Three Voices, Three Eras

Compare periods through theme, voice, and form.

12.T.PM.1.b "Compare and contrast major authors and works of three periods of English and American literary history, including key themes and stylistic features. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one phrase in each paragraph that names a theme or concern. Circle one phrase in each paragraph that names a stylistic feature, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside the periods in chronological order.

From Landscape to City

(1) British Romanticism, which flourished around 1798 to 1832, often treats nature as a source of insight rather than mere scenery. In "Tintern Abbey," William Wordsworth revisits a landscape and recalls how it has shaped his mind over time. His blank verse, reflective first-person voice, and long, flowing sentences imitate thought in motion. The poem's speaker seeks a lasting relationship among memory, the natural world, and moral feeling. Romantic writers often valued emotion, imagination, and the individual's inner life.

(2) American Realism emerged after the Civil War and focused on recognizable social conditions, regional speech, and pressures on ordinary people. Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn follows Huck down the Mississippi River as he questions rules taught by a slaveholding society. Huck's plain, vernacular narration and comic exaggeration create satire, exposing the gap between public respectability and private cruelty. Unlike Wordsworth's meditative lyric speaker, Twain uses a restless journey and colloquial voice to test conscience against custom.

(3) Early twentieth-century Modernism responded to rapid urban change, war, and uncertainty by breaking from smooth, orderly forms. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," T. S. Eliot presents an anxious urban speaker whose questions and quotations interrupt one another. Fragmented images, abrupt shifts, and allusions make readers experience his hesitation and isolation. Like Wordsworth, Eliot explores inner life, but his city offers no stable healing landscape. Unlike Twain's direct vernacular narrator, Eliot's densely layered voice leaves meaning unsettled, a defining Modernist effect.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What concern do Wordsworth and Eliot share, and how do their settings differ?

2. Compare Twain's narration with Eliot's voice and effect.

3. How do Wordsworth's and Eliot's styles reflect different periods?

4. What does Twain's journey test, and what does Wordsworth's landscape support?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

In exactly four sentences, compare all three works. Include one shared concern, one stylistic contrast, and a claim about how each period shapes its work.

ANSWER KEY

Three Voices, Three Eras

GRADE 12 · 12.T.PM.1.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one phrase in each paragraph that names a theme or concern. Circle one phrase in each paragraph that names a stylistic feature, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside the periods in chronological order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What concern do Wordsworth and Eliot share, and how do their settings differ?	**Both explore inner life. Wordsworth uses a healing natural landscape, while Eliot uses an isolating city.**
2	Compare Twain's narration with Eliot's voice and effect.	**Twain uses direct vernacular and satire to expose social hypocrisy. Eliot uses a layered, fragmented voice to create uncertainty and isolation.**
3	How do Wordsworth's and Eliot's styles reflect different periods?	**Wordsworth's flowing blank verse reflects Romantic reflection and connection to nature. Eliot's abrupt fragments reflect Modernist uncertainty.**
4	What does Twain's journey test, and what does Wordsworth's landscape support?	**Twain's journey tests conscience against social custom. Wordsworth's landscape supports memory, moral feeling, and personal insight.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

All three works examine a person trying to judge the world around them. Wordsworth's flowing blank verse turns a remembered landscape into moral renewal, while Twain's vernacular journey exposes injustice beneath social rules. Eliot's fragments and interruptions make Prufrock's city feel more confining than Wordsworth's natural setting. These differences show Romantic trust in nature, Realist attention to social custom, and Modernist uncertainty.

Accept equivalent comparisons supported by accurate details from the passage. For Part 3, require exactly four sentences that address all three works, a shared concern, a style contrast, and period influence.