

Location A

Poetry Analysis

TASK: Critically examine and think about poetry. Practice answering HSA-style questions related to poetry.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Read the following poems and answer the HSA-style questions. Record your answers on your paper.
2. The questions start off easy, by providing you with only three answer choices, but then get more difficult.
3. Work quickly, but accurately.
4. PLEASE don't write on this packet.
5. If you would like to use sticky notes to make notes, please do so.

STUCK?

1. Use process of elimination. Narrow down your answer choices.
2. Re-read the question and the text.
3. Think about the best answer that fits the text.
4. Move on and go back at the end.
5. Raise your hand.

1. Read lines 1 and 2 of the poem “Fireflies In the Garden.”

*Here come real stars to fill the upper skies,
And here on earth come emulating flies,*

In line 2, the word *emulating* means the speaker believes the fireflies are

- A. imitating the stars
- B. entering the skies
- C. making soft sounds

2. Read lines 3 and 4 of the poem “Fireflies In the Garden.”

*That though they never equal stars in size,
(And they were never really stars at heart)*

In lines 3 and 4, the poet most likely uses the words *never* and *never really* in order to

- A. make the lines of the poem equal in length
- B. stress the inability of fireflies to shine like stars
- C. describe the unimportance of fireflies in the cycle of nature



Fireflies in the Garden

Here come real stars to fill the upper skies,
And here on earth come emulating flies,
That though they never equal stars in size,
(And they were never really stars at heart)
Achieve at times a very star-like start.
Only, of course, they can't sustain¹ the part.

—Robert Frost

1 sustain: keep up

3. According to the poem, which of these statements BEST explains a difference between fireflies and stars?
 - A. The stars look motionless.
 - B. Stars are older than fireflies.
 - C. The light in fireflies is temporary.

4. The main idea of “Unfolding Bud” is that poems are
- A. filled with clear and obvious images
 - B. appreciated more fully after many readings
 - C. understood better by those who appreciate nature

5. Read lines 12 through 16 of the poem “Unfolding Bud.”

*Yet one is surprised
To see the poem
Gradually unfolding,
Revealing its rich inner self,
As one reads it*

The poet most likely uses the words *Revealing its rich inner self* in line 15 to show

- A. that a poem is like nature
- B. how difficult it is to write poetry
- C. that poetry often has deeper meaning

6. In line 12 of the poem, the word *Yet*

- A. provides elaboration
- B. decreases the surprise
- C. indicates a shift in thought



Unfolding Bud

One is amazed 1
By a water-lily bud
Unfolding
With each passing day,
Taking on a richer color 5
And new dimensions.
One is not amazed
At first glance,
By a poem,
Which is as tight-closed 10
As a tiny bud.
Yet one is surprised
To see the poem
Gradually unfolding,
Revealing its rich inner self, 15
As one reads it
Again
And over again.

Naoshi Koriyama

Read the poems "My People" and "I, Too" by Langston Hughes. Then answer the following.

7. In "My People," the speaker compares the souls of his people to

- A. their eyes
- B. their faces
- C. the stars
- D. the sun

8. Which of these best states the main idea of both "My People" and "I, Too"?

- A. People should learn to be patient.
- B. People should be proud of who they are.
- C. People learn to appreciate beauty in nature.
- D. People who are unhappy will grow stronger.

9. Read these lines from the poem "I, Too."

Tomorrow,

I'll be at the table

When company comes.

The poet most likely includes these lines to

- A. predict social change in the future
- B. tell where he will eat the next day
- C. express anger for past treatment
- D. warn uninvited guests to stay away

My People

The night is beautiful,
So the faces of my people.
The stars are beautiful,
So the eyes of my people.
Beautiful, also, is the sun.
Beautiful, also, are the souls of my people.

I, Too

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.
Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.
Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, am America.
—Langston Hughes

10. Which feature of "The Sky is Low, the Clouds Are Mean" shows that it is a poem?

- A. Images of nature as royalty
- B. Sentences are long and complex
- C. Sentences are divided into lines and stanzas
- D. Vivid descriptions and powerful words

11. "The Sky is Low, the Clouds Are Mean" has all of the following features except

(Use process of elimination, if stuck)

- A. personification
- B. rhyme
- C. stanzas
- D. couplets

Read the poem, "Those Winter Sundays," which is remembrance by poet Robert Hayden of his youth and relationship with his father. Then answer the following questions.

12. Which of these topics would be best to discuss before reading in order to help the reader better understand the poem?

- A. the jobs parents at work during the week
- B. skills for wood splitting
- C. the heating problems in old homes
- D. how young children may not appreciate simple things

13. The main conflict in the poem is between

- A. the mother and father
- B. the son and father
- C. the father and his work
- D. the heat and the cold

**The Sky Is Low,
The Clouds Are Mean
By Emily Dickinson**

The sky is low, the clouds are mean,
A travelling flake of snow
Across a barn or through a rut
Debates if it will go.

A narrow wind complains all day
How some one treated him;
Nature, like us, is sometimes caught
Without her diadem¹.

¹ diadem: a type of crown or royal headdress

**Those Winter Sundays
by Robert Hayden**

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

14. In line 14, the word “offices” suggests that love
- A. is a job that parents have and do for their children
 - B. should not be shown at the office
 - C. should always be easy and joyful, no matter what
 - D. is like a polished pair of shoes

15. Which of these themes is primarily developed in this poem?

- A. Hard work pays off in the long run
- B. Honor your father and other’s love
- C. Poverty breaks the spirit
- D. Love is displayed in many different ways

16. Which of these lines best communicates the author’s attitude toward his father?

- A. Then with cracked hands that ached (3)
- B. When the rooms were warm, he’d call, (7)
- C. Fearing the chronic angers of that house, (9)
- D. What did I know, what did I know (13)

17. What do the following words have in common?

blueblack, cracked, ached, banked, thanked, wake, breaking, call, chronic

- A. They all rhyme
- B. They all contain the similar sounds
- C. They are all examples of similes
- D. They all establish an angry tone

Those Winter Sundays

by Robert Hayden

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?