

Literary Analysis

VOICE

Voice is the quality in writing that allows you to “hear” a personality behind the words. The term can refer to the poet’s own voice. It can also refer to the voice of a **persona**, or fictional character created by the poet.

Stevie Smith’s poetry has a voice that combines two contrasting elements: an innocent whimsy and a dark, even grim sense of humor. Surprising twists, **irony** (the overturning of expectations) and **wordplay** (the intentional use of words with more than one meaning) contribute a darker edge to the voice.

Directions: Complete these charts to analyze the voice in each poem. Describe elements that contribute to whimsy in the voice and elements that contribute to the darker edge. Then describe the overall voice of the poem, explaining which aspect of the voice you think dominates the poem.

“The Frog Prince”

Whimsy	Dark Humor
Voice of the Poem	

“Not Waving but Drowning”

Whimsy	Dark Humor
Voice of the Poem	