Mid Stage 4 English – Selecting and Analysing Poems for an Anthology – Grade C

The poems I would recommend are: ‘Twelve Songs IX’ by W.H. Auden, ‘In Defence of Hedgehogs’ by Rom Ayres, and ‘City Life’ by John Cardiff.

The first poem, ‘Twelve Songs IX’ by W.H. Auden, is very mesmeric and very seducing. Although this poem is about a lost, loved one, it also displays poetic features.

One of the poetic devices used is a rhyme scheme. (In this case, abab cdcd efef.) ‘Telephone, bone, drum, come.’ This attracts the younger readers because it helps them to understand the poem and know how it should sound and be said.

Another poetic device used is metaphorical phrases such as, ‘He was my North, my South, my East, and West’ and ‘My soul, my starlight’. This shows the poet’s care for the man who has passed away. This makes imagery occur. It strengthens the reader’s view on how the person is mourning and how sad they are feeling.

The second poem, ‘In Defence of Hedgehogs’ by Rom Ayres, is very blunt and the poet is showing sympathy for the helpless hedgehogs. But she also acknowledges them for their stupidity. Whilst Ayres has written the poem about the poor hedgehogs, this poem also contains a number of different poetic devices.

In this poem, Ayres firstly tells the reader that the hedgehogs are not clever and are ‘quite dim’ but throughout the poem, she starts to sympathise with the hedgehogs and turns the other way and blames it on the drivers and their cars.

The poetic devices, such as, comparison. “That in a car… and hedgehog fight” which is definitely not true but actually means that they get in contact with each other. This affects the reader because it makes the story more humorous.

This poem has very strong adjectives which affect how the readers will see the two sides of the story: the drivers’ side and the hedgehogs’ side. It says that both the driver and the hedgehogs can’t help what they are doing. The hedgehog can’t help but roll up into a ball and the driver can’t help if he can’t.
Grade Commentary

Mel has demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of the selected poems. The response is coherent and adequately structured. There is a sense of personal engagement with the poems despite some misunderstanding of the references in one of the poems. There is some textual reference to the poems, and the response shows a clearly developing insight into the purpose of poetry and language usage. Techniques have been identified and defined, but with little analysis.

Mel’s response demonstrates characteristics of work typically produced by a student performing at a grade C standard midway through Stage 4.