

## Level 6 assessment part 2

you'll be handed a poem like this and  
you'll be asked to analyse it:

### AISLE OF DOGS

In the first cage  
a hunk of raw flesh.  
No, it was alive, but skinned.

talk about language especially  
the use of verbs

Or its back was skinned.  
The knobs of the spine  
poked through the bluish meat.

discuss metaphors: what they do  
and how they work in this text

It was a pit bull, held by the shelter  
for evidence until the case  
could come to trial,

are there any similes? why are  
they effective?

then they'd put him down. The dog,  
not the human whose cruelty

how about imagery?

lived on in the brindled body,  
unmoving except for the enemy eyes.

use of alliteration and assonance?

Not for Adoption, said the sign.

does the author have a  
convincing voice? is the speaker  
a main character convincing?  
if so, how does the author  
achieve this in the language?

All the other cages held adoptable pets,  
the manic yappers, sad matted mongrels,  
the dumb slobbering abandoned ones,

Does the poem have a  
rhyme scheme? what is it and  
why is it effective?

the sick, the shaved, the scratching,  
the wounded and terrified, the lost,

one to a cage, their water dishes  
overturned, their shit tracked around,

is the poem in a particular form  
e.g. a sonnet / sestina? why does  
the author use this form here?

on both sides of a long echoey  
concrete aisle--clank of chain mesh gates,  
the attendant hosing down the gutters

does something unexpected  
happen in the poem? how does  
the author take us by surprise?

with his headphones on, half-dancing  
to the song in his head.

I'd come for kittens. There were none.  
So I stood in front of the pit bull's  
quivering carcass, its long-drawn death,

discuss some of the metaphors  
and tell us how/why they  
work well (or not, in your  
opinion).

its untouched food, its incurable hatred  
of my species, until the man with the hose  
touched my arm and steered me away,

has the author made use of  
any of the five senses? what  
does this achieve?

shaking his head in a way that said  
Don't look. Leave him alone.

I don't know why, either.

how does the poem end? do you find  
the ending satisfying? if not, why  
not? what might you have  
changed about the ending?