

# Prompt Sheet

Task: "Compare and contrast Hawk Roosting by Ted Hughes and To a Mouse by Robert Burns."

## Paragraph One

**There is one major similarity between Hawk Roosting by Ted Hughes and To a Mouse by Robert Burns. . .**

- Explain that they are both animal poems.
- Explain that they describe the habits and lifestyle of the animals.
- Explain that the poet discusses issues about life in general using the animals as a starting point.
- You could mention that there is a long tradition of Nature poems in English.
- Say that the Nature poem is a genre of English poetry that is distinctive.

## Paragraph Two

**The main difference between the two poems is the subject. . .**

- Explain that one poem is about a mouse but one is about a hawk.
- Explain that a mouse is a small, weak and afraid animal.
- Explain that it is a victim.
- Explain that a hawk is a big, strong, aggressive bird.
- Explain that it is a predator that attacks and feeds on other creatures.

### Help quotations:

"Wee, sleeket, cowrin, tim'rous beastie..." (the mouse)

"my hooked head and hooked feet..." (the hawk)

## Paragraph Three

**Another difference between the poems is the language used by the poets. . .**

- Explain that Burns is a Scottish poet, but Hughes is English.
- Explain that Burns is writing in 1785 but Hughes is writing in the twentieth century after World War II.
- Explain that Burns uses emotional Scots language.
- Give example of Burns' language.
- Explain that Hughes uses hard unemotional language.
- Quote an example of Hughes' language.

### Help quotations:

"I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;

What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!

A daimen icker in a thraive

'S a sma request..."

(To a Mouse - an emotional appeal with the Scots words underlined)

"...the one path of my flight is direct

Through the bones of the living..." (Hawk Roosting - a hard unemotional claim in Standard English)

#### Paragraph Four

### **Another difference between the poems is the imagery...**

- Explain that Burns uses images that suggest that the mouse is a wee human living in a wee house.
- Quote lines to prove this.
- Explain that Hughes uses images to suggest that the hawk is like a killing machine.
- Quote lines to prove this.

#### **Help quotations:**

"Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!

Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!" (To a Mouse - the mouse nest like a little house with broken walls)

"...my hooked head and hooked feet...

.....perfect kills....

My manners are tearing off heads -

The allotment of death..." (Hawk Roosting - the hawk like a death machine)

#### Paragraph Five

### **The final difference to consider is the point of view. Burns is a ploughman. Hughes pretends to be a hawk. . .**

- Explain that Burns poem is autobiographical.
- He really was a ploughman.
- The poem is dated.
- It is like a factual account.
- Explain that Hughes' poem is imaginative.
- He was a thinker.
- He is trying to understand the cruelty of a hawk.
- Finish off by saying that this last difference really explains the other differences in the poems.