

Echoes in Rain

Compare a Scottish ballad with a contemporary Canadian poem.

12.RL.3.A “Compare and contrast traditional and contemporary texts that draw on similar themes, patterns of events, or character types with an emphasis on poetry, from various cultures.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one line in each text that shows someone is absent or unsupported. Circle one image in each text that reveals how the setting responds to that absence, then use your marks to compare the poems.

Two Poems, One Pattern

- ① Read the two poetic texts as an anthology pairing. Text A is an excerpt from “The Twa Corbies,” a traditional Scottish ballad recorded by Walter Scott in 1802. Scots words include *alane*, alone; *twa*, two; *corbies*, ravens; and *hame*, home. Text B is a contemporary Canadian poem written for this worksheet. Both texts use line breaks, so refer to a line by counting from the top of its text. Notice how each poem builds meaning through its speaker, images, sequence of events, and relationships among characters or objects.
- ② Text A, “The Twa Corbies,” traditional Scottish ballad excerpt: As I was walking all *alane*, I heard twa corbies making a mane; The tane unto the t’other say, “Where sall we gang and dine to-day?” “In behint yon auld fail dyke, I wot there lies a new-slain knight; And naebody kens that he lies there, But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.” “His hound is to the hunting gane, His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame, His lady’s ta’en another mate, So we may make our dinner sweet.”
- ③ Text B, “Night Inventory,” contemporary Canadian poem: At 2 a.m., I locked the laundromat. Across the street, a courier’s bicycle leaned against a bus shelter, one wheel turning. An app kept flashing: ORDER DELAYED. No friend came through the rain. No manager called his name. A pair of gulls worried a paper bag at the curb beside his insulated pack. I dialed the number stamped on its strap and waited under the blue emergency light. By dawn, the bike was gone, but the wet street held its thin chain of light.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What similar pattern of events connects Text A and Text B? Use details from both poems.

2 Compare the corbies and the gulls. What does each pair of birds do, and how does that difference shape the mood?

3 How does the point of view in each poem affect the reader's response to the absent person?

4 Identify one feature that makes Text A traditional and one feature that makes Text B contemporary. Explain how those features shape the same general concern differently.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write 90 to 120 words explaining how one specific image from Text A and one from Text B develop a similar concern in different ways. Include two brief quoted phrases, and explain how each poem's historical or cultural setting shapes its image.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one line in each text that shows someone is absent or unsupported. Circle one image in each text that reveals how the setting responds to that absence, then use your marks to compare the poems. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What similar pattern of events connects Text A and Text B? Use details from both poems.	Both poems show evidence of a vulnerable or missing person whose usual companions are absent. The knight lies unknown behind a wall while his hawk, hound, and lady are away, and the courier's bicycle and pack remain while no friend or manager comes.
2	Compare the corbies and the gulls. What does each pair of birds do, and how does that difference shape the mood?	The corbies discuss eating the knight, creating a cold and predatory mood. The gulls worry a paper bag near the courier's pack, creating an unsettling urban image without stating that they will harm anyone.
3	How does the point of view in each poem affect the reader's response to the absent person?	Text A uses the corbies' dialogue, so the knight is treated as prey. Text B uses a first-person observer who calls the number on the strap and waits, so the courier's absence receives human concern.
4	Identify one feature that makes Text A traditional and one feature that makes Text B contemporary. Explain how those features shape the same general concern differently.	Text A uses Scots dialect, rhyme, and ballad dialogue, placing abandonment in a harsh older world of hunting and rank. Text B uses free verse and details such as an app, a courier, and emergency lights, placing abandonment in a modern city.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In Text A, the “new-slain knight” lies behind an old wall, an image that makes his isolation feel hidden and final. The ravens see his body as food, reflecting the ballad's harsh world of hunting, rank, and death. In Text B, the “courier's bicycle” left at a bus shelter becomes a modern image of a missing worker. Instead of medieval animals speaking with cruel plans, the contemporary speaker notices technology, rain, and an emergency light, then tries to call for help. Both images show abandonment, but Text B allows human responsibility to interrupt indifference.

Accept comparisons that accurately connect a shared pattern, theme, image, or character role and support the comparison with details from both poems. For the open response, accept varied interpretations when the student uses two quotations and explains how the texts' different settings or forms shape meaning.