

Identifying

Language, Structure
and Presentation



Learning Objective

To explore personification and begin to analyse a poem.

Success Criteria

- To recognise, explain and create personification.
- To know what annotation is.
- To attempt annotation.
- To be able to use evidence in analysis of a poem.

Thought Experiment


Imagine you are a sunflower seed and listen carefully to the story of the seed growing under the soil.



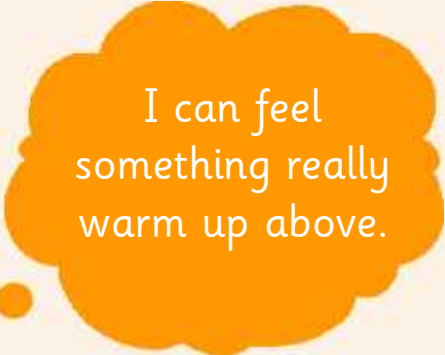
Your Turn!

Write down some thoughts you might have as a sunflower seed.

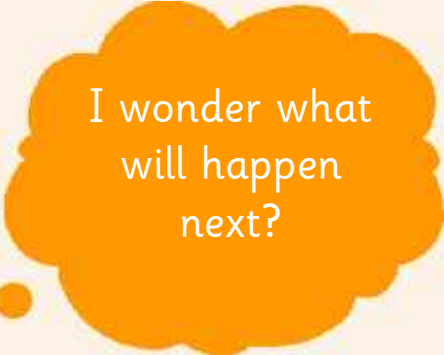
You will use these as inspiration when you write your poem later.



Ooh
that water
feels cold!



I can feel
something really
warm up above.



I wonder what
will happen
next?

Personification

Can anyone explain personification?

Personification

Personification means you describe something that is not a person **as if it *is* a person**. You give it the feelings and the features of a person.

Personification

Example: The sunflower turned her glowing face to the great orb in the sky.

- Does a person have a face?
- Does a sunflower have a face?

But we can **say** the sunflower has a face as it helps our description.

Personification

Example: The sea was wild and angry.

- Can a person be wild and angry?
- Does the sea have emotions and feel wild and angry?

Not really, but it helps to build a picture if we describe it that way.

Test Your Knowledge!

Underline the adjectives, similes and personification.

Test Your Knowledge

Underline the similes you see.

Her face was as white as a full moon. "Oh, no!" she said. Lorn had seen the car career around the corner like a speeding bullet. She also saw her cat, Mindy, de-
like a catwalk model. If she didn't
ent... as squashed as a swatted
athlete to get there in time.

Test Your Knowledge

Underline the adjectives, similes and personification in this passage.

Last night, when the sunflowers were sleeping and the moon looked like a ball parting in the sky, I sneaked out of the rusted house. I didn't really know where I was going, only that something was telling me I had to leave. The dark was like a blanket around me, strangely comforting, keeping me from being discovered. The rustling trees in the garden whispered to me "Be careful, be careful," as I headed out of the creaking gate. The excitement and fear felt like tiny, hot needles in my stomach. What was I thinking of? I nearly turned back, but no, I must go on. The lampposts and attention, like guards lining my route. I was sure this was the right thing to do.

Test Your Knowledge

Underline the similes and personification in the text below.

As they trundled me down to theatre, the wheels of the trolley squeaked like a demented mouse. I was petrified! The lights on the ceiling were gliding past, looking down on me as if they were laughing at my fate.

it was getting worse every
patient knife biting into me
tried to escape my ribcage
ndred. Why me? I thought,

The Wild Sunflower

by Albert Bigelow Paine

At early dawn, like soldiers in their places,
Rank upon rank the golden sunflowers stand;
Gazing toward the east with eager faces,
Waiting, until their god shall touch the land
To life and glory, longingly they wait,
Those voiceless watchers at the morning's gate.

Dawn's portals tremble silently apart;
Far to the east, across the dewy plain,
A glory kindles that in every heart

Finds answering warmth and kindles there again;
And rapture beams in every radiant face
Now softly glowing with supernal grace.

And all day long that silent worship lasts,
And as their god moves grandly down the west,
And every stem a lengthening shadow casts
Toward the east, ah, then they love him best,
And watch till every lingering ray is gone,
Then slowly turn to greet another dawn.



Analysing a Poem

First Steps

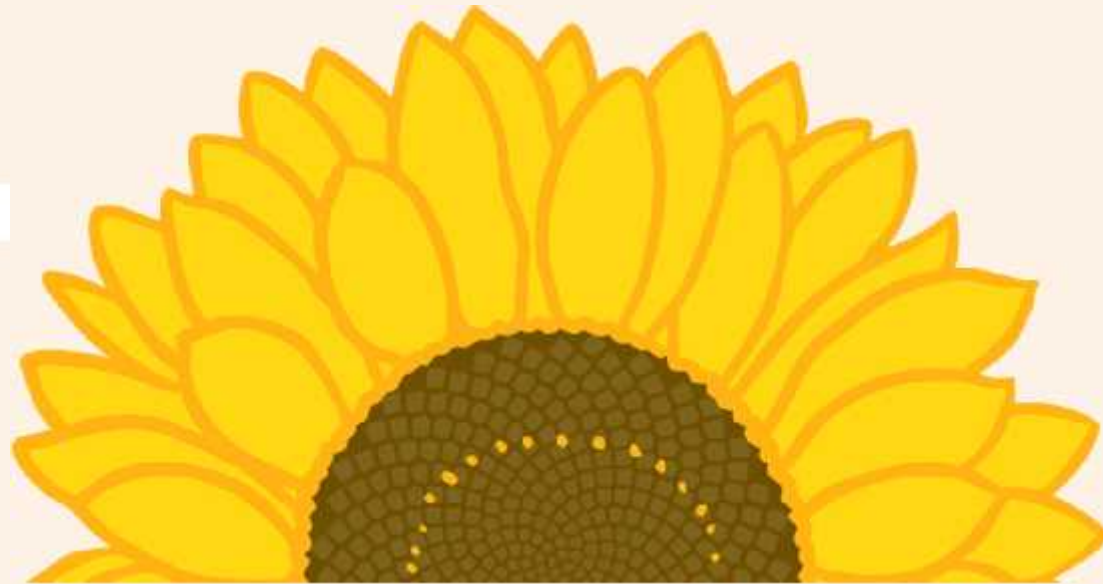
1. **Annotate the poem** to show what it may mean and any interesting language features such as similes, personification and adjectives.
2. **Write about the content** of the poem; what it is about. Always use evidence to back up what you are saying.
3. **Write about the language** of the poem and why you think the poet has used that language. Always use evidence to back up what you are saying.



Analysing a Poem

First Steps

We are going to analyse the first part of The Wild Sunflower by Albert Bigelow Paine



Step One: Annotate the Poem

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Step Two: Write about the Content

- **What it is about?** Always use evidence to back up what you are saying.

Example: What is the poet describing in the first two lines?

In the first two lines the poet is describing sunflowers. I know this because he says '...the golden sunflowers stand.' He says that they are standing up straight in rows, he uses the words 'rank upon rank' and 'stand' which helps me to imagine lots of sunflowers all together.

Your Turn!

- What do you think the poet is saying about the sunflowers in **lines 3 and 4**?
- What do you think the flowers are waiting for in **lines 5 and 6**?

Don't forget to include the evidence for your answer!

Step Two: Write about the Language

- **Why you think the poet has used that language?**
Always use evidence to back up what you are saying.

Example: In the first line, what language does the poet use to describe the sunflowers? Why does he use it?

In the first line, the poet describes the sunflowers as 'like soldiers in their

places.' This is a simile which compares sunflowers to soldiers. I think the

poet uses this to make us think of the flowers standing tall and proud and in

long straight lines.

Your Turn!

- Look at **lines 2 and 3**. Say how the poet has described the sunflowers and why you think he has chosen those particular words.
- Chose a word or phrase that stands out to you in **lines 4,5 or 6**. Why do you think the poet chose that particular word or phrase?

Don't forget to include the evidence for your answer!

How Confident are You?



I'm not really sure about this.



Yes I'm almost sure I've got it.



I'm really confident about this.

Use the system above to answer the following questions.

How Confident are You?

If I asked you to explain a simile to a nine year old.



I'm not really sure about this.



Yes I'm almost sure I've got it.



I'm really confident about this.

How Confident are You?

If I gave you a poem to annotate.



I'm not really sure about this.



Yes I'm almost sure I've got it.



I'm really confident about this.

How Confident are You?

If I asked you to write about language
in a poem.



I'm not really sure
about this.



Yes I'm almost
sure I've got it.



I'm really
confident
about this.

How Confident are You?

If I asked you to make a poster explaining personification.



I'm not really sure about this.



Yes I'm almost sure I've got it.



I'm really confident about this.

How Confident are You?

If I asked you to go home and relax this evening doing something you like.



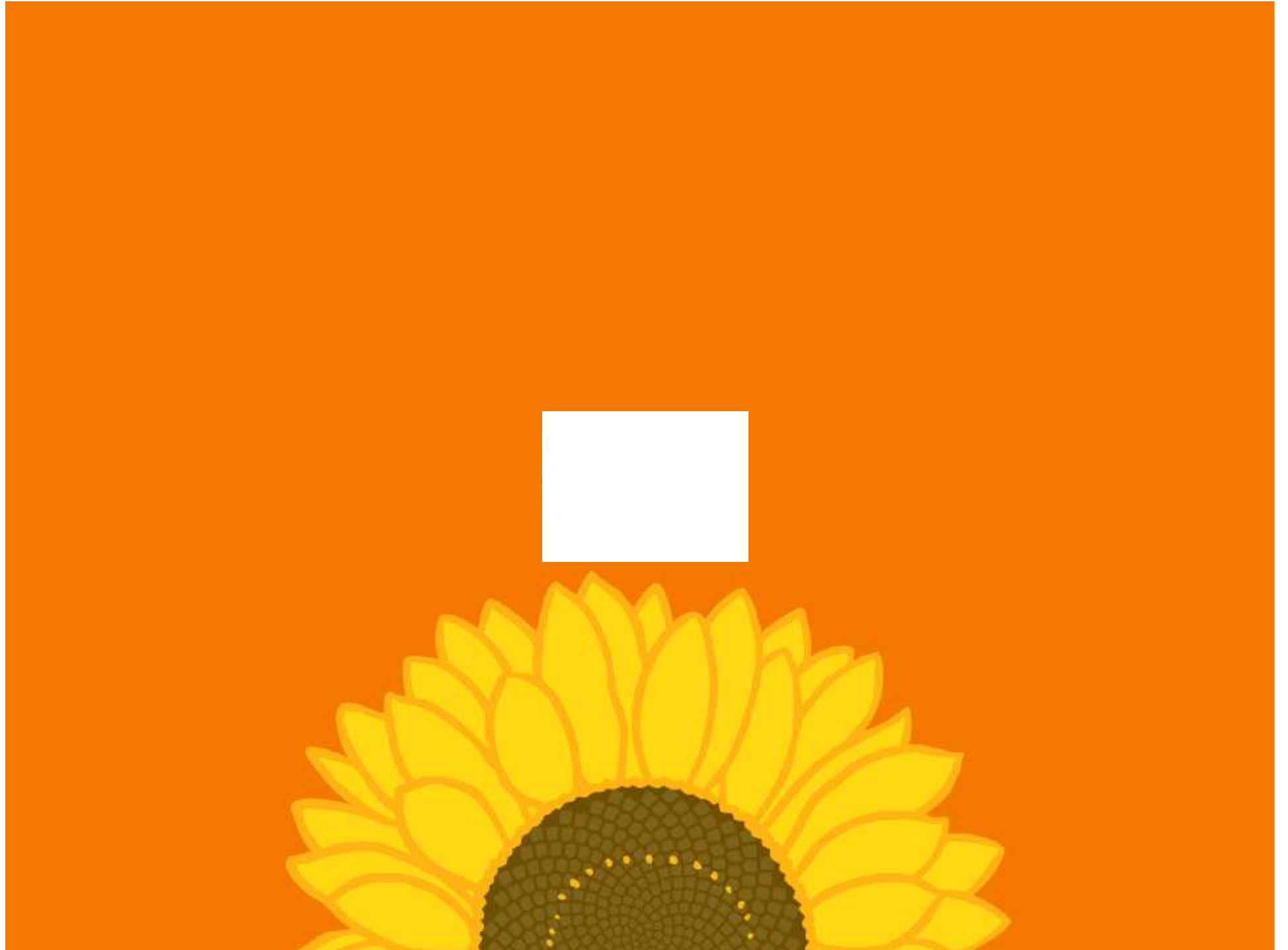
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Language, Structure and Presentation

Starter

Thought Experiment (use [Story of the Sunflower Seed](#))

This starter can be done in a couple of ways. You could do it as a piece of drama, where the pupils actually curl up on the floor and imagine that they are a sunflower seed. As you talk through the description of the seed growing, they do the actions as appropriate.

Of course you may have a class where this will not go down well. You could just talk through the description and they imagine the scene in their mind, or even 'act' it out with their hands, starting with a curled fist and showing the seed growing. The important thing is that they imagine what it would be like to be a sunflower seed.

Pupils then write a few notes on what the seed might be thinking as it starts to grow. This is to add to their inspiration for their final poem. You may want to share a few thoughts before moving on.

Main Learning Activities

Personification

An Introduction to or Revision - of course the pupils have just been creating personification in the previous task. This is a chance to make explicit what they have been doing. Use [Test Your Knowledge](#) to do this along with revising the previous language topics which were adjectives and similes.

Then focus in on The Wild Sunflower. You may wish to read this through again as a class and discuss what analysis might mean. There are three steps to analysing a poem as an introduction to this tricky topic. Only the first six lines will be analysed in detail.

Step One: Annotate the Poem

You can model annotation on the board and pupils can transfer this onto their [Annotation Text](#).

Step Two: Write about the Content

There is an example of a question and answer on content on the ppt along with a reminder to use evidence in the form of quotes. Then there is a chance for the pupils to practise their knowledge.

Step Three: Write about the Language

Again, there is an example and then two questions for the pupils to answer.

Plenary

Check Understanding (How Confident are You?)

Using the 'fingers up' system, one finger for I'm not sure, three for I've almost got it and five for I'm really confident, you can check the general level of confidence with this topic. There are questions to use on the ppt. (There's no two fingers, to avoid any confusion!!)

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Identifying Language, Structure and Presentation

Story of the Sunflower Seed

Imagine you are a sunflower seed, a little bit of life curled up inside a protective shell. You are inside the head of a sunflower, wondering what the next step will be. Then a person comes along who brushes you out of the sunflower and into a paper bag. Some time later, someone takes you between finger and thumb and drops you into a hole in the soil.

They cover you over with more soil and then they water you. You feel the water trickling down through the soil above you and landing on your shell. Does it tickle?

You are warm now and have enough water to start to grow. Slowly you begin to uncurl inside your shell. You start to stretch out. Your shell pops apart and you are free to begin the journey up through the black soil to the sunshine above. You push with all your might to get through the dark, dense, compost surrounding you. You can feel the warmth of the sun getting stronger all the time. Your shell is still attached to your leaves so you are bringing that up with you as well.

At last you burst through the soil and see the sun for the first time. Now you can really grow, you stretch out your leaves and the sunflower shell at last drops to the floor. You are now a seedling, eagerly taking in light from the sun and water and food from the soil through your spindly roots.

Test Your Knowledge

Underline the adjectives, similes and personification in this passage.

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Test Your Knowledge

Underline the similes you see.

Her face was as white as a full moon. “Oh no!” she said. Lorna had seen the car career around the corner like a speeding bullet. She also saw her cat, Mindy, delicately walking down the road like a catwalk model. If she didn’t do something, Mindy would end up as squashed as a swatted fly. Lorna ran like an Olympic athlete to get there in time.

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