**‘Dulce et Decorum Est’**

Read the poem and type your responses directly into this document, then email it to me:

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**Wilfred Owen**

**Dulce et Decorum Est**

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of disappointed shells that dropped behind.  
  
GAS! Gas! Quick, boys!-- An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And floundering like a man in fire or lime.--  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.  
  
In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.  
  
If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.

PTO

Consider the message that the poem gives about war by finding lines from the poem that go with the following ideas (they are in chronological order)

|  |  |
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| **Idea** | **Poem Line** |
| 1. The men are heavily burdened and in poor health. |  |
| 1. They are weary, tired, ill equipped and overworked. |  |
| 1. When the gas initially falls it isn’t heard by the tired men. |  |
| 1. The men panic when they realise what is happening. |  |
| 1. One of the men fails to get his gas mask on in time. |  |
| 1. The narrator describes watching the soldier die. |  |
| 1. The narrator is haunted by dreams of the death. |  |
| 1. The narrator describes what they did with the soldier, as he lay dying. He describes the dying man. |  |
| 1. The narrator is critical of people who tell young children that war is a glorious thing. |  |

1. Write down the sequence of events described in the poem. (i.e. The men are marching. They don’t hear the gas shells drop…)
2. Look at stanza 1. How are the soldiers described?
3. Look at stanza 2. How does Owen use language (words), punctuation and point of view to change the mood and focus of the poem here?
4. What is the ‘green light’ that Owen refers to in stanza 2?
5. In stanza 3 the dying man is described as ‘guttering’. The dictionary describes this word as  
   *- flowing, streaming down  
   - burning unsteadily, flicker so as to be almost extinguished*  
   Which of these meanings is Owen using? What effect does he create?
6. This poem is quite graphic and disturbing. What effect does writing this way have on the message/meaning of the poem?
7. What do you think Owen’s intentions were, when writing the poem? What did he want people to go away thinking?
8. How does Owen present war in the poem?