

Personification – Literary Analysis

Directions: Read "The Sky is Low" by Emily Dickinson.

As you read, look for examples of **personification**. Then answer the following questions.

Reread lines 1-2.

1. What natural item is described as having a human mood?

2. What human mood does this item have?

3. What is the literal meaning of this example?

Reread Lines 2-4

4. What natural item is engaged in a human action?

5. What human action is it engaged in doing?

6. What is the literal meaning of this example?

Reread Lines 5-6

7. What natural item is engaged in a human action?

8. What human action is it engaged in doing?

9. What is the literal meaning of this example?

Reread Lines 7-8

10. In your own words, describe the literal meaning of these lines and explain why it also applies to "us" readers.

The Sky is Low

by Emily Dickinson

- 1 The sky is low, the clouds are mean,
- 2 A travelling flake of snow
- 3 Across a barn or through a rut
- 4 Debates if it will go.

- 5 A narrow wind complains all day
- 6 How some one treated him;
- 7 Nature, like us, is sometimes caught
- 8 Without her diadem*.

*diadem – a jeweled headband used as a royal crown



Answer Key:

1. Clouds
2. Mean
3. The clouds are dark and stormy (menacing/threatening)
4. Flake (of snow)
5. Debating (which way to go)
6. The snow is changing directions as it blows in the air
7. Wind
8. Complaining
9. The wind is making a drawn out high-pitched noise (whining)
10. Answers may vary, but the general idea is that: Nature isn't always majestic (perfect, at its best, etc.) and neither are people.