**Conflict**

**Question 6**

**Read the two poems below and then answer both part a) and part b).**

*‘Partition’* by Sujata Bhatt & *‘Partition’* by WH Auden. You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on part a) and 30 minutes on part b).

**a)** Compare how these poems present the effects of conflict on people’s lives.

You should consider:

• ideas and attitudes in each poem

• tone and atmosphere in each poem

• the effects of the language and structure used.

**AND**

**b)** Explore in detail one other poem from your anthology that shows division between people leading to conflict.

***‘Partition’* by Sujata Bhatt**

She was nineteen-years-old then

And when she stood in her garden

She could hear the cries of the people

Stranded in the Ahmedabad railway station.

She felt it was endless – their noise –

A new sound added to the city.

Her aunt, her father’s sister,

Would go to the station every day

With food and water –

But she felt afraid,

Felt she could not go with her aunt –

And each day she wished

She had the courage to go with her aunt –

And each day passed with her

Listening to the cries of the people.

Now, when my mother

Tells me of this at midnight

In her kitchen – she is

Seventy-years old and India

Is ‘fifty’. “But, of course,

India is older than that,” she says,

“India was always there.

But how I wish I had

Gone with my aunt

To the railway station –

I still feel

Guilty about that.”

And then she asks me:

“How could they

Have let a man

Who knew nothing

About geography

Divide a country?”

**‘Partition’ by W.H. Auden**

Unbiased at least he was when he arrived on his mission,  
Having never set eyes on the land he was called to partition  
Between two peoples fanatically at odds,  
With their different diets and incompatible gods.  
"Time," they had briefed him in London, "is short. It's too late  
For mutual reconciliation or rational debate:  
The only solution now lies in separation.  
The Viceroy thinks, as you will see from his letter,  
That the less you are seen in his company the better,  
So we've arranged to provide you with other accommodation.  
We can give you four judges, two Moslem and two Hindu,  
To consult with, but the final decision must rest with you."  
  
Shut up in a lonely mansion, with police night and day  
Patrolling the gardens to keep the assassins away,  
He got down to work, to the task of settling the fate  
Of millions. The maps at his disposal were out of date  
And the Census Returns almost certainly incorrect,  
But there was no time to check them, no time to inspect  
Contested areas. The weather was frightfully hot,  
And a bout of dysentery kept him constantly on the trot,  
But in seven weeks it was done, the frontiers decided,  
A continent for better or worse divided.  
  
The next day he sailed for England, where he could quickly forget  
The case, as a good lawyer must. Return he would not,  
Afraid, as he told his Club, that he might get shot.