

Ozymandias 1 – introduction and revision ideas

Here is a gentle introduction to *Ozymandias* in the form of an 'immersed text'. The original poem is there, in the correct order but with other words interspersed.

Later, as a revision exercise, you might ask students to highlight the poem or to block out the words which have been added.

At The Explorer's Club: Finding Ozymandias

I was at the Explorers' Club yesterday and I met a strange chap, a traveller from Egypt or some antique land – been out on an expedition...got a bit lost I think. Anyway, it was this chap who said he'd come across this ruin of a great statue. Two vast and trunkless legs was what he noticed first. Hewn from stone, of course. These legs still stand in the desert and near them, on the sand, or rather half sunk in the sand, a shattered head or 'visage', (I think he called it) lies. He was most taken with this statue's face, whose frown and wrinkled lip made quite an impression on him. And he described the expression as a sneer of cold command – reckoned he could tell that its sculptor understood the chap he was representing all right! "Well those passions read" was how he put it. Most of the surrounding edifice had gone but the parts which yet survive are clear enough. This ruler's imprint was, how did he put it, 'stamped on these lifeless things', particularly 'The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed!' And then he noticed that on the pedestal there was an inscription. These words appear to say: "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" Well, so much for that because nothing beside the statue remains to be seen... Round the decay of the legs and head of that colossal statue – just a wreck now – the desert is boundless, and pretty bare I dare say. "The lone and level sands stretch far away," is how he put it. A bit poetic for an explorer I'd say, but there you go.

