

Fog's New Voice

Study how a poem transforms a short story.

9-10W4 “Create a poem, story, play, art work, or other response to a text, author, theme or personal experience; demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a variety of techniques and genres. Explain divergences from the original when appropriate.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that appear in both the story summary and the poem, circle one phrase that creates an image, and box the sentence that explains a divergence from the story.

A Poem Answers a Story

- ① In the short story “The Empty Net,” a teenage fisher named Mara ignores her grandfather’s warning and rows beyond the harbor before dawn. She hopes to catch enough mackerel to pay for a damaged bicycle. A thick fog erases the shore, and Mara hears a bell buoy through the gray water. She turns toward its sound, finds her way home, and admits that she was reckless. Her grandfather does not scold her. Instead, he gives her a dry blanket and says that a person can learn from a frightened morning. The following poem is a response to that story.
- ② “Bell Buoy” I am not Mara, clutching an oar. I am the iron throat in the fog, ringing one bright note at a time. Below me, mackerel flash like loose coins, but I keep no bicycle money and need no shore. When the small boat turns, I shake my bell until gray water opens a path of sound. At home, a blanket waits, warm as sunrise. No one sees the buoy listening while Mara tells the truth to her grandfather, whose silence is kinder than a storm outside.
- ③ In this response, I changed the narrator from Mara to the bell buoy. The original story shows Mara choosing to follow the buoy, but the poem imagines that the buoy notices her and deliberately guides her. This divergence lets the setting become a speaker, so the fog feels less like empty weather and more like a character. I kept the fog, mackerel, bicycle money, blanket, and truthful confession because those details connect the poem clearly to the story. Personification gives the buoy an “iron throat,” while the simile compares mackerel to loose coins. Repeated sounds of b, g, and s create a muffled, watery mood.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Name two details from “The Empty Net” that the poem keeps.

2 What is one major divergence between the original story and the poem?

3 Identify one technique in the poem. Quote the words that show it, then explain its effect.

4 Why does the writer say they kept several details from the original story?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a title and a 6- to 8-line poem that responds to “The Empty Net.” Use at least two details from the story and one technique such as imagery, personification, simile, or sound. Change the narrator or one event, then write one sentence explaining your divergence and why you made it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that appear in both the story summary and the poem, circle one phrase that creates an image, and box the sentence that explains a divergence from the story. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two details from "The Empty Net" that the poem keeps.	Answers may include the fog, mackerel, bicycle money, the bell buoy, Mara's boat or oar, the blanket, or Mara's truthful confession.
2	What is one major divergence between the original story and the poem?	The poem changes the narrator from Mara to the bell buoy and imagines that the buoy deliberately guides her.
3	Identify one technique in the poem. Quote the words that show it, then explain its effect.	For example, "iron throat" personifies the buoy, making part of the setting seem like a speaker. Other valid examples include the simile "mackerel flash like loose coins" or sound imagery.
4	Why does the writer say they kept several details from the original story?	The writer kept them so the poem would connect clearly to the original story.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Harbor Rope I hold the dock when Mara slips away. Before dawn, my wet coils taste of salt. Her bicycle dream pulls tight against the tide. Then fog shuts its gray door. Far out, the buoy knocks once, twice. I cannot call her back, but I loosen when her oar returns. I made the harbor rope the speaker, so the shore can seem worried even though the original follows Mara.

Accept responses that accurately identify choices described in the passage and support technique answers with quoted language. For the poem, accept varied creative choices if the student uses at least two source details, a clear technique, a meaningful divergence, and an explanation of that change.