

Grade 9 English Worksheet

On the poem "The Twins" by H.S Leigh do interpretative exercises

Read the poem.

The Twins

In form and feature, face and limb,
I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him,
And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
It reached a fearful pitch,
For one of us was born a twin,
Yet not a soul knew which.

One day (to make the matter worse),
Before our names were fixed,
As we were being washed by nurse,
We got completely mixed;
And thus you see, by Fate's decree,
(Or rather nurse's whim),
My brother John got christened *me*,
And I got christened *him*.

This fatal likeness even dogged
My footsteps when at school,
And I was always getting flogged,
For John turned out a fool.
I put this question hopelessly
To everyone I knew -
'What *would* you do, if you were me,
To prove that you were *you*?'

Our close resemblance turned the tide
Of my domestic life;
For somehow my intended bride
Became my brother's wife.
In short, year after year, the same
Absurd mistakes went on;
And when I died - the neighbours came
And buried brother John!

Henry S. Leigh

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Part A: Reciting

Question 1

In groups:

Take turns to read the poem aloud.

Help one another with pronunciation. Note:

- 'ea' in feature,
- 'th' in kith,
- the soft 'b' sound in 'limb',
- the sound of 'ed' in 'dogged', etc.

Check which words are italicised for emphasis.

Look at the rhythm of the poem, how unstressed syllables are followed by stressed syllables.

See how the punctuation helps to identify the pauses and give meaning.

Part B: Meaning

In groups:

Discuss the meanings of new words.

If necessary, translate these into home languages.

Match the following words with their meanings in the poem:

2	feature	caned	(1)
3	limb	future	(1)
4	folks	family	(1)
5	kith	looks	(1)
6	kin	people	(1)
7	pitch	incurable	(1)
8	fixed	friends	(1)
9	decree	ruling	(1)
10	whim	impulse	(1)
11	fatal	point	(1)
12	dogged	followed	(1)
13	flogged	leg	(1)
14	resemblance	likeness	(1)
15	domestic	cousins	(1)
16	intended	nonsensical	(1)
17	absurd	decided	(1)
			(16)

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Part C: Idiomatic language

On your own:

Find parts of sentences in the poem that mean the same as the following phrases:

18	mistaking me	make the matter worse	(2)
19	friends and relations	taking me	(2)
29	no one	not a soul	(2)
21	make more trouble	in short	(2)
22	as luck would have it	turned the tide	(2)
23	was stupid	fate's decree	(2)
24	changed events	turned out a fool	(2)
25	to be precise	kith and kin	(2)
			(16)

Part D: Comprehension

Answer the questions.

- 26 What is the central problem in the first verse of the poem? (2)
- 27 Look at the second verse. How is luck said to have played a hand? (2)
- 28 Look at the second verse. Does the speaker think that the nurse acted deliberately or accidentally? (1)
- 29 In the third verse the speaker gives a reason for having been flogged. What is this? (2)
- 30 What claim does the speaker make in the fourth verse about his marriage? (2)
- 31 Look at the fourth verse. Whose funeral was held? (2)
- 32 Look at the fourth verse. Why could the speaker not be dead? (2)
- 33 Comment on the relationship between the brothers. (2)
- (15)

Part E: Poetic language

Answer the questions.

- 34 Identify an example of alliteration in the first verse. (2)
- 35 Identify an example of assonance in the second verse. (2)
- 36 Study verse one. The rhyming pattern is a,b,a,b,c,d,c,d. (3)
- Give the rhyming patterns for the next three verses. (7)

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Part F: Summarising

Question 37

In your own words, summarise each verse of the poem. This exercise can be done orally or in writing. (10)

Part G: Tone

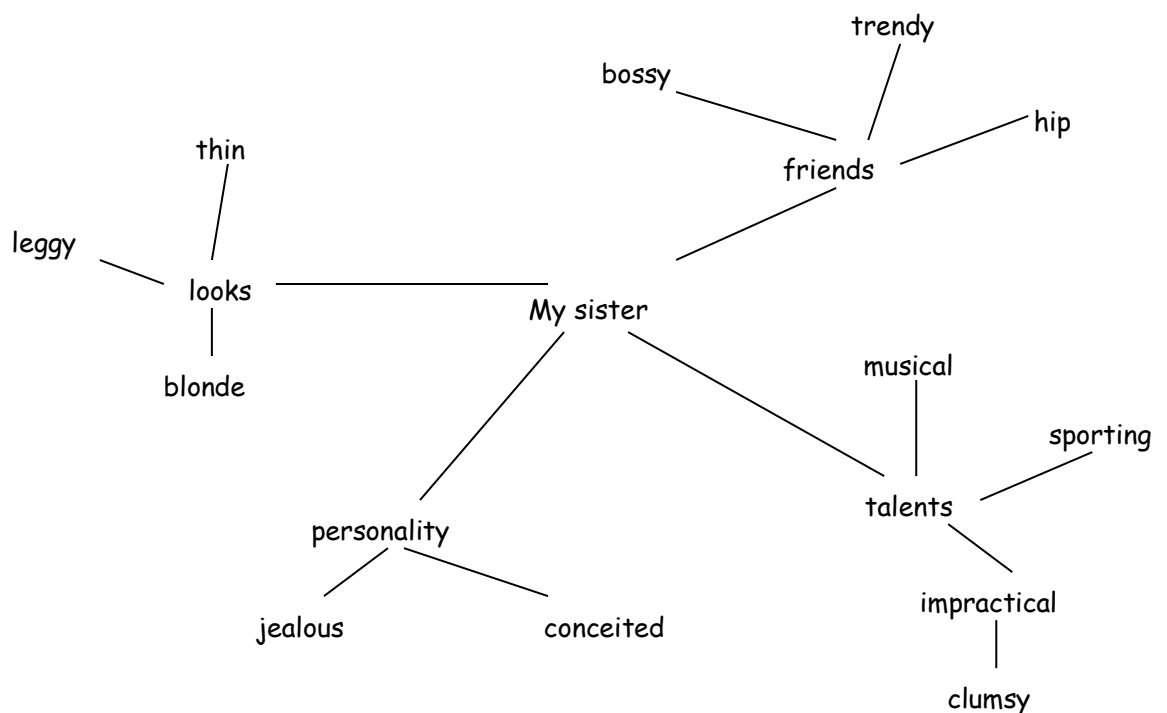
Question 38

Comment on the tone of the poem. Give reasons for your answer by referring to the poem. (10)

Part H: Vocabulary

Question 39

Prepare to write your own poem about a brother or sister. If you don't have a brother or sister, you can write about a cousin or a friend. Brainstorm ideas. Put all your ideas on a mindmap, for example:



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Part I: Own poem

Question 40

Write your own poem about a brother or sister. If you don't have a brother or sister, you can write about a cousin or a friend. Try to be creative and interesting. Include:

- alliteration
- assonance
- rhyming words
- humour

Your poem should be at least eight lines long.

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Suggested Solutions

Part A: Reciting

Question 1

In groups:

Learners should take turns to read the poem aloud.

They should help one another with pronunciation. Point out pronunciation such as:

- 'ea' in feature,
- 'th' in kith,
- the soft 'b' sound in 'limb',
- the sound of 'ed' in 'dogged', etc.

Make sure they check which words are italicised for emphasis.

Tell them to look at the rhythm of the poem, how unstressed syllables are followed by stressed syllables.

Point to how the punctuation helps to identify the pauses and give meaning.

Part B: Meaning

Learners can do this exercise in groups, helping each other by translating into home languages where necessary. It is important that they understand how the English words are used, i.e. what they mean in the context of the poem.

Matching exercise answers:

2	feature	looks	(1)
3	limb	leg	(1)
4	folks	people	(1)
5	kith	friends	(1)
6	kin	cousins	(1)
7	pitch	point	(1)
8	fixed	decided	(1)
9	decree	ruling	(1)
10	whim	impulse	(1)
11	fatal	incurable	(1)
12	dogged	followed	(1)
13	flogged	caned	(1)
14	resemblance	likeness	(1)
15	domestic	family	(1)

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16	intended	future	(1)
17	absurd	nonsensical	(1)
			(16)

Part C: Idiomatic language

Matching exercise answers:

18	mistaking me	taking me	(2)
19	friends and relations	kith and kin	(2)
29	no one	not a soul	(2)
21	make more trouble	make the matter worse	(2)
22	as luck would have it	fate's decree	(2)
23	was stupid	turned out a fool	(2)
24	changed events	turned the tide	(2)
25	to be precise	in short	(2)
			(16)

Part D: Comprehension

Answers

26	No-one can tell the difference between the narrator and his twin. / The boys looked so alike that no-one could tell the difference between them. / One of the boys is the original person and his brother is his twin and you can't tell the difference between them.	(2)
27	The twins got mixed up and given each other's names.	(2)
28	She acted deliberately.	(1)
29	He says he was hit because his brother was stupid and he was mistaken for him.	(2)
30	He claims that his brother married the person he was supposed to marry.	(2)
31	John's funeral was held.	(2)
32	The speaker claims that he had died but he couldn't have because he is still narrating the poem.	(2)
33	They must have been very close because they themselves seem unable to tell the difference between themselves.	(2)
		(15)

Part E: Poetic language

Answers

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34	The 'f' sound is repeated in 'form', 'feature', 'folks', fearful'.	(2)
35	The 'ee' sound is repeated in 'see', 'decree' and 'me'.	(2)
36	Verse 2: e,f,e,f,g,h,g,h Verse 3: l,j,l,j,k,l,k,l Verse 4: m,n,m,n,o,p,o,p	(3)
		(7)

Part F: Summarising

Question 37

The summary should include the following points:
(10)

In the first verse, the speaker explains that he looks very much like his brother. In fact, they look so alike that people can't tell the difference between them. Even their friends and family can't tell them apart.

In the second verse, the speaker describes how, when their nurse was washing them, she mixed them up so that they were christened incorrectly, each getting the other's name. He also suggests that fate may have had a hand in this.

In the third verse, the speaker tells about their schooldays. He claims that he was punished for his brother's stupidity. He asks everyone what they would do in these circumstances. He asks how they would prove their individuality.

In the fourth verse, the speaker says that his brother married the person he was supposed to marry. Finally, he claims that when he died, they buried his brother instead of him.

Part G: Tone

Question 38

The following is a suggested answer. Accept variations on this.
(10)

The poem is light-hearted. The speaker makes fun of the relationship between his brother and himself. In the first verse he mentions that people couldn't tell the difference between them, so much so that they didn't know the difference between themselves. In the second verse, he suggests that luck played a part but he playfully accuses the nurse of having deliberately switched them so that they got christened incorrectly. Then he makes fun of his brother's mistakes at school by attributing them to stupidity and blaming his brother when

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he got caned. In all likelihood, he himself was being caned for his own stupidity. In the fourth verse he even suggests that his brother married his intended bride. From there on the mistakes increased. Finally the speaker claims that when he himself died, his brother was buried. So, he himself can't tell the difference between them. This is all in fun because he wouldn't be able to recite the poem if he was dead.

Part H: Vocabulary

Question 39

Check that learners have created their own mind maps. You can allocate a mark to the mind map if desired.

Part I: Own poem

Question 40

Learners should write their own poems which should be creative and interesting. They should include:

- alliteration
- assonance
- rhyming words
- humour

The poem should be at least eight lines long.

Use the checklist in the Appendix of Assessment Tools to assess it.

Assessment checklist: Poem

The learner's poem includes:	Possible marks	
• alliteration	2	
• assonance	2	
• rhyming words	2	
• humour	2	
The poem is creative and interesting.	2	
	10	

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*Junior
Poetry
Workshop*

NEW EDITION

Edited by

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and

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Preface

Here is a new *Junior Poetry Workshop*.

Those familiar with the first edition will notice many changes. The new poems we have introduced and the old favourites we have retained will, we hope, be enjoyed by the pupils in junior forms of secondary schools. They will find stories to involve them, situations and people to laugh at and verses and ballads to read, sing and act. The more challenging poems will help them appreciate the craftsmanship of the poet and deepen their awareness of themselves and others.

If the selections and activities encourage boys and girls to find pleasure in reading poetry and satisfaction from their discussion and writing, the 'workshop' will have achieved its aim.

H. J. C.

N. R.

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As we were being washed by nurse,
We got completely mixed;
And thus you see, by Fate's decree,
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And I got christened *him*.

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To everyone I knew –
'What *would* you do, if you were me,
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And when I died – the neighbours came
And buried brother John!

Henry S. Leigh

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And then I tapped the tank in pain –
Those knells of drought and doom:
Our tank at last gone dry again,
Our home cast down in gloom;
But, oh, the joy that filled our hearts
When came the bounteous rain
And the drain-pipe sang in fits and starts
And filled the tank again!

James Hackston

Jonathan Bing Does Arithmetic

When Jonathan Bing was young, they say,
He slipped his school and ran away;
Sat in the meadow and twiddled his thumbs
And never learnt spelling or grammar or sums.

So now if you tell him, 'Add one to two,'
'Explain what you mean,' he'll answer you,
'Do you mean 2-morrow or that's 2 bad?
And what sort of 1 do you want me to add?'

'For there's 1 that was first when the race was 1,
(For he ran 2 fast for the rest to run).
But if 2 had 1 when the race was through,
I'd say your answer was 1 by 2.'

'Oh Jonathan Bing, you haven't the trick
Of doing a sum in arithmetic.'
'Oh give me a chance, just one more try,'
Says Jonathan Bing with a tear in his eye.

'Very well, Jonathan, try once more,
Add up a hundred and seventy-four.'
'A hundred, and seventy-four,' says he,
'Why – that's a great age for a person to be!'

Beatrice Curtis Brown

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