

Name: _____

Personification in Literature

Personification is a figurative element that attributes human thoughts, actions, characteristics or emotions to something that is not human.

Example: The sad clouds were ready to spill their tears upon the funeral procession.

Clouds cannot be sad, nor do they have tears.

Read each passage from literature below. Cite two examples of how personification is used in each passage. Explain how the personification enhances the description of the subject of the personification.

I. "Call of the Wild" by Jack London

His father, Elmo, a huge St. Bernard, had been the Judge's inseparable companion, and Buck bid fair to follow in the way of his father. He was not so large,--he weighed only one hundred and forty pounds,--for his mother, Shep, had been a Scotch shepherd dog. Nevertheless, one hundred and forty pounds, to which was added the dignity that comes of good living and universal respect, enabled him to carry himself in right royal fashion. During the four years since his puppyhood he had lived the life of a sated aristocrat; he had a fine pride in himself, was even a trifle egotistical, as country gentlemen sometimes become because of their insular situation.

2) I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud (Daffodils) by William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a Cloud
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd
A host of dancing Daffodils;
Along the Lake, beneath the trees,
Ten thousand dancing in the breeze.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee: --
A poet could not but be gay
In such a laughing company:
I gaz'd -- and gaz'd -- but little thought
What wealth the shew to me had brought

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Answers: Student's choice. Personification is underlined in each passage.

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