

Creating Imagery - Poems on a Theme

The Sea

The sea is a hungry dog,
Giant and grey.
He rolls on the beach all day.
With his clashing teeth and shaggy jaws
Hour upon hour he gnaws
The rumbling, tumbling stones,
And 'Bones, bones, bones, bones!'
The giant sea-dog moans,
Licking his greasy paws.

And when the night wind roars
And the moon rocks in the stormy cloud,
He bounds to his feet and snuffs and sniffs,
Shaking his wet sides over the cliffs,
And howls and hollos long and loud.

But on quiet days in May or June,
When even the grasses on the dune
Play no more their reedy tune,
With his head between his paws
He lies on the sandy shores,
So quiet, so quiet, he scarcely snores.

James Reeves

Sea-Fever

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown *spume*, and the sea-gulls crying. *foam*

I must go down to the seas again, to the *vagrant* gypsy life, *wandering freely*
To the gull's way and the whale's way, where the wind's like a *whetted* knife;
sharpened
And all I ask is a merry *yarn* from a laughing fellow-rover, *tale*
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long *trick*'s over. *work, duty*

John Masefield (1878-1967)

Saving Kimmeridge Bay, Dorset by Rachel Jones (aged 9)

I like the cracking, crumbling cliffs,
The glorious sky
And the furious sea
The oily shale that smells when you break it,
The shiny seaweed that smells when you shake it.

I like the glimmering, shimmering rock pools
The racy shrimps
And the lacy fish
The anemones that cling to your fingers
The curious crabs that nibble your fingers

I like the shells that cover the seashore,
The crinkly cockles
And the wrinkly whelks
The barnacles bristling on slate on the seabed
The limpets that stick to the rocks on the seabed

I like the fossils preserved over centuries
The curl of their shape
And the squirl of their shells
The fragile fossils that flake if you tap them
The delicate fossils that snap if you touch them.

I like the colourful boats in the bay
The lazy sea breeze
And the hazy sea sun
The fisherman sitting at work on the shoreline
The yachts out at sea silhouetting the skyline

I would like Kimmeridge kept safe for my children
No drilling for oil
No killing sea life
Keep Kimmeridge protected from deadly pollution
Keep Kimmeridge protected from man's evolution.

Poetry Definitions

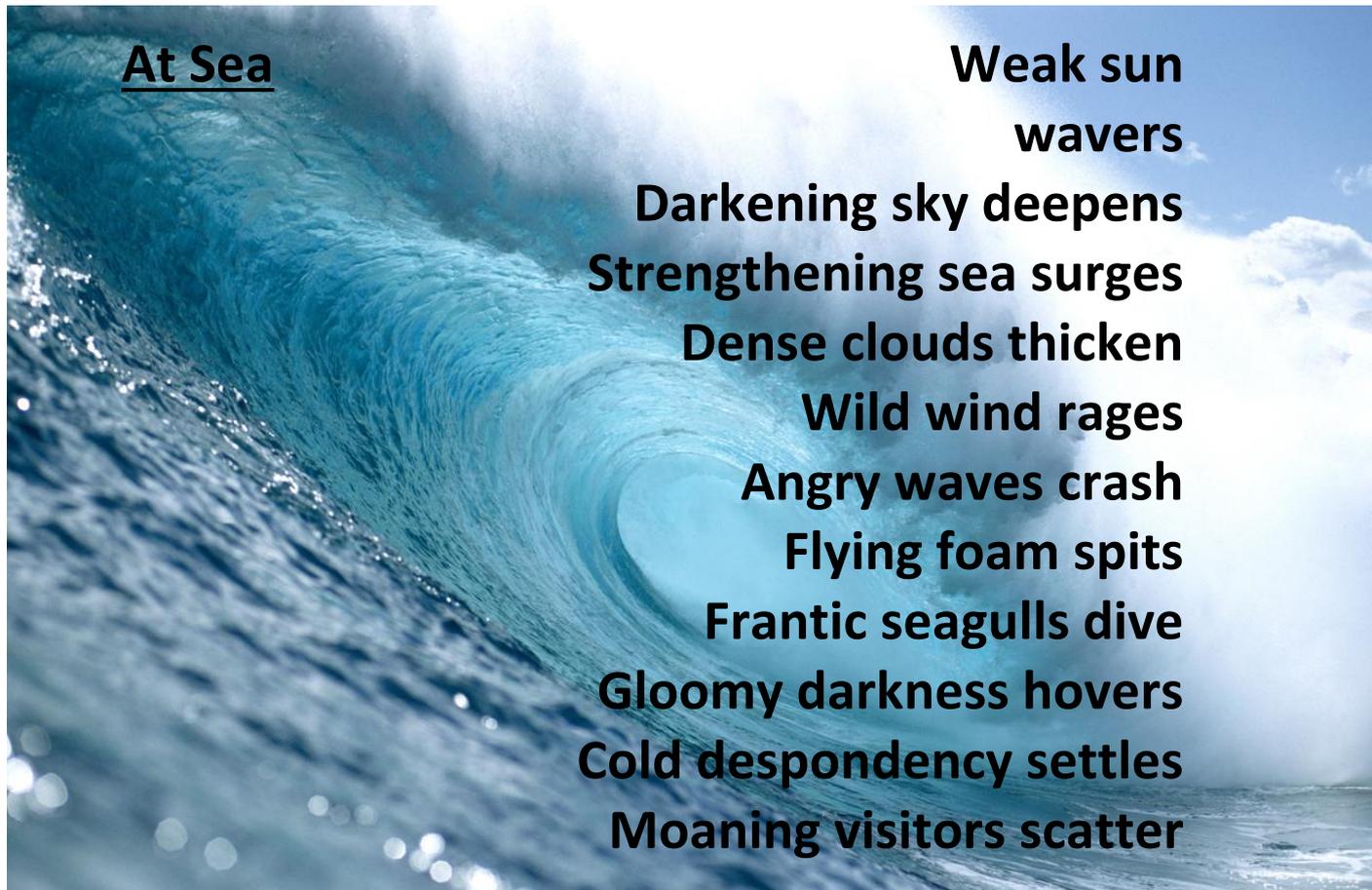
- imagery
mind
- the use of strong language which creates pictures (images) in your mind as you read it. All the uses of language given below may be referred to as imagery, especially simile and metaphor.
- simile
- a type of description where a thing or person is compared to something else. It is usually introduced by *like ...* or *as... as ...*, e.g. *The park was as silent as midnight.*
The book spun through the air like a confused spaceship.
- metaphor
- in this comparison an object is spoken of as though it *is* something else, even though it is clear that this is not literally true. e.g. *My gran is an absolute diamond.*
Her cutting comments sawed sharply through our conversation.
- personification
- a special type of metaphor in which an object is spoken of as though it has human (or sometimes animal) qualities, e.g. *The kettle sang and whistled cheerfully.*
Poor Adam had been completely swallowed up by a ferocious pile of homework.
- rhythm
- the sound system in poetry or music, created with the use of stressed and unstressed syllables, e.g. *To be or not to be – that is the question.*
Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
- rhyme
- two words are said to rhyme when they end with either the same vowel phoneme or the same vowel-plus-consonant pair of phonemes, e.g. *sky/try trap/clap /mishap*
- rhyme scheme
- in rhyming poetry the rhymes usually occur at the end of lines. The pattern describing which final words rhyme with which is known as the rhyme scheme and letters of the alphabet are used to denote this, e.g. *ABAB* indicates that the 1st and 3rd lines rhyme, so do the 2nd and 4th; *ABBACC* indicates that the 1st and 4th lines rhyme, so do the 2nd and 3rd, so do the 5th and 6th.
- alliteration
- grouping words together which begin with the same consonant sound(s), e.g. *the murmuring of innumerable men; silent, slippery, slimy slug*
- onomatopoeia
- use of a word which makes the sound it describes when it is said, e.g. *crash,*
whisper, gurgle, whoosh

Comprehension: sea poems

1. Read **The Sea** by James Reeves.
2. What is the sea being compared to? Find at least 3 metaphors from the poem and explain the comparisons being made. Do you find these metaphors effective?
3. How does the poem rhyme? Does it follow a pattern?
4. Which parts of the poem are noisy? Which parts are quiet?
5. Check what onomatopoeia and alliteration mean. Can you find any examples in the poem?
6. Does the poet surprise you at all (e.g. by using language in unusual ways or by including an unusual idea)? Give examples.
7. Read through the poems **Sea-Fever** and **Saving Kimmeridge Bay, Dorset**. Using the Poetry Definitions sheet, find and highlight as many of these features in the poems as you can.
8. Which of these poems did you enjoy the most? Write a paragraph explaining your answer. Include any favourite words or phrases you like from your chosen poem.

Writing Task:

Read through the following poem, then look how it has been 'translated' into prose narrative (a paragraph you would see in a story). Using this as an example, read through James Reeves' poem **The Sea** again. 'Translate' this poem into prose narrative (explain in paragraphs how the sea is behaving as if you were going to include this in a story).



At Sea

Weak sun
wavers
Darkening sky deepens
Strengthening sea surges
Dense clouds thicken
Wild wind rages
Angry waves crash
Flying foam spits
Frantic seagulls dive
Gloomy darkness hovers
Cold despondency settles
Moaning visitors scatter

At Sea – prose narrative

When the weak sun wavered, the sky seemed to darken and take on a deeper colour. The dense clouds thickened and the wild wind raged, causing the waves to leap angrily, spitting out their flying foam. All around, frantic seagulls were diving. A gloomy darkness hovered; as cold despondency began to settle, the moaning visitors scattered in all directions.

Building Expanded Noun Phrases to Create Evocative Writing

- Choose a sentence.
- Think of details to add to the noun to make it evocative (stimulating feelings).
- Add details to build an expanded noun phrase.
- What strong verbs or adverbs could you also add?

The ship sailed away from the island.

Six birds were wheeling above the waves.

The tide was coming in fast covering the sand.

There was only a seal swimming along the coast.

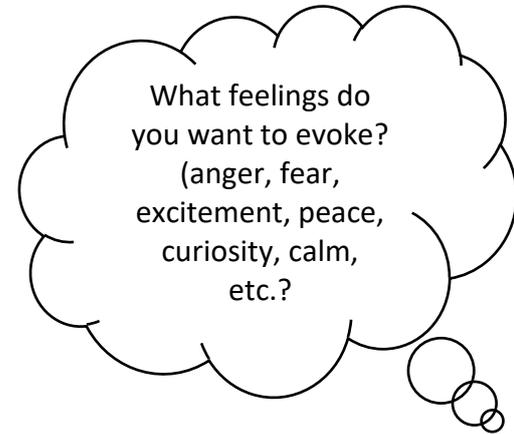
The waves were beating against the bottom of the cliffs.

A line of boats appeared on the horizon.

The tip of the whale's tail disappeared into the water.

The dolphins leapt and dived across the bay.

The ship finally sank below the waves.



Example: The towering waves, some larger than a house, were beating with the violent anger of an omnipotent sea-god against the foot of the cliffs, more than two hundred metres below the ledge.