



## 'Love and Friendship'

Emily Brontë

(1818-1848)

Love is like the wild rose-briar,  
Friendship like the holly-tree—  
The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms  
But which will bloom most constantly?

The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring,  
Its summer blossoms scent the air;  
Yet wait till winter comes again  
And who will call the wild-briar fair?

Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now  
And deck thee with the holly's sheen,  
That when December blights thy brow  
He still may leave thy garland green.

**Glossary:** *garland* - wreath.

### First encounter

1. Read the poem through twice then look again at the first two lines. What associations are conjured up by a wild rose and by holly? Jot down your thoughts and then compare them with those of a partner.

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### Getting closer to the poem

1. What does the writer tell us about a) the rose b) the holly?

The rose: .....

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The holly: .....

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2. Why does she consider the holly to be superior?

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3. Discuss these statements about the message of the poem with a partner. Label them 1-6 in order, with 1 being the best description of the poem's message.

	Love and friendship are different and should not be confused
	Friendship is better than love
	Friendship is longer lasting than love
	Love is fragile but friendship is hardy
	Holly's beauty will outlast that of the wild rose
	Friendship can be relied upon but love cannot

### Structure - the way the poem is built

1. The poem is a kind of argument, rather like a lawyer building a logical case. What are the stages in Brontë's argument? Look out for words which organise the argument, such as 'but', 'yet' and 'then'.

1 .....  
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2 .....  
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3 .....  
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4 .....  
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### The words on the page

1. Brontë's diction is very simple. However, if the poem were to be written today, some of the words chosen might be different. Consider these words:



2. Find a word to replace each of them in the poem:

Yet wait till winter comes again

And who will call the wild-briar  ?

Then  the  rose-wreath now

And  thee with the holly's  ,

That when December  thy

He still may leave thy garland green.



### Inside the poem

1. The poem takes two plants and compares them throughout the poem to two emotions. Find out the term that is used to describe a comparison that is carried on throughout a poem (or for a substantial part of a poem).

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2. Another poetic technique is used in the last two lines. What is it?

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3. What kind of questions does Brontë ask?

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### Thoughts, response, conclusion

1. Is Emily Brontë right? What experiences might have influenced her to come to her conclusion about love and friendship? Whether you agree with her or not, what is your response to the poem?

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## 'Late Love' by Jackie Kay and 'Love and Friendship' by Emily Brontë

### Comparison resource

'Late Love' and 'Love and Friendship': Use the table to make brief notes on similarities and differences between the poems.

<p><b>'Late Love'</b></p> <p>How they strut about, people in love, how tall they grow, pleased with themselves, their hair, glossy, their skin shining. They don't remember who they have been.</p> <p>How filmic they are just for this time. How important they've become - secret, above the order of things, the dreary mundane. Every church bell ringing, a fresh sign.</p> <p>How dull the lot that are not in love. Their clothes shabby, their skin lustreless; how clueless they are, hair a mess; how they trudge up and down streets in the rain,</p> <p>remembering one kiss in a dark alley, a touch in a changing-room, if lucky, a lovely wait for the phone to ring, maybe, baby. The past with its rush of velvet, its secret hush</p> <p>already miles away, dimming now, in the late day.</p> <p><b>Jackie Kay</b></p>	<p><b>'Love and Friendship'</b></p> <p>Love is like the wild rose-briar, Friendship like the holly-tree— The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms But which will bloom most constantly?</p> <p>The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring, Its summer blossoms scent the air; Yet wait till winter comes again And who will call the wild-briar fair?</p> <p>Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now And deck thee with the holly's sheen, That when December blights thy brow He still may leave thy garland green.</p> <p><b>Emily Brontë</b></p>
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'Late Love' by Jackie Kay and 'Love and Friendship' by Emily Brontë  
Comparison resource

<p><b>First thoughts</b></p> <p>They are from different periods. 'Love and Friendship' is older because ...</p> <p>The tone of 'Love and Friendship is' ...</p>	<p><b>Form</b></p> <p>Both use a verse form which consists of ...</p>
<p><b>Structure</b></p> <p>'Late Love' is in two parts, the first ...</p>	<p><b>Language</b></p> <p>Both poems use simple language. Brontë's use of verbs is restrained, e.g. ...</p>
<p><b>Imagery</b></p> <p>'Love and Friendship' employs an extended metaphor which ...</p>	<p><b>Themes</b></p> <p>As well as the theme of love, Brontë's poem reflects a rural background, whereas ...</p> <p>Both poems have a message. While Brontë conveys her views explicitly, Kay ...</p>
<p><b>In conclusion ...</b></p>	