

5.6 The function of personification

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS personification 拟人

Objective

Build the skills to explain **personification** 拟人.

You must be able to:

- define personification in the CED's terms
- state what personification does to the object
- explain why it is a type of comparison
- analyse which human trait is assigned

1 Worked examples

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

■ Definition

Personification is a type of comparison that assigns a human trait or quality to a nonhuman object, entity, or idea, thus characterising that object, entity, or idea.

■ Characterising

The CED's verb is **characterising**: personification does to an object what description does to a person. It gives it a nature.

■ A comparison

Because it is a comparison, the two-subject analysis applies: the nonhuman thing is the main subject and the human quality is what is transferred to it.

■ Which trait

The analysis is in the choice of trait. A sea that is *angry* is threatening; a sea that is *indifferent* is worse, because nothing can be appealed to.

2 Practice

2.1 Define personification in the CED's terms. [2]

2.2 State the CED's verb for what it does and explain it. [2]

2.3 The analysis lies in the trait chosen.

(a) Explain why. [2]

(b) State why personification is a comparison. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Personification assigns a human trait to [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** a nonhuman object, entity or idea
B another person
C the reader
D the author

3.2 The CED's verb for the effect on the object is [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** characterising
B destroying
C naming
D counting

3.3 A poem describes time as “patient”.

(a) State what has been assigned. [1]

(b) Explain what this makes the reader feel about time. [2]
