

The Hunchback in the Park: Workbook- Stanza by stanza

**Lesson 3: Poetry Analysis** 

The hunchback in the park

A solitary mister

Propped between trees and water

From the opening of the garden lock

That lets the trees and water enter

Until the <u>Sunday sombre bell</u> at dark

Think about the sound of the bell - what else would you associate this with?



What images does the second line of the poen	n suggest to you? How does the length of the
line help create this image?	
What do you think the word 'propped' suggest	s about the character in the poem?
Why does the poet describes the bell as 'Sun	iday sombre'? What is the importance of the
use of alliteration in this line?	
use of afficeration in this line:	Alliteration draws the attention of the reader to the line, it therefore
	emphasises the text in that line.



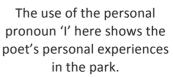
Eating bread from a newspaper

Drinking water from the <u>chained</u> cup

That the children filled with gravel

In the fountain basin where I sailed my ship

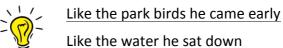
Slept at night in a dog kennel But nobody chained him up.





What do the boys do to mock the hunchback? Why do you think they do this?
What is the effect of the hunchback being compared to a dog? Think about the views that
society would have about the hunchback.
Why do you think the poet chose to use the verb "chained" twice in this stanza? What
impact does this have on creating character?

Comparisons to both nature and animals are used by Thomas to emphasise the hunchback's status in society.



And Mister they called Hey Mister
The truant boys from the town
Running when he heard them clearly
On out of sound



TIOW are the b	poys presented by Thomas in this stanza?
	Past lake and rockery
	Laughing when he shook his paper
	Hunchback in mockery
	Through the <u>loud zoo</u> of the willow graves
	Dodging the park keeper
	With his stick that picked up leaves
How does Tho	omas reflect the fast pace of the boys movements through the organisation of
the stanza?	Think about letter sounds (harsh or gentle), punctuation and sentence
structure/ len	gths of lines.
	And the <u>old dog sleeper</u>
	Alone between nurses and swans

While the boys among willows

To roar on the rockery stones

And the groves were blue with sailors

Onomatopoeia is used

with "roar" here.

Made the tigers jump out of their eyes

Another reference to animals is provided here with "old dog sleeper"





What image is the poet trying to present where he describes the boys in the line 'Made the	
tigers jump out of their eyes'?	
What do you associate with the images of nurses and swans that are presented here?	
Made all day until bell time	
A woman figure without fault	
Straight as a young elm	
Straight and tall from his crooked bones	
That she might stand in the night	
After the locks and chains	
Look carefully at the description of the woman given above. What does the hunchback's	
construction of the woman tell us about his own character?	
All night in the unmade park	
After the railings and shrubberies	
The birds the grass the trees the lake	
And the wild boys innocent as strawberries	
Had followed the hunchback	
To his kennel in the dark	



Look at the lack of punctuation in line 39 "The birds the grass the trees the lake". What is
the effect of the poet's omission of commas here?
Why do you think the poet uses a simile to describe the boys torment towards the
hunchback as, "innocent as strawberries"?

## Lesson 6:

## **Main Activity**

What is your response to the way the hunchback is presented in the poem? Do you feel sympathy towards him? Discuss the way that Thomas presents him using evidence from the text to support your view.

## Supplementary Tasks:

- 1. Write the script between the hunchback and one of the boys that are mocking him in the park. Present this to the class in pairs.
- 2. Imagine that you are the hunchback. Write a monologue of his private feelings and thoughts as he sits on the bench. Consider his reactions to what he sees and hears in the park. Also, consider his past, and possibly his dreams for the future.