

## Grade 8 English Home Language Worksheet

### Poetry analysis - "The Sea"

Read the following poem and answer the questions on it.

<b>The Sea</b>	<b>James Reeves</b>
The sea is a hungry dog, Giant and grey. He rolls on the beach all day. With his clashing teeth and shaggy jaws Hour upon hour he gnaws The rumbling, tumbling stones, And 'Bones, bones, bones, bones! ' The giant sea-dog moans, Licking his greasy paws.	5
And when the night wind roars And the moon rocks in the stormy cloud, He bounds to his feet and snuffs and sniffs, Shaking his wet sides over the cliffs, And howls and hollos long and loud.	10
But on quiet days in May or June, When even the grasses on the dune Play no more their reedy tune, With his head between his paws He lies on the sandy shores, So quiet, so quiet, he scarcely snores	15     20

### Questions

1. Outline the main idea in each stanza. (4)
- 2.1 Give the rhyme scheme of the poem. (1)
- 2.2 Discuss the use of rhyme in stanza 1. (5)
- 3.1 How would you describe the rhythm of the poem? Explain. (2)
- 3.2 How does the rhythm contribute to the effectiveness of the poem? (2)
4. The first line establishes the sustained metaphor of the poem.
- 4.1 Explain this metaphor as it is given in line 1. (1)

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- 4.2 Find one way in which the metaphor is sustained in each stanza.
- 4.2.1 stanza 1 (1)
- 4.2.2 stanza 2 (1)
- 4.2.3 stanza 3 (1)
- 4.2.4 stanza 4 (1)
- 4.3 Discuss the effectiveness of the metaphor as it is used in
- 4.3.1 line 8 (3)
- 4.3.2 18-19 (3)
- 4.4 What other metaphor could you suggest to describe the movement of the waves?  
Give reasons for your answer. (5)
- 5 What makes this a poem? (5)

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### Suggested Solutions

1. stanza 1: The waves roll in and out, making a noise.  
stanza 2: The tides wash in and out, making a moaning sound.  
stanza 3: In stormy weather, the sea rises and crashes over the cliffs  
stanza 4: In calm weather, the waves slide gently on the shore (4)
- 2.1 abbc cdddc ceffe ggg cc (1)
- 2.2 The rhyme links all the words related to the metaphor. ✓ The first word establishes the metaphor ("dog"), ✓ and the following rhymes sustain the idea of the sea as a grey dog ✓ with paws and jaws, that he uses to gnaw. ✓ The rhyme also extends to including the beach as part of the metaphor: the stones that the dog gnaws are his bones. ✓ (5)
- 3.1 The rhythm is lively and unpredictable. There is no obvious beat in the lines. (2)
- 3.2 This rhythm reflects the unpredictable movement of the waves. The same energy is seen in both the movement of the waves and in the rhythm. (2)
- 4.1 The sea is described as a hungry dog. (1)
- 4.2.1 The sea is described as having teeth and jaws. (1)
- 4.2.2 The sea is described as gnawing on a bone the way a dog does, and having greasy paws. (1)
- 4.2.3 The sea is described as jumping up, sniffing, shaking water over the cliffs and howling like a dog. (1)
- 4.2.4 The sea is described as a dog, lying with his head on his paws and hardly snoring. (1)
- 4.3.1 The sea is described as a huge dog, moaning. ✓ This effectively gives the roar of the waves ✓ as if it were an animal in pain. ✓ (3)
- 4.3.2 The sea is described as a dog lying quietly. This effectively conveys the quiet sounds of the sea, as if it were a dog asleep and hardly snoring. The sound of the waves on the shore is gentle, a soft shushing sound, the kind of sound a dog would make when it lies peacefully asleep. (Mark globally) (3)
- 4.4 Any creative and original idea 1 mark. Supported 3 marks. (4)
5. It has stanzas ✓ (as opposed to paragraphs in prose and verses in a song); it has shortened lines ✓; a rhyme scheme ✓; rhythm ✓, and figurative language ✓. (5)

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