

Discoveries may compel individuals to affirm, or challenge, their perspectives on themselves and the wider world.

How does this statement reflect the ideas represented in your prescribed text and at least ONE other text of your own choosing?

Discovery is an experience inherent to humanity, and yet the nature of it, particularly in terms of their consequences differ. More often than not, discoveries can challenge an individual's perspectives on themselves and the wider world. This idea is represented in Rosemary Dobson's poem, The Tiger and Guy De Maupassant's short story, The Necklace, where the protagonists' discoveries force them to develop new ways of thinking about themselves and others. However, occasionally, discoveries can also affirm one's view of themselves and of those around them. Rosemary Dobson's poem, Cock Crow demonstrates this, as her discovery of a metaphysical world leads her to return to her old world, hence affirming her perspectives of herself as well as society.

Firstly, the shifting of one's perceptions as a result of discovery, can be seen in The Tiger, as Dobson's revelation of the difficulty of expressing herself, challenges perceptions of herself, with regard to her attitude as a poet. It also forces her to come to terms with the oppressive nature of literary world. Her discovery of the difficulty in expressing herself is represented through the extended metaphor of the tiger which symbolises her caged spirit. Her response to this realisation can be seen through the evocative language in "*he rakes the sky of the stars and hunts*". The verbs "rakes" and "hunts" depict the desperate, almost violent change to which the poet approaches her work, in an attempt to overcome these issues. This discovery also causes her to adopt the view that the literary world has changed from free and accepting to oppressive and exclusive. This can be seen in the use of tense in "*he seeks and yet can never find, the world where he was free to range*" and "*his was the world to roam*". The past tense of "was" indicates the poet's belief that the state of freely expressing one's thoughts and ideas is no longer achievable. Overall, this poem clearly exhibits challenging of poet's perspectives of herself and the literary world as a result of her revelations of her literary expression.

Furthermore, The Necklace also demonstrates how discoveries can challenge an individual's perception of themselves and others. In the story, Madame Loisel makes two discoveries; the first is the missing diamond necklace and the second is the imitation diamond necklace. Both of these compel her to reconsider the value that she places on money and wealth as well as the lifestyle of the upper class. Firstly, following the realisation of the missing necklace, Madam Loisel is forced to work hard to pay back the money and in turn she "[becomes] like all the other strong, hard, coarse women of poor households...". This physical transformation is representative of her internal transformation as she becomes fully aware of the detrimental consequences of her own greed. Secondly, the discovery of the fake diamond necklace impels her to reconsider her misconceptions of the perfection of the lives of the upper class. The diamond necklace serves as a symbol of this deception – on the outside, it seems grand and luxurious but it is actually worthless and undesirable. Therefore, The Necklace clearly evidences how a discovery can lead to one's changed perceptions of themselves as well as the wider world.

However, some discoveries may also affirm an individual's belief and this is demonstrated in Dobson's Cock Crow. In this poem, Dobson uncovers a metaphysical world which is conveyed in stanza 2 – "*the night absolved me of my bonds, only my footsteps held the*

ground.” This suggests she is leaving the “real world” and hence represents a world of isolation – away from her family and her responsibilities. However, after spending some time in this world, she is compelled to return to back to her old life – “*Too brief illusion! Thrice for me.*” The exclamation mark in this line serves as an alarm to return to the real world and marks her entry back into her old world. In entering back into this world, she is affirming not only her self-perception as a mother, but also her acceptance of the societal expectations of her to fulfil the responsibilities of motherhood. Hence, this supports the idea that discoveries, in some circumstances, can may reaffirm one’s views of themselves and of society.

Ultimately, all three texts explore the impact of discoveries on an individual’s perspectives of themselves and the wider world, in terms of challenging or reaffirming them. Although their actual discoveries vary, both *The Tiger* and *The Necklace* demonstrate a change in their perception of their values and attitudes of themselves as well as the wider world. Conversely, *Cock Crow*, highlights how discoveries can also seek to affirm the way in which one views themselves and the world around them.

