EXAM STASH

POETRY COMPARISON

THE POWER OF NATURE

AQA GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

STORM ON THE ISLAND
SEAMUS HEANEY

- An apparently prepared community confronts a storm it cannot fully control.
- Preparation offers limited protection when an invisible force makes human confidence collapse.

COMPARISON AT A GLANCE

- Heaney uses a collective *we* and conversational confidence that becomes fear.
- Wordsworth presents a remembered personal encounter in first person, with confidence becoming awe and troubled reflection.
- Both explore the power of nature to overturn human control and leave a lasting psychological impact.

EXTRACT FROM THE PRELUDE
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

- A youthful boating adventure becomes an unsettling encounter with nature.
- Nature overturns the young speaker's self-assurance and remains powerful inside his imagination.

COMPARISON FOCUS	STORM ON THE ISLAND	SHARED ARGUMENT	EXTRACT FROM THE PRELUDE	METHOD	WHAT IT REVEALS
VOICE & DISTANCE	*'we are prepared'*	Both begin with confidence and a sense of control, which is later overturned by nature's power.	*'an act of stealth'*	*Point of view (collective vs first person)*	• Heaney's collective *we* creates shared, conversational confidence that collapses into fear; Wordsworth's first-person recall shows personal confidence turning to awe and reflection.
STRUCTURE & TONE SHIFTS	*'tame cat'*	Both move from assurance to a more threatening reality as nature reveals its greater power.	*'Went heaving through the water like a swan;'*	*Simile → threatening turn*	• Each uses a flattering image of control before the tone shifts, exposing how quickly nature overturns human self-assurance.
KEY IMAGERY	*'savage'*	Nature is presented as a powerful, active force that feels beyond human control.	*'a huge peak, black and huge,'*	*Adjective / repetition*	• Both build a sense of scale and threat: Heaney's single adjective turns the familiar dangerous, while Wordsworth's repetition emphasises the mountain's overwhelming presence.
ENDINGS & MEANING	*'huge nothing'*	Both end with lasting uncertainty, showing the enduring psychological impact of nature's power.	*'a trouble to my dreams.'*	*Paradox / reflective close*	• Heaney's paradox shows an invisible force that still feels enormous; Wordsworth's line reveals a lasting, troubled influence on the speaker's imagination.

RECALL TASK

1. **EXPLAIN ONE MEANINGFUL SIMILARITY** between the poems, using evidence from both.
2. **EXPLAIN ONE MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE** between the poems, using evidence from both.