

Unseen Poetry

GCSE English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Analyse the opening simile: 'She crosses the car park like a rumour'.

Step 1 · Method

Simile comparing the fox to a rumour.

Step 2 · Connotations

Rumours move quickly, quietly, half-believed and hard to pin down.

Step 3 · Effect

The fox seems elusive, almost unreal, from the first line.

Answer: The simile makes the fox mysterious and fleeting.

Check: Method → connotation → effect.

2. Now try one with the steps

Analyse the caesura in 'to look at me. Not fear. Not anything'.

Step 1 · Method

Step 2 · Effect

Step 3 · Meaning

Answer:

3. Practice

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

1. How many times should you read an unseen poem before writing? Write the number. [1]

2. How many stanzas does the fox poem have? Write the number. [1]

3. How many lines are in each stanza of the fox poem? Write the number. [1]

4. Which three places in a poem should you check first? [1]
-
-
5. Do you need context to answer an unseen poetry question? Answer yes or no. [1]
-
-
6. Identify a simile in the fox poem and explain its effect. [2]
-
-
7. What does 'the colour of a struck match' suggest about the fox? [2]
-
-
8. Why might the poet write 'Not fear. Not anything / I have a word for'? [2]
-
-
9. What is the turn (volta) in the fox poem? [1]
-
-
10. Analyse the final line 'and I am left holding my keys like a question'. [3]
-
-
-
11. Analyse 'bold bailiff' in the robin poem. [2]
-
-
12. Compare the endings of the two poems. [2]
-
-
13. Compare the forms of the two poems. [2]
-
-
14. Write a thesis for an answer on the fox poem. [2]
-
-

4. Before you hand it in

Panicking and trying to find the 'right' meaning.

Make a reasonable reading, support it with evidence and commit to it.

Paraphrasing the poem line by line.

Organise by ideas or methods with short quotations.

Ignoring form.

Comment on stanza shape, line length, rhyme (or its absence) and enjambment.

Giving both unseen tasks the same amount of time.

Check the marks for each part on your board's papers and budget time to match.