

2.2 The function of structure in a text

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain **poetic structure** 结构.

You must be able to:

- state what line and stanza breaks contribute
- state what the arrangement of lines and stanzas contributes
- explain how structure affects reactions and expectations
- write about a break as a choice

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Breaks

Line and stanza breaks contribute to the development and relationship of ideas in a poem. A break is a place where an idea is interrupted or joined.

■ Arrangement

The arrangement of lines and stanzas contributes to the development and relationship of ideas. Not only where the breaks fall but the shape they make.

■ Reactions and expectations

A text's structure affects readers' reactions and expectations by presenting the relationships among the ideas of the text via their relative positions and their placement within the text as a whole.

■ A break as a choice

Ask what the line would mean without the break, and what the break adds. A break that separates a subject from its verb makes the reader wait, and the waiting is the effect.

2 Practice

2.1 State what line and stanza breaks contribute.

[2]

2.2 State how structure affects readers. [2]

2.3 A break is a choice.

(a) State the question to ask about it. [2]

(b) Give one effect a break can produce. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Structure presents relationships among ideas via their relative positions and their [1]

- **A** placement within the text as a whole
 - **B** alphabetical order
 - **C** length
 - **D** rhyme only
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3.2 A break between a subject and its verb makes the reader [1]

- **A** wait
 - **B** stop reading
 - **C** skip ahead
 - **D** reread the title
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3.3 A stanza ends mid-sentence.

(a) State what the reader experiences. [1]

(b) Explain what an analysis should say about it. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **2.2 The function of structure in a text** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Poetry I** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 the development and relationship of ideas in a poem.

2.2 it affects readers' reactions and expectations by presenting relationships among ideas through their relative positions and placement in the whole.

2.3 (a) what the line would mean without the break and what the break adds. (b) any defensible effect, e.g. making the reader wait, or joining two ideas across a gap.

3.1 A. placement within the whole.

3.2 A. the delay is the effect.

3.3 (a) an idea suspended across the gap. (b) name the effect of the suspension and relate it to the poem's argument at that point.