

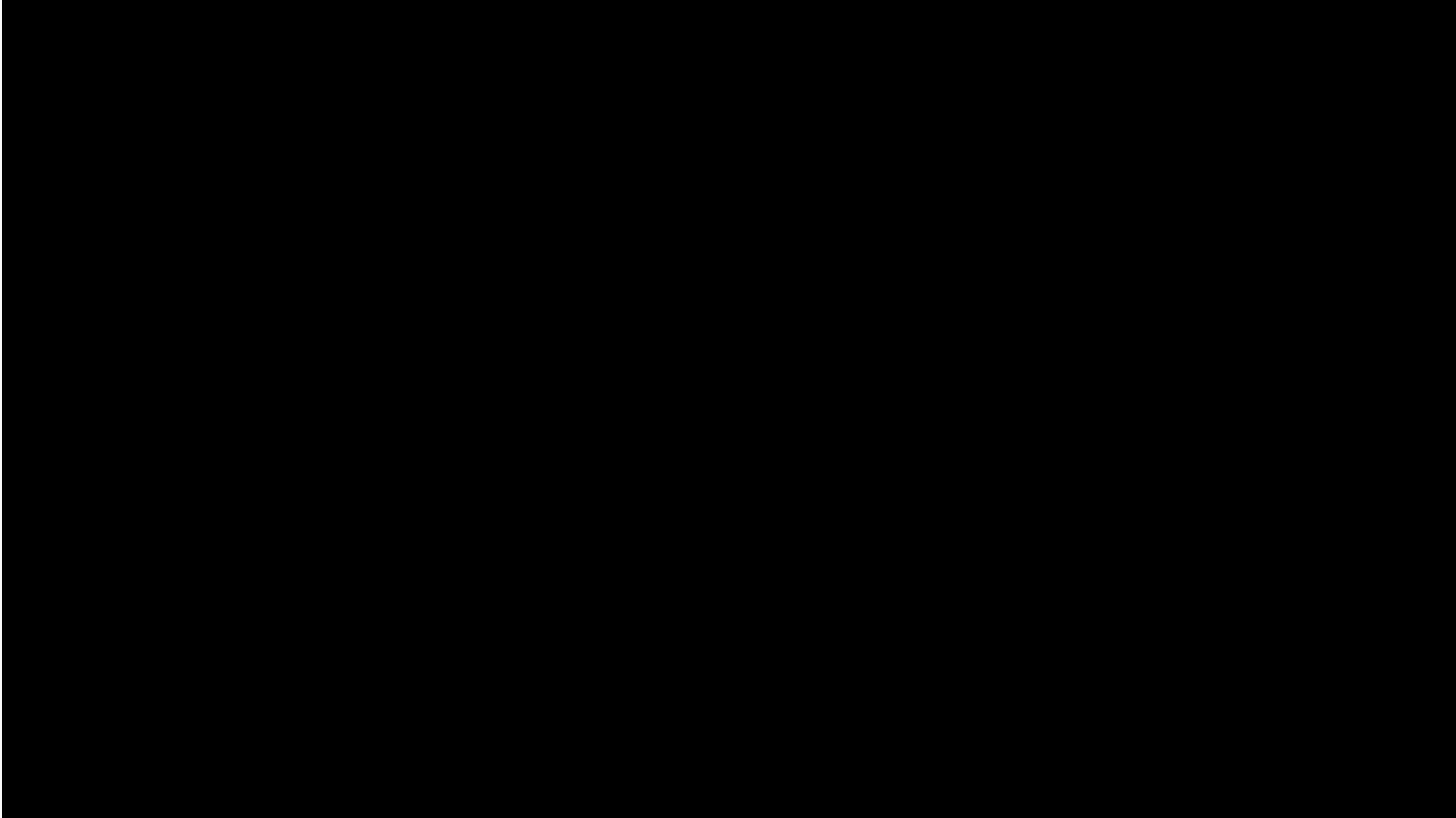


THE APPLICAN T

Title?

- Connotations?







The Applicant stanza 1

First, are you our sort of a person?

Do you wear

A glass eye, false teeth or a crutch,

A brace or a hook,

5 Rubber breasts or a rubber crotch,

The Applicant stanza 2

Stitches to show something's missing? No, no? Then

How can we give you a thing?

Stop crying.

Open your hand.

10 Empty? Empty. Here is a hand

The Applicant stanza 3

To fill it and willing

To bring teacups and roll away headaches

And do whatever you tell it.

Will you marry it?

15 It is guaranteed

The Applicant stanza 4

To thumb shut your eyes at the end

And dissolve of sorrow.

We make new stock from the salt.

I notice you are stark naked.

20 How about this suit— —

The Applicant stanza 5

Black and stiff, but not a bad fit.

Will you marry it?

It is waterproof, shatterproof, proof

Against fire and bombs through the roof.

25 Believe me, they'll bury you in it.

The Applicant stanza 6

Now your head, excuse me, is empty.

I have the ticket for that.

Come here, sweetie, out of the closet.

Well, what do you think of *that*?

30 Naked as paper to start



The Applicant stanza 7

But in twenty-five years she'll be silver,

In fifty, gold.

A living doll, everywhere you look.

It can sew, it can cook,

35 It can talk, talk, talk.

The Applicant stanza 8

It works, there is nothing wrong with it.

You have a hole, it's a poultice.

You have an eye, it's an image.

My boy, it's your last resort.

40 Will you marry it, marry it, marry it.

Analytical tools

- **Form:**

- quintets
- Free verse

- **Voice:**

- Bureaucratic dystopian speaker

- **Structure**

- Choices? To lack of choice?

- **Themes**

- Marriage
- Gender and entrapment
(social expectations of roles)

- **Imagery**

- Broken bodies
- Nakedness
- Suit
- Automaton: 'it'

Context 1950's-60's

- Discuss how this poem reflects the questions and themes of the era.
- Give evidence from the poem

Dramatise the poem

- In groups prepare a performance of the poem.
- Think about stylised movement, dramatic pause, varying the pace and volume as appropriate.
- Will you have several interviewers and one applicant, or the other way around? An automaton wife?