

Comparison: Identity – Lesson 2

L/O: How do the poems in the GCSE anthology present identity?

BRIDGES: Empathy, Understanding

Key Words: positive, negative, ambiguous, language, structure, form, context

Recap – Last lesson you compared how identity is presented in ‘Hurricane Hits England’ and ‘Presents From My Aunts In Pakistan’.

Today you are going to be comparing how identity is presented in ‘Hurricane Hits England’ and ‘Stewart Island’.

Task – Last lesson we said that, in ‘Hurricane’, the speaker has some inner conflict over their identity and where they belong.

1. In ‘Hurricane Hits England’ the hurricane represents Guyana, which is where the poet is from – what are the bad things about it?
2. What are the good things about it?
3. In ‘Stewart Island’, the speaker is also conflicted about where they are from – what does the speaker like about Stewart Island?
4. And what don't they like about Stewart Island, which is where they're originally from?

Write your answers in your pink books, and look back at your notes/the poems if you're not sure.

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If you said any of the following you'd be right!

- In 'Hurricane Hits England' one of the things the speaker likes about Guyana/the hurricane is that it reminds her of her ancestral gods 'Huracan', 'Oya' and 'Shango'
- She also seems to like the fact it reminds her the world is connected, and this frees her, as she says it 'breaks the frozen lake' in her, 'unchains' her heart, and reassures her that 'the earth is the earth is the earth'.
- However, the hurricane also brings destruction, suggesting there are negatives about where she's come from too. For example she talks about 'cratered graves', 'reaping havoc', 'blinding illumination' and 'further darkness.
- In 'Stewart Island' the speaker also feels conflicted about where they come from. On the one hand, she can see there are nice things about New Zealand like the 'white sand' etc., which might make her want to stay there.
- However, she also says there are negatives to New Zealand that make her feel like she doesn't belong. E.g. the 'seagulls' that swoop down on her son, and the 'sandflies' etc., which had made her 'to leave the country' and live in England.
- So, overall, both speakers are conflicted about their identity/where they come from because there are positives and negatives about it.

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Task – In ‘Stewart Island’ and ‘Hurricane Hits England’ both speakers suggest they’re conflicted about their identity because there are some good things about where they come from

List all the LSF techniques and evidence that you think proves this for each poem in a table like the one below:

Comparative point: In ‘Stewart Island’ and ‘Hurricane Hits England’ both speakers suggest they’re conflicted about their identity because there are some good things about where they come from

Evidence and LSF techniques in ‘Hurricane’ that suggest there are some positives to the hurricane, which, like her comes from Guyana

E.g. when the poet lists the names of her ancestral gods, she personifies them by saying ‘talk to me’ and calling them her ‘back-home cousins’, suggesting part of her loves her Guyanan identity
E.g. the poet also tells us she’s ‘aligning herself’ to them, ‘following them’, and ‘riding’ their storms – this list of verbs also suggests she missed her Guyanan identity, and is working hard to get it back
E.g. She also uses metaphors to imply her Guyanan identity’s freed her when she says her heart’s ‘unchained’ and the ‘frozen lake’ in her is ‘broken.

Evidence and LSF techniques in ‘Stewart Island’ that suggest there are some positives to the island she grew up on

Note how in the examples on the left we’ve found 5 LSF techniques and that we’ve given evidence for each – so make sure that you’re doing the same when it comes to ‘Hurricane’.

At the very least we expect you to note 3 relevant LSF techniques plus evidence for each.

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Task – Now add some context, as shown below.

Comparative point: In ‘Stewart Island’ and ‘Hurricane Hits England’ both speakers suggest they’re conflicted about their identity because there are some good things about where they come from

Evidence and LSF techniques in ‘Hurricane’

E.g. when the poet lists the names of her ancestral gods, she personifies them by saying ‘talk to me’ and calling them her ‘back-home cousins’, suggesting part of her loves her Guyanan identity

*E.g. the poet also tells us she’s ‘aligning herself’ to them, ‘following them’, and ‘riding’ their storms – this list of verbs also suggests she missed her Guyanan identity and is working hard to get it back
E.g. She also uses metaphors to imply her Guyanan identity’s freed her when she says her heart’s ‘unchained’ and the ‘frozen lake’ in her is ‘broken.*

Evidence and LSF techniques in ‘Stewart Island’

Hopefully by now you’ve noted at least 3 relevant LSF techniques plus evidence for each in this box!

Relevant context for ‘Stewart Island’

E.g. Maybe one of the reasons for Grace Nichols missing her homeland is because when she moved to England in 1977 she was an adult, meaning Guyana’s the place she spent her whole childhood.

Relevant context for ‘Hurricane’

Note how precise our context was for ‘Hurricane’ and try to make your context as precise as possible too – look back at old notes to help.

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Task – Now do the same for the second point below:

Comparative point: However, both poets seem conflicted about their identity because they can also see the negatives about where they grew up

Evidence and LSF techniques that the hurricane in ‘Hurricane Hits England’ has a negative side

Remember that, in our first planning grid, we found 5 LSF techniques and we gave evidence for each – so at the very least we expect you to note 3 relevant LSF techniques plus evidence for each.

Relevant context for ‘Stewart Island’

Remember how precise our context was, and try to make your context just as precise.

Evidence and LSF techniques that the places/people in ‘Stewart Island’ have a negative side

Remember that, in our first planning grid, we found 5 LSF techniques and we gave evidence for each – so at the very least we expect you to note 3 relevant LSF techniques plus evidence for each.

Relevant context for ‘Hurricane’

Remember how precise our context was, and try to make your context just as precise.