moss the flower-pots  
Were thickly crusted, one and all:  
The rusted nails fell from the knots  
That held the pear to the gable-wall |
| **20.** | It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in  
possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. |
21. The plain was grassy, wild and bare,  
Wide, wild, and open to the air,  
While had built up everywhere  
An under-roof of doleful gray.

22. Below the thunders of the upper deep;  
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,  
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep  
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee  
About his shadowy sides: above him swell  
Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;

23. My love, this is the bitterest, that thou—
Who art all truth, and who dost love me now
As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks to say—
Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love me still
A whole long life through, had but love its will.
Would death that leads me from thee brook delay

24. Sir Walter Elliot, of Kellynch Hall, in Somersetshire, was a man who, for his own amusement, never took up any book but the Baronetage; there he found occupation for an idle hour, and consolation in a distressed one; there his faculties were roused into admiration and respect, by contemplating the limited remnant of the earliest patents; there any unwelcome sensations, arising from domestic affairs changed naturally into pity and contempt as he turned over the almost endless creations of the last century; and there, if every other leaf were powerless, he could read his own history with an interest which never failed.

25. My godmother lived in a handsome house in the clean and ancient town of Bretton. Her husband's family had been residents there for generations, and bore, indeed, the name of their birthplace — Bretton of Bretton: whether by coincidence, or because some remote ancestor had been a personage of sufficient importance to leave his name to his neighbourhood, I know not.

26. Airy, fairy Lilian,  
Flitting, fairy Lilian,  
When I ask her if she love me,  
Claps her tiny hands above me,  
Laughing all she can;  
She'll not tell me if she love me,  
Cruel little Lilian.

27. The winds, as at their hour of birth,  
Leaning upon the ridged sea,  
Breathed low around the rolling earth  
With mellow preludes, 'We are free.'

28. No-one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy would have supposed her born to be a heroine. Her situation in life, the character of her father and mother, her own person and disposition, were all equally against her.

29. That was I, you heard last night,  
When there rose no moon at all,  
Nor, to pierce the strained and tight  
Tent of heaven, a planet so small:  
Life was dead and so was light.

30. The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance. The late owner of this estate was a single man, who lived to a very advanced age, and who, for many years of his life, had a constant companion and housekeeper in his sister.
Prose versus poetry

The difference between prose and poetry has been described* as like the difference between walking and dancing – each has many different forms (e.g. stalking, pacing, strolling, striding, ballet, jig, jazz, waltz) and some might even be very similar to one another (like skipping along), but the essential difference is that walking goes somewhere (it has a precise object/intention), whereas dancing is contained within a given space, using movement for a reason other than locomotion. Likewise, ‘Poetry implies a decision to change the function of language’ (Paul Valéry, 1957). Prose has a message and it is the message you remember. In poetry, the sound of the words and the images they create are as important as any message there might be: the impression is the point.

* by Malherbe, quoted by Racan, quoted by Paul Valéry in Remarks on Poetry

Our approach to a poem must be less continuously linear than to a story. The very presentation signals this ... Basically, the reader of a story wants to know what will happen next and how it will end. By contrast, the infinite variety of ways in which poems are presented indicates different emphases where the sense of space is often part of the reader’s response. The reader of a poem wants to move about within it, discovering what it means to him and enjoying the way it makes that meaning.

* by Geoff Fox and Peter Benton, 1985, quoted in English and Media Centre Strategies for teaching poetry, Nov. 2008

- A narrative is a communication; hence, it presupposes two parties, a sender and a receiver. (Seymour Chatman, 1978)

- The ‘first-person’ narrative lends itself better than any other to anticipation, by the very fact of its avowedly retrospective character, which authorizes the narrator to allude (suggest(point to) the future and in particular, his present situation. (Gerard Genette)

- (own thoughts) ...
## Openings

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<td>Describe the setting</td>
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<td>Establish the tone</td>
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<td>Address the reader directly</td>
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<td>Establish the subject</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start a story</td>
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<tr>
<td>Launch into the middle of a story</td>
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<td>Introduce/describe the characters</td>
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<td>Hint at what is to come</td>
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<td>Establish the voice</td>
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<td>Provide a frame to the rest of the text</td>
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<td>Establish a moral message</td>
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