**Literature AO3 Base Therapy:**

Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

Having an understanding of the context for any text you are studying helps give it more meaning and enhances your understanding. It shows that you can look beyond the text.

Do you know the nursery rhyme below?

**Ring A-Ring O' Roses**

Ring a-ring o' roses,
A pocketful of posies.
A-tishoo! A-tishoo!
We all fall down!

Ashes in the water,
Ashes in the sea
We all jump up with a
One, two, three!

What is this rhyme about?

Let’s consider the context:

* It is suggested, or the theory is, that the rhyme refers to The Great Plague of London in 1665
* The ‘ring o’ roses’ is the ring of red sores around the mouth
* People carried ‘pocketful of posies’ (small bunches of flowers) in the pockets and brought this to their noses to smell in order to mask the smell of death
* ‘A-tishoo!’ is the sneezing that accompanied the plague before death – ‘We all fall down!’
* The ‘ashes’ refers to the ashes from the burnt bodies as burning the bodies was the best way of controlling the plague. The ashes were then thrown into the river Thames
* ‘We all jump up’ refers to the survivors

Knowing the context helps us work out what the writer is trying to say and the social or historical point they are trying to make.

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