



BRANCHE	SECTION(S)	ÉPREUVE ÉCRITE
ANGLAIS Texte inconnu	A	<i>Durée de l'épreuve :</i> 2h30 <i>Date de l'épreuve :</i> 26 mai 2020

Poppies

5 Three days before Armistice Sunday
and poppies had already been placed
on individual war graves. Before you left,
I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals,
spasms of paper red, disrupting a blockade
of yellow bias binding around your blazer.

10 Sellotape bandaged around my hand,
I rounded up as many white cat hairs
as I could, smoothed down your shirt's
upturned collar, steeled the softening
of my face. I wanted to graze my nose
across the tip of your nose, play at
being Eskimos like we did when
you were little. I resisted the impulse

15 to run my fingers through the gelled
blackthorns of your hair. All my words
flattened, rolled, turned into felt,

20 slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked
with you, to the front door, threw
it open, the world overflowing
like a treasure chest. A split second
and you were away, intoxicated.
After you'd gone I went into your bedroom,
released a song bird from its cage.

25 Later a single dove flew from the pear tree,
and this is where it has led me,
skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy
making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without
a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

Jane WEIR (born 1963)

Annotations :

Armistice Sunday	the Sunday closest to 11th November, the date when the First World War ended
lapel	folded flaps of cloth on the front of a jacket or coat
bias binding	a type of ribbon that is typically used for the edges of school blazers
Sellotape	transparent adhesive tape
felt	fabric made by rolling and pressing wool accompanied by the application of moisture or heat (Filz; feutre)
blackthorns	a shrub with spikey hard thorns
tucks, darts, pleats	sewing techniques

Questionnaire :

1. What is the relevance of the poem's title?
How are the poppies presented in the first stanza ? (6 m.)
2. With close reference to the text, comment on the mother-son relationship as portrayed in this poem. (12 m.)
3. How does the poet use bird imagery and metaphor in general? (12 m.)
4. How does the poet present the son's experience of the outside world? (ll.19-22)
(8 m.)
5. Explain how the poem reflects both a specific story and a universal experience.
(8 m.)
6. *'I wrote the piece from a woman's perspective, which is quite rare, as most poets who write about war have been men.'* (Jane Weir on writing her poem 'Poppies')
How do men write about war? (14 m.)