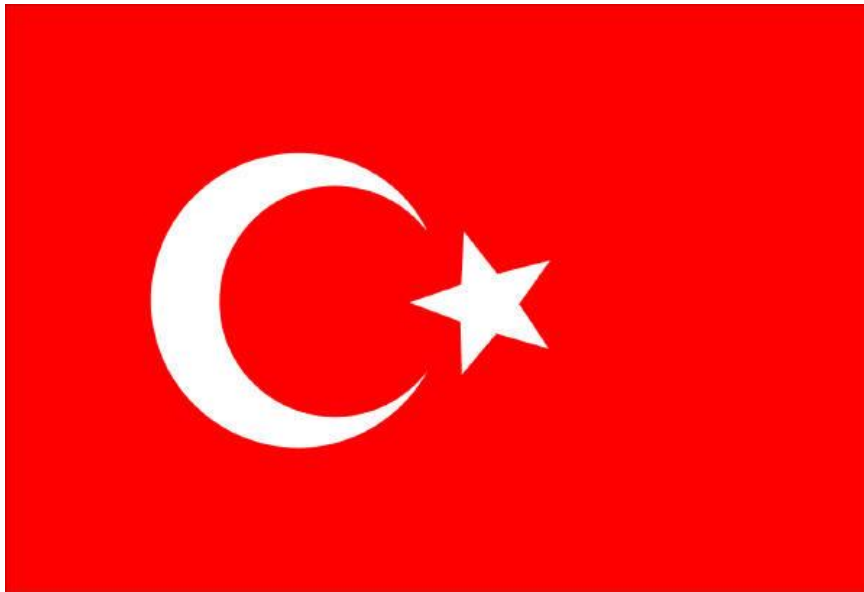


Turkish Persona and Personification Assignments



Persona Poem: A persona is a character played by an actor. The word is derived from Latin, where it originally referred to a theatrical mask. A persona poem is written in the voice of a character who is not the author.

Elements of Character are: behavior, speech, appearance, thought.

Appearance and Behavior shows what the character does and how he/she looks.

Poetry Assignment 1: Take one of the people you read about on the TCF website, speak in their voice and dramatize a small moment, using imagery to make the moment come to life.

yvonne

Yvonne
stood there unsmiling
with collard greens
and sensible shoes
on her way
to becoming a good
Black woman.

--Nikki Giovanni

Sophia

“Sophia Engastromenos, is a splendid woman, open, indulgent, gentle and good housewife, full of life and well educated.” --Heinrich Schliemann

He is much older than I. My father
likes him, and I am beginning to be quite
fond of his stories of wanderings, of indigo
and gold. He is more sensitive than
his countenance reveals. His face, such shock,
when I recited the Iliad from memory.
And those eyes, heavy lidded, I
made them shine like the Dardenelles
when I said, *Everything is more beautiful
because we're doomed...* In that moment,
love bloomed. I am intelligent
enough to know a young woman
is always at another's mercy. *Give me
a place to stand and I will move the earth.*

--Linda Cooper

Atong

I left Atong by the schoolyard
fence—
where he waved and waved
saying Bye bye Bye bye Bye bye.

I still don't know what it was
that filled his face with light that day—
it was for me
a shower of white flowers
when he smiled
and then a flight of sparrows
when he smiled again.
And when I turned to leave
I could not understand why I, his mother, was
like a fool, so overcome with joy.

--Benilda S. Santos

Name: _____

Section: _____

Persona Poetry Revision/Editing Checklist

1. Revision

- ☐ Few repeated words
- ☐ Organization (does the order of images/events make sense?)
- ☐ Imagery (language using the five senses to show our experience)
- ☐ Small moment in time (freeze the moment like you would in a photograph)
- ☐ Fluency (Do the sentences flow? Is there a mix of long and short sentences?)
- ☐ Voice (does it sound like the speaker in the poem?)

2. Editing

- ☐ Capitalization
- ☐ Punctuation
- ☐ Spelling
- ☐ Grammar (focus on complete sentences)

3. Line Breaks

- ☐ Placed after strong words (nouns, verbs)
- ☐ Uniformity: keep lines mostly uniform, unless the break comes for a certain effect.
- ☐ Pacing (short lines, slower pace; long lines, faster pace)

4. Specifics to Persona Poem

- ☐ Clearly shows details of character
- ☐ Clearly shows the setting
- ☐ Use the first person "I" as if you are that person and write from the person's POV
- ☐ 15 lines minimum
- ☐ Includes a citing from research on the TCF website

Personification Poem Assignment

Another way to gain a deeper understanding of the Turkish experience is to pretend to be an inanimate object from a specific time period and take on that persona, using the technique of personification. We will do this by writing a poem as if we were a ruin or church or a figurine representative of your Turkish study and write from an imagined point of view. I wrote a personification poem (below) from the point of view of the moon and one from the point of view of a goddess figurine I saw in Turkey.

Butter Moon Addresses Grass and Pine

I am not touched
by your green shouts.

I have my own concerns: the
sour cries of planets and far-
reaching sirens of other circling moons.
Screaming novas and supernovas,
meteors and stars, especially
the stars, one dying every minute.

How could I possibly hear you
in all that noise?

I am melting, disappearing.
I do not sleep. Please

be still. There's nothing
I can do.

Cybele

Sit at my feet, daughter, and listen.
I want to tell you something fire and gold.
I am stone, pressed clay, bone,
but I built my throne out of panthers
and a belly full of heat.
Did I not pass you and your sisters
through to the world to rule it?
Gazing into the mirror into another
and another all the way to the beginning,
I see everything and much of it

is lesser, smaller, weaker
than it was meant to be.
You were not born to serve a master.
You are no fool, no dribbling rain.
Inhale the fire. Explode
your words into the world's ear.

Name: _____

Section: _____

Personification Poetry Revision/Editing Checklist

5. Revision

- ☐ Few repeated words
- ☐ Organization (does the order of images/events make sense?)
- ☐ Imagery (language using the five senses to show our experience)
- ☐ Small moment in time (freeze the moment like you would in a photograph)
- ☐ Fluency (Do the sentences flow? Is there a mix of long and short sentences?)
- ☐ Voice (does it sound like the speaker in the poem?)

6. Editing

- ☐ Capitalization
- ☐ Punctuation
- ☐ Spelling
- ☐ Grammar (focus on complete sentences)

7. Line Breaks

- ☐ Placed after strong words (nouns, verbs)
- ☐ Uniformity: keep lines mostly uniform, unless the break comes for a certain effect.
- ☐ Pacing (short lines, slower pace; long lines, faster pace)

8. Specifics to Personification Poem

- ☐ Clearly shows the setting
- ☐ Use the first person "I" as if you are that object and write from the object's POV
- ☐ Uses research from the TCF website about an object as inspiration
- ☐ 15 lines minimum
- ☐ Includes a citing from research on the TCF website

Student Personification Poem Exemplar

Bench

I stand here
through all the weather,
winter gales, autumn breezes,
or hot summer afternoons.
Here to comfort
the tired, those passerby's
who wait for the train.
They move on,
and I stand,
watching and waiting.
A man comes by,
his face drawn together, a thousand
lines on his forehead.
Silent cries die in his throat.
He fidgets on my seat, hard stone
charred black with age,
anxiously watching the horizon,
listening for the quiet blare of the train.
His pride prevents him from
running off and slumping down, crying.
I try to comfort him,
"There could be hope,"
I try to say,
but after all, I am just a bench.
A woman walks by
with a kind, gentle face. She
carries a sleeping child, wrapped
in a quilted shawl.
Dark circles line her large, black eyes.
She is thin with hunger, hands
calloused, wisps of early white hair
cascading from the pretty blonde head.
I watch a small, gray lark flutter up
into the sky, singing while
the low hum of the train echoes
softly in the distance.

Student Persona Poem Exemplar

Josh

I saw Howie flung down
the track by the express
train. I clutched the banjo
to my chest, as all color
left my face.

I became cold.
The trek across the brown,
eerie, silent field was too short
for words.

I brought Joey closer.
The sounds of the railroad
tracks grinding against the trains.
The thoughts of riding box cars again
quickly fled my mind.

The only sound was the fallen wheat
under our heels.

More Student Exemplars

Julian

The Interrogator Door

The Interrogator is an angry, cruel man.
All day, he brings poor immigrants into his office,
and asks them questions that there is no way they could possibly answer
like “How many pigs did your neighbor have?!”
When they say that they don’t know or make up an answer,
he yells at them or calls them a liar,
and they leave his office in tears.
I wished I could do something, but I can’t.
I feel the immigrants’ pain.
As they leave, I let out a mournful squeak,
and The Interrogator yells that I need to be oiled.
The Interrogator is a cruel man.
As he leaves, I slam in his face.
He howls in pain, but he just walks on.
It gives me a small bit of satisfaction to see him in pain.
I think for the thousandth time
of all the curses I would call him,
if only I could speak.
I wish there was something more that I could do,
but I am just a door.

Eli K

Bed on the Ship

I am supporting a woman,
lying down.
I think she is sick,
but she still breathes.
She has lain here for so long.
My frame is stretched and still stretching.
I have her form imprinted on me.
She is not the first to lie here.
I have others as well.
Imprinted.
Forgotten.

Aaron Kim

The Fake Paper of Mr. Tom

I sit here
on the brown, cold table.
Where am I?
People run with
loud, dismal noises,
scrambling, yelling.
A hand holds me.
I gasp for air.
Who is this person?
I scream,
“I’m the merchant son’s paper!”
I see a boy,
Who is that?
I feel something itch
and I smell something burn.
I feel some weird sense
that it starts to hurt.
I realize a tan on myself.
A dark, scarred, crunchy feeling.
I realize they are burning me.
What did I do?
I take a last look
before I’m gone
and see that young, almost adult,
boy again.
That is when I see,
a sour look on his face...

Josephine

Mrs. Fong

We needed to come across
this big, blue ocean
to a land of opportunity
for a better future.
We look on the line between the sky and the sea,
where the two shades of blue split
apart from each other.
A salty wind brushes our faces
as the sound of seagull's voices ring in our ears.
The water dances below us,
tossing and turning,
flaunting its freedom.
Our desperate eyes
scavenge the picture before us
for signs of hope
to show us our sacrifice has paid off.
Our endless nights
memorize our scripts
to pass.
Now, the suspension of waiting takes its toll.
I stare deep into my husband's eyes
that wander so far off.
His love was strong enough to bring me with him.
And we could only stare into this big, blue ocean before us.

Josephine

Big, Blue Ocean

Though the ship is dull
it stands out in this blue world,
lost clouds floating above
the deep blue waves.
I move the ship toward its destination:
hope and a new future.
I feel the shores of the land they wish to reach
and the shores of their former home.
I see the faces of the people aboard
staring into the distance,
frowning with tired expressions.
The dull blue sky above me
is filled with the voices of seabirds
calling each other, then diving.
I only wish that the people
on the boat could feel the same freedom.

Sayra

Mr.Chew, age 32 in 1923

My Nightmare

It was night at Angel Island.
I stood next to a large window
with the view to San Francisco.
I stared at the dark blue sky surrounded
by sparkling yellow and white stars.
I looked at the ocean, dark as dirt,
flowing and thudding against big rocks.
It looked so free. Free. It was what I wanted to be.
Free like a bird flying on a hot summer day,
spreading its large white wings
through the light blue sky.
That's what I wanted to be.
I stepped away from the window,
heading back to my bed.
The coldness of the ground ran
from my feet up to my spine.
With every step I took, the coldness grew even more.
Every step felt like ice.
Every step reminded me of how people were.
Every step made me die a little inside.
With every step, I got closer to my cold metal bed.