

Analyzing War Poetry:
Comparing Themes

“In Flanders Fields” by Lt. Col. John McCrae, MD

1. List all of the sensory details McCrae uses in the poem.
2. Does the tone of the poem seem to be positive, negative, or neutral? What are three words you might use to describe the tone of the poem?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
3. Choose one of the words you listed in number 2. Find two examples of diction (word choice) from the poem which demonstrate that particular tone.
 - a. _____ (line ____)
 - b. _____ (line ____)
4. What type(s) of figurative language does the writer use in the poem? Circle all that apply.
 - a. Simile
 - b. Metaphor
 - c. Personification
5. Write the examples of figurative language, providing the line number(s) for each example. Also, identify which type of figurative language (see number 4) is being used in each example.
6. Who is the speaker in this poem? How do you know?
7. How does the speaker feel about the war? How do you know? Give textual evidence.
8. Overall, what is the theme, or message, the writer is trying to convey to readers? How do you know? Give textual evidence.

“Dulce et Decorum Est” by Wilfred Owen

1. List all of the sensory details Owen uses in the poem.

2. Does the tone of the poem seem to be positive, negative, or neutral? What are three words you might use to describe the tone of the poem?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

3. Choose one of the words you listed in number 2. Find two examples of diction (word choice) from the poem which demonstrate that particular tone.
 - a. _____ (line ____)
 - b. _____ (line ____)

4. What type(s) of figurative language does the writer use in the poem? Circle all that apply.
 - a. Simile
 - b. Metaphor
 - c. Personification

5. Write the examples of figurative language, providing the line number(s) for each example. Also, identify which type of figurative language (see number 4) is being used in each example.

6. Who is the speaker in this poem? How do you know?

7. How does the speaker feel about the war? How do you know? Give textual evidence.

8. Overall, what is the theme, or message, the writer is trying to convey to readers? How do you know? Give textual evidence.

Making the Connection

9. How do the two poems, “In Flanders Fields” and “Dulce et Decorum Est” compare in tone and theme? Explain using examples from the poems.