

Comparing Poetry

GCSE English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Plan a whole comparison: 'Compare how the poets present leaving home.'

Step 1 · Thesis

Both poems present leaving home act of love on both sides, but A dwells on loss while B finds a new beginning.

Step 2 · Paragraph 1

Openings: the waving mother versus the first night in halls.

Step 3 · Paragraph 2

Central images: the door metaphor versus the folded kitchen.

Step 4 · Paragraph 3

Form: rhymed quatrains versus free verse.

Step 5 · Paragraph 4

Endings: 'a draught on either side' versus 'I tell it.'

Answer: Thesis → four integrated comparison paragraphs → judgement.

Check: Every paragraph discusses both poems.

2. Now try one with the steps

Compare the central images.

Step 1 · Poem A

Step 2 · Poem B

Step 3 · Compare

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. What two things must you compare between poems? [1]

2. What is the difference between an integrated and a 'block' comparison? [2]

3. Give three comparative connectives. [1]
-
-
4. How many stanzas does 'Platform' have? Write the number. [1]
-
-
5. What is the rhyme scheme of each stanza of 'Platform'? [1]
-
-
6. Name one similarity in what the two poems say about mothers. [1]
-
-
7. Compare the forms of the two poems in one sentence. [2]
-
-
8. Write a comparative overview sentence for both poems. [2]
-
-
9. What does the word 'But' at the start of line 7 of 'Platform' signal? [1]
-
-
10. Compare the metaphors 'leaving was a door' and 'our kitchen / folded small enough to fit'. [3]
-
-
-
11. Why is comparing methods more sophisticated than comparing subject matter? [2]
-
-
12. Analyse the effect of the final line 'I tell it.' and compare it with the ending of 'Platform'. [3]
-
-
-

13. Why might a contrasting pair of poems give you more to write about than two very similar poems? [1]

14. When you choose a second poem from your anthology, what should decide your choice? [2]

4. Before you hand it in

Writing all about Poem A, then all about Poem B.

Integrate: every paragraph covers both poems, linked by a connective.

Comparing only subject matter ('both poems are about home').

Compare the methods and the attitudes they convey.

Forcing contrasts when there is a similarity.

Look for shared methods or ideas beneath different tones.

Unequal coverage (four points on A, one on B).

Plan paired points so both poems get similar attention.