‘No More Hiroshimas’ - James Kirkup

A) Before reading the poem

1. With a partner prepare a spider diagram about what you know about the city of Hiroshima and modern Japan.
2. Research the city of Hiroshima in the library or on the internet.
3. Discuss your findings with another pair.

B) Read through the poem once

1. Having read the poem once are there any lines or images that you find particularly memorable? Which lines are they? Why and how have they affected you?
2. Look up the meanings of any words that you do not understand and write them, in pencil, next to the poem.

C) Detailed study of the poem

1. What does the title of the poem remind you of?
2. The first stanza (verse) of the poem creates a vivid picture of the station in Hiroshima. Kirkup states that, ‘it might be anywhere’ as he is in, ‘a town like any other in Japan’. How is the station area described? Look at the use of adjectives and metaphors. Do you think that they help you to imagine the scene? How?
3. What is the tone of this stanza and how does it contrast with the following stanzas of the poem?
4. At what point does the tone of the poem change? What do you think made the poet change the tone of the poem?
5. Look at the descriptions of the modern buildings and their contents in stanzas one to four. Make a list of the descriptive phrases. Would you describe this as positive or negative imagery?
6. Why is,

   The river remains unchanged, sad, refusing rehabilitation.

   repeated in the second stanza?
7. How many times are words associated with emptiness repeated in the first four stanzas? Why do you think that the poet has chosen to repeat this idea?
8. In the sixth stanza the poet comments upon what he has found in Hiroshima. How far can this be said to explain the negative imagery of the first four stanzas? Do you think that the poet approves of what he has found in stanzas one to four? Explain your ideas in full.
‘No More Hiroshimas’ - Sheet Two

9. Stanza six concentrates on describing the Park of Peace, but repeats the idea of death. Why do you think that the poet has done this?
10. Where do you think that the quotation in the seventh stanza is taken from?
11. How are the seventh and eighth stanzas of the poem linked?
12. The eighth stanza contains a list of items found in the museum. Why are there only one or two items per line? Why is, ‘And slowly die.’ set in a line of its own, do you think?
13. (a) Why is a traditional poetic device (assonance) used as the final two lines of the poem?
   (b) Why do you think that the poet has chosen not to have a regular rhyme or rhythm scheme in this poem?

D) Comparison with ‘Anthem…’ and ‘Attack’

1. Copy out and complete the following table in your book.
2. Use a highlighting pen to mark any ideas that are similar.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘Anthem for Doomed Youth’</th>
<th>‘Attack’</th>
<th>‘No More Hiroshimas’</th>
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