



Sonnets

18

William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day



Sonnets

138

William Shakespeare

When my love swears that she is full of truth

Teacher's Notes

Sonnet 18

There are 4 sheets:

- A. Shakespearian text
- B. Simple modern text
- C. Shakespearian text reorganised for sequencing
- D. Simple modern text reorganised for sequencing

The two sequencing texts should be photocopied onto different coloured paper or card. Pupils can then cut up as appropriate and

- (1) Sequence the Shakespearian text (having been given the first two lines) using rhyming patterns – Rhyme pattern AB, AB; CD, CD; EF, EF; GG
- (2) Match it to the modern text

Sheets A and B can be used in any way – for reading out, checking etc.

Sonnet 138

There are 6 sheets:

- 1. Shakespearian text
- 2. Simple modern version
- 3. Colloquial modern version
- 4. Shakespearian text reorganised for sequencing
- 5. Simple modern text reorganised for sequencing
- 6. Colloquial modern text reorganised for sequencing

Sheets 4, 5 and 6 must be photocopied onto different coloured paper or cards. They can then be cut up, sequenced and matched.

It is suggested that the first two lines of the original poem be given to the class and that they then work on rhyme patterns and meaning as they sequence – Rhyme pattern AB, AB; CD, CD; EF, EF; GG

Sheet 5 and/or 6 can be matched with the original as wished.

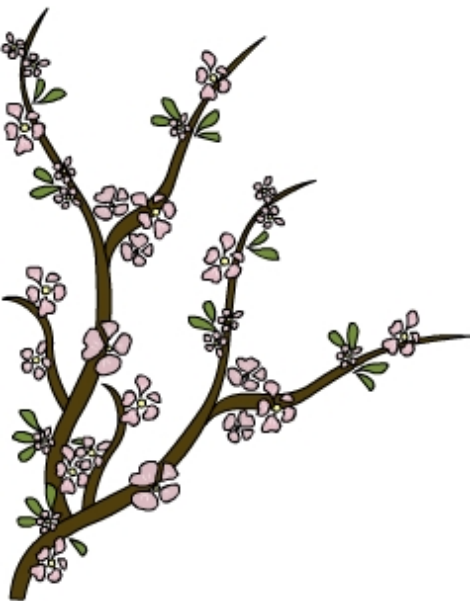
Bilingual learners are likely to have as much difficulty with the colloquial version as with the Shakespearian text.



Sonnet XVIII

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.*

William Shakespeare.





Love Letter No. 18

What can I say about you that could possibly be good enough? You make me feel all warm and happy – like when it's a beautiful day in summer – relaxing and perfect.

But actually you're even better than that. In May, the trees can be filled with the most beautiful blossom, and then the slightest puff of wind can blow it all away. In any case, summertime never lasts long enough. (Not like how I feel about you).

Sometimes it gets too hot in summer and then it tires you out. Sometimes it all clouds up, and it's just as bad as the rest of the year.

Everything beautiful must lose its beauty eventually – either by an accident, or in the course of time.

But your perfect beauty will never be lost in my mind's eye – no matter what happens.

Not even Death can boast that he will take you or your beauty, even when you do become old and lined.

Now that I've written down how I see you, I feel that I have given you immortality. You will live like this forever – in the minds of anyone who reads what I have written.

William.



B

*So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.*

*And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed;*

 *William Shakespeare.* 

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D



Sonnet CXXXVIII

*When my love swears that she is made of truth
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.*

William Shakespeare.





138

I know she's not always telling me the truth, but I always say I believe her...

I suppose I want her to think I'm young enough and silly enough to believe it all...

So I keep on trying to believe that she really thinks I'm young – even though we both know different...

I just keep on seeming to believe everything she says, and neither of us really faces up to the truth...

**Why doesn't she just tell me what she thinks?
And why don't I just say I'm old now? What stops me?**

One of the things I like about love is how trusting you can seem to be with each other...

And when you are old, you don't really want to be told you are...

So we both keep on lying – to each other and with each other, and give each other a bit of happiness by not telling quite all of the truth.



William S.

2

7

**RELATIONSHIPS (Thought no. 138) or:
What can you expect at our age?**



Well, she's all sweetness and light, butter wouldn't melt etc. etc...and I go along with it I suppose...

Well if I didn't, she'd have to let on that I'm not this innocent young thing that I have to make out that I am – to keep it all sweet...

So there I go, conning myself that she thinks I'm really young for my age – although it's as clear as the nose on my face that I'm not...

I just go along with it all, and I guess she does the same. I mean we're both lying our heads off...

How come she don't just talk straight? And how come I don't just come out with it myself and say "Look, I'm an old man now" ... I'm just as bad you see...

I suppose the only way of getting these 'relationships' to work is by making out that you've got all this trust...

And let's face it, when you're getting on a bit, you don't exactly want to have your nose rubbed in it, do you?

So I guess the truth is there's a whole lot of lying going on. I lie to her, she lies to me...Mind you, quite a bit of lying around in bed together too...which can't be bad...so as they say "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth." "Make hay while the sun shines". We'll just jolly each other along by just believing in the bits we want to believe in.

Bill.

3



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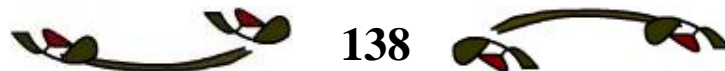
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believe her...**



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and give each other a bit of happiness by not telling quite all of
the truth.**

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