

# Writing about Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 18'

English

Lesson 4 of 'Sonnet 18' by William Shakespeare

Mr. Posthill



## 'Sonnet 18': First Quatrain



Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too short a date;

**What does the speaker compare the object of his love to?**

**Why does the speaker say his lover is better?**



**‘Sonnet 18’: First Quatrain - Pause and complete**  
**What does the speaker compare the object of his love to?**

**Why does the speaker say his lover is better?**



## 'Sonnet 18': Second Quatrain



Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;

**What effect does the list of summer's negatives have on the reader?**



# What effect does the list of summer's negatives have on the reader?

## Option 1

The negatives show summer is imperfect.

## Option 3

The negatives take away from the lover's beauty.

## Option 2

The negatives show that summer is perfect.

## Option 4

The negatives show how terrible summer is.





## ‘Sonnet 18’: Third Quatrain

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st;  
Nor shall death brag thou wander’st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st:

**What does the speaker say about the object of his love in contrast to summer?**

**What does he say will never happen to his love?**



**‘Sonnet 18’: Third Quatrain - Pause and complete  
What does the speaker say about the object of his  
love in contrast to summer?**

**What does he say will never happen to his love?**



# 'Sonnet 18': Romantic Couplet



So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

**Why does the speaker repeat the line opening 'so long'?**

**What does the speaker say will happen to his lover?**





**‘Sonnet 18’: Romantic Couplet - Pause and complete**  
**Why does the speaker repeat the line opening ‘so long’?**

**What does the speaker say will happen to his lover?**



## Copy out and complete the sentences below by filling in the gaps

- 1) The speaker in 'Sonnet 18' compares his l\_\_\_\_\_ to a s\_\_\_\_\_’s d\_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) The speaker says however that summer is i\_\_\_\_\_t and fades too q\_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) The s\_\_\_\_\_ suggests that his l\_\_\_\_\_ will never f\_\_\_\_\_ and will live forever, through his p\_\_\_\_\_.



# True or false

- a) An ABAB rhyme scheme mimics the wooing of the two lovers.
- b) An ABAB rhyme scheme mimics a nursery rhyme.
- c) Iambic pentameter mimics a beating heart.
- d) Romantic couplets imply the coming together of the two lovers.



**1) Copy out the two sentences below, adding a quotation from your notes as evidence to back up the point**

The speaker compares his lover to a summer's day, but suggests that while summer is imperfect, his lover is perfect.

Quotation -

This suggests that the speaker thinks that his lover is better than a summer's day and highlights his love.



**2) Copy out the two sentences below, adding a quotation from your notes as evidence to back up the point**

The speaker suggests that while summer is short lived and fleeting, his lover's beauty will never fade.

Quotation -

This contrast suggests that while the speaker's lover is as beautiful as a summer's day, his beauty is eternal and will not fade, unlike the beauty of summer.



### 3) Copy out the two sentences below, adding a quotation and explanation from your notes

The speaker suggests that his lover will love on forever through his poetry,

Quotation -

Explanation -



## **Challenge - Answer the following question as part of your review work on this lesson.**

How does the structure of 'Sonnet 18' present the relationship between the speaker and his lover?

In your answer you should consider the following:

- How does the metre present the relationship between the two lovers?
- How does the rhyme scheme present the relationship between the two lovers?

