

**Pearson Edexcel**  
International Advanced Level

# English Literature

International Advanced Level

**Unit 3: Poetry and Prose**

Sample Assessment Material for first teaching  
September 2015  
**Source Booklet**

Paper Reference

**WET03/01**

**Do not return this Source Booklet with the question paper.**

*Turn over* ►

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**PEARSON**

## Section A: Post-1900 Unseen Poetry

### Question 1

#### *The Burning Truck*

It began at dawn with fighter planes:  
they came in off the sea and didn't rise,  
they leaped the sandbar one and one and one  
coming so fast the crockery they shook down  
off my kitchen shelves was spinning in the air  
when they were gone.

They came in off the sea and drew a wave  
of lagging cannon-shells across our roofs.  
Windows spat glass, a truck took sudden fire,  
out leaped the driver, but the truck ran on,  
growing enormous, shambling by our street-doors,  
coming and coming ...

By every right in town, by every average  
we knew of in the world, it had to stop,  
fetched up against a building, fall to rubble  
from pure force of burning, for its whole  
body and substance were consumed with heat  
but it would not stop.

And all of us who knew our place and prayers  
clutched our verandah-rails and window-sills,  
begging that truck between our teeth to halt,  
keep going, vanish, strike ... but set us free.  
And then we saw the wild boys of the street  
go running after it.

And as they followed, cheering, on it crept,  
windshield melting now, canopy-frame a cage  
torn by gorillas of flame, and it kept on  
over the tramlines, past the church, on past  
the last lit windows, and then out of the world  
with its disciples.

**Les Murray**

Taken from: *New Selected Poems*, Les Murray, Carcanet Press Ltd, 2012