Originally

We came from our own country in a red room  
which fell through the fields, our mother singing  
our father’s name to the turn of the wheels.  
My brothers cried, one of them bawling *Home*,

5 *Home*, as the miles rushed back to the city,  
the street, the house, the vacant rooms  
where we didn’t live any more. I stared  
at the eyes of a blind toy, holding its paw.

All childhood is an emigration. Some are slow,

10 leaving you standing, resigned, up an avenue  
 where no one you know stays. Others are sudden.  
 Your accent wrong. Corners, which seem familiar,  
 leading to unimagined, [pebble­-dashed](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/265609#eid10199091) estates, big boys  
 eating worms and shouting words you don’t understand.

15 My parents’ anxiety stirred like a loose tooth  
 in my head. *I want our own country*, I said.

But then you forget, or don’t recall, or change,  
and, seeing your brother swallow a slug, feel only  
a [skelf](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/242209#eid12738621) of shame. I remember my tongue

20 shedding its skin like a snake, my voice  
in the classroom sounding just like the rest. Do I only think  
I lost a river, culture, speech, sense of first space  
and the right place? Now, *Where do you come from?*  
strangers ask. *Originally?* And I hesitate.

1. By referring closely to stanza 1 analyse the use of poetic technique to emphasise the dramatic impact moving to another country had on the family. **2**
2. Look at **stanza 2**.

“All childhood is an emigration” Explain fully what the poet means by this. **2**

1. In lines 12—16 analyse the use of poetic technique to convey the distress of the family members caused by their “sudden” emigration to a new environment. **3**
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of **stanza 3** as a conclusion to the poem. Your answer should deal with ideas and/or language. **3**
3. Discuss how Carol Ann Duffy uses contrast in this poem and at least one other to

highlight the poems’ main concerns. **10**

**Marking Scheme**

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| **Question** | **Expected Answer** | **Max Marks** | **Additional Guidance** |
| **1** | 2 marks can be awarded for  two examples which  highlight the dramatic  impact.  A detailed/insightful  comment on one example  may be awarded 2 marks.  Reference plus basic  comment for 1 mark.  0 marks for  reference/quotation alone. | **2** | Possible answers include:   * Word choice of “we”/“our” suggests a sense of comforting group identity/defining event in family history * Repetition of “our” suggests the need for group identity in the face of new circumstances * Word choice of “fell” suggests a loss of control over event/helplessness in the face of change * Word choice of “cried”/“bawling” suggests the degree of distress caused by the move. * The sequence “the city …. rooms” suggests a poignant re-tracing of the route/desire to return * Word choice of “vacant” suggests the physical/emotional emptiness of the place that used to be home * The climactic conclusion to the sequence “city … any more.” suggests the finality of the move * The word choice of “stared” suggests a stunned reaction to the move. * The contrast of the poet’s reaction ― “stared” - with the reactions of her brothers ―“cried”/”bawling” ― highlights the poet’s shocked reaction * Symbolic use of “blind toy” ― like the poet the toy is unfeeling and unaware of what is happening. * Word choice of “holding its paw” suggests a desperate need for comfort/reassurance. |
| **2** | Candidates should explain  fully what Duffy means by  the image “all childhood is  an emigration.” Simple comment about  journey to adulthood for 1  mark.  A detailed/insightful  comment may be awarded 2  marks.  Reference to journey alone  = 0 marks. | **2** | Possible answers include:   * Childhood is a journey from safety/security/the familiar   OR   * Childhood is a journey into the unknown/to independence/potentially risky and dangerous situations. |
| **3** | Candidates should analyse  how the poet’s use of poetic  technique conveys the distress of the family members.  3 marks can be awarded for three examples of language highlighting the distress.  Reference plus basic comment for 1 mark.  (1+1+1).  Alternatively, 2 marks may  be awarded for reference  plus more  detailed/insightful comment  (2+1).  0 marks for reference/quotation alone. | **3** | Possible answers include:   * The positioning/abruptness of the minor sentence “Your accent wrong” suggests lack of acceptance/sense of exclusion. * The parenthesis/positioning of “which seem familiar” suggest a sense of confusion/disorientation/déjà vu triggered by the new environment. * The word choice of “unimagined” suggests some unspeakable horror. * The word choice of “big boys” suggests the intimidating appearance of the boys/the vulnerability of the poet. * The detail “eating worms” suggests outlandish/disgusting behaviour. * The word choice of “shouting” suggests the intimidating nature of the way the boys are speaking. * The word choice of “you don’t understand” suggests confusion/alienation. * The image “anxieties … loose tooth” suggests that a loose tooth causes annoyance but the parents‟ concerns about the move won’t go away. * The word choice of “in my head” suggests that the parents‟ concerns have made a deep impression on the poet. * The italics/the phrase “*I want … country*” suggests the strength of the desire to return. * The word choice of “*want*” “*our*”/“*own*” suggests the depth of her desire for the familiar. |
| **4** | Candidates should show  understanding of the term  “conclusion” and show how  the content of the last  stanza continues ― or  contrasts with ― ideas  and/or language from the first two stanzas.  3 marks can be awarded for three appropriate, basic comments.  A detailed/insightful comment on one example may be awarded 2 marks.  Other examples are acceptable.  0 marks for reference/quotation alone. | **3** | Possible answers include:  **Ideas**   * The poet has moved on in her life, and she has adapted to her new life. * This move has created a sense of uncertainty as to her true origins, and sense of belonging.   **Language**   * “But” suggests a change from her previous outsider status to becoming assimilated into the new environment. * The sequence “you forget … or change” suggests the gradual/indeterminable process of assimilation. * The idea of “brother swallow a slug” links back to “eating worms” and suggests her brother’s acceptance of the local culture. * The use of the dialect word “skelf” suggests a hankering back to previous home or limited influence of previous culture on her. * The image “skelf of shame” suggests that just as a “skelf” is a splinter of wood, so is her sense of shame in betraying her past rather limited. * The image “my tongue … snake” suggests that just as a snake sheds its old skin, she is shedding her old life/adapting to suit her new life. * The idea of “my voice … like the rest” links back to “Your accent wrong” suggesting the poet’s continuing assimilation into her new culture. * The list “I lost … the right place?” suggests an awareness of the amount she has lost by emigrating. * The use of the question at the end of the previous list introduces uncertainty ― has she actually “lost” the items in the list? * The positioning/abruptness of “And I hesitate” suggests the poet’s uncertainty about her cultural identity or where she really belongs. |
| **5** | Candidates should discuss  the use of contrast in this  and other poems by Carol  Ann Duffy and should refer to appropriate textual evidence to support their discussion.  0 marks for reference/quotation alone.  Candidates can answer in  bullet points in this final question, or write a number of linked statements. | **10** | Up to 2 marks can be achieved for identifying elements of commonality as identified in  the question, i.e. use of contrast to highlight main concerns of this and other poems by  Duffy.  A further 2 marks can be achieved for reference to the extract given.  6 additional marks can be awarded for discussion of similar references to at least one other poem by the poet.  In practice this means:  Identification of commonality (2) (e.g.: theme, characterisation, use of imagery, setting,  or any other key element…)  from the extract:  1 x relevant reference to technique/idea/feature (1)  1 x appropriate comment (1)  (maximum of 2 marks only for discussion of extract) from at least one other text/part of the text:  as above (x3) for up to 6 marks  OR  more detailed comment x2 for up to 6 marks  Thus, the final 6 marks can be gained by a combination of 3, 2 and 1 marks depending on  the level of depth/detail/insight.  The aim would be to encourage quality of comment, rather than quantity of references.  In comments on other poems, possible references include:   * Conventional romance versus realistic love in “Valentine” * the conflicting emotions that transition can bring “The Way My Mother Speaks” * Peacefulness of darkroom versus horror of war zone in “War Photographer”   Many other references are possible. |