

2 Structure and comparison in a poem – Part 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary

Write each word three times.

English

Write it 3 times (English)

contrast

simile

Recall

- You know where a poem's lines break even when you do not know why.
- You have felt a poem change direction partway through.
- You know a comparison can flatter or insult.

New ideas

Read these first. Each idea has a short worked example. Then do the Practice below.

■ 1 Breaks and arrangement

Line and stanza breaks develop the relationship of ideas in a poem, and their arrangement affects a reader's expectations. A break that separates a subject from its verb makes the reader wait, and the waiting is the effect.

Worked example. A stanza ending mid-sentence suspends an idea across the gap.

■ 2 Contrast

A **contrast** results from a shift or a juxtaposition. A shift may be signalled by a word, by punctuation, or by a structural convention - and a contrast always has two terms.

Worked example. Saying 'the tone becomes bitter' names one term; the analysis needs what it is bitter against.

■ 3 Simile

A **simile** uses 'like' or 'as' to transfer a quality from a comparison subject to a main subject. Identifying it is not analysis; naming the quality transferred is.

Worked example. 'Her voice was like gravel' transfers roughness and wear to the voice, not gravel's colour or weight.

Watch out: A contrast without both terms is not a contrast. Name what the text moved *from* as well as what it moved *to*.

Practice

2.1 State what line and stanza breaks contribute. [2]

2.2 Name the two things a contrast results from. [2]

2.3 Name three ways a shift may be signalled. [3]

2.4 Define a simile and name its two subjects. [2]

2.5 'The tone becomes bitter.' State what is missing. [1]
