

WORKSHEET

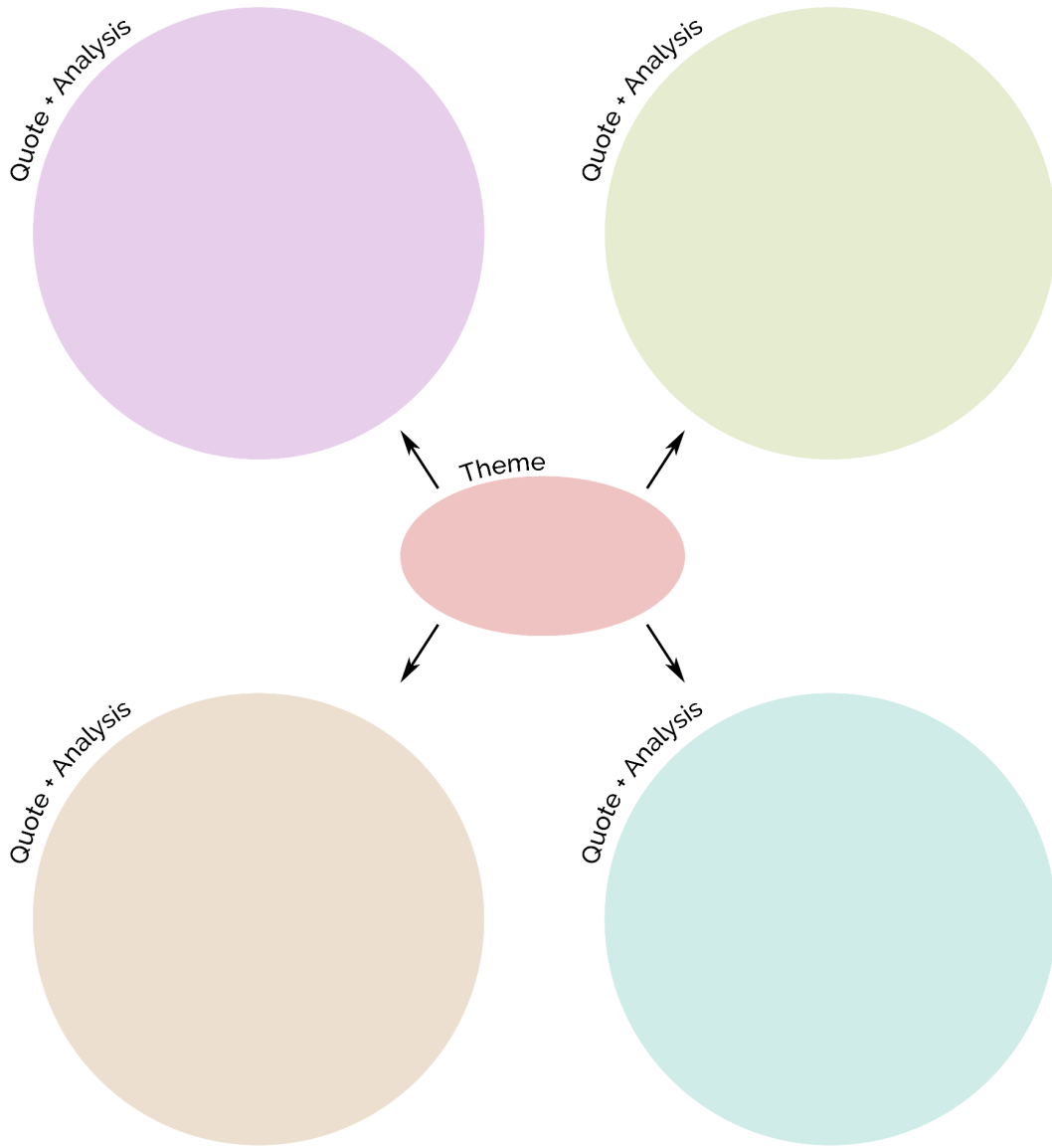
Football at Slack

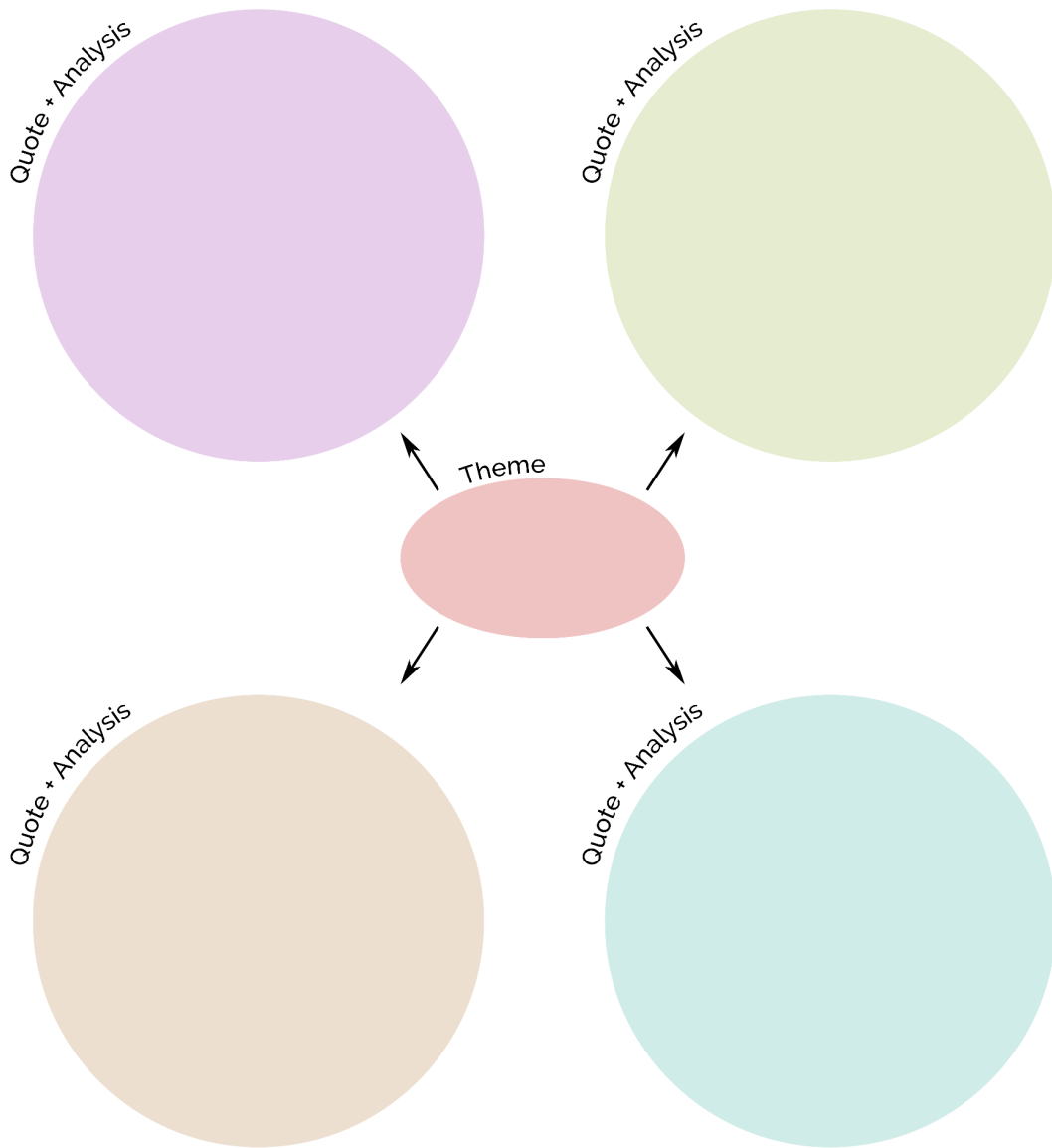
Ted Hughes

TASKS

1a. Pick two of these themes, then make a mind map for each by adding four separate quotations from the story that relate to them. Make short notes of analysis, explaining how and why each one relates to your theme.

- Man and Nature
- Sports and sportspeople
- Football
- Memories
- Weather
- Fun and Joy
- Identity
- Unity and teamwork
- Storms and rain
- Different perceptions





1b. What, in your opinion, is the author’s final message or statement about each theme that you chose?

2. Analyse the following language features, exploring how and why they are used in the poem:

Personification:

“The glare light / Mixed its mad oils and threw glooms.”

Visual imagery:

“ the wingers leapt, they bicycled in air / And the goalie flew horizontal”

Metaphor:

“a golden holocaust / Lifted the cloud’s edge, to watch them.”

3. Look up images of West Yorkshire, including Calderdale. Write a paragraph that describes the landscape and scenery in this part of England.

EXERCISES

1. List 10 verbs in the poem 'Football at Slack'. Why do you think the poet used so many? Which one is your favourite, and why?

2. What is the impact of repetition in the poem 'Football at Slack'?

3. Why would we expect the speaker and players to be depressed when it starts to rain, and why do they remain happy?

4. Explore your own experience of playing a sport. Try to describe the game or match in detail, using lots of imagery.

PRACTICE ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. "The result of the match was not important to the speaker of this poem." To what extent do you agree or disagree with that statement? Give your reasons.
2. Examine how the speaker used humorous, childlike or whimsical imagery in the poem 'Football at Slack'.
3. Compare the presentation of sports and sports players in Football at Slack and one other poem you have studied. Think about language, themes and context.
4. How does Hughes powerfully create a sense of place through the setting in 'Football at Slack' and one other poem from your collection?