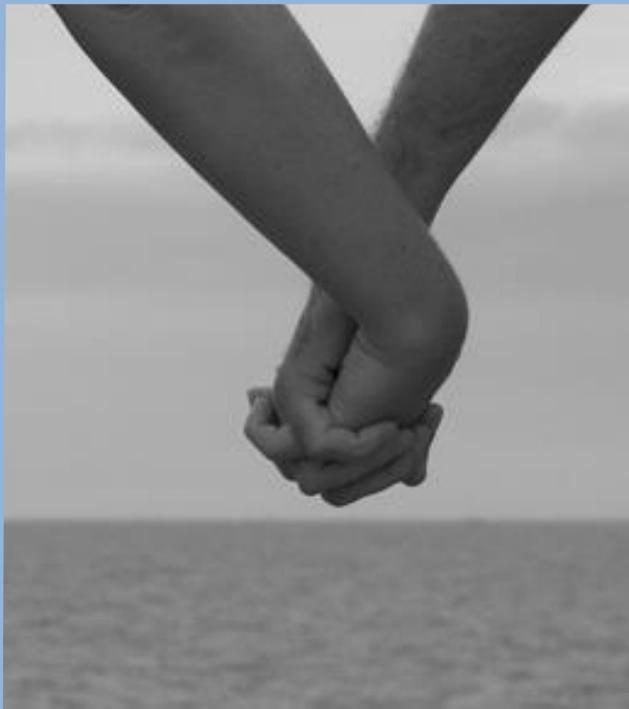


'Winter Swans'

Owen Sheers



OBJECTIVE:

- 1 Explore how Owen Sheers uses **form**, **structure** and **language** to help shape our understanding of the **relationship** presented to us in the poem.

OBJECTIVE:

What **happens** in the poem?

How is the **speaker** presented?

How is the **relationship** presented?

How do **form, structure** and **language** shape meaning?

Conflict

Partnership

Hope

Doubt

Contentment

Love



Winter Swans, by Owen Sheers (b. 1974)

The clouds had given their all -
two days of rain and then a break
in which we walked,

the waterlogged earth
gulping for breath at our feet
as we skirted the lake, silent and apart,

until the swans came and stopped us
with a show of tipping in unison.

As if rolling weights down their bodies to their heads

they halved themselves in the dark water,
icebergs of white feather, paused before returning again
like boats righting in rough weather.

'They mate for life' you said as they left,
porcelain over the stilling water. I didn't reply
but as we moved on through the afternoon light,

slow-stepping in the lake's shingle and sand,
I noticed our hands, that had, somehow,
swum the distance between us

and folded, one over the other,
like a pair of wings settling after flight.

Annotation and Analysis Toolkit

- **Form**

- ✓ Caesura
- ✓ Enjambment
- ✓ Stanza length

- **Structure**

- ✓ Contrast
- ✓ Shift in mood or tone

- **Imagery**

- ✓ Adjective
- ✓ Colour
- ✓ Image
- ✓ Metaphor
- ✓ Pathetic fallacy
- ✓ Simile
- ✓ Symbolism
- ✓ Verb

- **Sound**

- ✓ Alliteration
- ✓ Reported speech
- ✓ Sibilance
- ✓ Tone
- ✓ Voice

- **Analytical Verbs**

- ✓ Emphasises
- ✓ Implies
- ✓ Indicates
- ✓ Reveals
- ✓ Supports

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**How Sheers has used
form, structure and
language to help
shape our
understanding of the
relationship?**

**Work closely with
your partner and
prepare to feedback.**

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Academic Writing

Formal

Accurate

Precise

Logical

**The clouds had given their all –
two days of rain and then a break**

Tone

Hyphen

Pathetic fallacy

Furthermore

Suggests

Highlights

and folded, one over the other,

like a pair of wings settling after flight.

Tone

Simile

Stanza

However

Reveals

Emphasises

Code	Meaning
Sp.	Spelling mistake
P.	Punctuation mistake (incorrect usage or omission)
C.	Capitalisation mistake (incorrect usage or omission)
H.	Handwriting is unclear or messy
//	New paragraph required
^	Omission of word or phrase
	Unclear expression

1

Is each point supported and fully developed? Remember that it's important to write in-depth about carefully selected parts of the poem.

2

Is the written expression appropriately precise and formal? Make sure that informal language (e.g. slang or language that is vague) has not been used.

3

Is the writing technically accurate? Look carefully at the work and identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors; please also make the necessary corrections.

4

Have a range of reporting and analysing verbs been used to help express and develop the points? Remember that each verb has a subtly different meaning.

5

Are you impressed with the overall quality of the work? Think about whether you'd be happy to submit this as your own response.