**Two Railway Poems**

Read and analyse these two railway poems by using appropriate stylistic tools and frames (you should be able to identity and analyse at least two devices per poem). You can refer to the commenting on a poem-checklist and/or employ other theoretical approaches.

Some possible areas of investigation include but are not limited to: figurative language (metaphor, personification, cognitive metaphor) / use of pronouns / phonetic symbolism / lexis / parallelism / foregrounding / listing / perceptual modality and representation of senses / deixis / text world theory.

You can also compare how the rhetorical and linguistic treatment of the railway theme is portrayed in the two texts.

“The Railway Train” (published in 1891)

Emily Dickinson

I like to see it lap the miles,

And lick the valleys up,

And stop to feed itself at tanks;

And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,

And, supercilious, peer

In shanties, by the sides of roads;

And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,

Complaining all the while

In horrid, hooting stanza;

Then chase itself down hill

And neigh like Boanerges;

Then, punctual as a star,

Stop -docile and omnipotent-

At its own stable door.

[neigh: verb used to refer to the cry of horses; Boanerges: a name given by Jesus to James and Mark, (Mark 31.17), in a sense raucous, vociferous prayer]

You can also listen to a public reading of this poem on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCvr98ggPQA>

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“From a Railway Carriage” (1885)

Robert Louis Stephenson

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,

Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;

And charging along like troops in a battle,

All through the meadows the horses and cattle:

All of the sights of the hill and the plain

Fly as thick as driving rain;

And ever again, in the wink of an eye,

Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,

All by himself and gathering brambles;

Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;

And there is the green for stringing the daisies!

Here is a cart run away in the road

Lumping along with man and load;

And here is a mill and there is a river:

Each a glimpse and gone for ever!

You can also listen to a public reading of this poem on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFMPOkHr-rs>