

8.1 The function of structure in a text

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 18 marks**

KEY WORDS interrupted patterns 打断的规律

Objective

Build the skills to explain **interrupted patterns** 打断的规律.

You must be able to:

- state what ideas and images may do across lines
- state the CED's claim about punctuation
- state what an interruption in a pattern creates
- explain why the interruption is the analytic target

1 Worked examples

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

■ Across lines

Ideas and images in a poem may extend beyond a single line or stanza. A line break is not a boundary of meaning.

■ Punctuation

Punctuation is often crucial to the understanding of a text. In poetry a comma can decide which of two words a phrase attaches to.

■ Interruptions

When structural patterns are created in a text, any interruption in the pattern creates a point of emphasis. The pattern is what makes the break audible.

■ The target

A regular pattern is a background. The one line that breaks it is where the poem is pointing, so an analysis should start with the exception rather than the rule.

2 Practice

2.1 State what ideas and images may do across lines. [2]

2.2 State what an interruption in a pattern creates. [2]

2.3 The exception is the target.

(a) Explain why. [2]

(b) State the CED's claim about punctuation. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 An interruption in a structural pattern creates a point of [1]

- **A** emphasis
- **B** confusion
- **C** silence
- **D** rhyme

3.2 A line break is [1]

- **A** not a boundary of meaning
- **B** always the end of an idea
- **C** decorative
- **D** required

- (a) State what this creates. [1]
- (b) Explain why an analysis should begin there. [2]

Write an essay that analyses how the interruption of the poem's pattern conveys its meaning.

Solutions

2.1 they may extend beyond a single line or stanza, so a line break is not a boundary of meaning.

2.2 a point of emphasis, because the pattern makes the break audible.

2.3 (a) a regular pattern is a background, so the break is where the poem is pointing.
(b) punctuation is often crucial to the understanding of a text.

3.1 A. emphasis.

3.2 A. not a boundary of meaning.

3.3 (a) a point of emphasis. (b) the regular stanzas establish an expectation and the fifth line is the poem marking something as exceptional.

3.4 Row A — Thesis (1). The claim must be about the **break**, and must interpret it. **Earns it:** “The poem spends five stanzas teaching the reader to expect the year to go on, so that its silence in the sixth is not a change of subject but the arrival of the thing the refrain was holding off.” **Does not:** “The last stanza is different from the others, which shows that something has changed.”

Row B — Evidence and Commentary (0–4). Each broken element needs its own commentary. The lost fourth line leaves a gap the ear registers before the reader understands it. The absent rhyme removes the sound of consequence — rhyme makes a line feel answered, and nothing here answers. The dropped refrain is the strongest evidence because the poem has trained the reader to supply it, so its absence is filled by the reader’s own expectation. A 4-point response explains that the pattern’s function was **reassurance**, which is why breaking it reads as loss rather than merely as variation. Listing the differences without that argument caps at 2.

Row C — Sophistication (1). Earned by noticing that the poem’s meaning depends on its most conventional feature: without five stanzas of dutiful, almost tedious regularity, the final stanza would carry nothing. The essay must sustain that reading of the poem’s patience as technique.