

FOCUS ON THE TEXT

Language

1 Read the poem and find:

- all the words related to the human body;
- all the words related to a human heart and mind.

2 In which part of the poem did you find them? Does this help you with the analysis of the poem?

Structure and content

3 Complete the text.

Brooke's poem is a sonnet which can be divided into two sequences: the (1) and the (2) Syntactically, the poem is structured around a/an (3) whose main clause is: (4) There is also a coordinate to the main clause: (5)

4 In the first sequence we find the identification of the soldier with England. Underline all the expressions suggesting this idea.

5 What is the poet's feeling towards his home country? Choose among the following and then support your answer with quotations from the text.

- Indifference. Scorn.
 Pride. Love.

6 The poet's feelings introduce the reader to the second section of the poem. Now the focus is not on the body any longer, but on his heart and mind.

- 1 Read the lines to find evidence in the text.
- 2 Not only will his body be an English corner in a foreign country, but his heart and mind will beat and live with England.

BUILD UP YOUR COMPETENCES

Explore authentic material

7 **Reading** Read Sir Winston Churchill's obituary on Rupert Brooke's death, published in *The Times* on April 26, 1915. Supply each gap (1-5) with its missing sentence (A-F). There is one extra sentence you don't need to use. **FIRST**

Rupert Brooke is dead. This life has closed at the moment when it seemed to have reached its springtime. (1), a note had been struck, more true, more thrilling, more able to do justice to the nobility of our youth in arms engaged in this present war, than any other more able to express their thoughts of self-surrender, and with a power to carry comfort to those who watch them so intently from afar. (2) Only the echoes and the memory remain; (3)

During the last few months of his life, months of preparation in gallant comradeship and open air,

the poet-soldier told with all the simple force of genius the sorrow of youth about to die, and the sure triumphant consolations of a sincere and valiant spirit. (4): he was willing to die for the dear England whose beauty and majesty he knew: and he advanced towards the brink in perfect serenity, with absolute conviction of the rightness of his country's cause and a heart devoid of hate for fellowmen. Joyous, fearless, versatile, deeply instructed, with classic symmetry of mind and body, (5), he was all that one would wish England's noblest sons to be in the days when no sacrifice but the most precious is acceptable, and the most precious is that which is most freely proffered.

- A He expected to die
 B ruled by high undoubting purpose
 C The voice has been swiftly stilled
 D will be shared by many thousands of young men
 E A voice had become audible
 F but they will linger

Be an independent learner

8 **Speaking** Throughout the 20th century, Rupert Brooke has been celebrated as a kind of National hero. Surf the net and visit the website of The Rupert Brooke Society to learn more. As far as you know, are any Italian poets celebrated in this way in Italy? Tell your classmates about your research and work with them to find an answer to the question above.

The Trenches, by Andrew Howat, an illustration for an article about Rupert Brooke who died early on during World War I.

