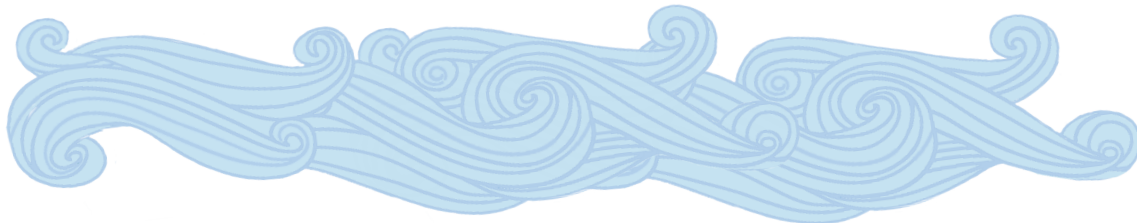


Compare and Contrast in Poetry:

“January” and “The Wind”

Read the two poems, and then answer the questions on the next page.



For question #5, underlined words may vary.

January

By William Carlos Williams

Again I reply to the triple winds
running chromatic fifths of derision
outside my window:

Play louder.

You will not succeed. I am
bound more to my sentences
the more you batter at me
to follow you.

And the wind,
as before, fingers perfectly
its derisive music.

Derision: (n.) scorn, ridicule, or
mockery

The Wind

By Robert Louis Stevenson

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long!
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!



Compare and Contrast in Poetry: "January" and "The Wind"

Answer the following questions about "January" and "The Wind."

1. Fill in the chart below with details about each poem's structure. Details might include a poem's form, shape, stanzas, rhyme scheme, rhythm, or repetition. **Sample answers:**

"January"	"The Wind"
This poem has... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free verse • no rhyme scheme • stanzas not delineated with spacing • deep indentations to separate ideas 	This poem has... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three stanzas of six lines each • AABBCC rhyme scheme • repetition of the last two lines of each stanza • structure similar to an ode

- 2a. Which of these literary devices do both poets use?
- a. repetition **b. personification**
- c. simile d. end rhyme

- 2b. How do both poets use that device in a similar way for effect? **Sample answer:**
- Both poets personify the wind by speaking directly to it, amplifying its role in each poem. The effect is that the wind becomes a character with a personality.**

- 3a. Write one word to describe the tone of each poem below. **Sample answers:**
- The tone of "January" is **annoyed, irritated, frustrated, antagonistic.**
- The tone of "The Wind" is **curious, playful, lighthearted.**

- 3b. Which words in the poem contribute to the tone? Go back to the poems and highlight or underline two lines/phrases in each poem that reveal the tone. Record them below. **Sample answers:**

"January:" **"derision," "you will not succeed," "derisive music"**

"The Wind:" **"toss the kites," "sings so loud a song," "you hid"**

4. What metaphor does each poet use to describe the wind? How do these different comparisons impact the meaning and tone of each poem? **Sample answer:**

Williams compares the wind to a musician playing loud, irritating music. This metaphor contributes to a general tone of anger and frustration. Stevenson compares the wind to a child playing hide-and-seek. This metaphor contributes to a feeling of whimsy and play.

5. What can you infer about the differences between the speakers of these two poems? How can you tell? **Sample answer:**

The speakers of the two poems seem different in age. The speaker of "January" is most likely an adult because he is committed to his word in the face of distraction, and he uses more complex language. The speaker of "The Wind" is a child. He asks the wind if it is "a stronger child than me," and uses simple language to compare the wind to a child playing a game.

6. How is the speaker's attitude toward the wind in "January" different from the speaker's attitude toward the wind in "The Wind"? **Sample answer:**

The speaker in "January" sees the wind as a distraction. He is contemptuous of the wind and tries to challenge and ignore it in favor of his work. The speaker of "The Wind" is curious about the wind. He pays careful attention to it and wants to learn more about it.