English Language Arts 10-2

Unit 2: Comprehend and respond to texts

Imagery in a war poem

Poppies between the crosses

- John McCrae, In Flanders Fields (1915, public domain): In Flanders fields the poppies blow between the crosses, row on row, that mark our place; and in the sky the larks, still bravely singing, fly scarce heard amid the guns below.
- Imagery: these lines name poppies, crosses in rows, larks, and guns. You can see a field and hear a thin song.
- Topic: war, or death. Theme has to be a sentence, for example that beauty and birdsong continue in a place marked by the dead, and the song is almost lost.
- Artistry: row on row is repetition that extends the graves. Bravely singing beside scarce heard is a contrast that makes the larks both persistent and faint.

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow

Between the crosses, **row on row**,

That mark our place; and in the sky

The larks, still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.

Row on row repeats the crosses into a field. The repetition is part of the poem's artistry.

Image and craft

- Imagery is the field you can describe: poppies blowing, crosses row on row, larks scarce heard over guns.
- Theme is a full sentence about continuance and loss. It is significant if it still matters when you set it beside a life you know, and it still has to come from the lines.
- Artistry is the craft you can name. Repetition in row on row. Contrast in bravely and scarce heard.
- Effectiveness is whether those choices stir a response they aimed toward, here a felt sense of the dead marked and the song thinned by guns.

Key terms

imagery

A picture or sensation built by the words, such as poppies between crosses.

theme

A sentence about what the text suggests, a full claim in place of a one-word topic.

artistry

The craft that makes a text effective, named with a term such as repetition, image, or voice.

A theme sentence can be checked

- War fits almost any line about guns. A checkable theme is a full sentence.
- A sentence can: the living field and the birds keep going where the dead are marked, and the guns nearly erase the song.
- You can disagree with how significant that idea is. You still test it against poppies, crosses, larks, and guns.
- Row on row is effective because one pair of words makes the graves feel numerous. That is artistry you can point to.

Image and theme

- Image: poppies blowing between rows of crosses, larks singing faintly under gunfire.
- Theme sentence: life and song continue in a field that marks the dead, and the song is almost drowned.
- Artistry: repetition in row on row. Contrast between bravely singing and scarce heard.
- Effectiveness: the contrast can evoke quiet grief or unease. A reader can say which, and point to the larks.



The gym after the dance

- Original paragraph: The gym lights were still on. The streamers were still taped to the rail. The speaker was still humming, and nobody was dancing.
- Identify one image. Write a theme sentence. Name one craft choice.
- This gym scene is our own text. Leave poppies with McCrae’s poem.

Review

- Cover McCrae and the gym.
- The deck lights were off. The water kept slapping the tile. A kickboard drifted.
- Give one image and a theme sentence. Name whether the repetition of the slap, if you hear it twice, is doing craft work.

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