



Frost's Form and Content: "Mending Wall" (Teacher Version)

Student Name _____ Date _____

Student Analysis Worksheet

Lines	Student Notes about Form	Student Notes about Content
Line 12 through Line 15: What is the formal effect and the significance of the repetition of the word "wall"?	Repetition of the word wall formally creates "walls" of lines in the poem	Repetition emphasizes the literal and figurative wall between the neighbor
Line 16: How would you describe the rhythm of this line? How many syllables does this line have? Compare this line to others in terms of rhythm and meter.	"Mending Wall" actually begins in iambic pentameter. Here, however, the line "To each the boulders that have fallen to each" represents a brilliant move, since this is the point at which the boulder falls off the wall and the poem falls out of its previous consistent meter.	The form literally mimics the content, because here the boulder falls off the wall
Lines 17 and 18: Compare the meter of these two lines. What is the effect of the extra syllable of line 18?	Line 17 is a pentameter line, but Line 18 has an extra syllable. The word "balance" hangs off the line.	Again, Frost emphasizes the boulders that are off balance with the extra syllable; similar to Line 16.
Line 22: Compare this line to Line 9 in terms of form and content.	The end of the sentence/period emphasizes the two sides of the wall.	Similar use of form appears in Line 9 to emphasize the metaphorical barrier.
Lines 27 through 34: Why does Frost use the word "offense" in Line 34. Compare the significance of the word "offense" in relation to "a fence."	The narrator takes "offense" in "a fence," but his play on words is lost on his literal-minded neighbor.	These lines emphasize how even the level of conversation between the speaker and neighbor is off kilter, the speaker using figurative language and the neighbor using literal meaning.
Line 43: What is the meaning of this line? How is this line symbolic or metaphoric?	The "father's saying" becomes a figurative wall between the neighbor and the speaker.	Out of unquestioned tradition, the neighbor will continue to mend the wall each spring and believe his father's saying without questioning it as the speaker does throughout the poem.
Line 12 through Line 15: What is the formal effect and the significance of the repetition of the word "wall"?	Repetition of the word wall formally creates "walls" of lines in the poem	Repetition emphasizes the literal and figurative wall between the neighbor