


CONSONANCE

When words share the same consonant sound, like *humming*, *slimmer*, *emu*, and *emit*, that is called **consonance**.

Consonance lets poets pour music into lines of poetry, but to do it in an almost secret way. Both rhyme and alliteration are more noticeable than consonance.

Look at the way T.S. Eliot introduced a kind of crunchy sound track into this passage of “Preludes,” by using consonance on the *k* sound:

 Have students write a short poetic passage using only consonants, through alliteration and consonance, as the poetic technique. No rhyme.

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.

The **consonance** does not have to use the letter *k* every time; it is the sound, not the letter.

Here we see the *k* sound as part of an *x*, and as a *c*, and as a *ck*, as well as *k*.

The consonance in this poem is atmospheric.

Did you notice the alliteration of *settles*, *smell*, *steaks*, *six* and *smoky*, or the assonance in *steaks* and *passageways*?