

LITERATURE – 3B

START THINKING ...

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- When you are sad, what do you do to try to cheer yourself up?
- How do you feel when other people are upset?
- Do you prefer to hide your emotions or show them? Why?

POEMS

(1850–1919) Ella Wheeler Wilcox

I Told You

- I told you the winter would go, love,
I told you the winter would go,
That he'd flee in shame when the south wind came,
And you smiled when I told you so.
- 5 You said the blustering fellow
Would never **yield** to a breeze,
That his cold, icy breath had frozen to death
The flowers, the birds, and trees.
- And I told you the snow would melt, love,
10 In the passionate glance o' the sun;
And the leaves o' the trees, and the flowers and bees,
Would come back again, one by one.
That the great, gray clouds would vanish,
And the sky turn tender and blue;
- 15 And the sweet birds would sing, and talk of the spring
And, love, it has all come true.
- I told you that **sorrow** would fade, love,
And you would forget half your pain;
That the sweet bird of song would waken ere long,
- 20 And sing in your bosom again;
That hope would **creep** out of the shadows,
And back to its nest in your heart,
And gladness would come, and find its old home,
And that sorrow at length would depart.
- 25 I told you that **grief** seldom killed, love,
Though the heart might seem dead for awhile.
But the world is so bright, and full of warm light
That 'twould waken at length, in its smile.
Ah, love! was I not a true **prophet**?
- 30 There's a sweet happy smile on your face;
Your sadness has flown – the snow-drift is gone,
And the buttercups bloom in its place.

Solitude

- Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone;
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
- 5 Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost in the air;
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.
- Rejoice**, and men will seek you;
10 Grieve, and they turn and go;
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your **woe**.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all, –
- 15 There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.
Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
- 20 But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a long and lordly train,
But one by one we must all **file** on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

Glossary

- 1 _____ a person who is believed to have a special power that allows them to say what will happen in the future
- 2 _____ to walk in a line, one behind another
- 3 _____ a feeling of great sadness
- 4 _____ to give up the control of or responsibility for something, often because you have been forced to
- 5 _____ extreme sadness
- 6 _____ very great sadness, especially at the death of someone
- 7 _____ cry tears
- 8 _____ to move slowly, quietly, and carefully, usually in order to avoid being noticed
- 9 _____ to eat a large amount of food
- 10 _____ to feel or show great happiness about something

- 2 **▶▶ 3B.1** Read the poems and listen.
- 3 Match the words in bold to the definitions to form a glossary.

4 Read the poems again. Circle the correct answer.

- In the first poem, *winter / spring* represents optimism.
- The person the poet is speaking to *does / doesn't* believe her at first.
- The two people feel *happier / sadder* at the end of the first poem.
- According to the second poem, happy people are *popular / lost*.
- Dying is something we must do *alone / with friends*.

5 **READ BETWEEN THE LINES** Answer the questions. Give reasons and examples from the text.

- Why do you think the person the poet is talking to in *I Told You* is sad? What life event have they experienced?
- In *Solitude* the first two lines of each verse begin with opposites. What are they and why are they used?
- In what way are the poems similar?

6 **VOCABULARY** Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words from the glossary.

- It's normal to experience _____ and sorrow when someone we know dies.
- Tigers can _____ up on other animals without making a noise.
- It's important to _____ through passport control one at a time at airports.
- When pop bands break up, fans often _____.
- People _____ when good things happen.
- At celebrations like weddings, people _____ on special food.

7 **ROLE PLAY** Work in groups of two. Student A is a journalist and Student B is Ella Wheeler Wilcox. Read the beginning of the conversation and then continue it with your own ideas.

JOURNALIST Your poem, *I Told You*, made me cry. What were you thinking about when you wrote it?

WHEELER WILCOX I was thinking about how I felt when someone told me their relative had died. I was very sad.

JOURNALIST What was your aim when you were writing the poem? Did you want to ...

8 **LISTENING** **▶▶ 3B.2** Listen to an extract in which two students, Charles and Jane, discuss the two poems. Write A (*I Told You*) or B (*Solitude*).

- Charles's favourite poem is .
- In the poet is talking to a larger audience.
- Charles talks about imagery in .
- Charles says that is negative at the end.

9 **LISTENING** **▶▶ 3B.2** Listen again. Complete the sentences.

- Jane says that both poems are about looking on the _____ side.
- Solitude* cheers you up and gives _____.
- In *I Told You*, the negative symbols are wind, snow, _____ and ice.
- The final _____ of *Solitude* is that we should live our lives positively.
- _____ wants to know what the poet's inspiration was.

THiNK STYLE

Personification

Personification is used in poetry to give something that isn't human (objects, emotions, nature, animals, etc.) human characteristics. Here are some simple examples: *The river destroyed everything in its path. The traffic crawled along slowly. Time flies when you're having fun.*

10 Find examples of personification in *I Told You* and *Solitude*. How are they effective?

WRITING A poem

11 **WRITING** Write a short poem about a time when you were happy (a holiday, a birthday, a celebration, etc.).

- Think about how many verses you would like to include. Make sure each verse has a slightly different theme.
- Try to use personification, symbols and imagery. What symbols are positive?
- Make sure there's a similarity in each verse. For example, the first or last line could be similar, or a word or expression could be included in each verse.
- Include a 'twist' or a surprise at the end.