

Lesson 8 – The Manhunt

Simon Armitage

What do you think this poem is about?

The Manhunt - Context

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGX4vwXvek4>

Discuss the title and the clip and come up with a response to the question.

Learning Outcomes

1. You will be able to explain what the poem is about.
2. You will be able to comment on the structure of the poem
3. You will be able to comment on the themes and ideas in the poem
4. You will be able to explore the ways the poet uses language
5. You will begin to make comparisons between the poems

What do you learn about this poem from the poet?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtDiOsQsnRw>

About?

Themes & ideas?

Context?

Language?

Structure?

What is it about?

- *The Manhunt* is written from the perspective of the _____ of a soldier who has sustained serious _____ at war and has returned home. The poem explores the _____ and _____ effects of living with injuries _____ when on active _____ in the armed forces.
- Mental - Wife - sustained
- injuries - physical - service

Themes and Ideas

1. What does the poem say about war?
2. What does the poem say about relationships & love?

Use this slide to help you add to your ideas

Attitudes, themes and ideas

The Manhunt is about the patience and care of love. The wife in the poem is methodical and thorough in her search, exploring her husband's injured body with love and care.

The poem also explores the **cost of war on those serving in the armed forces**. The man has a "grazed heart", perhaps literally from an injury caused by "the metal beneath his chest", but also metaphorically. He is unable to connect with his wife, unwilling to speak of his experiences, and so their loving relationship is affected. The image of the metal bullet still inside him as a "foetus" suggests that, like having a baby, the couple's relationship will be forever changed by what he has gone through.

Lines 23 and 24 present the metaphor of "a sweating, unexploded mine buried deep in his mind". The source of the problem is not physical but mental, and threatens to cause problems at any time. The importance of the wife's care and delicacy is highlighted by her discovery of this problem.

The poem is not about judging the rights and wrongs of war, but the impact of war on one particular relationship. This is made clear in the final line of the poem: "Then, and only then, did I come close". Her search is not fully successful, she only comes "close", and only after she realises that her husband's problems lie as much in memories of his experiences as they do in his physical scars.

Language



This poem has been very carefully crafted.

1. Underline the words/phrases in the poem that seem unusual or seem to be have been very carefully chosen.
2. Can you explain why you think Armitage has made these choices?

Structure

Using your knowledge of structure, what do you notice about this poem?

- Rhyme scheme?
- Stanzas?
- Regular/irregular?
- EFFECT????????

Overview

- How would you sum up what this poem is about.
- Complete the following:
In this poem Armitage.....

Plenary

- Make sure all of the poems are placed in your themes table.