
Investigating Personification – Classic

Lodged

by Robert Frost

The rain to the wind said,
“You push and I’ll pelt.”
They so smote* the garden bed
That the flowers actually knelt,
And lay lodged*—though not dead.
I know how the flowers felt.

*Line 3: **Smote** = to strike or inflict a heavy blow upon.

*Line 5: **Lodge** = to beat down flat.

Investigating Personification – Classic Student Worksheet

Personification: A figure of speech in which an object or animal is given human feelings, thoughts, or attitudes.

For example:

My report card smiled, showing off straight A's.

**Can the rain really talk to the wind? Can the wind really listen to the rain?
Can the flowers really kneel?**

What are some of the effects that the tool of personification brings to this poem?

If the rain and wind and flowers were real people, how would one describe the event that is occurring?

If the flowers were real people, how do they feel after the wind and the rain "smote" the garden bed?

Speculate on why the speaker of the poem empathizes with the flowers?

Investigating Personification – Classic & Contemporary

Mirror

by Sylvia Plath

- 1 I am silver and exact.
I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately.
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
- 5 I am not cruel, only truthful—

I Am Music

by Common

- 1 You can feel me all over alive,
I help culture survive, I opened the eyes of many
Styles y'all wrote in the skies, with your lows and highs,
open your mind to hear me
- 5 In the streets I beat cops and obsolete
On every station it's hot you can't stop my heat
I taught Jay and Dre how to rock the beat
On what's going on today yo, I gots to speak
I take the stand, yo you could feel me bam
- 10 Whether in Larry Graham or Steely Dan
Live I be killing it man For how long I survived yo I'm realer than man
Got a soft side but I'm still a man
For me women cry and children dance,
I'm trying to eat I could'a got a mil and ran
- 15 But like Sly for the fam still I stand
I am music.

Investigating Personification – Classic & Contemporary Student Worksheet

Personification: A figure of speech in which an object or animal is given human feelings, thoughts, or attitudes.

For example: My computer stared at me, deciding if it wanted to cooperate.

What are some of the “human” actions that the mirror takes in Plath’s poem?

What kind of “human attitude” has the poet given the mirror?

Plath is known for her sparse, stoic poems that leave the reader with shrill feelings of despair. Explain why this poem fits into that category?

In “I Am Music,” what are some of the “human” actions taken by music?

What kind of “human attitude” has the poet given music?

Common is known for his politically/spiritually conscious lyrics. Explain why his poem, “I Am Music” fits into that category?

How are the poems of Plath and Common alike?

How are the poems of Plath and Common different?

Poetry Writing Exercise: Personification

Learning Objective: Students will identify and utilize the poetic device of personification.
Standards Addressed: 9/10 W&O 1.3, 1.4; LRA 3.7; R 1.1, 1.2, 11/12 W&O 1.1, 1.2; W 2.2
Materials needed: This worksheet.
Methodology: See below.

Personify 3 OBJECTS:

For example:

The report card smiled.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Personify 3 PLACES:

For example:

My house sang the Blues.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Write a PERSONIFICATION POEM where one of your chosen objects interacts with one of your chosen places.

For example:

Personification Poem

My report card smiled,
showing off straight A's.
My house no longer sang the Blues.
It's great to have happy grades,
and live in a neighborhood that is happy with you.

Personification Poem
