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Individual Learning Packet

**Teaching Unit**

**100 Best-Loved Poems**

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written by John Peruggia

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# 100 Best-Loved Poems

## Terms and Definitions

*Alliteration* - the repetition of sounds at the beginning of words. **Example:** More Mischief and Merriment.

*Allusion* - a reference to a person, place, poem, book, event, etc., which is not part of the story, that the author expects the reader will recognize. **Example:** In *The Glass Menagerie*, Tom speaks of “Chamberlain’s umbrella,” a reference to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.

*Anaphora* - repetition of a word or group of words within a short section of writing. **Example:** “A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.”—Ecclesiastes 3:2

*Anthropomorphism* - attributing human qualities, emotions, and behavior to animals. **Examples:** In the *Uncle Remus* stories, the bear is usually portrayed as slow and dumb. *Aesop’s Fables* also give animals emotions of jealousy, anger, revenge, etc., to illustrate a moral.

*Assonance* - repetition of an interior vowel sound within a short section. **Example:** Why does my wife fly in the sky at night?

*Ballad Stanza* - a stanza of four lines of poetry with a rhyme scheme of abcb. **Example:**

It is an ancient Mariner,	[A]
And he stoppeth one of three.	[B]
‘By thy long grey beard and glittering eye.	[C]
Now wherefore stopp’st thou me?’	[B]

—*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

*Catalog Verse* – a technique in poetry used to describe people, things, places, or ideas.

**Example:** W.H. Auden’s *In Memory of W.B. Yeats*.

*Cliché* - a familiar word or phrase that is used so often that it is no longer fresh or meaningful, but trite. **Example:** “All’s well that ends well.”

*Climax* - the point of greatest dramatic tension or excitement in a story. **Examples:** Othello’s murder of Desdemona. In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the person chasing Scout is killed.

*Colloquialism* - a popular expression or term that may or may not be proper English. **Example:** He hasn’t got any.

*Connotation* - a meaning of a word that carries a suggested meaning different from the actual definition. **Example:** The word “fireplace” has a *connotation* of warmth, comfort, security, and home. The actual definition, though, is a brick area in a home that contains a fire.

*Consonance* - repetition of an interior consonant sound within a short sentence. **Example:** The kingfisher is splashing through the rushing water.

*Couplet* - Two successive rhyming lines of poetry, usually the same length. **Example:**

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.  
– Joyce Kilmer

*Denotation* – the primary understanding or meaning of a word. **Example:** The word “worm” means a creature that lives in soil.

*Dialect* - a particular kind of speech used by members of one specific group because of its geographical location or class. **Example:** Jim, in *Huckleberry Finn* says, “Shet de do.” [“Shut the door”.]

*Dialogue* - conversation between two or more characters.

*Double Entendre* - a type of pun in which a word or phrase has two or more different meanings, one of which is usually sexual. **Example:** “Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads; take it in what sense you will.”  
–*Romeo and Juliet*

*Elegy* – a formal, stylized poem about the death of a famous person, a close friend; a poem on a very solemn subject. **Example:** Whitman’s “*When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d*.”

*Elision* – the exclusion or blending of a syllable. **Examples:** gonna, wanna, ya’ll

*End Rhyme* – rhyme that occurs at the ends of lines. **Example:**  
My mother always said,  
“It’s time for good boys to go to bed.”

*Epitaph* – an inscription on a tombstone. **Example:** Edgar Lee Masters’ *Spoon River Anthology* is written as a series of verse memories from dead citizens based on their epitaphs.

*Foot* - a standard of length in poetry, dependent on syllables. **Examples:** “To be/ or not/ to be/” consists of three feet of two syllables each. “Amidst/ the mists/ he spied/ the girl/” is made up of four feet, each with two syllables. “Comprehend/ the meaning/ of rhythm” uses three feet of three syllables each.

*Half Rhyme* - a near-rhyme; one that is approximate, not exact. Also called *slant rhyme*.  
**Examples:** keep/neat, friend/wind.

*Hyperbole*- exaggeration for emphasis; overstatement. **Example:** I've told you a million times to...

*Iamb* - the most common foot of poetry in English, made up of two syllables, the first unstressed and the second stressed. **Examples:** a lone'; e lect'.

*Iambic Pentameter* - a line of poetry composed of five feet of iambs; the most common form of English poetry. **Example:** Hamlet says, "O, what' / a rogue' / and peas' / ant slave' / am I'."

*Imagery Imagery* - the use of words to evoke impressions and meanings that are more than just the basic, accepted definitions of the words themselves. **Example:** The quotation, "Get thee to a nunnery," from *Hamlet* implies that Ophelia must regain her purity and chastity and does not simply mean that she needs to go to a convent.

*Inference* - the act of drawing a conclusion that is not actually stated by the author. **Example:** In *The Pigman*, John and Lorraine are writing a "memorial epic" about Mr. Pignati. Therefore, the reader may logically assume that Mr. Pignati dies in the book.

*Interior Monologue* - an author's thoughts, written as if they come from his or her mind directly to the reader's. **Example:** *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*.

*Internal rhyme* - the rhyming of words within one line of poetry or one sentence of prose. **Example:** The **green** river slides silently **unseen** beneath the **trees**.

*Irony* - a perception of inconsistency, sometimes humorous, in which the significance and understanding of a statement or event is changed by its context. **Example:** The firehouse burned down.

- *Dramatic Irony* - the audience or reader knows more about a character's situation than the character does and knows that the character's understanding is incorrect. **Example:** In *Medea*, Creon asks, "What atrocities could she commit in one day?" The reader, however, knows Medea will destroy her family and Creon's by day's end.
- *Structural Irony* – the use of a naïve hero, whose incorrect perceptions differ from the reader's correct ones. **Example:** Huck Finn.
- *Verbal Irony* - a discrepancy between what is said and what is really meant; sarcasm. **Example:** A large man whose nickname is "Tiny."

*Juxtaposition* - the placement of two dissimilar items, people, thoughts, places, etc., next to one another to emphasize the differences or heighten the similarities. **Example:** In *The Pearl*, the main character instinctively touches the valuable pearl and his knife at the same time.

*Lyric Poem* – a genre of poetry in which the voice of the poem (which may not be that of the poet) expresses personal feelings or perspectives. **Example:** Poem #128 by Emily Dickinson.

*Metaphor* - a comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar in which one is described in terms of the other. **Example:** The moon, a haunting lantern, shone through the clouds.

*Meter* - the emphasized pattern of repeated sounds in poetry; meter is represented by stressed and unstressed syllables. **Example:** “To wake’ the soul’ with ten’der strokes’ of art’.”—Alexander Pope

*Monologue* - an extended speech by one character, either when alone or to others. **Example:** *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*; Mark Antony’s speech at Caesar’s funeral.

*Motif* - a situation, incident, idea, or image that is repeated significantly in a literary work. **Examples:** In *Hamlet*, revenge is a frequently repeated idea. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden continually comments on the phoniness of people he meets.

*Onomatopoeia* - a word whose sound (the way it is pronounced) imitates its meaning. **Examples:** “roar,” “murmur,” “tintinnabulation.”

*Paradox* - a statement that is self-contradictory on its surface, yet makes a point through the *juxtaposition* of the ideas and words within the paradox. **Examples:** “Noon finally dawned for the remaining, weary soldiers”; “He that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat...”—Isaiah 55:1

*Parallelism* - the repetition of similarly constructed phrases, clauses, or sentences within a short section. **Examples:** “Government of the people, by the people, and for the people...”; “When I was a child, I spake as child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child...” I Corinthians 13:11

*Personification* - a figure of speech in which an object, abstract idea, or animal is given human characteristics. **Examples:** The wall did its best to keep out the invaders.

“Because I could not stop for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me.”  
—Emily Dickinson

*Plot* - the pattern of events in a literary work; what happens.

*Point of View* - the position or vantage point, determined by the author, from which the story seems to come to the reader. The two most common points of view are First-person and Third-person. **Examples:** First-person point of view occurs in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; the reader receives all information through Huck’s eyes. An example of third-person point of view is Dickens’ *Hard Times*, in which the narrator is not a character in the book.

*Pun* - an expression that achieves emphasis or humor by utilizing:

- two distinctly different meanings for the same word. **Example:** “play” meaning “fun” and “play” meaning a performance on stage.

or

- two similar sounding words. **Example:** close/clothes.

**Example:** In *Romeo and Juliet*, one character, Mercutio, says after being fatally stabbed, “Ask for me tomorrow and you will find me a grave man.”

*Quatrain* - a four-line stanza of poetry that may or may not rhyme.

**Example:**

“All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his sacred flame.”  
–Coleridge

*Rhetoric*- the art of eloquent speech or writing, which employs various techniques in order to persuade one’s audience. **Example:** Congressional speeches.

*Rhyme Scheme* - an alphabetical representation of the way a poem rhymes, constructed by assigning each line a letter. **Example:**

My vantage point permitted a clear view      [A]  
of the depths of the pit below: a desolation      [B]  
bathed with the tears of its tormented crew      [A]  
–*The Inferno*

*Romanticism* - an 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century literary movement that is frequently characterized by the following:

- a depiction of emotion and imagination
- a depiction of the beauties of nature
- settings that are in exotic or remote locations. Old castles or mansions frequently play an important role.
- a hero or heroine who rebels against the social norms of his or her society.
- an intense interest in nature, its beauty, and/or its fierceness.
- an interest in the irrational realms of dreams, folk superstitions, legends, and ghosts.
- language and characters marked by emotional intensity

**Examples:** *Frankenstein*, *Wuthering Heights*.

*Satire* - using humor to expose something or someone to ridicule. **Examples:** *Animal Farm*; *Gulliver’s Travels*.

*Sensory images* - the use of details from any, some, or all of the five senses. **Example:** He reached behind him, felt the wall, and was more secure.

*Setting* - when and where the short story, play, or novel takes place. **Examples:** *Macbeth* takes place in the eleventh century in Scotland. *The Old Man and the Sea* has its main setting on the ocean outside Havana, Cuba, in an unspecified time in the middle-to-late 20<sup>th</sup>-century.

*Simile* - a comparison between two different things using either *like* or *as*. **Examples:** I am as hungry as a horse. The huge trees broke like twigs during the hurricane.

*Soliloquy* - lines in a play in which a character reveals thoughts to the audience, but not to the other characters; it is usually longer than an aside and not directed at the audience.

**Example:** Hamlet's famous "To be or not to be" speech.

*Sonnet* - a fourteen line poem written in iambic pentameter and having a standard rhyme scheme.

**Example:** Shakespeare's Sonnet I

From fairest creatures we desire increase,	[A]
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,	[B]
But as the ripper should by time decrease,	[A]
His tender heir might bear his memory:	[B]
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,	[C]
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,	[D]
Making a famine where abundance lies,	[C]
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.	[D]
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,	[E]
And only herald to the gaudy spring,	[F]
Within thy own bud buriest thy content,	[E]
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding.	[F]
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,	[G]
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.	[G]

*Stanza* - a grouping of lines in a poem. **Example:**

It was many and many a year ago  
In a kingdom by the sea  
That a maiden there lived whom you may know  
By the name of Annabel Lee;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

—Edgar Allen Poe

*Synecdoche* - using a part of something to stand for the entire thing. **Example:** I spoke to Big Mouth yesterday.

*Synesthesia* – the merging or mixing of two sensory experiences to create an image: "hearing" a "color." **Example:** The perfume unleashed a stream of perfect words.

*Syntax* - the arrangement of words to form sentences.

*Tercet* – a grouping of three consecutive lines of poetry that may or may not rhyme. **Example:**

“All that glisters is not gold;  
Often have you heard that told.  
Many a man his life hath sold...”  
– *The Merchant of Venice*

*Tetrameter* – a verse in a poem consisting of four metric feet. **Example:**

“And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England’s mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England’s pleasant pastures seen?”  
– *Milton*

*Theme* - the central or dominant idea behind the story; the most important aspect that emerges from how the book treats its subject. Sometimes theme is easy to see, but, at other times, it may be more difficult. Theme is usually expressed indirectly, as an element the reader must figure out. It is a universal statement about humanity, rather than a simple statement dealing with plot or characters in the story. Themes are generally hinted at through different methods: a phrase or quotation that introduces the novel, a recurring element in the book, or an observation made that is reinforced through plot, dialogue, or characters. It must be emphasized that not all works of literature have themes in them. **Example:** In a story about a man who is diagnosed with cancer and, through medicine and will-power, returns to his former occupation, the theme might be: “Real courage is demonstrated through internal bravery and perseverance.” In a poem about a flower that grows, blooms, and dies, the theme might be: “Youth fades, and death comes to all.”

*Tone* - the atmosphere in a literary work or the attitude the author puts in a literary work.

**Examples:** The gloom and representation of decay is the main tone of Poe’s *The Fall of the House of Usher*; the tone of *Catch-22* is one of *sarcasm* and absurdity.

*Trimeter* – a line of a poem that contains three metric feet. **Example:**

“When here the spring we see,  
Fresh green upon the tree.”

*Verse* - another word for “*poetry*.” In Shakespeare, the educated characters and the nobility usually speak in verse to indicate their high station in life.

# *100 Best-Loved Poems*

## **Background Notes**

Poetry has evolved from its oral-based birth through its periods of strict forms and conventions, into a sprawling expanse of words, images, and ideas. The poems collected in this anthology cover a range of nations, of forms and styles, of themes and objectives, and of times. What makes them the “best-loved,” is up for discussion, but their lasting appeal has long been established as truth.

The poems in this anthology can be taught in a number of ways. If one treats the poems in order of presentation, an adequate study can be made of the chronological progression of poetry through its major movements and time-periods. Such an approach will allow students to trace the influences of poets past, as well as to examine the slight variations of style that occur within set boundaries.

The poems can also be treated by their subject matter. Units can easily be developed based on the ideas and feelings of love, loss, death, prayer, anger, hope, and resilience. Treated as such, the poems in the book will allow students to grasp the continuity of the poems’ form. The themes and messages presented can be seen as transcending time. Additionally, close readings of poems in units may allow for lively discussions on the treatment of a variety of topics.

To adapt the Unit, teachers should simply scan the study and test questions and cross out any undesired ones before reproducing the pages for students.

Please also note that, in order to complete the essay portion of the provided test, students will need access to either their books or photocopies of the poems to be discussed.

However one may study the poems of this anthology, the outcome remains consistent—poetry can captivate and move, it can express and enlighten. The study of poetry is a study of human nature. The 100 poems presented allow for comparison, discussion, and reaction to the basic tenets of what makes us human as writers, as poets, and as readers.

All references come from the 1995 Dover Thrift Edition of *100 Best-Loved Poems*, edited by Phillip Smith.

# *100 Best-Loved Poems*

## **Objectives**

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. understand and explain the relationship of a poem's form to its content.
2. compare and contrast two or more poems through an examination of both form and content.
3. compare and contrast two or more poets' treatments of the same subject or theme.
4. distinguish between iambic pentameter, tetrameter, and trimeter, and point out examples of each in the text.
5. comment on the themes, concerns, and trends in poetry from its inception to the second World War.
6. define all of the vocabulary words listed in the study guide.
7. identify the following figures of sound and point out examples of each: alliteration, assonance, consonance, internal rhyme, and half rhyme.
8. identify the following forms and elemental units of poetry and point out examples of each: sonnet, foot, stanza, strophe, quatrain, catalog verse, couplet, tercet, narrative poem, lyric poem, prose poem, and free verse.
9. identify the following figures of speech and point out examples of each in the text: metaphor, simile, irony, synecdoche, allusion, imagery, personification, narrator, anaphora, parallelism, dialect, elision, theme, and tone.
10. understand the value of poetry as a form of protest.
11. understand the value of poetry as a form of self-expression.
12. infer details not explicitly stated in the text.
13. understand the difference between the poet and the narrator of the poem.
14. understand the effects of repetition, diction, and syntax in a poem.
15. identify a poem's rhyme scheme and denote it in capital letters.
16. identify and comment on the development and milestones of poetry from the ballads of the Middle Ages to the verses of the mid- to late-twentieth century.

# *100 Best-Loved Poems*

## **Questions for Essay and Discussion**

1. Discuss the two traditional ballads that appear at the beginning of the anthology, “Lord Randal” and “Sir Patrick Spens.” Consider the ways the two title characters are similar and different.
2. Compare and Contrast William Blake’s poems “The Lamb” and “The Tyger” in terms of their tones and views of the world.
3. Consider Keats’ “Ode to a Nightingale” and “Ode on a Grecian Urn” in terms of their development of a common theme.
4. Discuss the ways both A.E. Housman and Wilfred Owen mourn the loss of youth in their poems.
5. Discuss the ways both Longfellow’s “The Village Blacksmith” and Kipling’s “Gunga Din” attempt to define the “honorable man.”
6. Discuss both Bryant’s and Longfellow’s use of the poem as an inspirational device. Is poetry an effective form of inspirational writing in today’s society?
7. Imagine that you are the servant being addressed in Browning’s “My Last Duchess.” What response and advice would you bring to your master concerning the Duke?
8. Discuss the ways in which alliteration and internal rhyme saturate Poe’s “The Raven” and the effect they have on the poem’s tone.
9. Discuss the way that Marianne Moore and William Carlos Williams bring a rigorous attention to form to their “free” verse.
10. Compare the ways Gray’s “Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes” and Burns’ “To A Mouse,” treat the subject of animal behavior.
11. Discuss the punctuation of Donne’s “Holy Sonnet X” in terms of its symbolic use of caesurae.
12. Discuss the use of natural imagery by Shakespeare in his sonnets.
13. Compare the ways Coleridge and Shelley discuss man’s fatality in “Kubla Khan” and “Ozymandias.”
14. Discuss the speaker’s emotional response to his choice in Frost’s “The Road Not Taken.”

15. Choose your favorite poem from the anthology and discuss why it appeals to you both formally and thematically. Use specific examples from the poem to explain how it works for you.
16. Compare and contrast the theme of love in William Shakespeare's Sonnet XVIII, Sonnet LXXIII, Sonnet XCIV, and Sonnet CXVI. How is it treated differently from sonnet to sonnet?
17. Compare and contrast the ways in which Nashe and Thomas treat the subject of death in "Adieu, Farewell Earth's Bliss" and "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night."
18. Compare and contrast the message to women carried in "Song" by Edmund Waller and "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time," by Robert Herrick.
19. Compare William Blake's "London" to "Composed upon a Westminster Bridge, Sept. 3, 1802" by William Wordsworth. How do the authors' views of the same city differ? How are their techniques in communicating this the same?
20. Compare and contrast the ways in which A.E. Housman and Wilfred Owen deal with the subject of the death of young people.
21. E.E. Cummings is known as a radically modern poet, whose writing challenged conventional poetic techniques. Identify the conventional techniques he challenges in his "anyone lived in a pretty how town," and discuss both why you think he challenged them, and what impact they have on the reader.

# *100 Best-Loved Poems*

## Test

### Multiple Choice

1. The “eye of heaven,” is Shakespeare’s metaphor for
  - A. the moon.
  - B. his love.
  - C. the sun.
  - D. a rose.
2. How many lines are in a Shakespearean sonnet?
  - A. 8
  - B. 6
  - C. 12
  - D. 14
3. The name of the son to whom Jonson’s “On My First Son” is written is
  - A. Abou Ben Adhem.
  - B. Benjamin.
  - C. Mineveer Cheevey.
  - D. Richard Cory.
4. "Richard Cory" is a man who seems to have everything and is envied and admired by everyone but commits suicide. This is both surprising and
  - A. allusive.
  - B. figurative.
  - C. paratactic.
  - D. ironic.
5. The speaker of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" pines for a lost love named
  - A. Desiree.
  - B. Annabel Lee.
  - C. Lenore.
  - D. Devorah.
6. In Emily Dickinson's "Because I could not stop for Death," death is
  - A. personified.
  - B. parodied.
  - C. defeated.
  - D. minimized.

7. The central tone in Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken" is one of
- A. regret that one can only follow one path in life, and that the path one chooses shuts one off to the opportunities of others.
  - B. contentment and satisfaction that one has chosen the best path for oneself, even if others shun that path.
  - C. regret that one has chosen the wrong path.
  - D. pity for those who do not choose the less-traveled path.
8. In George Herbert's "Love Bade Me Welcome," Love symbolizes
- A. innocence.
  - B. hope.
  - C. Celia.
  - D. God.
9. The poet being alluded to in Milton's "On his Blindness" is
- A. Milton himself.
  - B. Homer.
  - C. Shakespeare.
  - D. Marlowe.
10. In his "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars," Richard Lovelace's speaker compares the title character to
- A. a nunnery.
  - B. a rose.
  - C. a mouse.
  - D. a starry night.
11. Which of the following is NOT an allusion from Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress"?
- A. "Love you ten years before the Flood..."
  - B. "Thou by the Indian Ganges' side..."
  - C. "Till the conversion of the Jews..."
  - D. "Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."
12. An elegy is
- A. a short poem about love.
  - B. a poem of lament and sorrow.
  - C. written on a tombstone.
  - D. written to memorialize someone important.
13. In his "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, Sept. 3, 1802," William Wordsworth compares \_\_\_\_\_ to a garment.
- A. Xanadu
  - B. London
  - C. Celia
  - D. Westminster Bridge

14. The phrase, “Five miles meandering with a mazy motion” exemplifies what literary device?
- A. onomatopoeia
  - B. consonance
  - C. assonance
  - D. alliteration
15. What does “Jenny” do to Leigh Hunt’s speaker?
- A. kisses him
  - B. mourns him
  - C. kills him
  - D. marries him
16. How does Byron show the passage of time in his “The Destruction of Sennacherib”?
- A. allusions to Greek gods
  - B. allusions to the four seasons
  - C. discussion of an hour-glass
  - D. comparisons to the life of a man
17. What is Shelley’s “West Wind” a metaphor of?
- A. his own art
  - B. God
  - C. the passage of time
  - D. the loss of innocence
18. Thanatopsis means
- A. the second coming.
  - B. the woman without mercy.
  - C. crossing the bar.
  - D. meditation on death.
19. What is at “The Lake Isle of Innisfree”?
- A. a Grecian urn
  - B. a skylark
  - C. a cabin
  - D. a jabberwock
20. “\_\_\_\_\_” uses a metaphor of a candle to explain life’s stresses.
- A. First Fig
  - B. Fog
  - C. The Red Wheelbarrow
  - D. A Birthday

## Essay

*(Answer any two.)*

1. Compare and contrast the use of art as a symbol in Keats' "Ode to a Grecian Urn" and Auden's "Musee des Beaux Arts."
2. Citing specific examples, compare the following poems' treatment of war and dying. Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade," Kipling's "Gunga Din," and Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth."
3. Consider Frost's "The Road Not Taken" and Thomas' "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night." Has the speaker in Frost's poem accepted Thomas' pleas? Explain your answer.
4. Compare Wyatt's "The Lover Showeth How He is Foresaken of Such as He Sometime Enjoyed" with John Suckling's "Why So Pale and Wan, Fond Lover." Are the speakers of the two poems similar? How are they different?
5. Discuss the ways in which "On His Deceased Wife" and "My Last Duchess" reveal the characters of widowed men. How are the two men alike? How do they differ?
6. Citing specific examples from the text, explain how the character traits of "Barbara Frietchie" reflect or refract the messages found in at least three of the following poems:
  - Vaughan's "The Retreat"
  - Gray's "The World is too Much with Us; Late and Soon"
  - Hunt's "Abou Ben Adhem"
  - Longfellow's "The Village Blacksmith"
  - Holmes' "Old Ironsides"
  - Yeats' "When You Are Old"
  - e.e. cummings' "anyone lived in a pretty how town"
7. Discuss the theme of religion in early poetry. Include in your discussion the poetry of John Donne, William Blake, and George Meredith.
8. Compare and contrast the sonnets of Shakespeare to the sonnets of John Donne and Elizabeth Barrett Browning in terms of form, voice, and the ways in which they address love.

# *100 Best-Loved Poems*

## **Test Key**

1.	C	6.	A	11.	D	16.	B
2.	D	7.	A	12.	B	17.	A
3.	B	8.	D	13.	B	18.	D
4.	D	9.	B	14.	D	19.	C
5.	C	10.	A	15.	A	20.	A

# 100 Best Loved Poems

## Study Guide Teacher's Copy

### “Lord Randal”

by Anonymous, page 1

#### Vocabulary

**hae** – have

**weary** – tired

**fain** – happily

**wald** – would

**gat** – ate

**gat ye** – you eat

**bloodhounds** – dogs

1. How did we come to have ballads as part of our literary history?

*As stated in this poem's introduction, before ballads were written down, they were passed down from person to person through oral tradition. This explains how versions of ballads often slightly differ, as they often changed from speaker to speaker.*

2. Who is the speaker of the poem?

*The poem's speaker is the mother of Lord Randall.*

3. What key events of Lord Randal's life are recalled in each stanza of the poem?

*The first stanza recalls Lord Randal's hunting as a young boy. The second and third stanzas recall his evening date with his love. The fourth stanza recalls the death of Lord Randall's dogs, while the last stanza recalls his own death.*

4. This ballad repeats several phrases in each stanza, including "...mother make my bed soon,/For I am weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down." By repeating these lines, as well as other phrases, what literary device is being used?

*This ballad is using anaphora.*

5. What is Lord Randal hunting throughout the poem?

*The poem infers that Lord Randal has been hunting, or courting, his love.*

## “Sir Patrick Spens”

by Anonymous, pages 2-4

### Vocabulary

**skipper** – captain

**faem** – same

**hame** – home

**fetch** – return

**alack** – an exclamation denoting sorrow

**league** – a distance of about 3.0 miles

**lang** – long

1. In what point of view is the poem written? Who is the narrator?

*The poem is written in the third-person, limited omniscient point of view. The narrator is an unnamed third person who is observing the events and dialogue presented.*

2. In the fifth stanza, Sir Patrick Spens is moved to tears as he reads a letter requesting his help. What causes this display of emotion?

*Sir Patrick Spens realizes he must help the King of Norway rescue his daughter, as he is a man of honor and duty. However, he regrets he must leave at that time, as the sea is at its most difficult, and he knows he may not survive.*

3. What modern-day saying does the line “Be it wind, be it weat, be it hail, be it sleet, Our ship must sail the faem” sound like?

*Answers may vary. Example: The United States Postal Service unofficially adopted a similar slogan, “Be it wind, rain, sleet or snow, the mail will be delivered.”*

4. What happens to the ship in section II?

*The ship encounters a fierce storm and is sunk.*

5. At the end of the poem, Sir Patrick Spens is said to be laying fifty-fathoms deep. What is he doing there?

*On his way home, Sir Patrick Spens and his sailors are overtaken by a powerful storm and drown. Many will wait for the sailors’ return for a long time, never knowing that they rest at the bottom of the ocean. Sir Patrick Spens has died in the shipwreck, and so his body is at the bottom of the ocean.*

6. A ballad generally consists of quatrains with the following metrical scheme: the first and third lines have four accented syllables, while the second and fourth have three accented syllables. What is the metrical scheme of this poem? Does it fit the standard form of the ballad?

*Answers may vary, but students should be able to effectively analyze a quatrain of the poem in order to show how it successfully adheres to the ballad structure.*

**“The Lover Showeth How He Is Forsaken of Such as He Sometime Enjoyed”**

by Sir Thomas Wyatt, pages 4-5

**Vocabulary**

**chamber** – bedroom

**array** – assortment, display

**guise** – appearance

**forsaking** – abandoning

**new-fangleness** – newly fashioned

1. The poem is written in a unique structure. Translate the first line of the poem into modern English.

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker of the poem is the seeker and not the one who flees. “They flee from me that I sometimes did seek.”*

2. What is the feeling of the narrator toward the woman he speaks of in this poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: The narrator is frustrated by the fact that women who were once gentle and kind to him and once kept him company now act wildly, as if they don’t know him at all. He reflects on one woman in particular, and wonders if it is fair that, since she left him, he feels such loss, while she might feel no sadness at all.*

3. To what animal does the speaker compare the objects of his desire?

*The speaker compares the “they” of the poem to wild animals, probably horses, which now range in his possession.*

4. Why has the speaker stopped chasing women?

*The speaker has fallen in love with one.*

5. What is the poem’s rhyme scheme? What type of poem does this scheme suggest?

*The poem is written in rhyme royale, consisting of seven-line stanzas of iambic pentameter with a rhyme scheme of a/b/a/b/b/c/c.*

6. The line, “And I have leave to go, of her goodness” is an example of what literary convention?

*The line exemplifies irony, in that the speaker really has not let go of his love.*

7. Why is the word ‘she’ italicized in the last line of the poem? Why has Wyatt given this word special emphasis?

*Answers may vary. Example: The poem is written as a monologue, and so the italics may suggest that the speaker is placing significance on the word. Perhaps it is to emphasize his idea that he knows what he deserves in life and she does not.*

## **“The Passionate Shepherd to His Love”**

by Christopher Marlowe, pages 5-6

### **Vocabulary**

**dales** – valleys

**melodious** – musical

**madrigals** – a short, musical poem about love

**posies** – flowers

**embroider’d** – sewn

**swains** – young boys from the country

1. What, metaphorically, does the speaker want to prove in the first stanza?

*The speaker wants his Lover to join in him in proving the pleasures of love.*

2. What is the purpose of the Shepherd’s poem?

*The shepherd is trying to woo his love by promising her walks in nature, fine clothing, and a life filled with happiness.*

3. What is the literary term for the phrase “coral clasps”?

*The repetition of the ‘c’ sound is called consonance.*

4. Why has Marlowe capitalized “Love” in the first and last lines of the poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: Marlowe is using the term as a proper noun and the capitalization suggests added importance to the shepherd.*

5. This poem is written in stanzas of four lines each. What is the term for this type of stanza?

*This type of stanza is called a quatrain.*

**“Sonnet XVIII”**

by William Shakespeare, page 6

**Vocabulary**

**temperate** – moderate

**darling** – beloved

**lease** – temporary ownership, permission

1. What comparison does the speaker make in this poem?

*The speaker is comparing his beloved to the beauty of the season.*

2. What poetic device is employed in the seventh line of the sonnet?

*The poet uses consonance and alliteration (“fair from fair”).*

3. What is “the eye of heaven”?

*The eye of heaven refers to the sun.*

4. How does the poem’s final quatrain distinguish between his beloved and the summer?

*The speaker says that his beloved, unlike the summer, has an everlasting beauty, one that “shall not fade.”*

5. According to the poem’s concluding couplet, why will the beloved’s beauty last forever?

*The beloved’s beauty will last forever because it is immortalized in this poem, which will also last forever.*

6. Traditional Elizabethan sonnets are fourteen lines long and end with two rhymed lines. What is the term for these two rhymed lines?

*The term is couplet.*

**“Sonnet LXXIII”**

by William Shakespeare, page 7

**Vocabulary**

**consumed** – inspired

**nourished** – sustained

1. What is the meter of this poem?

*The poem is written in iambic pentameter (lines of ten-syllables [five feet], following the pattern of unaccented-accented).*

2. In the first quatrain, the speaker compares his age to which season? Why?

*The speaker compares his age to late autumn because he is in the latter part of his life. He compares his aging to the aging of trees, the cold weather, and the migrating birds.*

3. Why does the speaker say that his age resembles the “twilight”?

*The speaker compares himself to the twilight since he believes his sun, or energy, has been extinguished.*

4. What does the speaker say in the final couplet of the poem?

*The speaker explains that his beloved must be strengthened by the knowledge that they will soon be parted from each other.*

5. What is the rhyme scheme of this sonnet?

*A/B/A/B C/D/C/D E/F/E/F GG*

## “Sonnet XCIV”

by William Shakespeare, page 7

### Vocabulary

**inherit** – receive

**base** – dishonorable, vile

**infection** – disease

**fester** – worsen, be made bitter

1. What kind of people is the speaker describing in the first two quatrains of the sonnet?

*Shakespeare lists many qualities, including: People who could hurt others but choose not to; people who are able to draw out emotion from others without showing any themselves; people who are not easily tempted; and people who are ruled only by themselves.*

2. What does the speaker claim will happen to these people?

*The speaker says that these people will prosper and lead, they will “inherit heaven’s graces.”*

3. In the sonnet’s concluding sestet, the speaker shifts his thoughts to a description of nature, discussing lilies and weeds. What does the final couplet suggest about the tone and message of the poem in its entirety?

*The final sestet compares flowers and weeds as parallel to the stewards and the lords and owners. The final couplet suggests that the speaker’s tone is one of realism and disenfranchisement. He claims “lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds,” which suggests that the lords and owners by nature are not meant to be beautiful, but to be deadly and controlling. Shakespeare is suggesting that people with great power and status who succumb to temptation and treachery are far worse than those of lower status who may occasionally be tempted or be deceitful. This comparison is called a metaphor.*

## “Sonnet CXVI”

by William Shakespeare, pages 7-8

### Vocabulary

**impediments** – obstacles

**tempests** – storms

**sickle** – a pole with a hook, used for farming grain

1. The second line of the sonnet contains which poetic device(s)?

*“Admit impediments” is an example of assonance, consonance, and internal rhyme.*

2. “It is the star to every wandering bark” is an example of what literary device?

*The speaker is comparing love to a star that guides lost ships without using like or as, so it is a metaphor.*

3. Why is “Time” capitalized in the ninth line of the poem?

*The speaker/poet has capitalized “Time” to signify its place as a subject and personified noun, “he”. The mention of the sickle implies Father Time.*

4. How sure is Shakespeare of his beliefs about love? Cite evidence in your own words to back up your statement.

*Answers may vary. Example: In the couplet at the end of this sonnet, Shakespeare says if he is not correct, then he has never written, and no man has ever loved before. He is obviously certain beyond a doubt, since he has written and people have experienced love.*

5. How does the tone of this sonnet compare to that in Sir Thomas Wyatt’s poem, “The Lover Showeth How He is Forsaken of Such as He Sometime Enjoyed”?

*The tone of Sir Thomas Wyatt’s poem is uncertain, disappointed, frustrated, and even angry. He feels that love is transient, unfair, and something that cannot be trusted. The tone is depressing and dark. Shakespeare’s sonnet, on the other hand, reflects on love as something that is solid, strong, unbreakable, and trustworthy. The tone is positive and passionate.*

## “Adieu, Farewell Earth’s Bliss”

by Thomas Nashe, pages 8-9

### Vocabulary

**physic** – health

**devour** – consume quickly

**vain** – hopeless

**heritage** – birthright, destiny

1. This poem is classified as a lyric. What qualities make it this type of poem?

*A lyric is a type of poetry in which the voice of the poem (in this case, the narrator’s) expresses personal feelings or perspectives. In this poem, the voice is clearly religious, and is criticizing the rich, the vain, and the ignorant.*

2. The first stanza of the poem alludes to “life’s lustful joys” and also to Death’s “darts.” With what mythological figure is Nashe associating with Death?

*Nashe is comparing Death to Cupid. The inference relies on the lustful joys (i.e. love), and the darts (i.e. arrows).*

3. The mentioning of Helen and Hector, both characters of classical epics, is an example of what literary device?

*Referencing characters from Homer’s The Illiad, Nashe is using allusion to show how the most beautiful and the most brave both eventually meet their matches in death.*

4. “Wit with his wantonness” is an example of what type of sound device?

*The repetition of the ‘w’ sound is called consonance.*

5. What is the tone of the poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: The poem is discussing the inevitability of death. Its tone is reflective, non-humorous, but also not too grim.*

6. What do you feel was Nashe’s purpose for writing this lyric?

*Answers may vary. Example: Nashe seems to be communicating that no matter how rich, strong, beautiful, or witty, everyone must eventually succumb to death, so we should pray for God’s mercy.*

## **“The Good Morrow”**

by John Donne, pages 9-10

### **Vocabulary**

**troth** – word of honor

**fancies** – whims

**slacken** – loosen

1. To what is the poem’s title referring?

*“The Good Morrow” refers to the time after the two lovers in this poem meet. Donne compares meeting his true love to waking up to a new day, which he greets in stanza two with “...good morrow to our waking souls.”*

2. What kind of imagery does Donne use in the first stanza to describe life before the two loves met?

*Donne uses words like “wean’d,” “suck’d,” and “childishly” to create an image of childhood and ignorance.*

3. What is the rhyme scheme and meter of this poem?

*The poem’s rhyme scheme is A/B/A/B C/D/C/D E/F/E/F G/G (a Shakespearean or Elizabethan sonnet form). It is written in iambic pentameter.*

4. Explain the significance and meaning of lines 6-7.

*The speaker is explaining that while he did see and get other beautiful things (women), they were all inferior to his love. The line is significant because it answers the speaker’s own question of what he did before he found his love.*

5. Why do you think Donne repeats the words “world” and “worlds” so frequently in lines 12-14?

*Donne repeats the words to show their importance to the speaker. He is comparing his love with the world— in size, in importance, and in uses.*

6. Line 12 contains an example of what poetic device?

*“Whatever dies, was not mix’d equally” is an example of verbal irony, as “dies” is also a homophone for dyes, or the mixing of colors. There is also the literal meaning of dying.*

## “Holy Sonnet X”

by John Donne, page 10

### Vocabulary

**poppy** – a type of flower used to make opium

1. What type of poem is “Holy Sonnet X”?

*The poem is an example of a Shakespearean sonnet written in loose iambic pentameter.*

2. How does the speaker portray Death? What are the different forces that bring it on?

*Death is portrayed as someone not worthy of awe, but rather of contempt. According to line nine and ten, death can only take action when brought on by fate, chance, kings, desperate men, poison, war, and sickness.*

3. Why does Donne say that those who Death thinks he kills, “die not”?

*The speaker believes that death is a pause in life, and so those who die are only waiting to awake to eternal life. Therefore, death should not be proud.*

4. Explain the significance of the caesurae in the poem’s final line.

*The use of a semicolon between “more” and “death” suggests that death is nothing but a pause for the dying. The comma after “death” suggests that death is the victim of dying, not the person. For once someone dies, death can no longer live for that person.*

5. By addressing Death, Donne’s poem is an example of what literary device?

*The addressing of an inanimate, abstract, or non-present being is known as apostrophe.*

## “Holy Sonnet XIV”

by John Donne, pages 10-11

### Vocabulary

**usurp’d** – taken through force or rebellion

**viceroy** – governor; ruling power

**labour** – work, energy

**betroth’d** – promised to marry

**enthrall** – captivate

**chaste** – innocent, pure

1. What is the irony in the speaker’s request?

*The speaker is asking for God to batter and beat him, to break, blow, and burn him, and to rape him in order to make him a better person.*

2. What metaphors and similes are used by the speaker in the poem? What effect/purpose do they have on the poem’s tone?

*The poem has several comparisons: the speaker compares himself to a “usurp’d town,” a maiden bound to the enemy, and a prisoner. The comparisons create an image of God as an overwhelming, terror-filling conqueror.*

3. The fifth line of the poem contains what poetic sound device?

*The repetition of the ‘u’ sound in “usurp’d” and “due” is an example of assonance.*

4. What are the contradictory feelings that exist within the speaker of this poem?

*The speaker loves God and willingly works hard to be worthy of His goodness. However, he is also aware that he is “weak or untrue.” He feels imprisoned by God, since he “never shall be free,” but is simultaneously “enthrall[ed],” stating “you ravish me.”*

## “To Celia”

by Ben Jonson, page 11

### Vocabulary

**nectar** – juice, potion

1. What allusion exists in the first stanza of this poem?

*Jonson alludes to the mythological god Jove.*

2. Explain the ironies present in the first stanza of the poem.

*There is irony in the speaker's requests for Celia to drink with her eyes and to kiss cups. There is also irony present in his statement that he will pledge with his eyes, since most pledge with words.*

3. According to the speaker, why did he send the woman a wreath of roses?

*The speaker sent her a wreath not in her honor, but in hopes that in her presence it would never wither and stay beautiful forever.*

4. What is Celia's response to the speaker's gift in the second octet?

*Celia does not accept the wreath, but rather sends it back untouched.*

5. How, according to the speaker, has the wreath changed?

*After the wreath was sent back to him, the speaker believes the wreath now smells like the woman he loves.*

6. What is the tone of the poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: The tone is overly romantic. The speaker is trying to win Celia, but she does not want to be won. His final exclamation is one of unintended humor for the reader, who sees the hopelessness in the speaker's actions.*

## **“On My First Son”**

by Ben Jonson, page 12

### **Vocabulary**

**exacted** – demanded

**lament** – grieve for

*Note to the teacher: As an introduction, students should be made aware that Benjamin (Ben for short) means “child of my right hand” in Hebrew, and that poetry, or poiesis in Greek, means creation. Both translations are necessary for proper understanding of the poem.*

1. To whom is the speaker addressing his remarks?

*The speaker, Ben Jonson, is addressing his son Benjamin who died when on his seventh birthday.*

2. What does Jonson say is enviable about his son’s death?

*In line seven, the speaker says he envies that his son escaped the “rage” and “misery” people must experience while living on Earth.*

3. Explain in your own words what Jonson means in the last two lines of this lyric:  
“...henceforth, all his vows be such,/As what he loves may never like too much.”

*Answers may vary. Example: Jonson seems to be making a vow to himself that in the future he will still love, but not come to like what he loves too much. This is to spare him the pain of loss he feels now with the passing of his son.*

## **“To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time”**

by Robert Herrick, pages 12-13

### **Vocabulary**

**coy** – shy

**tarry** – delay

1. In the first stanza, Herrick writes of rosebuds and the brevity of their beauty. For what are rosebuds actually a metaphor?

*Herrick uses rosebuds as a metaphor for a woman’s virginity.*

2. The second stanza contains examples of what two poetic devices?

*The sun is described as “the glorious lamp of heaven,” an example of simile. In the second line, it is referred to as “he” and as running a race, an example of personification.*

3. What advice does the speaker give to the virgins he is addressing in the last stanza?

*The speaker tells the women not to be shy, but to “use your time,” presumably by finding a man to love, and to marry him if possible. He warns them that if they lose their virginity before they marry, they may be alone forever.*

4. In what ways does the poem reflect ideas present in Ben Jonson’s “To Celia”?

*Answers may vary. Example: Both poems are attempts at getting women to act on their love for selfish purposes. Additionally, both poems comment on the need for swift and decisive action.*

## “Upon Julia’s Clothes”

by Robert Herrick, page 13

### Vocabulary

**liquefaction** – to be turned into liquid

1. What is the tone of the first stanza? Explain your answer.

*The first stanza has a tone of objectivity and detachment. The speaker seems to simply be describing Julia’s clothes.*

2. What does the “my” in the poem’s first line reveal about the speaker?

*The speaker says, “my Julia,” suggesting that she is his possession.*

3. What is ironic about the poem’s concluding line?

*The speaker concludes by admitting that he is enraptured with Julia. It is ironic when considering the poem’s first line, wherein he claims she is his possession. In reality, she possesses him.*

4. What effect, if any, do the long vowel sounds in the poem’s second line, “sweetly flows,” have on the poem’s meaning?

*Answers may vary. Example: The long vowel sounds reflect the smooth, fluid movement of the dress. Their length also may symbolize the speaker’s infatuation with Julia.*

5. Why do you think Herrick repeats “then” in the second line of the poem?

*The repetition of the word suggests that the speaker is entranced, and that he had to pause to catch what he was saying. It may also reflect his overwhelming desire to rekindle the moment he is recalling.*

6. What does the author mean by “the liquefaction of her clothes?”

*Answers may vary. Example: The author may be referring to the liquid-like movement of her clothes on her body. Alternately, he may be referring to his desire to see these clothes become like liquid and melt away.*

## **“Love Bade Me Welcome”**

by George Herbert, page 13

### **Vocabulary**

**bade** – directed, ordered

**marred** – flawed

1. In the first stanza, what or who is the “Love” to which Herbert refers? How do you know?

*The “Love” that Herbert refers to is actually the Lord. We know this because shortly after, in the third stanza, Herbert addresses the love he has been speaking to as Lord.*

2. What is the term for renaming the subject in a poem, for example, calling the Lord “quick-eyed Love” in the first stanza?

*The term is epithet.*

3. Why is the speaker hesitant to accept the Lord’s invitation to sit with him? Find an example from each stanza.

*In the first stanza, he is hesitant because he is “Guilty of dust and sin.” In the second, he calls himself “unkind, [and] ungrateful.” Third, he admits his eyes have been “marred” by sin.*

4. Why does the Lord still invite the speaker to sit with him?

*The Lord reminds the speaker of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross and the practice of communion: “And know you not...who bore the blame?” Since the speaker seems repentant of his faults, and because of Christ’s sacrifice, the Lord still invites the speaker to sit “...and taste My meat.”*

## “Song”

by Edmund Waller, page 14

### Vocabulary

**resemble** – appear similar

**spied** – observed

**abide** – stand

**uncommended** – not recommended, not praised

1. According to the speaker, how should young, beautiful women behave?

*The speaker’s message here seems to be that young women should not hide their beauty, but be as visible as possible so the world may enjoy it.*

2. In your own words, describe what Waller means by his statement in the last stanza, “How small a part of time they share/ That are so wondrous sweet and fair!”

*Answers may vary. Example: People and things that are beautiful and kind seem to live a short life on Earth.*

3. How would you characterize the speaker of this poem? Explain your answer using evidence from the poem.

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker encourages those who are beautiful to “come forth” and “suffer herself to be desired,” telling women that they should not “blush so to be admired.” The speaker, then, may be considered vain in the sense that he encourages the flaunting of beauty. On the other hand, he may simply be kind, wishing women not to hide her beauty out of fear of being judged as vain.*

4. Why do you think the speaker says that “she” is wasting both his and her own time?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker of the poem thinks that she is wasting their time because she has not realized how he feels about her.*

5. What does the third stanza imply about her feelings of being pursued?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker’s love is embarrassed and shy about his feelings for her. She blushes at his admiration.*

6. In the final stanza, why does the speaker tell Rose to die?

*The speaker tells Rose to die so that his love may witness the brevity of life and, in turn, act on her feelings for him quickly.*

## “On His Blindness”

by John Milton, pages 14-15

### Vocabulary

**lodged** – stuck

**chide** – reprimand, scold

**yoke** – burden

1. What is the speaker of this poem bothered by when he considers his state of blindness?

*He wonders whether he will be able to effectively do “day labour, light denied.” In other words, he wonders whether he will be able to do the Lord’s work without the ability to see.*

2. Before he thinks to ask the Lord whether he is still a worthy servant, he answers the question himself. What is his answer?

*The speaker recalls that God does not need men to work for Him or give Him gifts. God wants most of all for man to “Bear his mild yoke.” He realizes that thousands of people are ready to answer God’s call. Within those thousands are people who can see, and so accomplish difficult tasks, but there are also those who “only stand and wait.”*

3. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? What type of poem is it?

*The poem is written in the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet form of A/B/B/A A/B/B/A C/D/E C/D/E.*

4. What does Patience offer as a reply to the speaker’s questioning?

*Patience describes God as one who understands and rewards those who use the gifts they have to serve. Patience also refers to a belief that is the quality of talent, not the talent itself, that is most important in the eyes of God.*

**“On His Deceased Wife”**

by John Milton, page 15

**Vocabulary**

**espoused** – supported

**vested** – dressed

**fancied** – loved

1. The mention of Alcestis and Jove is an example of what literary and poetic device?

*The references to figures of classical Greek epics are examples of allusion.*

2. Who is the “late espoused saint” of the poem’s first line?

*The poem’s first line introduces the subject of the speaker’s thoughts, his deceased wife.*

3. Where does the speaker hope to see his wife again?

*He hopes to see her “Full sight...in Heaven.”*

4. What happens to the vision of the speaker’s wife?

*In the dream, his wife extends her arms to embrace him, but as she does, the speaker awakens. The vision of her was only a dream, and so she disappears.*

5. What does the “night” at the end of the poem symbolize?

*The speaker’s grief and sorrow for his dead wife is described as his “night.”*

**“Why So Pale and Wan, Fond Lover?”**

by Sir John Suckling, pages 15-16

**Vocabulary**

**wan** – weary, ill, unhappy

**prithce** – please; alternate to “I pray thee”

1. What is the speaker’s tone by the end of the poem?

*The speaker seems to give up hope, and surrenders the woman to the devil. He has asked whether looking ill (not beautiful) and staying quiet will keep her from sinning. By the end, he has decided these qualities cannot save a person who does not love and lacks self-respect.*

2. To whom is the speaker addressing?

*There are two possible answers: the speaker is speaking to himself or he is speaking to another man about that man’s love.*

**“To Lucasta, Going to the Wars”**

by Richard Lovelace, page 16

**Vocabulary**

**nunnery** – a home for religious women

**inconstancy** – unfaithfulness, infidelity

1. The speaker’s comparison of Lucasta to a nunnery is an example of what literary device?

*The comparison is an example of metaphor.*

2. Explain the metaphor present in the poem’s second stanza.

*The speaker is comparing his relationship with Lucasta to his experiences at war. His new mistress is the enemy, someone to pursue and conquer.*

3. In the third stanza, “thou too shalt,” presents an example of what poetic sound device?

*The repetition of the ‘t’ sound is called consonance.*

4. Within the speaker, what faith is stronger than his faith in the woman he loves?

*In the second stanza, the speaker says his faith in his sword, horse, and shield are stronger than his faith in the woman.*

5. According to the speaker, why should the woman not take offense to the fact that his faith in his horse and weapons is stronger than his faith in her?

*The speaker says from the “Honour” and faith he has in his country and cause, he has gained the ability to also love, honor, and have faith in her. In addition, if he had not had faith in his sword, shield, and horse, he may not have survived war, and so would not have been able to love her at all.*

## “To His Coy Mistress”

by Andrew Marvell, pages 17-18

### Vocabulary

**hue** – shade, color

**transpires** – emerges, happens

**amorous** – loving

**languish** – decay

1. What does the speaker entreat of his love?

*The speaker is asking his mistress to make the most of their time together, and to “devour” and “tear” each other.*

2. What justifications or reasoning does the speaker employ to persuade his mistress?

*Answers may vary. Examples: time stops when he and his mistress are together, she deserves him, he loves her, time is moving quickly so they ought to act now, she is still young enough to enjoy him, and the sun, or happiness, cannot be fully enjoyed until they enjoy each other.*

3. Identify the allusion in line eight.

*The speaker says he would love his mistress for “ten years before the Flood.” This alludes to the Great Flood in Christian history, which killed all but Noah and those on his ark.*

4. Identify an instance of hyperbole in this poem.

*Answers may vary. Examples: the reference to the conversion of the Jews; his love growing as vast as empires; needing a hundred years to praise her forehead; two hundred years to adore each breast; thirty thousand years to adore the rest of her body.*

5. How would you describe his tone? Do the tone and message remain constant throughout, or is there a shift in the poem?

*The poem’s tone is one of excitement and attempts at persuasion. The speaker is trying to woo his mistress to act on her feelings. The tone shifts throughout the poem from one of detached observer to needy persuader. As the poem progresses, the speaker’s attempts at winning over his mistress come more frequently and remain more pointed.*

6. How is time presented in this work?

*Time is presented through a series of allusions and metaphors: the Ganges river, biblical floods, chariot races, marble-temples, and predatory birds.*

7. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? Are there any lines that do not follow this scheme? Why?

*The poem is written in rhyming couplets. The lines that do not follow the scheme are lines 7-8, 23-24, and 27-28. These lines are examples of half-rhyme, lines whose rhymes are forced to 'fit' because of the poem's rhyme scheme.*

8. How is this poem's message similar to Robert Herrick's poem, "To the Virgins, to Make Much Time?"

*Both poems encourage women to not hide away from men since time passes by too quickly. Both poems encourage women to be open and loving with the men they care for—in this poem's case, particularly with the speaker.*

## “The Retreat”

by Henry Vaughan, pages 18-19

### Vocabulary

**gilded** – covered with gold

1. Identify an example of half-rhyme in this poem.

*Answers may vary. Examples: “I” and “eternity,” “spy” and “eternity,” “wound” and “sound,” and “love” and “move.”*

2. How are the ideas in Henry Vaughan’s introduction reflected in this particular poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: In the introduction to Henry Vaughan’s work, the reader is told that his verses contained alchemical themes. One facet of alchemy was the desire to discover a means to indefinitely prolonging life. In this poem, Vaughan reflects on his youth, and by the end, reveals he wishes he had stayed forever young, and wishes to be that way again.*

3. In your own words, explain the first stanza of this poem. What does Vaughan miss? How does he believe he has changed? Use quotes from the poem to support your translation.

*In the first stanza, Vaughan writes that he misses the days of “angel-infancy.” When he was a child, he could gaze at a flower or cloud for an hour and see in them “shadows of eternity.” He feels he has changed because now he knows how to hurt people (“taught my tongue to wound”) and has sinful thoughts (“conscience with a sinful sound”).*

4. In the last stanza, how does Vaughan see himself as different from other men?

*Vaughan writes that while most men wish to move forward in time, perhaps working toward success, love, and rewards, he wishes to move backward. He wishes that once he dies, he will become as pure as he was when he was born: “And when this dust falls to the urn/In that state I came, return.”*

## “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”

by Thomas Gray, pages 19-22

### Vocabulary

**knell** – to summon

**droning** – boring

**hamlet** – home

**clarion** – a medieval trumpet

**ply** – carry out

**lisp** – a speech impediment, slurred speech

**glebe** – soil

**jocund** – lighthearted

**disdainful** – scornful

**annals** – history books

**impute** – to assign to, credit

**pealing** – ringing

**genial** – friendly

**circumscribed** – confined

**ignoble** – shameful

**sequester** – isolate

**uncouth** – uncivilized

**elegy** – a poem of lament and sorrow

**forlorn** – sad

**dirges** – a funeral hymn

1. At what time of day does the poem take place?

*The poem takes place at the “knell of a parting day,” or the evening.*

2. To what sense does the second stanza appeal?

*The second stanza appeals to the sense of sight.*

3. Yew trees were often planted in cemeteries. What is the "narrow cell" referred to in line 15?

*The “narrow cell” refers to the shallow graves, wherein the dead sleep.*

4. What time of day is it in the fifth stanza?

*The night has passed, and the time in the fifth stanza is the “morn.”*

5. To whom is the speaker referring in lines 21-24?

*The speaker is discussing the dead fathers whom he introduced in the previous stanzas. The dead are spoken of as loving and beloved husbands and fathers.*

6. What is the rhyme of lines 29 and 31 more commonly known as?

*The two lines, ending with “toil” and “smile,” respectively, exemplify half-rhyme.*

7. What does the speaker say about the paths of glory in lines 33-36?

*The speaker asserts that the paths of glory, or all human achievement, inevitably lead to death, or “the grave.”*

8. In lines 55-60, to what or whom does the speaker compare a flower in the desert? Does the metaphor succeed? Why or why not?

*The speaker compares a flower in the desert to the dead in the graveyard. Answers to part two may vary. Example: The metaphor succeeds because both the flower and the men represent life and beauty in an otherwise desolate landscape.*

9. Living a simple life has its drawbacks, but doing so also has its positive side. According to lines 65-68, what positive side of living a simple life is pointed out?

*The simple life allows for one to remain untainted by the turmoil and troubles associated with the ruling classes. Simpletons also benefit from the advantage of being able to keep to their own ways.*

10. What made the lives to which the speaker refers in lines 73-74 special?

*The lives referred to by the speaker are special because they remained true to their intentions and they “kept the noiseless tenor of their way.”*

11. In line 80, what causes the speaker to sigh?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker sighs out of respect and tribute to those who maintained their strength and courage through life and death. It is a sigh of awe.*

## “Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes”

by Thomas Gray, pages 23-24

### Vocabulary

**azure** – blue

**demurest** – shyest, most reserved

**pensive** – thoughtful

**vies** – wagers

**tyrian** – purple

**presumptuous** – assumptive

**malignant** – evil, harmful

1. To what does the speaker compare a lake?

*The speaker creates a metaphor at the conclusion of the first stanza, referring to the tub of goldfish as “the lake below.”*

2. What does the cat look like? What was its name?

*The cat has a round face, white beard, velvet paws, a tortoise-shell colored coat, black ears, and emerald eyes. The cat’s name was Selina.*

3. Who or what is the “Presumptuous Maid” of the poem’s fifth stanza?

*The cat is referred to as the “Presumptuous Maid” by the speaker for her naïveté in thinking she could capture the fish in the tub.*

4. Who are Tom and Susan?

*Tom and Susan are most likely the cat’s owners.*

5. What poetic device is exemplified by the phrases “heedless hearts” and “glisters, gold”?

*The repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words is known as alliteration.*

6. At first, Gray makes the reader believe that this poem is simply about the death of a cat. The last stanza, however, proves otherwise. How does the last stanza change the purpose of this poem?

*In the last stanza, Gray warns the reader that “...one false step is ne’er retriev’d” and that “nor all, that glisters, gold.” His poem becomes not just a story, but a story with a lesson: live a life ruled by caution, and remain aware of the temptations that exist in it.*

## **“The Lamb”**

by William Blake, page 24

### **Vocabulary**

**vales** – valleys

1. In the first two lines of this poem, Blake repeats the phrase, “who made thee?” What is this kind of repetition of a short phrase in poetry called?

*The literary term for this is anaphora.*

2. What is the Lamb a metaphor of?

*The Lamb of the poem is a metaphor for a child, someone innocent and unmarked by life’s experiences. It may also refer to the Christ, the Lamb of God.*

3. How, according to the speaker, are the Little Lamb and its creator similar?

*The speaker reminds the Little Lamb that its creator, God, is often referred to as Lamb (Jesus Christ), and like the Little Lamb, he once took the form of a child on Earth.*

4. What type of rhyme scheme is the poem written in?

*The first stanza of the poem is written in rhyming couplets. The second stanza features a circular/symmetrical rhyme scheme of a/a/b/c/d/d/c/b/a/a.*

## **“The Sick Rose”**

by William Blake, pages 24-25

### **Vocabulary**

**crimson** – deep red

1. A rose is a traditional symbol of love. What may be the poem’s symbolic message or meaning?

*Answers may vary. Example: The rose (love) is being killed by a worm (a symbol of death). The “crimson bed” may be destroyed by the ways in which love is often unspoken of, as it causes blushing (one’s cheeks to turn to crimson).*

2. What is the poem’s rhyme scheme? What does this scheme infer about the poem’s tone?

*The poem consists of two stanzas, rhyming A/B/A/B. The scheme suggests a sense of directness and dread that accompanies love’s demise.*

3. After reading this short work, what do you think author felt when he created it? Use evidence from the text for support.

*Answers may vary. Example: The poem begins with an exclamation, which exudes strong emotion of surprise, despair, or regret. The poem ends with the word “destroy,” maintaining the sad, angry, negative tone of the poem.*

## “The Tyger”

by William Blake, page 25

### Vocabulary

**symmetry** – equality

**sinews** – muscles

1. How do the first two lines (called a couplet) contrast?

*The first line of this poem mentions the dark “forest of the night,” while the second line speaks of the “burning” brightness of the tiger’s coloring. Blake is contrasting images of lightness and darkness to reinforce the tiger’s uniqueness and majesty.*

2. The fourth stanza compares the creator of the tyger to what/whom?

*The speaker uses metaphor to compare the tyger’s creator to a blacksmith.*

3. Unlike in his “The Lamb,” Blake’s “The Tyger” offers no answers for the speaker’s questions. What does the lack of responses suggest is the poem’s message about creation?

*Answers may vary. Example: The unanswered questions suggest that the speaker is in awe of the creator. It may also suggest that the speaker would rather have the reader contemplate the difficult questions he asked. The rhetorical questions leave readers questioning their own creation and deliberating the answers for themselves.*

4. How does the speaker present the tyger, as compared to the lamb in Blake’s other poem?

*The tyger is more complex and more ferocious than the lamb. It lacks the innocence of the lamb, and serves as a hunter rather than hunted. Lastly, the tyger is fiery colored, while the lamb is pure white.*

## **“London”**

by William Blake, pages 25-26

### **Vocabulary**

**manacles** – chains that bind

**hearse** – used to transport a coffin

1. This poem, like “The Lamb” and “The Tyger,” was originally published as part of Blake’s *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. Judging from the poem’s tone and theme, which book do you think “London” was published in?

*“London” was originally considered part of Songs of Experience.*

2. Who does the speaker blame for the pain and strife he hears and sees on London’s streets?

*The speaker points to two different causes for the grief and strife he witnesses: the Church (line ten) and Royalty (line twelve).*

3. What is ironic about the poem’s final image of “the Marriage hearse”?

*The image combines the beauty of love (Marriage) with the sorrow and destruction of death (hearse). The irony lies in that marriage marks the beginning of life together, while a hearse marks the end.*

4. What does the repetition of words throughout the poem do to its message?

*The repetition that prevails in the poem emphasizes the horrors and evils the speaker observes by making them seem abundantly common.*

5. After reading this poem, how would you describe the speaker’s attitude toward London?

*The speaker presents nothing positive about London. In lines three and four, for instance, he reports that in every face he sees only “Marks of weakness, marks of woe.”*

## “To a Mouse”

by Robert Burns, pages 26-28

### Vocabulary

**dominion** – ruled-over land

**coulter** – the blade of a plough

1. The poem is written in a distinct voice. What is this non-standard English known as?

*Burns writes this poem in a Scottish brogue, or dialect.*

2. In the first stanza, the speaker explains why the mouse needs to run. What does the speaker say in the second?

*In the second stanza, the speaker apologizes to the mouse for ruining its home while plowing and reminds it of its bond with man—they are both mortal creatures. He states that he has “broken Nature’s social union.”*

3. One of the most well known clichés comes from Burns’ poem: “The best-laid schemes of mice and men...” What does this phrase refer to in the context of his poem?

*Burns writes that the mouse is not the only one who has learned that having foresight sometimes does no good. He writes that these well-laid plans often go awry, leaving us to deal with grief, rather than the “promised joy” we anticipated.*

4. What is the tone of the poem?

*The poem’s tone is one of nervous reflection and anxious foresight. While the speaker seems to be telling the simple story of a mouse, the poem later reveals a metaphorical meaning that compares the mouse’s demise to that of the speaker.*

5. According to the speaker, how is the mouse in a better position in life?

*In the last stanza, the speaker says the mouse is only concerned about the present, while the speaker must reflect on the past: “On prospects drear!” and worry about the future, which “I guess an’ fear!”*

**“A Red, Red Rose”**

by Robert Burns, page 28

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. The poem’s first line is an example of what?

*The line is simile, comparing the speaker’s love to a rose.*

2. Identify a hyperbole in the second stanza.

*The hyperbole is “And I will luvve thee still, my dear,/Till a’ the sea gang dry.”*

3. Why has the speaker written this poem?

*The speaker has written the poem as a means of bidding goodbye to his love.*

**“Composed upon Westminster Bridge, Sept. 3, 1802”**

by William Wordsworth, page 29

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the rhyme and meter of this poem? What form of poetry do these schemes reveal the poem to be in?

*The poem is a Petrarchan sonnet, written in iambic pentameter and following the rhyme scheme of A/B/B/A A/B/B/A C/D/C/D/C/D.*

2. Find and record an example of personification from this poem.

*Answers may vary. Example: The river is given the human quality of having its own will and houses “seem to sleep.”*

3. What does the speaker compare to a garment? Who/What is wearing it?

*The speaker compares the beauty of London to a garment, with the city itself as the model.*

4. How would you describe the author’s feelings toward the city? Cite evidence from the poem to support your answer.

*Answers may vary. Example: The author seems enchanted by the city as he watches the sun rise over it in the morning. He is overwhelmed with its beauty, “all bright and glittering.” According to him, “Never did the sun more beautifully steep” the world around the author in its light. The author reports he has never felt “a calm so deep!”*

## **“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”**

by William Wordsworth, pages 29-30

### **Vocabulary**

**vales** – valleys

**sprightly** – energetically

**jocund** – lighthearted

**pensive** – thoughtful

1. What is the meter of this poem?

*The poem is written in iambic tetrameter.*

2. What does the daffodil symbolize?

*The daffodils by the lake symbolize a memory.*

3. According to the author, what other “happy” movement of nature did the daffodils “out dance”?

*In stanza three, Wordsworth writes “The waves beside them” from the nearby lake seemed to dance also, but the daffodils' movement “Out-did the sparkling waves of glee.”*

4. The title of the poem is an example of what literary and poetic device?

*“I wandered lonely as a cloud” is an example of simile, a comparison using like or as.*

5. Including the above-mentioned comparison of the speaker, what does the personification of the daffodils, waves, and cloud infer about human nature?

*The comparisons and personifications suggest that man and nature are linked to one another.*

## “The World is Too Much with Us, Late and Soon”

by William Wordsworth, page 30

### Vocabulary

**sordid** – dirty

**boon** – blessing

**forlorn** – sad

**creed** – statement of belief

1. What is the poem’s form and meter?

*The poem is a Petrarchan sonnet, written in iambic pentameter.*

2. What is the tone of the poem?

*The poem is written in a tone of anger. The speaker is angry that the world has lost touch with nature and all that is meaningful.*

3. Line 7 of the poem contains an example of what literary and poetic device?

*The line contains an example of simile: “And are up-gathered like sleeping flowers.”*

4. Wordsworth writes that he does not want to become one of these people who do not seem to appreciate the world around them. What does he write he would rather do?

*Wordsworth writes he would rather become a pagan that worshipped Nature than forsake the beauty and power around him—a strong statement in an age where forsaking religion was not looked upon favorably.*

5. After reading this poem in its entirety, put into your own words the message Wordsworth is attempting to convey.

*Answers may vary. Example: Wordsworth is saying that we have become removed from the world so much that we do not take the time to appreciate its beauty and power.*

## “Kubla Khan”

by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, pages 30-32

### Vocabulary

**sinuous** – twisting

**cedarn** – cedar

**chaffy** – teasingly

**dulcimer** – an hourglass shaped instrument

1. With what meter and rhyme schemes does Coleridge achieve musical and rhythmic sound?

*The poem is written in iambic tetrameter. The first stanza has a rhyme scheme of A/B/A/A/B/C/C/D/E/D/E. The second stanza has a rhyme scheme of A/B/A/A/B/C/C/D/D/F/F/G/G/H/I/I/H/J/J, expanding upon the scheme from the previous stanza. The third stanza has a scheme of A/B/A/B/C/C, while the fourth has a scheme of A/B/C/C/B/D/E/D/E/F/G/F/F/F/G/H/H/G.*

2. How does the fourth stanza differ in content from the poem’s first three stanzas?

*In the first three stanzas, the speaker is explaining a vision of Xanadu to readers. In the poem’s concluding stanza, he is stating the poem’s theme as a whole.*

3. “Five miles meandering with a mazy motion” is an example of what literary device?

*The repetition of the ‘m’ sound is called alliteration.*

4. According to the introduction to Coleridge’s poetry, what may have aided him in making this poem so fantastical?

*According to the introduction, Coleridge had a longtime addiction to narcotics. Coleridge admitted this poem was inspired by an opium dream, which may explain some of its strange and nonsensical content.*

5. As mentioned in the introduction, the poem's final stanza was written after an interruption from a man from Porlock. What, after reading the poem, could the man be considered a metaphor of?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker's interruption by the man signifies the interruption of genius and inspiration. The man may be a metaphor for the interruptions thrown by the world into the way of creativity and visionary grandeur.*

6. In the third stanza, the speaker wishes he could recreate the vision of Xanadu he had. Out of what does he imagine he would build this place?

*The speaker tells the reader he had a dream of "a damsel with a dulcimer" who could play and sing a song that enchanted him. He believes he could build Xanadu out of the beauty of this music he once heard.*

7. At the end of the poem, why does the speaker believe others would be fearful of the creator of this "dome in the air"?

*Others may be fearful of the creator's "flashing eyes" and "his floating hair," but most especially they would fear that fact that "he on honey-dew hath fed," and that he has "drunk the milk of Paradise."*

## **“Abou Ben Adhem”**

by Leigh Hunt, page 32

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the “it” of the poem’s fourth line?

*The speaker is referring to his bedroom.*

2. In the second line of this poem, the words “deep,” “dream,” and “peace” rhyme. What is the literary term for this repetition of interior vowel sounds within a short section?

*The literary term is assonance.*

3. In your own words, what question does Abou ask the angel in his room?

*Abou asks the angel what it is writing in its book of gold.*

4. What is the angel’s reply to Abou’s question? How does Abou react?

*The angel tells Abou that he is writing the names of those who love the Lord, and reveals that Abou’s name was not on this list. Abou then asks the angel to write him down as one who “loves his fellow man.”*

5. Why do you believe, at the end of this poem, Abou’s name “led all the rest” on the list of those who God had blest? What is Hunt trying to tell his reader by ending his poem this way?

*Hunt seems to infer that God loves most not those who worship him best, but those who love and care for all men most.*

## “Jenny Kiss’d Me”

by Leigh Hunt, page 33

### Vocabulary

[none]

1. Who is the poem addressed to?

*The poem is addressed to Time (the capitalized ‘T’ suggests it is Father Time)*

2. What does the first line of the poem infer about the relationship between the speaker and Jenny?

*Answers will vary. Note: The poem’s first line says that Jenny kissed the speaker upon their meeting. It does not, however, state that it was their first meeting. Therefore, the relationship is not inferable, but possible answers may include: daughter and father, lovers, grandparent and granddaughter, or close friends.*

3. What do you believe motivated Hunt to write this poem? Do you think there was more than one motivating factor?

*Answers may vary. Example: One factor may simply be his joy in having been kissed by a beautiful woman. There seems to be a boasting quality in this poem, too, in his demanding Time to include this moment on its list of “Sweets.” Hunt mentions his growing old, and mentions that he is “weary,” “sad,” and that “health and wealth have miss’d” him. This, combined with his calling Time a “thief,” suggests this poem was meant as a sort of protest against the growing control time and age has over man. One thing time cannot control, he seems to be saying, is the fact that he was kissed by Jenny.*

## **“She Walks in Beauty”**

by George Gordon, Lord Byron, page 33

### **Vocabulary**

**climes** – climates

**aspect** – appearance, facial appearance

**gaudy** – extravagant, flashy

1. What color is the woman’s hair?

*The speaker describes her hair as a “raven tress,” inferring that her hair is black (this is also an example of a metaphor).*

2. The first line of the second stanza includes two contrasting images. What are they, and what literary device does the poet use to present them?

*The images of shade and sunlight are examples of antithesis.*

3. According to the speaker, where is “all that’s best of dark and bright” reflected in the woman he sees?

*He sees the best of both dark and bright in the woman’s face and eyes.*

4. Based on the woman’s beauty, what kinds of conclusions does he draw about her demeanor, thoughts, and lifestyle?

*In the second stanza, he writes of how her beautiful hair rests over her face, which reflects her peaceful, calm thoughts, and the fact that she is “pure.” In the final stanza, she is “soft, so calm, yet eloquent,” and her face alone tells him of “days of goodness spent,” and that her mind is “at peace,” and her heart is full of a love that “is innocent.”*

## **“The Destruction of Sennacherib”**

by George Gordon, Lord Byron, page 34

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. With garments described as “gleaming in purple and gold,” the “cohorts” are most likely members of what class?

*Purple and gold are symbols of royalty and power, so one may infer that the cohorts were members of the ruling class.*

2. What does the speaker use to show the passage of time?

*The speaker makes allusions and metaphors using the four seasons to show the passage of time.*

3. In addition to strength, what did the army that won this battle have on its side?

*In the third stanza, the reader is told “the Angel of Death” is on the army’s side, breathing its deadly breath on their foe as they passed.*

4. What do you think is the purpose of the fourth and fifth stanzas?

*Answers may vary. Example: Both of these stanzas describe the carnage left after the battle between the two armies. Words like “foam,” “gasping,” “distorted,” and “pale” reinforce the violence of the battle, and the resulting aftermath.*

5. According to the speaker, who was ultimately responsible for the destruction of Sennacherib?

*After the speaker describes the widows wailing and the destruction of the idols in Baal, he tells that the Gentiles went “unsmote by the sword” thanks the power given to them by the Lord.*

6. The poet’s mentioning of an Assyrian, the Gentile, Ashur, the temple of Baal, and the Sea of Galilee is an example of what literary device?

*The sites and characters are allusions to biblical narratives and tales.*

## “So We’ll Go No More a Roving”

by George Gordon, Lord Byron, pages 34-35

### Vocabulary

**roving** – traveling about in search of adventure

1. Why does the speaker pledge to not go roving during the night?

*The speaker’s pledge is based on his observations that “the sword outwears its sheath,” “the heart must pause to breathe,” and “the night was made for loving.”*

2. What is the tone of the poem?

*Though the meter moves the poem along steadily and quickly, the tone is sad and regretful. The poem has a tone of disappointment and almost insincerity, as inferred by the “Yet” in the poem’s last statement.*

3. According to the first stanza, what has stayed the same?

*The speaker says the heart “is still as loving” and the moon “be still as bright.”*

4. The second stanza contrasts with the first, as it describes things that do change. In your own words, what are the things, according to the speaker, that we can expect to change in life?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker says that the sword will outlive its holder, the soul will outlive its body, the heart must eventually stop, and the passion and intensity of love must at some point come to an end.*

## “Ozymandias”

by Percy Bysshe Shelley, page 35

### Vocabulary

**visage** – countenance

**sneer** – scorn

1. The rhyme and metrical scheme is what poetic form?

*The poem is a fourteen line sonnet written in iambic pentameter.*

2. What is the poem’s subject matter? What is the subject a metaphor of?

*The poem takes as its subject the shattered statue of a former ruler. The statue is a metaphor of the pride and greed (hubris) of humanity and political leaders.*

3. What remains of the statue? What may Shelley be saying by having such remains?

*All that remains of the state are “two vast and trunkless legs of stone,” a decapitated and worn head, and the words on the statue’s base. The only intact remains are the words, which may suggest that language outlasts people and power.*

4. What type of king was Ozymandias?

*Ozymandias is described as a king whose hands mocked his people and whose heart fed off of them. His visage infers that he was a cold, domineering leader. His words suggest egotism and pride.*

5. How is irony functioning in this poem?

*There is verbal irony functioning in this poem. On the pedestal of the collapsed sculpture, the words read, “My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!” The irony lies in the fact that, as the speaker says, “Nothing beside remains.” There is no one around to look on the works of Ozymandias; the person who would feel the most despair at the situation is Ozymandias himself.*

## “Ode to the West Wind”

by Percy Bysshe Shelley, pages 35-37

### Vocabulary

**hectic** – frenzied

**pestilence** – plague, disease

**azure** – blue

**pumice** – powdery ash used as an abrasive

1. What is the rhyme scheme of each section of the poem?

*The first and third lines of each stanza rhyme, while the middle line begins the rhyme of the following stanza. This rhyme scheme is known as terza rima.*

2. What is the wind a metaphor of?

*The speaker uses the wind as a metaphor for his own art.*

3. In contrast with “Pestilence-stricken,” what positive attribute do the dead leaves have?

*Despite their disease-carrying nature, the leaves carry seeds into the ground, where they wait under the snow to bloom.*

4. In the section IV, what is the wish of the speaker? What urges him to make such a wish?

*The speaker wishes he could be a leaf, a cloud, or an ocean wave so that he may be lifted up by the West Wind and away from the world in which he lives. In this section, he tells the reader it is a time of “sore need” for him. He states, “I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!” and “A heavy weight of hours has changed and bowed/ One too like thee.” Both these statements reveal the misery the speaker currently is experiencing, therefore motivating him to wish to be lifted up and away from his life on Earth.*

5. In the final section, the speaker asks the West Wind to “Be through my lips to unawakened earth/ The trumpet of a prophecy!” To what prophecy do you believe the speaker is referring?

*Answers may vary. Example: Before this request, the speaker says he believes the power of the West Wind could lift him out of his sadness, pushing his “dead thoughts” away and allowing him the energy to begin again. The prophecy he refers to may relate to these thoughts: The West Wind is a sort of prophecy of the winter to come; however, the speaker wishes to remind the world that after winter, spring is not far behind. In life, then, when sadness prevails, a chance to begin again cannot lurk far off.*

6. As a representative of the Romantic poets of the early nineteenth-century, Shelley’s poem can be seen as offering an explanation of the Romantic idea of nature. How does Shelley (and the other young Romantic poets) view nature?

*Shelley views nature as a source of beauty and aesthetic experience (i.e. inspiration).*

7. When the speaker prays to the West Wind to scatter his ashes like dead leaves across the universe, what is he implying about poetic language? How does such a prayer relate to Shelley's ideas about inspiration and expression?

*The speaker’s request implies that poetic language, like nature, does not die, but is reborn through future generations. His request echoes his ideas about inspiration and expression because he has gained his ideas from nature and his predecessors as well.*

## “To a Skylark”

by Percy Bysshe Shelley, pages 37-40

### Vocabulary

**blithe** – happy, carefree

**profuse** – plentiful

**unpremeditated** – spontaneous

**unbidden** – not invited

**aëreal** – area

**languor** – laziness

1. Why does the skylark exceed the capacity of human language to describe its qualities or the qualities of its song?

*The speaker believes the bird to be not a bird at all, but a being from heaven, one that pours its entire heart into every song it sings. The skylark exceeds human language because it inspires it.*

2. What is the poem’s meter and rhyme scheme? What does the meter of the fifth lines of each stanza typify?

*The poem is written in cinquains (five-line stanzas), with the rhyme scheme of A/B/A/B/B. The first four lines are written in trochaic trimeter, while the fifth line is written in iambic hexameter. The fifth line is also called an Alexandrine.*

3. What prevents the speaker (and us) from singing as the skylark does?

*The skylark’s song comes from natural excitement and creativity. It sings without thought of hopes or fears because it sings purely. The speaker (and we) cannot sing as such because we are impure.*

4. Four stanzas of this poem begin with the word “Like.” To what does the speaker choose to compare the skylark?

*The skylark is compared to a poet deep in thought, to a maiden in a palace tower, to a glow-worm in the dark of night, and to a rose embowered in its own leaves.*

5. Stanzas eighteen, nineteen, and twenty shift focus from the skylark to human weakness. In your own words, describe the human weaknesses the speaker addresses.

*Answers may vary. Example: The human weaknesses the speaker addresses include: humans’ need to reflect on the past and worry about the future; to wish for what is not; to laugh even when we feel some pain; to feel and express hate, fear, and pride; and to feel sadness and pain.*

6. At the poem’s end, does the speaker seem confident that his words can have the same effect on future readers as the bird’s pure song has upon him? Why or why not?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker does not seem confident that his words can achieve the power and resonance that the skylark’s song does. The speaker asks the skylark to teach him the thoughts that inspire such beautiful singing.*

## “Thanatopsis”

by William Cullen Bryant, pages 40-42

### Vocabulary

**blight** – something that impairs one’s growth and deflates one’s spirit

**patriarchs** – males in power

**hoary** – grown gray with age; ancient

**sepulchre** – tomb

**pensive** – thoughtful

**venerable** – honorable; honored

**scourged** – severely punished

1. What does the poem’s title mean?

*“Thanatopsis” means “Meditation on Death.”*

2. When Bryant writes that Nature “speaks/A various language” and refers to Nature as “she,” what literary device is he using?

*Bryant is using personification.*

3. What, according to the speaker, will make the reader become “a brother to the insensible rock/And to the sluggish clod”?

*According to the speaker, death and the natural decaying of the body will make one become these things.*

4. Re-state Bryant’s “All that tread/The globe are but a handful to the tribes/That slumber in its bosom” in simple, modern English.

*Answers will vary. Example: The number of people living on Earth is nothing compared to the number dead and buried underground.*

5. The speaker tells us that we should not be upset if we die alone without friends or family to mourn us. Why, according to the speaker, should we not be troubled if this happens?

*According to the speaker, “[A]ll that breathe” will ultimately share our “destiny,” meaning those who forsake us in life will inevitably become our companions in death, and “one by one be gathered to [our] side.”*

6. What does “Thanatopsis” ultimately argue that we should do?

*“Thanatopsis” ultimately argues that we should go happily, not fearfully, towards our deaths.*

## “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer”

by John Keats, pages 42-43

### Vocabulary

**fealty** – oath of loyalty

**demesne** – territory, domain

**ken** – view, sight

1. At the start of this poem, how does the speaker establish himself as well cultured?

*The speaker tells the reader that he has “much travell’d,” and “many goodly states and kingdoms seen.” He later states he has “Round many western islands been,” where he has heard bards speak in praise of Apollo, and heard of the accomplishments of Homer.*

2. The speaker uses two different similes to compare the experience hearing Chapman’s translation of *Homer*. Which of these similes is an allusion?

*The speaker first compares hearing Chapman’s Homer to gazing into the skies and suddenly discovering a new planet. However, the allusion is the second simile, in which the speaker compares the hearing to what it must have been like when Cortez first sighted the Pacific.*

## “Ode to a Nightingale”

by John Keats, pages 43-45

### Vocabulary

**opiate** – a narcotic

**draught** – a mug-full

**verdurous** – green, forest-like

**requiem** – song of sorrow and remembrance

**plaintive** – mournful

1. To who or what is the speaker addressing in the poem?

*The speaker is addressing his poem to a nightingale he hears singing in a forest.*

2. In the third stanza, the speaker announces, “Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies.” What other poet presented in this anthology shares the speaker’s idea that youth and innocence dies with age and experience?

*The theme of innocence and experience is most evident in the poetry of William Blake.*

3. How will the poet follow the nightingale, according to the fourth stanza?

*The speaker will follow the nightingale through his poetry, not through alcohol.*

4. In Stanza VII, find and record an example of an allusion.

*The allusion in this stanza is to the book of Ruth in the Bible.*

5. How does the speaker react to the bird’s flight at the end of the poem?

*The speaker, upon losing hearing of the bird’s song, questions whether he is awake or asleep.*

6. How does the tone of this poem differ from the tone found in Percy Bysshe Shelley’s “To A Skylark?”

*Shelley’s “To A Skylark” has a positive tone that praises the beauty and power of the bird. It is filled with longing; the speaker wishes he could know what inspires the skylark to sing so wonderfully so he could be inspired also. It ends with the speaker’s request to be taught how to sing, so that he may share the song with the world.*

*This poem of Keats’ has a darker tone. The poem begins with the speaker describing his heartache, and a frustrated, forlorn tone continues through most stanzas. This poem ends with the speaker wishing the bird away, and then wondering whether seeing it was a dream.*

## “Ode on a Grecian Urn”

by John Keats, pages 45-46

### Vocabulary

**citadel** – fortress

**dales** – vales

**timbrels** – small hand drums

**pious** – devout

**brede** – embroidery

1. The poem opens with a series of comparisons between the urn and random types of people. The comparison between the non-living urn and the very much alive people is known as what?

*The comparisons come in the form of metaphors, but the attribution of living qualities to the urn is known as personification.*

2. What is the first picture that the speaker sees on the urn?

*The speaker sees a picture of men chasing women and asks what the reason could be.*

3. Why are the melodies played by the piper in the urn’s second picture superior to those played by actual, living pipers?

*The melodies played in the picture, though silent, are unaffected by time and are unconstrained in meaning.*

4. Why, according to the speaker, will the town of the fourth stanza be silent “evermore”?

*The town will be silent because its citizens, as depicted in the picture on the urn, have fled it and are frozen in time in the picture.*

5. How does the speaker engage, interact, or react to each picture on the urn? Do his responses change? Why?

*The speaker tries to ask questions of the urn with the first picture, but seeing how the urn cannot answer him, he abandons the line of questioning. With the second picture, the speaker tries to imagine what the experience of the characters on the urn must be like, trying hard to identify with them. His attempts, though, remind him of his own life and how he is tied to his experiences, so he abandons this line of interaction. Finally, with the third picture, the speaker tries to think about the characters as though they are experiencing time. His theory gives the picture an origin and destination; but then, unable to know if the journey is completed, he becomes captivated by the static nature of the urn. His responses show a progression in his identification with art.*

6. Who speaks the poem’s final line, “that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know”?

*Answers may vary. This question has been debated by critics since the poem’s first publication. If the speaker is the speaker of the poem, the line signifies that he understands the limits of art. If the speaker is the urn, then perhaps art shows that there is no limitation to life. The speaker may also be directly addressing the urn itself or the reader.*

## “La Belle Dame sans Merci”

by John Keats, pages 47-48

### Vocabulary

**loitering** – hanging around

**haggard** – worn, fatigued

**meads** – meadows

**manna** – allusion to biblical food, made from the sap of trees and plants

**sojourn** – break, vacation

1. What point of view is the poem written in? Who is its speaker(s)?

*The poem is written in the first person point of view. The poem is written as a dialogue between a knight and another man.*

2. In the second stanza, what does the speaker say are reasons for the knight-at-arms to not “ail”?

*The speaker says the “squirrel’s granary is full,” meaning it has been a slow fall, allowing much time for preparation. This concept is repeated in the second reason he gives, which is “the harvest’s done.”*

3. Why does the lady weep and sigh in the poem’s eighth stanza?

*Answers may vary. Example: The lady weeps because she knows that while she loves the knight, they cannot be together since they are too different.*

4. How does the French title translate into English?

*The title translates into “The Beautiful Woman with No Mercy.”*

5. What does the speaker’s dream suggest about the woman whom he has fallen in love with?

*The pale people of the speaker’s dreams warn him that he has fallen for a woman without pity, suggesting that she has left him for good, without consideration of his feelings.*

6. Why do you believe the knight-at-arms is so sad?

*Answers may vary. Example: One reason might be that when he awoke from his dream, the beautiful woman he had found and kissed was gone. Another reason might be his realization that the woman he had seen did not truly love him.*

7. Explain the significance in the speaker’s choice of words in the final stanza, especially “sojourn” and “palely.”

*The choice of “sojourn” suggests that the speaker is waiting for something, most likely his love. The choice of “palely” parallels the description he has given of the kings and princes in his dreams. This may infer that he has also fallen for la belle dame sans merci.*

## “When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be”

by John Keats, page 48

### Vocabulary

**glean'd** – gathered

**teeming** – crowded

1. What type of sonnet is this poem an example of?

*The poem is an example of a Shakespearean or Elizabethan sonnet.*

2. What is the tone of the poem?

*The poem has an overwhelming tone of quite contemplation. The speaker is reflecting on a life without his love, since such feelings are similar to those of “ceasing to be.”*

3. Find and identify a simile in the first five lines of this poem.

*The simile is comparing books to grain holders: “Before high-piled books, in character,/ Hold like rich garners the full ripen'd grain;”*

4. Find and identify an example of personification in the first five lines of this poem.

*The speaker personifies the night sky by referring to it as “the night's starred face.”*

5. What theme in this poem seems to echo a theme found in John Keats' “La Belle Dame Sans Merci?”

*Both these poems have an ethereal quality to them. When writing of love, Keats mentions faeries in both of these works, suggesting that love has a supernatural quality about it.*

## “Hymn: Sung at the Completion of the Concord Monument”

by Ralph Waldo Emerson, page 49

### Vocabulary

**votive** – given as the mark of a vow or pledge

**sires** – fathers

1. What has happened to the “rude bridge”?

*The bridge no longer stands since it was swept down the stream.*

2. What does the speaker ultimately ask the “Spirit” to do?

*The speaker asks the “Spirit” to do what it can to protect the monument and keep it standing.*

3. “Occasional poems” are poems written to be read on a specific occasion, much as speeches are written. What occasion was “Concord Hymn” written to mark?

*“Concord Hymn” was written to mark the completion of the Concord Monument.*

## “Sonnet XLIII”

by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, pages 49-50

### Vocabulary

[none]

1. What is the tone of the poem?

*The poem is written in a reflective, loving tone.*

2. What does the speaker mean when she writes, “by sun and by candle”?

*The speaker is using the imagery of the daylight and the candlelight to suggest that her love lasts all day.*

3. Who are the “lost saints”?

*The speaker is referring to those whom she has loved before, most likely family members.*

4. Why do you believe words like “Being” and “Grace” are capitalized in this poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: The words that are capitalized in this poem are words that are associated with moral goodness and purity. These words tie into the final capitalized word in this poem, God.*

5. According to the final last lines of this poem, how long will the speaker’s love endure?

*The speaker’s love will endure even “after death,” should God allow.*

## “The Village Blacksmith”

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, pages 50-51

### Vocabulary

**sinewy** – muscular

**bellows** – wind-tunnels, chimneys

**chaff** – tease

**threshing** – beating

**repose** – sleep

1. How does the speaker feel about the village blacksmith?

*The speaker holds the blacksmith in high esteem as a hard worker, faithful man, loving father, devoted husband, and worthy friend. He describes the blacksmith’s brow as “wet with honest sweat,” and that in addition to earning whatever he can, he “owes not any man.”*

2. The third line of second stanza, “His brow is wet with honest sweat,” is an example of what poetic technique?

*The line is an example of internal rhyme.*

3. What, according to the speaker, do children love about the blacksmith?

*The children are particularly fascinated by the “flaming forge,” hearing “the bellows roar,” and catching “the burning sparks” that fly from the fires he works with.*

4. In stanzas five and six, what causes the blacksmith to think simultaneously of both his daughter and his wife?

*In these stanzas, the speaker tells the reader that when the blacksmith attends church on Sunday, the voice of his daughter singing in the choir reminds him of his wife’s voice, who he believes is singing in heaven.*

5. What is the lesson taught by the blacksmith?

*The blacksmith has taught the speaker (and others) the value of hard work, passion, and dedication. Through his actions he has shown the ways to a successful life. Our lives, too, are shaped each day by “each burning deed and thought.”*

## “The Children’s Hour”

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, pages 51-52

### Vocabulary

**banditti** – plural of “bandit,” thieves

**moulder** – decay; crumble to dust

1. Describe the speaker of this poem. What is the speaker’s gender? What do you think the speaker’s relation is to Alice, Allegra, and Edith?

*The speaker is male (“an old moustache as I am”).*

*Answers to the second question may vary. Example: The speaker is most likely a father or grandfather to the girls.*

2. Find and record an example of half rhyme in the first stanza.

*“Lower” and “hour” make up the half rhyme in the first stanza.*

3. The speaker makes a reference to the “Bishop of Bingen,” a figure from outside the poem whom the speaker assumes readers will recognize. What is the literary term for this kind of reference?

*Such a reference is called an allusion.*

4. Rather than saying, “Such an old *person* as I am,” the speaker says, “Such an old moustache as I am.” In using a part (moustache) to stand for a whole (person), what literary device is Longfellow employing?

*Longfellow is employing synecdoche.*

## “Barbara Frietchie”

by John Greenleaf Whittier, pages 53-54

### Vocabulary

**famished** – starving, hungry

**fourscore year and ten** – 90 years old

1. The speaker makes references to the “Lee” (Robert E.), a figure from outside the poem whom the speaker assumes readers will recognize. What is the literary term for this kind of reference?

*Such a reference is called an allusion.*

2. The poem is written in rhyming pairs. What is the term for this type of rhyme scheme?

*The poem is written in rhymed couplets.*

3. What flag does Barbara Frietchie hang in her attic window, that of the Union or the Confederacy?

*She hangs a Union flag, described as having “silver stars” and “crimson bars.”*

4. According to the speaker, how old is Barbara Frietchie?

*On line eighteen, the speaker reveals that Barbara Frietchie is “fourscore years and ten,” or ninety years old.*

5. How does his encounter with Barbara Frietchie change Stonewall Jackson?

*Barbara Frietchie’s impassioned plea to allow her flag to fly seemed to soften the general. It causes him to feel a “shade of sadness,” and makes him “blush with shame.” When her words and actions stir in him his “nobler nature,” he orders his troops to leave her and her flag alone.*

6. In your own words, explain the last couplet of this poem. What does this play on words really mean?

*The speaker plays with the word “stars” in this couplet. The speaker asks that the “stars above,” perhaps meaning heaven, always look down with admiration and praise on the “stars below in Fredericktown,” referring to the stars on the flag allowed to fly, thanks to the efforts of Barbara Frietchie.*

## “To Helen”

by Edgar Allan Poe, page 55

### Vocabulary

**barks** – boats

**Naiad** – resembling a water-nymph of Greek mythology

**agate** – chalk

1. Find an allusion Poe makes to Greek mythology in this poem other than the reference to the Naiads.

*Poe also refers to Psyche, Eros’s mistress, who ultimately comes to embody our idea of the soul.*

2. To compare Helen’s beauty with “Nicean barks of yore,” Poe employs what literary device?

*The comparison is an example of simile.*

## “The Raven”

by Edgar Allan Poe, pages 55-58

### Vocabulary

**surcease** – an end

**obeisance** – a bow or other gesture of respect

**mien** – aspect

**Plutonian** – of or relating to the underworld; hellish

**countenance** – face; facial expression

**discourse** – conversation

**aptly** – appropriately

**Seraphim** – angels

**respite** – relief

**nepenthe** – something that eases pain or causes one to forget a painful situation

**quaff** – drink

1. Read the poem’s first line. What is the literary term for a rhyme such as the rhyming of “dreary” (in the middle of the line) with “weary” (at the line’s end)?

*The literary term is internal rhyme.*

2. Who is Lenore?

*Lenore is a lost love of the speaker’s—lost because of death.*

3. Why do you think Poe chose to use a raven in this poem as opposed to, for example, a parrot or sparrow?

*Answers may vary. Example: A raven may be seen as an ill omen since it has darker connotations the other birds do.*

4. What, according to the second stanza, is the speaker trying to accomplish by reading “forgotten lore”?

*The speaker is trying to find some relief from his mourning to distract himself and attain “surcease of sorrow.”*

5. When he peers into the darkness and sees nothing, who does the speaker initially imagine may be trying to contact him?

*The speaker initially imagines that Lenore may be trying to contact him.*

6. What does the narrator mean when, in the eleventh stanza, he says of the raven, “Doubtless...what it utters is its only stock and store,/Caught from some unhappy master”?

*The speaker is trying to convince himself that the raven most likely learned only one word—“nevermore”—from its master and is not replying intelligently to the narrator’s queries, but rather automatically. However, the word “nevermore,” as it is used in other stanzas, also signifies the end of Lenore’s life and the fact that the narrator will never see her again. The bird’s automatic response mocks his feelings.*

7. Who is the narrator addressing when he cries “Wretch” in the fourteenth stanza?

*The narrator is addressing himself.*

8. Describe the narrator’s state at the end of the poem.

*Answers may vary. Example: The narrator has been driven somewhat mad by grief, torturing himself by shaking off his earlier idea that the raven’s “nevermore”s were mere parrotings of a word the bird had been taught in favor of the idea that the raven really does know that the speaker will never be reunited with Lenore.*

## **“Annabel Lee”**

by Edgar Allan Poe, pages 58-59

### **Vocabulary**

**seraphs** – angels

**coveted** – envied

**dissever** – fully separate

1. What is the effect of the constant repetition in the poem—especially the repetition of Annabel Lee’s name?

*Answers may vary. Example: The constant repetition makes the poem song-like, like a ballad or dirge. The repetition of Annabel Lee’s name in particular suggests the narrator’s all-pervading preoccupation with her.*

2. Why do you think Poe chose to put Annabel Lee’s name in all capital letters?

*Answers may vary. Example: The capitalization emphasizes the near-mythic stature Annabel Lee has attained in the speaker’s mind.*

3. According to the speaker, why did Annabel Lee die?

*Annabel Lee died because the angels coveted the perfect love relationship she had with the speaker.*

## **“Old Ironsides”**

by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., page 60

### **Vocabulary**

**ensign** – flag or banner

1. What was the poet’s purpose in writing this poem?

*The poet wrote this poem in protest of the dismantling of a ship, hoping to move others to his cause.*

2. Locate two metaphors Holmes uses for the ship in the body of the poem.

*Holmes refers to the ship as the “meteor of the ocean air” and “the eagle of the sea.”*

3. What drastic fate does the narrator suggest would be better for the ship than the dismantling of it?

*The narrator suggests that it would be better for the ship to simply sink into the sea.*

4. The first word of the poem is “Ay,” or “yes.” To whom is the speaker saying “Ay”?

*The speaker is saying “Ay” to those who would dismantle the ship.*

## “The Chambered Nautilus”

by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., pages 60-61

### Vocabulary

**gauze** – sewn cloth

**irised** – eye-like

1. Rather than describe them as sails, Holmes writes, “webs of living gauze.” In what ways are the sails of a ship “living gauze”?

*Answers may vary. Example: The sails, when being used during a journey, appear alive in the wind, moving somewhat naturally and without the wind’s assistance.*

2. The use of “dim dreaming...dwell” is an example of what literary device?

*The repetition of the ‘d’ sound at the beginning of the words is an example of alliteration.*

3. The poem’s final stanza reveals a metaphorical message of the poem. What is the chambered nautilus a symbol of?

*The nautilus is, according to the speaker, similar to life, wherein one discards the old shell for something bigger and grander. Holmes, therefore, is writing a poem about a sea snail, which must leave its “home” and find a new one when the old is damaged beyond repair.*

4. What “heavenly message” does the poem’s subject convey to the speaker?

*The speaker sees the snail’s habit of leaving one shell for a newer, stronger, more beautiful one as something to be admired. He believes the message is to work at building stronger, more beautiful “temples.” This reference to temples may be literal, but is more likely figurative, referring to the inner temple for one’s soul, as he follows the first direction of “Build thee more stately mansions” with the declaration, “O my soul.” He believes it is important to continue to better one’s “temple” until death, when “...thou at length art free,/ Leaving thine outgrown shell by life’s unresting sea.”*

## **“The Charge of the Light Brigade”**

by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, pages 62-63

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Why do you suppose Tennyson has repeated canon at the beginning six lines (stanzas three and five)?

*By beginning the line with “canons,” Tennyson creates a sense of unrelenting assault. Every line greets the reader’s eyes with canons just as the soldiers were greeted on the fields.*

2. Find and record an example of an allusion within the first stanza.

*The allusion in the first stanza is found on line three, and repeated on line seven, where the speaker uses the phrase “valley of Death.” This is an allusion to Psalm 23 in the Bible, where the poet says, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of Death, thou art with me.” It is not a reference to hell, but rather a reference to the time between death and one’s ascent to heaven or descent to hell.*

3. What is the speaker’s outlook on war?

*The poem seems to glorify war and the courage that seems to accompany it.*

4. In the poem’s last stanza, the speaker asks, “When can their glory fade?” By writing the poem, Tennyson seems to be trying to ensure that it never does. What is the term for a question asked that is not meant to be answered?

*The question is a rhetorical one.*

## **“Crossing the Bar”**

by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, pages 63-64

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the speaker’s attitude towards death and dying?

*The speaker displays an attitude of complacency towards death.*

2. What is the sandbar a metaphor of?

*The sandbar is a metaphor for the line between life and death. It is something that needs to be overcome and reached.*

3. This entire poem functions as an analogy. To what is Lord Tennyson’s image of a ship “crossing the bar” and going out to sea an analogy?

*Lord Tennyson’s image of “crossing the bar” is an analogy to death, which is meant to strike up images of the soul passing the point at which it will not return, but travel on to heaven.*

4. Explain the speaker’s reference to “my Pilot” in the last stanza.

*Since the poem is an analogy to passing on from life to heaven, the reference to “my pilot” is a reference to God, whom he “hope[s] to see” when he reaches heaven.*

## **“My Last Duchess”**

by Robert Browning, pages 64-65

### **Vocabulary**

**countenance** – face

**mantle** – a cape

**officious** – flattering

**trifling** – of very little worth or importance

**forsooth** – truly

**munificence** – generosity

1. The poem is written in the first person. What is the name of an extended speech by one speaker to another character?

*The poem is a dramatic monologue.*

2. The poem’s lines do not end at the end of a line, but rather they continue into the next. What is the term for the use of sentences and other grammatical constructs that do not necessarily conclude at the end of a line?

*The term is called enjambment.*

3. Describe the Duke’s character.

*Answers may vary. Example: He is egotistic and jealous. He was controlling over his last wife and hints that he plans on controlling his future wife as well.*

4. To whom is the Duke speaking?

*The Duke is speaking to an unseen audience, a servant of another lord whose daughter he is aiming to wed.*

5. What is the tone of the poem?

*The tone of the poem is one of unintentional revelation. The speaker is revealing, unconsciously, internal character flaws to his audience.*

6. According to the speaker, what was it that brought a blush to the Duchess's cheek?

*The speaker says that the Duchess was "too easily impressed." A kind word or deed from any man would draw a blush to the cheek, and kind words from her mouth, which made the Duke jealous.*

7. How did the speaker feel about the Duchess's behavior? What actions resulted from these feelings?

*The speaker, her husband, did not like the fact that she gave the same smile and kind words to others as she did to her husband. After this had gone on for some time, the speaker says he "have commands," and the "smiles stopped altogether." Unfortunately, the smiles seemed to stop not only to others, but also to him.*

8. Explain the significance of the statue of Neptune alluded to at the poem's conclusion.

*The statue represents the god of the sea taming a sea horse. The statue is meant to reflect the Duke's own goals of taming his wife and seemingly succeeding, albeit through her death.*

## **“I Hear America Singing”**

by Walt Whitman, pages 65-66

### **Vocabulary**

**blithe** – lighthearted; carefree

**robust** – healthy and energetic

1. This poem proceeds roughly in the form of a list. What is the literary term for such a poem?

*Catalog verse is the literary term for this form.*

2. Describe the overall tone of the poem.

*Answers may vary. Example: The overall tone of the poem is celebratory and praiseful.*

3. In what way does the poem celebrate both the individual and the masses?

*The poem celebrates the individual in that Whitman mentions that each is “singing what belongs to him or her and to none else.” It celebrates the masses in its title: all of these individuals constitute “America Singing.”*

## **“O Captain! My Captain!**

by Walt Whitman, pages 66-67

### **Vocabulary**

**keel** – the body of a ship

**rack** – in this case, stress or torture

1. Refer to the introduction to Walt Whitman’s poem and explain who the captain is in this poem.

*The introduction to Walt Whitman’s poetry reveals that this poem was written shortly after the death of Abraham Lincoln; it would seem he is the subject of this writing.*

2. In the first stanza, Whitman writes that “the prize we sought is won.” Taking into consideration the period in which this poem was written, what do you think the “prize” is of which Whitman speaks?

*Since Abraham Lincoln spent most of his time in office fighting for the emancipation of slaves in the United States, the prize may be winning the Civil War and setting free the many slaves in the South.*

3. How does the captain’s death affect the speaker’s experience of the victory?

*Although the masses exult over the victory, the speaker paces the deck “with mournful tread,” grieving his captain rather than joining the celebration.*

4. Why do you think Whitman chose to use this form for this poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: The strict form of this poem seems to fit the occasion; the rhyme and meter make it resonate like a death knell or mournful dirge. The repeated return to the refrain mimics the way the speaker’s mind keeps returning to his dead captain whenever it threatens to veer towards celebrating the victory.*

5. What kinds of feelings seem prevalent in this poem? Do contradictory feelings exist here? What are they?

*Answers may vary. Example: The author seems to love and admire his captain as he continually points out the efforts of others who show him praise and adulation. At the same time, however, each stanza ends with a statement of great sadness and disbelief. While the author is proud of the character and actions of his captain, he simultaneously feels great grief that he has died.*

## “A Noiseless Patient Spider”

by Walt Whitman, page 67

### Vocabulary

**promontory** – part of land that projects out, as into water

**ductile** – in this case, capable of being drawn out into threads

**gossamer** – delicate; gauzy

1. Why do you think Whitman uses the repetition of “filament, filament, filament” in the fourth line, rather than simply using the plural “filaments”?

*Answers may vary. Example: The repetition mirrors the action of the spider, enabling the reader to envision the spider’s lively work.*

2. In what way is the speaker’s soul similar to the spider?

*The speaker’s soul also throws out “filaments” in its search for meaning, answers, and a sense of home in the world.*

3. Record an instance of apostrophe in the poem.

*Apostrophe occurs when the speaker addresses his soul, which cannot speak back: “And you O my soul...”*

4. How does the speaker seem to feel about his soul? What emotion is there?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker seems to feel that his soul is both delicate and marvelous; he almost seems to encourage it in its challenging business. Emotions may include hope and tenderness.*

5. What analogy does he make using the spider that is the subject of his title?

*Whitman watches a spider cast out threads of filament as it explores the space in front of it, drawing an analogy to his soul, and how it continues to explore the world around it, with its thoughts and feelings each similar to the spider’s filaments. Just as the spider hopes its filament will catch on to something that will hold its weight, Whitman’s soul hopes some of its feelings and ideas will become solid, permanent, and lasting.*

## “Dover Beach”

by Matthew Arnold, pages 67-68

### Vocabulary

**tranquil** – peaceful, calm

**ebb** – description of the coming in of the sea

**cadence** – flow, rhythm

**turbid** – state of turmoil, muddled

**melancholy** – depressed

**certitude** – confidence, certain

**shingle** – pebble beach

1. Who is the speaker of this poem? Who is he talking to? What is their relationship?

*The speaker of the poem is a young man. He is speaking to his love. The poem suggests that they are having a difficult relationship (“And we are here as on a darkling plain swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight”).*

2. What is the relationship between the setting in stanza one and the description in stanza two of what Sophocles heard beside another sea?

*In the first stanza, the sea is described as playing an “eternal note of sadness.” Similarly, the Aegean Sea brings misery to Sophocles’ mind. The relationship is that the sea is not a symbol of hope and independence, but rather of misery and of constraint.*

3. What is the relationship of the first and second stanzas to the “Sea of Faith” described in stanza three?

*The Sea of Faith, like the beaches and seas described in the first two stanzas, once was alive and present around the world. The difference is that the Sea of Faith represents hope and faith, while the new water represents misery.*

4. The final stanza offers love as the solution for the problems that the speaker and his lover see in the world around them. Explain the meaning of love and its importance in this poem. Do you agree with Arnold's idea? What does this poem suggest about love and the modern world?

*Love, like the waters, is ever present, but also ever changing (ebbing and flowing). The speaker suggests that love is the solution since it is natural and unsought for. Love, too, is present. He urges his love to focus on the present calm, the present love, in hopes that it will lead to a bright future.*

5. The poem’s concluding image calls to mind the chaotic night-battle at Epipolae when Athenian warriors, unable to see, killed friend and enemy alike. What, to the speaker, do the waters warn of?

*The waters warn of humanity’s sad destiny by reminding him of the past.*

## “Lucifer in Starlight”

by George Meredith, pages 68-69

### Vocabulary

[none]

1. What poetic form does “Lucifer in Starlight” follow?

*The poem is a Petrarchan or Italian sonnet.*

2. To what does the allusion, “the old revolt from Awe” refer?

*The allusion is to the biblical tale of Lucifer’s losing battle with God. Upon his defeat, Lucifer was cast down from the heavens.*

3. In your own words, what causes Lucifer “to sink”?

*According to the speaker, when Lucifer flies up close to the stars, which are “the brain of heaven,” he sees God’s unconquerable army and flees back to his dominion for he knows he cannot beat them.*

4. The description of the stars as the “brain of heaven” is an example of the employment of what literary device?

*The description is a comparison without using like or as, or a metaphor.*

5. Who or what makes up the “army of unalterable law”? What is the law?

*The army is composed of the un-fallen angels. The unalterable law is the law of God, or divine law.*

## “I’m Nobody! Who Are You?”

by Emily Dickinson, page 69

### Vocabulary

**bog** – a wet, spongy area of ground, where one is likely to sink, and where frogs live

1. Describe the over-all tone of this poem.

*Answers may vary. Example: The tone is both intimate, drawing the reader into a circle with the speaker, and perhaps also a bit superior by scoffing.*

2. What does fame seem to consist of to the speaker?

*Fame seems mainly to consist of telling one’s name over and over all “the livelong day.”*

3. By comparing the announcement or telling of her name to the calls of a frog, what does the speaker infer is the value of it?

*The comparison of her name to a frog’s call suggests that she views her name with little value, lowering it to a mere noise or croak rather than something worthy of admiration.*

**“This is My Letter to the World”**

by Emily Dickinson, page 69

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Explain the meaning of the lines “Her message is committed/To hands I cannot see.” To whose “hands” does the poet refer?

*The poet refers to the hands of the future readers of this “letter”—that is, this poem.*

2. To whom did “Nature” tell “news”? What is the news?

*Nature told “news” to the poet; the news is the content of the poem/s. The poet is positioning herself as Nature’s scribe.*

**“I heard a Fly Buzz When I Died”**

by Emily Dickinson, page 70

**Vocabulary**

**heaves** – coughs

**interposed** – interrupted

**assignable** – selected, set apart

1. What is the setting of the poem?

*The speaker is on her deathbed when she hears a fly buzz above her.*

2. What is the metrical scheme of the poem?

*The lines alternate in tetrameter and trimeter iambs. It should be noted that this pattern is one of Dickinson’s trademarks.*

3. The first stanza of the poem compares the speaker’s room to a storm using what literary device?

*The comparison is made through a simile.*

4. To what is Dickinson referring to when she writes of “the king” on line seven?

*Dickinson is referring to God, who will “be witnessed in his power” when she dies.*

5. In your own words, describe what role the fly plays in the speaker’s death.

*Answers may vary. Example: Just after the speaker has signed her will and faces death, the fly comes between her and “the light”—which could signify a light in the room, or the light of God.*

## “Because I Could Not Stop for Death”

by Emily Dickinson, page 70

### Vocabulary

**syntax** – sentence construction; word order

**recluse** – one who shuns society; one who remains at home

**cornice** – uppermost molding

**surmised** – guessed; began to understand

1. In the way she writes of death in this poem, is Dickinson using simile or personification? Explain your answer.

*Dickinson uses personification since Death is presented as a character, not as a comparison.*

2. How does Dickinson characterize “Death”? Why do you think it is presented in this way?

*Dickinson characterizes Death as polite, civil, and gentlemanly.*

*Answers may vary. Example: She is trying to show Death’s place in the natural cycle of life, not as something to be (or that can be) avoided.*

3. What is the “house that seemed/A swelling of the ground”?

*The house is the speaker’s grave.*

4. Rewrite the poem’s last stanza in simple prose.

*Answers may vary. Example: Centuries have passed since I died and was buried, but those centuries feel shorter than the longest day of my life: the day I realized I was dead and heading for my grave.*

## “A Birthday”

by Christina Rossetti, page 71

### Vocabulary

**halcyon** – calm and peaceful

**dais** – table of honor

**vair** – fur

**fleurs-de-lys** – an iris

1. What is the relationship between the first stanza (with its similes) and the second stanza?

*The first stanza contains a number of similes that compare the joy and love of the speaker's heart to natural occurrences and places. The second stanza explains why her heart feels that way.*

2. What kinds of images does Rossetti use in the last stanza? What do the images have in common? Why do you think she chose these images?

*The speaker chooses images of physical worth that signify wealth and abundance. She names silk and down, purple dyes, doves, pomegranates, peacocks, gold and silver grapes, and fleur-de-lys. She may have chosen these images to show the reader how valuable her love is to her, or how wealthy in spirit she feels because she found it.*

3. The last few lines tell the reader that the speaker feels it is “the birthday of my life” because she has found love. What do you think is meant by such a statement?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker may feel that when she found her love, she started her life over again, or perhaps just began living. It is a figurative birthday for a new beginning.*

## “Jabberwocky”

by Lewis Carroll, pages 71-72

### Vocabulary

**bryllyg** – The time of broiling dinner, i.e. the close of the afternoon

**slythy** – smooth and active

**tove** – a species of Badger

**gyre** – to scratch like a dog

**gymble** – to screw out holes in anything

**wabe** – the side of hill

**mimsy** – unhappy

**borogove** – an extinct kind of parrot

**mome** – grave

**rath** – a land turtle

**outgrabe** – squeaked

1. Using the vocabulary above, write out the first stanza of the poem in a more standardized version of English.

*Answers may vary. Example: It was evening, and the smooth active badgers were scratching and boring holes in the hill side, all unhappy were the parrots, and the grave turtles squeaked out.*

2. The poem is an example of nonsense poetry. The term comes from nonce, or a made-up word. Carroll, however, claims that all the words actually have standard English roots. Choose any two of the words above and explain what you believe their English derivatives to be.

*Answers will vary. Examples: Brillig (broil); slithy (slimy and lithe); gyre (from the old English gyaour meaning dog); mimsy (miserable).*

3. What is the poetic form of “Jabberwocky”?

*The poem is written in traditional ballad form.*

4. The poem makes substantial use of alliteration. Find three examples of alliteration.

*Answers may vary. Examples: “gyre” / “gimble”; “the” / “that” / “the” / “that”; “claws” / “catch”; “snicker-snack”; “Callooh” / “Callay.”*

5. Why do you think this poem ends with the same stanza as it began?

*Answers may vary. Example: Carroll may have done so to reinforce the ridiculousness of the poem. He may also have wanted to show that the world, which began in this poem as a relative calm place, was once again a place free of fright, thanks to the killer of the Jabberwocky.*

6. Most of the nonsense words in this poem are nouns or adjectives. Why do you think Carroll chose to use nonsense words to replace these parts of speech in his poem?

*Answers may vary. Carroll may have been hoping to show that, with actions in tact, what characters look like, see and say can be left to the imagination of his readers so that the story told can be different for each person.*

## “The Darkling Thrush”

by Thomas Hardy, pages 72-73

### Vocabulary

**coppice** – a thicket of trees or shrubs

**dregs** – remains

**fervourless** – void of emotion

**illimited** – unlimited

1. How do the dominant colors of the poem (black, white, and red) connote death and ghostliness and further indicate the desolation of the speaker and the scene?

*The colors of the poem are all traditional symbols of death. Black suggests sorrow and mourning. Red suggests blood and pain. White suggests the absence of color and feeling.*

2. Which specific words connote both spiritual and physical cold and discomfort?

*Answers may vary. Examples: “spectre-gray,” “crypt,” “dry,” “bleak,” “frail,” “gaunt,” and “gloom.”*

3. What essential paradox does the flight and the song of the thrush in the midst of a moribund landscape present?

*The paradox present is the contrast of life and death, of hope and desolation.*

4. How does Hardy establish a sense of time, place, and mood in this poem?

*Hardy uses specific words to establish the poem’s time, place, and mood. He relies on the senses, employing touch (“leant”), sight (“weakening eye”), and hearing (“voice arose”).*

5. The image of “The weakening eye of day,” is a metaphor for what?

*The eye of day is a metaphor for the sun.*

6. What surprises the speaker in the middle of this cold winter night?

*In the second stanza, the speaker is surprised to hear a song of “joy illimited” from the thrush in the middle of such a harsh, cold evening. This further surprises the speaker because the thrush puts forth such a strong song, yet is such a “frail, gaunt, and small” bird.*

7. What does the speaker feel might be carried in the tune the thrush sings?

*In the final stanza, the speaker says he thinks there may be “Some blessed Hope” within the thrush’s song. If the thrush can sing of happiness in the cold, dead winter, he believes perhaps he, too, could find some hope in such a dark time.*

## “The Windhover”

by Gerard Manley Hopkins, pages 73-74

### Vocabulary

**minion** – subordinate

**dauphin** – prince

**wimpling** – cloth headpiece

**chevalier** – knight

1. Among the poem’s themes is the smooth merging of the windhover with the air. What literary devices does Hopkins employ to have his language appear equally smooth and fluid?

*Hopkins’ poem uses alliteration, consonance, and assonance to create a fluid stream of words and thoughts. He also uses parallelism and unusual syntax to make his words seem almost melodic.*

2. “The Windhover” is written with a meter in which the number of accents in a line is counted, but not the number of syllables. What is the term for this type of meter?

*This type of meter is called sprung rhythm.*

3. The poem is a fourteen-line sonnet, consisting of an octave and two tercets. The subject matter of the poem switches after the octave from the windhover to the speaker’s chevalier, a medieval image of Christ on a horse. How are the two subjects linked by the speaker?

*The speaker links the two subjects by mention of his heart. Witnessing the bird hovering in the air sets his heart stirring, which is a similar to the feeling that thoughts of Christ have on him.*

4. What is the speaker referring to when he says in line ten, “—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!”?

*The speaker is referring to the Falcon, which is flying above the speaker through the morning air.*

## “Pied Beauty”

by Gerard Manley Hopkins, page 74

### Vocabulary

**dappled** – spotted

**brinded** – streaked

**stipple** – to paint, draw

**fickle** – unstable, picky

1. How does this poem attempt to "free" nature from saturation by human consciousness?

*The first stanza lists a number of natural objects: animals, chestnuts, charcoal, and trout. In the second stanza, the speaker seeks to apologize for these things. The saturation by human consciousness is removed from nature by the speaker's attempt at placing them as creations and reflections of God rather than of man.*

2. The poem ends with the line "praise him"—i.e. praise God for the great diversity of things as described in the first ten lines. How is the appreciation of nature's diversity, for Hopkins, a kind of affirmation of God's creative energy?

*For Hopkins, nature's diversity points to the unity and permanence of God's power and inspires man to praise God.*

3. Hopkins was a Jesuit priest, and as such knew the order's motto well: Ad majorem dei gloriam, or glory to God in the highest. This motto is briefly mentioned in the poem's lines, "Glory be to God," and "Praise him." What literary and poetic device are these references examples of?

*The lines are examples of allusion.*

4. How might Hopkins defend his comparison of a chestnut to a piece of coal?

*Answers may vary. Example: The chestnut is hard on the outside, but inside contains its worth. Likewise, a fresh coal may be hard on the outside but contains heat on the inside. Thus, to appreciate both, one must look below the exterior.*

5. You might notice that this poem has a great deal of repetition of consonant sound. What is the term for this technique that Hopkins uses so much? Provide an example.

*The literary term for this is alliteration.*

*Answers may vary. Examples: "Glory" and "God" in line 1; "couple-color" and "cow" in line 2; "fresh-firecoal" "-falls," and "finches" in line four.*

## **“Requiem”**

by Robert Louis Stevenson, pages 74-75

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Read the introduction to this writer’s life. What is significant about this particular poem?

*This poem is carved into Stevenson’s gravestone in Samoa. It serves as his epitaph.*

2. What does the repetition of “glad” and “I” suggest the tone of the poem to be?

*The repetition of “glad” and “I” suggest that the speaker has willingly chosen and allowed himself to die. The resulting tone is one of acceptance and relief.*

3. As the note that precedes the poem explains, Stevenson was an avid world-traveler. What lines of the poem suggest his worldliness?

*The poem’s final two lines allude to Stevenson’s travels, acknowledging his place on the sea and on land.*

4. The poem’s final line contains three words that begin with a hard ‘h’ sound: “hunter,” “home,” and “hill.” What is the term used to describe such repetition?

*The repetition is called alliteration.*

5. What kind of feeling does this poem leave you with after you have read it?

*Answers may vary. Example: Though this is a poem about someone’s death, the ending leaves the reader feeling fairly positive. Lines like “Home is the sailor” and “the hunter home from the hill” cause the reader to believe the person for whom the poem was written is resting in peace and that his death was not something he was angry about or unprepared for.*

## “To an Athlete Dying Young”

by A.E. Housman, pages 75-76

### Vocabulary

**threshold** – doorway

**rout** – to poke

**lintel** – door frame

1. What is posited as eternal in Housman's poem?

*The poem posits that memories of the athlete's triumphs will last eternally, though his life was brief.*

2. The poem's first two stanzas are set in the same place but at two very different times. Why is the athlete being honored in the first and second paragraphs?

*In the first stanza, the athlete is being honored for winning a race. In the second one, his life is being honored following his death. Note the contrasting images of the crowd “cheering by” in the first stanza to the “stiller town” of the second.*

3. The image of a wilting laurel wreath in the third stanza is recalled later in the poem's concluding lines. What does the speaker intend for the laurel to symbolize in the two usages?

*The first image is contrasted against that of a rose. The intention of the comparison seems to be the lasting qualities of success and love. In this comparison, love wins out. Contrastingly, the second image is that of a young girl's head of curls. The comparison is meant to show the similarities between the athlete's accomplishments and the girl's innate innocence. The speaker suggests that both are lost too soon.*

4. The repetition of the ‘o’ sound in “hold” and “low” is an example of what literary and poetic device?

*The repetition is known as assonance.*

5. How does the author feel the young athlete will benefit from dying young? Explain your answer.

*Answers may vary. Example: In the fifth stanza, the author discusses how most men outlive their fame. The young athlete died while still well known for his accomplishments, and so will forever be remembered.*

## “Gunga Din”

by Rudyard Kipling, pages 76-78

### Vocabulary

[none]

1. Who is the speaker of the poem?

*The poem’s speaker is a soldier of the English army fighting in India.*

2. What is Gunga Din’s job? How do the others treat him?

*Gunga Din is the water-boy for the army. The other soldiers seem to treat him as a servant, ordering him around and not truly appreciating his service.*

3. Throughout the poem, the speaker employs the use of military terms and regional language. What is the term for such use of non-standard English?

*The term is dialect.*

4. What does the speaker mean when he says, on line forty-five, “An’ for all ‘is dirty ‘ide/ ‘E was white, clear white, inside/ When ‘e went to tend the wounded under fire.”

*The speaker means that though Gunga Din’s skin was dark because of his ethnic (Indian) background, there was nothing “dark” or “evil” about him—he was pure and courageous on the inside.*

5. In your own words, describe what amazed the speaker about Gunga Din.

*The speaker tells us that even when the fighting gets difficult or intense, Gunga Din shows no fear and puts himself at risk to be sure the men get water.*

6. Why does the speaker retort, “You’re a better man than I am, Gunga Din!” at the poem’s conclusion?

*Gunga Din lost his life doing his job and aiding the wounded speaker. The speaker has finally come to appreciate Gunga Din.*

7. What is the tragic end of Gunga Din?

*While tending to the speaker, Gunga Din is shot. Before he dies, he says to the speaker, “I’ope you liked your drink.”*

## **“Recessional”**

by Rudyard Kipling, pages 78-79

### **Vocabulary**

**contrite** – remorseful, apologetic

**pomp** – splendor

1. The poem, an ode, takes the form of a prayer by the speaker. For what is the speaker praying?

*The speaker is praying for companionship with God during times of war and turmoil.*

2. What is the ancient sacrifice being alluded to in the poem’s second stanza? What is its relationship to the third stanza?

*The sacrifice is God’s gift of his son, Christ, who in Christian theology died out of love for mankind. The allusion is meant to be compared to the sacrifice being made by the soldiers in the poem’s third stanza. Unlike their rulers who will perish, the sacrifice and its result shall live on.*

3. Why do you suppose the poem is subtitled, “A Victorian Ode”? Who is the speaker of the Ode and to whom is the ode attributed?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker of the ode is meant to be metaphorically all Victorians. It is an ode to the “God of our fathers,” the Christian God.*

4. The speaker repeatedly ends his stanzas with “Lest we forget – lest we forget.” What do you think he is concerned people will forget?

*Answers may vary. The speaker seems concerned that the people around him will forget the power God deserves, and the respect and praise should be constantly shown.*

“If—”

by Rudyard Kipling, pages 79-80

**Vocabulary**

**knaves** – male servants

**sinew** – muscle

1. The poem seems to be a long list of ‘ifs’. What is the ‘then’?

*The speaker concludes his ‘ifs’ with the poem’s final lines, “Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it...And you’ll be a Man, my son!”*

2. What, according to the speaker, are the qualities of a Man?

*Answers may vary. Examples: patience, confidence, coolness under pressure, level-headedness, imaginative, intelligent, caring, judicious, persistent, strong, loyal, and brave.*

3. Describe in your own words what Kipling meant when he wrote, “If you can dream—and not make dreams your master.”

*Answers may vary. Example: Kipling meant it is important to dream in life, but equally important, do not to let dreams distract you from the important tasks of day-to-day life.*

4. To whom does it seem Kipling wrote this poem?

*Kipling ends the last stanza with “And—which is more—you’ll be a man, my son!” It seems, then, he wrote this poem for his own child, or for children in general.*

5. According to the last few lines of this poem, what does the speaker feel is the most important goal in a young boy’s life?

*The most important goal for a young man does not seem to be something as grandiose as ruling “the Earth and everything that’s in it,” but instead simply to “be a Man,” who is able to live honestly and treat people well and fairly.*

## “The Lake Isle of Innisfree”

by William Butler Yeats, pages 80-81

### Vocabulary

**wattles** – twigs, reeds, and branches

**linnet** – a small bird

1. The poem is written in hexameter, with the last line of each stanza in tetrameter. How many syllables are in each of the poem’s lines? What is its rhyme scheme?

*Each line has twelve syllable (hexameter means six feet) with the last lines of each stanza having eight (four feet). The rhyme scheme is A/B/A/B.*

2. In the first two poems, Yeats attempts to describe nature through sensory details and imagery. What does the wording of the second stanza, “veils,” “peace,” and “glow,” suggest nature is most like?

*The words chosen suggest divinity and serenity. The image is one of solitude, a death-like experience that is, though, very much alive.*

3. What could you find if you went to visit Innisfree?

*According to the first stanza, you could find “a small cabin of clay and wattles,” “Nine bean rows,” and “a hive for honey.”*

4. How does the speaker personify peace?

*In the second stanza, the speaker personifies peace by describing it as something that moves slowly from the sky onto the Earth, as if it had the ability to know when and how to move on its own.*

5. Describe what you feel the speaker of this poem is trying to say in the last stanza.

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker is saying that no matter where he goes—even when he is surrounded by pavement and roads—he still hears the sound of the water lapping on the shore of Innisfree. It is a sound that stays in his heart, so he can hear it wherever he goes.*

6. The poem’s concluding thought, that truth is found in “the deep heart’s core,” is a theme that resonates throughout Yeats’ poetry. What, according to the poem, is the significance of the heart’s core?

*The heart’s core contains the essential truths of life and of nature. Man’s quest to find and unearth these truths should be his goal in life.*

## **“When You Are Old”**

by William Butler Yeats, page 81

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What does the poem infer about the power of poetry and the written word?

*The poem infers that poetry lasts and remains as a constant reminder of what was. The speaker suggests that poetry has the ability to contain a man's life in its lines and, in turn, to ensure that the life never dies.*

2. The term “glad grace” is an example of what literary device?

*The repetition of the ‘g’ sound suggests that it is an example of alliteration.*

3. In what ways is the soul, to the speaker, a “pilgrim”?

*The soul of the spoken to is on a pilgrimage through life. It is in a state of constant movement and experience, with its ultimate destination, through death, being heaven.*

4. By having love flee to join the “crowd of stars” overhead, what is the speaker suggesting is its role in life?

*Love is described as having a role of protector and guidance through life for the pilgrim-soul.*

## **“The Second Coming”**

by William Butler Yeats, pages 81-82

### **Vocabulary**

**gyre** – spiral

**anarchy** – disorder

**indignant** – angry

**vexed** – to puzzle, annoy

1. What is the purpose of the poem’s first stanza?

*The first stanza aims to describe the world in its present state. Keep in mind that it was written around the time of the first World War (1921).*

2. What is the significance of the poem's mention of the Sphinx myth?

*The Sphinx serves to contrast the modern and ancient worlds.*

3. In the second stanza, the speaker describes his image of the Second Coming. Historically, what is meant by the Second Coming? What does the speaker imagine it will be like?

*The Second Coming is a reference to the Christian belief that Christ will come again to the Earth to save those who have been true to God and to punish all sinners. The speaker believes that part of the Second Coming will include a giant creature that will ravage the Earth with its “lion body and head of a man.”*

4. Explain the allusion found in the phrase “vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle.”

*The allusion here is to the cradle that held Christ after he was born. This allusion is reinforced in the next line, when the speaker tells the reader he envisions the creature “Slouching towards Bethlehem,” where Christ is said to have been born.*

## **“Richard Corey”**

by Edwin Arlington Robinson, page 82

### **Vocabulary**

**arrayed** – dressed

**imperially** – majestically

1. Describe the poem’s speaker.

*The poem’s speaker is of the working class and is impressed by and even envious of Richard Cory. The speaker’s envy is not malicious, however—he seems to find Cory’s suicide wondrous, but does not find glory in Cory’s fall.*

2. In what way is the ending ironic?

*The ending of the poem is ironic because what happens is exactly the opposite of what we might assume.*

3. What does the poem suggest about happiness and appearances?

*The poem suggests that happiness is not an automatic byproduct of wealth and success. It also suggests that appearances may sometimes mask a different reality.*

## “Miniver Cheevey”

by Edwin Arlington Robinson, pages 82-83

### Vocabulary

**assailed** – attacked

**albeit** – even though; although

**diction** – choice of words

**incessantly** – without stopping

1. Why does Miniver Cheevey drink and accomplish so little?

*Miniver Cheevey accomplishes very little because he is fixated on how much more exciting life must have been in earlier centuries.*

2. What does Robinson refer to when he uses the words “iron clothing”?

*Robinson refers to suits of armor.*

3. The last two lines of the next-to-last stanza read: “Miniver thought, and thought, and thought, And thought about it.”

What is the effect of the repetition of the phrase “and thought”? Why do you think Robinson did not simply write “Miniver thought about it repeatedly”?

*Answers may vary. Example: The repetition mimics Miniver’s actions, allowing the reader to truly feel the passing and wasting of time as Miniver dwells on his state.*

4. What are the possible allusions in Miniver Cheevey’s name?

*Answers may vary. Example: Miniver could be a reference to Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom (the Greek Athens). Cheevey might be a pun on achieve. These combined could indicate that the subject of the poem is intelligent, but does not actually do much but think and dream.*

## “The Road Not Taken”

by Robert Frost, page 84

### Vocabulary

**diverged** – went in different directions; forked

**trodden** – stamped down

**hence** – from this time

1. Read the poem carefully, then describe the two roads and explain whether or not they are very different from one another.

*The roads are not very different from one another. Both are “worn really about the same” and, when the speaker arrives at them, neither one is freshly trodden. The speaker also describes the second road as “just as fair” as the first.*

2. Was the speaker at all interested in taking the road he did not end up choosing?

*Yes; the speaker was “sorry [he] could not travel both” and “kept the first for another day.”*

3. Why do you think the speaker will be telling this tale “with a sigh” later in life?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker will sigh because he was forced by circumstance to choose one road over another; he regrets it now and will always regret not being able to take both.*

4. Why is the poem called “The Road Not Taken” instead of “The Road Less Traveled”?

*The poem, often misread as inspirational verse, is about the fact that each choice made entails leaving another choice behind. The road he did not take occupies the speaker’s mind—simply because he did not take it. He may wonder what difference the road not taken would have made in his life had he chosen it instead.*

5. How would you describe the tone of this poem?

*Answers may vary. Example: The tone is one of resignation and an awareness of the possibility of regret.*

## “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”

by Robert Frost, pages 84-85

### Vocabulary

[none]

1. Write the rhyme scheme of the poem. In what way does the rhyme scheme of the final stanza differ from those of the stanzas that precede it?

*AABA, BBCB, CCDC, DDDD*

*In the final stanza, there is no third-line departure from the end rhyme of the rest of the stanza. Every line in the final stanza rhymes.*

2. How would the feel and potential meaning of the poem differ if the last line was not repeated?

*Answers may vary. Example: The line “And miles to go before I sleep,” would seem entirely literal; the surprise of the repetition is what raises the possibility that the speaker might mean eternal sleep. Frost, himself, claimed that the poem seemed incomplete without the final line, but he was unable to do anything else other than repeat it. This repetition allows the reader to interpret the first line as literal sleep, but the second as death.*

3. What do you think the speaker wants to do at the end of the poem? Support your answer with details from the text.

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker wants to remain in the woods, mentioning that they are “lovely, dark and deep,” but then adds, like someone responding to the call of duty, “But I have promises to keep.”*

## “Chicago”

by Carl Sandburg, pages 85-86

### Vocabulary

**brawling** – fighting noisily

1. Who or what is the speaker addressing in this poem?

*The speaker is addressing the city of Chicago itself.*

2. How does the speaker handle complaints about the city?

*The speaker acknowledges that the complaints are valid, then goes on to counter them by powerfully singing the city’s praises. The city’s problems do not, according to the speaker, cancel out the city’s charms.*

3. Comment briefly on the form of this poem.

*Answers will vary. Example: The form is not quite that of a prose poem; although some parts clearly resemble prose. A number of short, set-off lines make it difficult to fit the poem neatly into any one formal category.*

4. Earlier in the anthology, we encountered a poet whose long, sweeping lines and celebratory tone clearly seem to have influenced Sandburg. Name the poet.

*The poet is Walt Whitman.*

## “Fog”

by Carl Sandburg, page 86

### Vocabulary

**haunches** – hips and thighs

1. Is Sandburg’s comparison of the fog to a cat a metaphor or a simile?

*Sandburg’s comparison is a metaphor.*

2. Why do you think Sandburg chose to leave white space between the first two lines of the poem and the last four?

*Answers may vary. Example: The white space slows the poem down and it mimics the creeping and measured silence of the cat-like fog.*

## “The Emperor of Ice Cream”

by Wallace Stevens, pages 86-87

### Vocabulary

**concupiscent** – lusty; full of desire

**protrude** – stick out

**affix** – fasten

1. What kind of ceremony is taking place in this poem?

*A wake is being held.*

2. The speaker suggests that the girls wear their everyday dresses and that the boys bring flowers “in last month’s newspapers.” What does this say about his attitude towards ceremony and propriety?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker scoffs a bit (but not scornfully) at the formal ceremony and he sees no reason to dress up the fact that a woman is dead.*

3. What do you think the speaker means by the line “Let be be finale of seem”?

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker means that we should stop worrying about how things seem or look to others and simply let them be as they are.*

4. What do you think the speaker means by the poem’s refrain of “The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream”?

*Answers may vary. Example: This assertion is related to the speaker’s suggestion that we let “be be finale of seem.” We invest emperors and ceremonies with ridiculous power and meaning, taking them too seriously. The speaker is pointing this out. Alternative interpretations abound:*

- *despite death, the sweetness of life still exists*
- *the only important thing is life*
- *the only important thing is death*
- *both life and the end of life are to be savored*
- *etc.*

### **“The Red Wheelbarrow”**

by William Carlos Williams, page 87

#### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Although we would call this a free verse poem, each strophe is precisely arranged in the same way as the others. What “form” do the strophes take?

*The strophes each consist of two lines: the first with three words, the latter with one.*

2. Why do you think Williams does not go into greater detail when describing the wheelbarrow and chickens? Why only tell us one thing about them (in this case, their colors)?

*Answers may vary. Example: The spare details put the image into sharp focus; it becomes as vivid as a street sign.*

3. “Wheelbarrow” is written as one word in the title, but divided in the second strophe. Why does Williams divide it in the body of the poem?

*While “wheelbarrow” is usually written as one word, Williams divides it in the body of the poem to preserve the strophe’s form.*

4. What is your interpretation of the poem?

*Answers may vary. Examples:*

- *Much depends on the family farm.*
- *One person regrets leaving such an important object out in the rain.*
- *The colors red and white are symbolic of blood and purity, among many other things.*

### **“The River-Merchant’s Wife: A Letter”**

by Ezra Pound, pages 87-88

#### **Vocabulary**

**eddies** – currents

1. The first strophe of this poem ends with “Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.” The second begins with “At fourteen I married My Lord you.” Comment on the transition. What has changed about their relationship in addition to their getting married?

*The transition is dramatic. The relationship between the people in the poem has changed as the boy is suddenly “My Lord.”*

2. How do the butterflies “hurt” the river-merchant’s wife?

*The butterflies hurt the river-merchant’s wife by being “paired,” as she misses being paired with her husband.*

## “Poetry”

by Marianne Moore, pages 88-89

### Vocabulary

**dilate** – grow wider; expand

**derivative** – unoriginal

**insolence** – rudeness; arrogance

1. While Moore does not use meter in this poem, she does impose a strict form on it. How is the form achieved?

*The form is achieved with the use of indentations, in the same place for each strophe.*

2. What, according to the speaker, should ideally be like “imaginary gardens with real toads in them”? Explain the meaning of this phrase.

*According to the speaker, poems should ideally be like imaginary gardens with real toads in them.*

*Answers may vary. Example: A poem should be unreal and illusory, but it should also be populated by actual feelings, characters, and concepts.*

## “First Fig”

by Edna St. Vincent Millay, page 90

### Vocabulary

**renascence** – rebirth

1. Is the candle of the poem literal or figurative? Why do you think the author begins the poem with such a common cliché?

*The candle is figurative.*

*Answers may vary. Example: Millay might have wanted a rhyme for “Friends.” However, the cliché does fit the sense of this very short poem.*

2. Describe the voice and tone of the speaker.

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker is exuberant and unapologetic.*

3. What is defended in this poem?

*The poem defends the decision to live a very full and experimental, if fast, life.*

## “Anthem For Doomed Youth”

by Wilfred Owen, page 90

### Vocabulary

**orisons** – prayers

**shires** – counties

**pallor** – paleness

**pall** – a cover for a coffin

1. What does the simile, “who die as cattle” suggest about the death of the young soldiers?

*The comparison of the soldiers to dying cattle suggest the number of casualties, as well as a tinge of anger, at how their lives are being disposed of without much thought in the name of war.*

2. What literary device is used to create images rather than simply offer descriptions of the weapons of war in the first octet of the poem?

*The first stanza is filled with uses of onomatopoeia: stuttering, puttering, patter, shrill, and wailing.*

3. Why do you think the speaker employs religious terminology in the first stanza of the poem? What does it say about his view of organized religion and war?

*The use of religious terminology and imagery remain consistent with the undertone of irony and sarcasm found throughout the poem. In the first stanza, the use refers to the lack of hope and grace on the battlefield.*

4. How does Owen link the two stanzas of his poem? Why does it break?

*The two stanzas of the poem are linked by the idea of a calling. The first stanza concludes with the calling of bugles to war, while the second stanza begins with the calling of candles from war. The poem breaks to show the transition from the action of the first stanza to the inaction (through death) of the second.*

5. What do the soldiers receive in lieu of a funeral?

*Rather than proper burials, the soldiers receive the thoughts of those they left behind.*

6. What is the term for the repetition of the ‘r’ sound in “rifles’ rapid rattle”?

*The above phrase exemplifies alliteration. The repetition of the ‘a’ sound in rapid and rattle is also an example of assonance.*

**“anyone lived in a pretty how town”**

by e.e. cummings, pages 91-92

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Who is “anyone”? Describe “anyone”’s relations to “noone.”

*Anyone is a man who is different than anyone else in the town, and so he is hated. Anyone is loved by noone, as the line, “anyone’s any was all to her,” suggests.*

2. What tense is the poem written in? Does the tense shift at all?

*The poem is written in the past tense until “anyone” and “noone” are buried. The poem then becomes present for a single stanza, suggesting that death and the eternal life that follows is constantly ‘present.’*

3. What does the rearrangement of the seasons and stellar beings suggest about time?

*The rearrangements keep the same circular order, suggesting that time is also circular, yet ever-changing.*

4. The only two capitalized words of the poem are “Women.” Why do you suppose Cummings capitalizes them?

*The capitalizations both follow the only two full stops of the poem (periods). Cummings may be signifying the beginning quality of women, suggesting that everything, including the poem, begins with a woman.*

## “Musee des Beaux Arts”

by W.H. Auden, page 92

### Vocabulary

**martyrdom** – suffering of death for one’s beliefs

**forsaken** – renounced

*Note: To fully appreciate the poem, students should be shown a reproduction of "Landscape with the Fall of Icarus," by artist Pieter Brueghel. The poem is essential to interpreting the poem's second stanza.*

1. What is the poem suggesting about the nature of cruelty?

*The poem suggests that cruelty is a natural part of all our lives, and that suffering affects everyone.*

2. Who in the poem cares about human suffering?

*The speaker of the poem infers that the ones who care about human suffering are the children. The suggestion is that children are too young to have experienced suffering themselves, and so the witness of it affects them more.*

3. What is the theme of the poem? Choose one image from the poem and explain how it reinforces this message.

*The theme of the poem is about the universality of human suffering. The poem's images suggest how suffering is constantly taking place, though not to everyone at the same time.*

*Students' responses to the second part of the question will vary, but should reinforce the above mentioned theme.*

4. Why do you think the poet chose Peter Bruegel's "Icarus" to illustrate his theme of the world's indifference to human suffering ?

*Answers may vary. Example: The village folk in the poem would have been aware of Icarus' failure, but they continue to move on with their work. The images suggest that suffering does not move people to act any differently than they normally do because it is experienced by all.*

5. Some critics have argued that this poem hints at Auden's decision to turn back to Christianity. What signs do you find in this poem that signal this may be true?

*In line seven, Auden mentions the "miraculous birth," probably a reference to Christ's birth. The theme of tragedy is also reminiscent of Christ and his tragic end.*

## “Do Not Go Gentle Into that Good Night”

by Dylan Thomas, page 93

### Vocabulary

[none]

1. What is the tone of the poem?

*The poem’s tone is one of anger and persuasion. The speaker is urging readers to not succumb to death.*

2. What is the “dying of the light”?

*The dying of the night is a metaphor for death.*

3. As the note above the poem suggests, it is an example of a villanelle. A villanelle is a poem consisting of 19 lines, but only two rhymes. It also repeats two lines throughout the poem. Why do you think Thomas has chosen to write his poem following the traditional form of a villanelle?

*Answers may vary. Example: Thomas writes a villanelle to show the constrictions placed on men by death. By writing his poem about rebellion in a constricting form, its theme is reinforced.*

4. According to the first stanza, what does the speaker seem to be asking? Put your response in your own words.

*Answers may vary. Example: The speaker is saying that you should fight against dying and that old age should not be a reason to give in to death.*

5. What kind of men should rage against the dying of the light? What four types of men does Thomas address?

*Thomas addresses “wise men,” “good men,” “Wild men,” and “grave men.”*

6. Consider the punctuation used in the first two lines of the poem’s last stanza. What do the caesurae (commas) suggest about the speaker’s feelings toward his father?

*The commas separate the speaker’s ideas and add a feeling of spontaneity to the words. The second line, “Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray” does not suggest that the speaker wants to be cursed and blessed by his father, but rather that he has cursed, blessed, and prayed for his father. The speaker, the son, is forced to live with the pain of the dead father: “**me** now with **your** fierce tears.”*

# *100 Best Loved Poems*

## **Study Guide Student Copy**

### **“Lord Randal”**

by Anonymous, page 1

#### **Vocabulary**

**hae** – have

**weary** – tired

**fain** – happily

**wald** – would

**gat** – ate

**gat ye** – you eat

**bloodhounds** – dogs

1. How did we come to have ballads as part of our literary history?
2. Who is the speaker of the poem?
3. What key events of Lord Randal’s life are recalled in each stanza of the poem?
4. This ballad repeats several phrases in each stanza, including “...mother make my bed soon,/For I am weary wi’ hunting, and fain wald lie down.” By repeating these lines, as well as other phrases, what literary device is being used?
5. What is Lord Randal hunting throughout the poem?

## **“Sir Patrick Spens”**

by Anonymous, pages 2-4

### **Vocabulary**

**skipper** – captain

**faem** – same

**hame** – home

**fetch** – return

**alack** – an exclamation denoting sorrow

**league** – a distance of about 3.0 miles

**lang** – long

1. In what point of view is the poem written? Who is the narrator?
2. In the fifth stanza, Sir Patrick Spens is moved to tears as he reads a letter requesting his help. What causes this display of emotion?
3. What modern-day saying does the line “Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet, Our ship must sail the faem” sound like?
4. What happens to the ship in section II?
5. At the end of the poem, Sir Patrick Spens is said to be laying fifty-fathoms deep. What is he doing there?
6. A ballad generally consists of quatrains with the following metrical scheme: the first and third lines have four accented syllables, while the second and fourth have three accented syllables. What is the metrical scheme of this poem? Does it fit the standard form of the ballad?

**“The Lover Showeth How He Is Forsaken of Such as He Sometime Enjoyed”**

by Sir Thomas Wyatt, pages 4-5

**Vocabulary**

**chamber** – bedroom

**array** – assortment, display

**guise** – appearance

**forsaking** – abandoning

**new-fangleness** – newly fashioned

1. The poem is written in a unique structure. Translate the first line of the poem into modern English.
2. What is the feeling of the narrator toward the woman he speaks of in this poem?
3. To what animal does the speaker compare the objects of his desire?
4. Why has the speaker stopped chasing women?
5. What is the poem’s rhyme scheme? What type of poem does this scheme suggest?
6. The line, “And I have leave to go, of her goodness” is an example of what literary convention?
7. Why is the word ‘she’ italicized in the last line of the poem? Why has Wyatt given this word special emphasis?

## **“The Passionate Shepherd to His Love”**

by Christopher Marlowe, pages 5-6

### **Vocabulary**

**dales** – valleys

**melodious** – musical

**madrigals** – a short, musical poem about love

**posies** – flowers

**embroider’d** – sewn

**swains** – young boys from the country

1. What, metaphorically, does the speaker want to prove in the first stanza?
2. What is the purpose of the Shepherd’s poem?
3. What is the literary term for the phrase “coral clasps”?
4. Why has Marlowe capitalized “Love” in the first and last lines of the poem?
5. This poem is written in stanzas of four lines each. What is the term for this type of stanza?

**“Sonnet XVIII”**

by William Shakespeare, page 6

**Vocabulary**

**temperate** – moderate

**darling** – beloved

**lease** – temporary ownership, permission

1. What comparison does the speaker make in this poem?
2. What poetic device is employed in the seventh line of the sonnet?
3. What is “the eye of heaven”?
4. How does the poem’s final quatrain distinguish between his beloved and the summer?
5. According to the poem’s concluding couplet, why will the beloved’s beauty last forever?
6. Traditional Elizabethan sonnets are fourteen lines long and end with two rhymed lines. What is the term for these two rhymed lines?

**“Sonnet LXXIII”**

by William Shakespeare, page 7

**Vocabulary**

**consumed** – inspired

**nourished** – sustained

1. What is the meter of this poem?
2. In the first quatrain, the speaker compares his age to which season? Why?
3. Why does the speaker say that his age resembles the “twilight”?
4. What does the speaker say in the final couplet of the poem?
5. What is the rhyme scheme of this sonnet?



**“Sonnet CXVI”**

by William Shakespeare, pages 7-8

**Vocabulary**

**impediments** – obstacles

**tempests** – storms

**sickle** – a pole with a hook, used for farming grain

1. The second line of the sonnet contains which poetic device(s)?
2. “It is the star to every wandering bark” is an example of what literary device?
3. Why is “Time” capitalized in the ninth line of the poem?
4. How sure is Shakespeare of his beliefs about love? Cite evidence in your own words to back up your statement.
5. How does the tone of this sonnet compare to that in Sir Thomas Wyatt’s poem, “The Lover Showeth How He is Forsaken of Such as He Sometime Enjoyed”?

**“Adieu, Farewell Earth’s Bliss”**

by Thomas Nashe, pages 8-9

**Vocabulary**

**physic** – health

**devour** – consume quickly

**vain** – hopeless

**heritage** – birthright, destiny

1. This poem is classified as a lyric. What qualities make it this type of poem?
2. The first stanza of the poem alludes to “life’s lustful joys” and also to Death’s “darts.” With what mythological figure is Nashe associating with Death?
3. The mentioning of Helen and Hector, both characters of classical epics, is an example of what literary device?
4. “Wit with his wantonness” is an example of what type of sound device?
5. What is the tone of the poem?
6. What do you feel was Nashe’s purpose for writing this lyric?

**“The Good Morrow”**

by John Donne, pages 9-10

**Vocabulary**

**troth** – word of honor

**fancies** – whims

**slacken** – loosen

1. To what is the poem’s title referring?
2. What kind of imagery does Donne use in the first stanza to describe life before the two loves met?
3. What is the rhyme scheme and meter of this poem?
4. Explain the significance and meaning of lines 6-7.
5. Why do you think Donne repeats the words “world” and “worlds” so frequently in lines 12-14?
6. Line 12 contains an example of what poetic device?

**“Holy Sonnet X”**

by John Donne, page 10

**Vocabulary**

**poppy** – a type of flower used to make opium

1. What type of poem is “Holy Sonnet X”?
2. How does the speaker portray Death? What are the different forces that bring it on?
3. Why does Donne say that those who Death thinks he kills, “die not”?
4. Explain the significance of the caesurae in the poem’s final line.
5. By addressing Death, Donne’s poem is an example of what literary device?



**“To Celia”**

by Ben Jonson, page 11

**Vocabulary**

**nectar** – juice, potion

1. What allusion exists in the first stanza of this poem?
2. Explain the ironies present in the first stanza of the poem.
3. According to the speaker, why did he send the woman a wreath of roses?
4. What is Celia’s response to the speaker’s gift in the second octet?
5. How, according to the speaker, has the wreath changed?
6. What is the tone of the poem?



**“To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time”**

by Robert Herrick, pages 12-13

**Vocabulary**

**coy** – shy

**tarry** – delay

1. In the first stanza, Herrick writes of rosebuds and the brevity of their beauty. For what are rosebuds actually a metaphor?
2. The second stanza contains examples of what two poetic devices?
3. What advice does the speaker give to the virgins he is addressing in the last stanza?
4. In what ways does the poem reflect ideas present in Ben Jonson’s “To Celia”?

**“Upon Julia’s Clothes”**

by Robert Herrick, page 13

**Vocabulary**

**liquefaction** – to be turned into liquid

1. What is the tone of the first stanza? Explain your answer.
2. What does the “my” in the poem’s first line reveal about the speaker?
3. What is ironic about the poem’s concluding line?
4. What effect, if any, do the long vowel sounds in the poem’s second line, “sweetly flows,” have on the poem’s meaning?
5. Why do you think Herrick repeats “then” in the second line of the poem?
6. What does the author mean by “the liquefaction of her clothes?”

**“Love Bade Me Welcome”**

by George Herbert, page 13

**Vocabulary**

**bade** – directed, ordered

**marred** – flawed

1. In the first stanza, what or who is the “Love” to which Herbert refers? How do you know?
2. What is the term for renaming the subject in a poem, for example, calling the Lord “quick-eyed Love” in the first stanza?
3. Why is the speaker hesitant to accept the Lord’s invitation to sit with him? Find an example from each stanza.
4. Why does the Lord still invite the speaker to sit with him?

**“Song”**

by Edmund Waller, page 14

**Vocabulary**

**resemble** – appear similar

**spied** – observed

**abide** – stand

**uncommended** – not recommended, not praised

1. According to the speaker, how should young, beautiful women behave?
2. In your own words, describe what Waller means by his statement in the last stanza, “How small a part of time they share/ That are so wondrous sweet and fair!”
3. How would you characterize the speaker of this poem? Explain your answer using evidence from the poem.
4. Why do you think the speaker says that “she” is wasting both his and her own time?
5. What does the third stanza imply about her feelings of being pursued?
6. In the final stanza, why does the speaker tell Rose to die?

**“On His Blindness”**

by John Milton, pages 14-15

**Vocabulary**

**lodged** – stuck

**chide** – reprimand, scold

**yoke** – burden

1. What is the speaker of this poem bothered by when he considers his state of blindness?
2. Before he thinks to ask the Lord whether he is still a worthy servant, he answers the question himself. What is his answer?
3. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? What type of poem is it?
4. What does Patience offer as a reply to the speaker’s questioning?

**“On His Deceased Wife”**

by John Milton, page 15

**Vocabulary**

**espoused** – supported

**vested** – dressed

**fancied** – loved

1. The mention of Alcestis and Jove is an example of what literary and poetic device?
2. Who is the “late espoused saint” of the poem’s first line?
3. Where does the speaker hope to see his wife again?
4. What happens to the vision of the speaker’s wife?
5. What does the “night” at the end of the poem symbolize?

**“Why So Pale and Wan, Fond Lover?”**

by Sir John Suckling, pages 15-16

**Vocabulary**

**wan** – weary, ill, unhappy

**prithce** – please; alternate to “I pray thee”

1. What is the speaker’s tone by the end of the poem?
2. To whom is the speaker addressing?

**“To Lucasta, Going to the Wars”**

by Richard Lovelace, page 16

**Vocabulary**

**nunnery** – a home for religious women

**inconstancy** – unfaithfulness, infidelity

1. The speaker’s comparison of Lucasta to a nunnery is an example of what literary device?
2. Explain the metaphor present in the poem’s second stanza.
3. In the third stanza, “thou too shalt,” presents an example of what poetic sound device?
4. Within the speaker, what faith is stronger than his faith in the woman he loves?
5. According to the speaker, why should the woman not take offense to the fact that his faith in his horse and weapons is stronger than his faith in her?

**“To His Coy Mistress”**

by Andrew Marvell, pages 17-18

**Vocabulary**

**hue** – shade, color

**transpires** – emerges, happens

**amorous** – loving

**languish** – decay

1. What does the speaker entreat of his love?
2. What justifications or reasoning does the speaker employ to persuade his mistress?
3. Identify the allusion in line eight.
4. Identify an instance of hyperbole in this poem.
5. How would you describe his tone? Do the tone and message remain constant throughout, or is there a shift in the poem?



**“The Retreat”**

by Henry Vaughan, pages 18-19

**Vocabulary**

**gilded** – covered with gold

1. Identify an example of half-rhyme in this poem.
2. How are the ideas in Henry Vaughan’s introduction reflected in this particular poem?
3. In your own words, explain the first stanza of this poem. What does Vaughan miss? How does he believe he has changed? Use quotes from the poem to support your translation.
4. In the last stanza, how does Vaughan see himself as different from other men?

## “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”

by Thomas Gray, pages 19-22

### Vocabulary

**knell** – to summon

**droning** – boring

**hamlet** – home

**clarion** – a medieval trumpet

**ply** – carry out

**lisp** – a speech impediment, slurred speech

**glebe** – soil

**jocund** – lighthearted

**disdainful** – scornful

**annals** – history books

**impute** – to assign to, credit

**pealing** – ringing

**genial** – friendly

**circumscribed** – confined

**ignoble** – shameful

**sequester** – isolate

**uncouth** – uncivilized

**elegy** – a poem of lament and sorrow

**forlorn** – sad

**dirges** – a funeral hymn

1. At what time of day does the poem take place?
2. To what sense does the second stanza appeal?
3. Yew trees were often planted in cemeteries. What is the "narrow cell" referred to in line 15?
4. What time of day is it in the fifth stanza?

5. To whom is the speaker referring in lines 21-24?
  
6. What is the rhyme of lines 29 and 31 more commonly known as?
  
7. What does the speaker say about the paths of glory in lines 33-36?
  
8. In lines 55-60, to what or whom does the speaker compare a flower in the desert? Does the metaphor succeed? Why or why not?
  
9. Living a simple life has its drawbacks, but doing so also has its positive side. According to lines 65-68, what positive side of living a simple life is pointed out?
  
10. What made the lives to which the speaker refers in lines 73-74 special?
  
11. In line 80, what causes the speaker to sigh?

**“Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes”**

by Thomas Gray, pages 23-24

**Vocabulary**

**azure** – blue

**demurest** – shyest, most reserved

**pensive** – thoughtful

**vies** – wagers

**tyrian** – purple

**presumptuous** – assumptive

**malignant** – evil, harmful

1. To what does the speaker compare a lake?
2. What does the cat look like? What was its name?
3. Who or what is the “Presumptuous Maid” of the poem’s fifth stanza?
4. Who are Tom and Susan?
5. What poetic device is exemplified by the phrases “heedless hearts” and “glisters, gold”?
6. At first, Gray makes the reader believe that this poem is simply about the death of a cat. The last stanza, however, proves otherwise. How does the last stanza change the purpose of this poem?

**“The Lamb”**

by William Blake, page 24

**Vocabulary**

**vales** – valleys

1. In the first two lines of this poem, Blake repeats the phrase, “who made thee?” What is this kind of repetition of a short phrase in poetry called?
2. What is the Lamb a metaphor of?
3. How, according to the speaker, are the Little Lamb and its creator similar?
4. What type of rhyme scheme is the poem written in?

**“The Sick Rose”**

by William Blake, pages 24-25

**Vocabulary**

**crimson** – deep red

1. A rose is a traditional symbol of love. What may be the poem’s symbolic message or meaning?
2. What is the poem’s rhyme scheme? What does this scheme infer about the poem’s tone?
3. After reading this short work, what do you think author felt when he created it? Use evidence from the text for support.

**“The Tyger”**

by William Blake, page 25

**Vocabulary**

**symmetry** – equality

**sinews** – muscles

1. How do the first two lines (called a couplet) contrast?
2. The fourth stanza compares the creator of the tyger to what/whom?
3. Unlike in his “The Lamb,” Blake’s “The Tyger” offers no answers for the speaker’s questions. What does the lack of responses suggest is the poem’s message about creation?
4. How does the speaker present the tyger, as compared to the lamb in Blake’s other poem?

## **“London”**

by William Blake, pages 25-26

### **Vocabulary**

**manacles** – chains that bind

**hearse** – used to transport a coffin

1. This poem, like “The Lamb” and “The Tyger,” was originally published as part of Blake’s *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. Judging from the poem’s tone and theme, which book do you think “London” was published in?
2. Who does the speaker blame for the pain and strife he hears and sees on London’s streets?
3. What is ironic about the poem’s final image of “the Marriage hearse”?
4. What does the repetition of words throughout the poem do to its message?
5. After reading this poem, how would you describe the speaker’s attitude toward London?

**“To a Mouse”**

by Robert Burns, pages 26-28

**Vocabulary**

**dominion** – ruled-over land

**coulter** – the blade of a plough

1. The poem is written in a distinct voice. What is this non-standard English known as?
2. In the first stanza, the speaker explains why the mouse needs to run. What does the speaker say in the second?
3. One of the most well known clichés comes from Burns’ poem: “The best-laid schemes of mice and men...” What does this phrase refer to in the context of his poem?
4. What is the tone of the poem?
5. According to the speaker, how is the mouse in a better position in life?

**“A Red, Red Rose”**

by Robert Burns, page 28

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. The poem’s first line is an example of what?
2. Identify a hyperbole in the second stanza.
3. Why has the speaker written this poem?

**“Composed upon Westminster Bridge, Sept. 3, 1802”**

by William Wordsworth, page 29

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the rhyme and meter of this poem? What form of poetry do these schemes reveal the poem to be in?
2. Find and record an example of personification from this poem.
3. What does the speaker compare to a garment? Who/What is wearing it?
4. How would you describe the author’s feelings toward the city? Cite evidence from the poem to support your answer.

**“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”**

by William Wordsworth, pages 29-30

**Vocabulary**

**vales** – valleys

**sprightly** – energetically

**jocund** – lighthearted

**pensive** – thoughtful

1. What is the meter of this poem?
2. What does the daffodil symbolize?
3. According to the author, what other “happy” movement of nature did the daffodils “out dance”?
4. The title of the poem is an example of what literary and poetic device?
5. Including the above-mentioned comparison of the speaker, what does the personification of the daffodils, waves, and cloud infer about human nature?

**“The World is Too Much with Us, Late and Soon”**  
by William Wordsworth, page 30

**Vocabulary**

**sordid** – dirty

**boon** – blessing

**forlorn** – sad

**creed** – statement of belief

1. What is the poem’s form and meter?
2. What is the tone of the poem?
3. Line 7 of the poem contains an example of what literary and poetic device?
4. Wordsworth writes that he does not want to become one of these people who do not seem to appreciate the world around them. What does he write he would rather do?
5. After reading this poem in its entirety, put into your own words the message Wordsworth is attempting to convey.

**“Kubla Khan”**

by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, pages 30-32

**Vocabulary**

**sinuous** – twisting

**cedarn** – cedar

**chaffy** – teasingly

**dulcimer** – an hourglass shaped instrument

1. With what meter and rhyme schemes does Coleridge achieve musical and rhythmic sound?
2. How does the fourth stanza differ in content from the poem’s first three stanzas?
3. “Five miles meandering with a mazy motion” is an example of what literary device?
4. According to the introduction to Coleridge’s poetry, what may have aided him in making this poem so fantastical?



**“Abou Ben Adhem”**

by Leigh Hunt, page 32

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the “it” of the poem’s fourth line?
2. In the second line of this poem, the words “deep,” “dream,” and “peace” rhyme. What is the literary term for this repetition of interior vowel sounds within a short section?
3. In your own words, what question does Abou ask the angel in his room?
4. What is the angel’s reply to Abou’s question? How does Abou react?
5. Why do you believe, at the end of this poem, Abou’s name “led all the rest” on the list of those who God had blest? What is Hunt trying to tell his reader by ending his poem this way?

**“Jenny Kiss’d Me”**

by Leigh Hunt, page 33

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Who is the poem addressed to?
2. What does the first line of the poem infer about the relationship between the speaker and Jenny?
3. What do you believe motivated Hunt to write this poem? Do you think there was more than one motivating factor?



## **“The Destruction of Sennacherib”**

by George Gordon, Lord Byron, page 34

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. With garments described as “gleaming in purple and gold,” the “cohorts” are most likely members of what class?
2. What does the speaker use to show the passage of time?
3. In addition to strength, what did the army that won this battle have on its side?
4. What do you think is the purpose of the fourth and fifth stanzas?
5. According to the speaker, who was ultimately responsible for the destruction of Sennacherib?
6. The poet’s mentioning of an Assyrian, the Gentile, Ashur, the temple of Baal, and the Sea of Galilee is an example of what literary device?

**“So We’ll Go No More a Roving”**

by George Gordon, Lord Byron, pages 34-35

**Vocabulary**

**roving** – traveling about in search of adventure

1. Why does the speaker pledge to not go roving during the night?
2. What is the tone of the poem?
3. According to the first stanza, what has stayed the same?
4. The second stanza contrasts with the first, as it describes things that do change. In your own words, what are the things, according to the speaker, that we can expect to change in life?

**“Ozymandias”**

by Percy Bysshe Shelley, page 35

**Vocabulary**

**visage** – countenance

**sneer** – scorn

1. The rhyme and metrical scheme is what poetic form?
2. What is the poem’s subject matter? What is the subject a metaphor of?
3. What remains of the statue? What may Shelley be saying by having such remains?
4. What type of king was Ozymandias?
5. How is irony functioning in this poem?





## **“To a Skylark”**

by Percy Bysshe Shelley, pages 37-40

### **Vocabulary**

**blithe** – happy, carefree

**profuse** – plentiful

**unpremeditated** – spontaneous

**unbidden** – not invited

**aëreal** – airy

**languor** – laziness

1. Why does the skylark exceed the capacity of human language to describe its qualities or the qualities of its song?
2. What is the poem’s meter and rhyme scheme? What does the meter of the fifth lines of each stanza typify?
3. What prevents the speaker (and us) from singing as the skylark does?
4. Four stanzas of this poem begin with the word “Like.” To what does the speaker choose to compare the skylark?
5. Stanzas eighteen, nineteen, and twenty shift focus from the skylark to human weakness. In your own words, describe the human weaknesses the speaker addresses.
6. At the poem's end, does the speaker seem confident that his words can have the same effect on future readers as the bird's pure song has upon him? Why or why not?

## **“Thanatopsis”**

by William Cullen Bryant, pages 40-42

### **Vocabulary**

**blight** – something that impairs one’s growth and deflates one’s spirit

**patriarchs** – males in power

**hoary** – grown gray with age; ancient

**sepulchre** – tomb

**pensive** – thoughtful

**venerable** – honorable; honored

**scourged** – severely punished

1. What does the poem’s title mean?
2. When Bryant writes that Nature “speaks/A various language” and refers to Nature as “she,” what literary device is he using?
3. What, according to the speaker, will make the reader become “a brother to the insensible rock/And to the sluggish clod”?
4. Re-state Bryant’s “All that tread/The globe are but a handful to the tribes/That slumber in its bosom” in simple, modern English.
5. The speaker tells us that we should not be upset if we die alone without friends or family to mourn us. Why, according to the speaker, should we not be troubled if this happens?
6. What does “Thanatopsis” ultimately argue that we should do?



## **“Ode to a Nightingale”**

by John Keats, pages 43-45

### **Vocabulary**

**opiate** – a narcotic

**draught** – a mug-full

**verdurous** – green, forest-like

**requiem** – song of sorrow and remembrance

**plaintive** – mournful

1. To who or what is the speaker addressing in the poem?
2. In the third stanza, the speaker announces, “Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies.” What other poet presented in this anthology shares the speaker’s idea that youth and innocence dies with age and experience?
3. How will the poet follow the nightingale, according to the fourth stanza?
4. In Stanza VII, find and record an example of an allusion.
5. How does the speaker react to the bird’s flight at the end of the poem?
6. How does the tone of this poem differ from the tone found in Percy Bysshe Shelley’s “To A Skylark?”

**“Ode on a Grecian Urn”**

by John Keats, pages 45-46

**Vocabulary**

**citadel** – fortress

**dales** – vales

**timbrels** – small hand drums

**pious** – devout

**brede** – embroidery

1. The poem opens with a series of comparisons between the urn and random types of people. The comparison between the non-living urn and the very much alive people is known as what?
2. What is the first picture that the speaker sees on the urn?
3. Why are the melodies played by the piper in the urn’s second picture superior to those played by actual, living pipers?
4. Why, according to the speaker, will the town of the fourth stanza be silent “evermore”?
5. How does the speaker engage, interact, or react to each picture on the urn? Do his responses change? Why?
6. Who speaks the poem’s final line, “that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know”?

**“La Belle Dame sans Merci”**

by John Keats, pages 47-48

**Vocabulary**

**loitering** – hanging around

**haggard** – worn, fatigued

**meads** – meadows

**manna** – allusion to biblical food, made from the sap of trees and plants

**sojourn** – break, vacation

1. What point of view is the poem written in? Who is its speaker(s)?
2. In the second stanza, what does the speaker say are reasons for the knight-at-arms to not “ail”?
3. Why does the lady weep and sigh in the poem’s eighth stanza?
4. How does the French title translate into English?
5. What does the speaker’s dream suggest about the woman whom he has fallen in love with?
6. Why do you believe the knight-at-arms is so sad?
7. Explain the significance in the speaker’s choice of words in the final stanza, especially “sojourn” and “palely.”

**“When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be”**

by John Keats, page 48

**Vocabulary**

**glean’d** – gathered

**teeming** – crowded

1. What type of sonnet is this poem an example of?
2. What is the tone of the poem?
3. Find and identify a simile in the first five lines of this poem.
4. Find and identify an example of personification in the first five lines of this poem.
5. What theme in this poem seems to echo a theme found in John Keats’ “La Belle Dame Sans Merci?”

**“Hymn: Sung at the Completion of the Concord Monument”**  
by Ralph Waldo Emerson, page 49

**Vocabulary**

**votive** – given as the mark of a vow or pledge

**sires** – fathers

1. What has happened to the “rude bridge”?
2. What does the speaker ultimately ask the “Spirit” to do?
3. “Occasional poems” are poems written to be read on a specific occasion, much as speeches are written. What occasion was “Concord Hymn” written to mark?

**“Sonnet XLIII”**

by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, pages 49-50

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the tone of the poem?
2. What does the speaker mean when she writes, “by sun and by candle”?
3. Who are the “lost saints”?
4. Why do you believe words like “Being” and “Grace” are capitalized in this poem?
5. According to the final last lines of this poem, how long will the speaker’s love endure?

**“The Village Blacksmith”**

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, pages 50-51

**Vocabulary**

**sinewy** – muscular

**bellows** – wind-tunnels, chimneys

**chaff** – tease

**threshing** – beating

**repose** – sleep

1. How does the speaker feel about the village blacksmith?
2. The third line of second stanza, “His brow is wet with honest sweat,” is an example of what poetic technique?
3. What, according to the speaker, do children love about the blacksmith?
4. In stanzas five and six, what causes the blacksmith to think simultaneously of both his daughter and his wife?
5. What is the lesson taught by the blacksmith?

## “The Children’s Hour”

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, pages 51-52

### Vocabulary

**banditti** – plural of “bandit,” thieves

**moulder** – decay; crumble to dust

1. Describe the speaker of this poem. What is the speaker’s gender? What do you think the speaker’s relation is to Alice, Allegra, and Edith?
2. Find and record an example of half rhyme in the first stanza.
3. The speaker makes a reference to the “Bishop of Bingen,” a figure from outside the poem whom the speaker assumes readers will recognize. What is the literary term for this kind of reference?
4. Rather than saying, “Such an old *person* as I am,” the speaker says, “Such an old moustache as I am.” In using a part (moustache) to stand for a whole (person), what literary device is Longfellow employing?

## **“Barbara Frietchie”**

by John Greenleaf Whittier, pages 53-54

### **Vocabulary**

**famished** – starving, hungry

**fourscore year and ten** – 90 years old

1. The speaker makes references to the “Lee” (Robert E.), a figure from outside the poem whom the speaker assumes readers will recognize. What is the literary term for this kind of reference?
2. The poem is written in rhyming pairs. What is the term for this type of rhyme scheme?
3. What flag does Barbara Frietchie hang in her attic window, that of the Union or the Confederacy?
4. According to the speaker, how old is Barbara Frietchie?
5. How does his encounter with Barbara Frietchie change Stonewall Jackson?
6. In your own words, explain the last couplet of this poem. What does this play on words really mean?











**“The Chambered Nautilus”**

by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., pages 60-61

**Vocabulary**

**gauze** – sewn cloth

**irised** – eye-like

1. Rather than describe them as sails, Holmes writes, “webs of living gauze.” In what ways are the sails of a ship “living gauze”?
2. The use of “dim dreaming...dwell” is an example of what literary device?
3. The poem’s final stanza reveals a metaphorical message of the poem. What is the chambered nautilus a symbol of?
4. What “heavenly message” does the poem’s subject convey to the speaker?

**“The Charge of the Light Brigade”**

by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, pages 62-63

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Why do you suppose Tennyson has repeated canon at the beginning six lines (stanzas three and five)?
2. Find and record an example of an allusion within the first stanza.
3. What is the speaker’s outlook on war?
4. In the poem’s last stanza, the speaker asks, “When can their glory fade?” By writing the poem, Tennyson seems to be trying to ensure that it never does. What is the term for a question asked that is not meant to be answered?









## **“O Captain! My Captain!”**

by Walt Whitman, pages 66-67

### **Vocabulary**

**keel** – the body of a ship

**rack** – in this case, stress or torture

1. Refer to the introduction to Walt Whitman’s poem and explain who the captain is in this poem.
2. In the first stanza, Whitman writes that “the prize we sought is won.” Taking into consideration the period in which this poem was written, what do you think the “prize” is of which Whitman speaks?
3. How does the captain’s death affect the speaker’s experience of the victory?
4. Why do you think Whitman chose to use this form for this poem?
5. What kinds of feelings seem prevalent in this poem? Do contradictory feelings exist here? What are they?

**“A Noiseless Patient Spider”**

by Walt Whitman, page 67

**Vocabulary**

promontory – part of land that projects out, as into water

ductile – in this case, capable of being drawn out into threads

gossamer – delicate; gauzy

1. Why do you think Whitman uses the repetition of “filament, filament, filament” in the fourth line, rather than simply using the plural “filaments”?
2. In what way is the speaker’s soul similar to the spider?
3. Record an instance of apostrophe in the poem.
4. How does the speaker seem to feel about his soul? What emotion is there?
5. What analogy does he make using the spider that is the subject of his title?

## **“Dover Beach”**

by Matthew Arnold, pages 67-68

### **Vocabulary**

**tranquil** – peaceful, calm

**ebb** – description of the coming in of the sea

**cadence** – flow, rhythm

**turbid** – state of turmoil, muddled

**melancholy** – depressed

**certitude** – confidence, certain

**shingle** – pebble beach

1. Who is the speaker of this poem? Who is he talking to? What is their relationship?
2. What is the relationship between the setting in stanza one and the description in stanza two of what Sophocles heard beside another sea?
3. What is the relationship of the first and second stanzas to the "Sea of Faith" described in stanza three?
4. The final stanza offers love as the solution for the problems that the speaker and his lover see in the world around them. Explain the meaning of love and its importance in this poem. Do you agree with Arnold's idea? What does this poem suggest about love and the modern world?
5. The poem's concluding image calls to mind the chaotic night-battle at Epipolae when Athenian warriors, unable to see, killed friend and enemy alike. What, to the speaker, do the waters warn of?

**“Lucifer in Starlight”**

by George Meredith, pages 68-69

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What poetic form does “Lucifer in Starlight” follow?
2. To what does the allusion, “the old revolt from Awe” refer?
3. In your own words, what causes Lucifer “to sink”?
4. The description of the stars as the “brain of heaven” is an example of the employment of what literary device?
5. Who or what makes up the “army of unalterable law”? What is the law?

**“I’m Nobody! Who Are You?”**

by Emily Dickinson, page 69

**Vocabulary**

**bog** – a wet, spongy area of ground, where one is likely to sink, and where frogs live

1. Describe the over-all tone of this poem.
2. What does fame seem to consist of to the speaker?
3. By comparing the announcement or telling of her name to the calls of a frog, what does the speaker infer is the value of it?

**“This is My Letter to the World”**

by Emily Dickinson, page 69

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Explain the meaning of the lines “Her message is committed/To hands I cannot see.” To whose “hands” does the poet refer?
2. To whom did “Nature” tell “news”? What is the news?

**“I heard a Fly Buzz When I Died”**

by Emily Dickinson, page 70

**Vocabulary**

**heaves** – coughs

**interposed** – interrupted

**assignable** – selected, set apart

1. What is the setting of the poem?
2. What is the metrical scheme of the poem?
3. The first stanza of the poem compares the speaker’s room to a storm using what literary device?
4. To what is Dickinson referring to when she writes of “the king” on line seven?
5. In your own words, describe what role the fly plays in the speaker’s death.

**“Because I Could Not Stop for Death”**

by Emily Dickinson, page 70

**Vocabulary**

**syntax** – sentence construction; word order

**recluse** – one who shuns society; one who remains at home

**cornice** – uppermost molding

**surmised** – guessed; began to understand

1. In the way she writes of death in this poem, is Dickinson using simile or personification? Explain your answer.

2. How does Dickinson characterize “Death”? Why do you think it is presented in this way?

3. What is the “house that seemed/A swelling of the ground”?

4. Rewrite the poem’s last stanza in simple prose.



## **“Jabberwocky”**

by Lewis Carroll, pages 71-72

### **Vocabulary**

**bryllyg** – The time of broiling dinner, i.e. the close of the afternoon

**slythy** – smooth and active

**tove** – a species of Badger

**gyre** – to scratch like a dog

**gymble** – to screw out holes in anything

**wabe** – the side of hill

**mimsy** – unhappy

**borogove** – an extinct kind of parrot

**mome** – grave

**rath** – a land turtle

**outgrabe** – squeaked

1. Using the vocabulary above, write out the first stanza of the poem in a more standardized version of English.
2. The poem is an example of nonsense poetry. The term comes from nonce, or a made-up word. Carroll, however, claims that all the words actually have standard English roots. Choose any two of the words above and explain what you believe their English derivatives to be.
3. What is the poetic form of “Jabberwocky”?
4. The poem makes substantial use of alliteration. Find three examples of alliteration.
5. Why do you think this poem ends with the same stanza as it began?
6. Most of the nonsense words in this poem are nouns or adjectives. Why do you think Carroll chose to use nonsense words to replace these parts of speech in his poem?

## **“The Darkling Thrush”**

by Thomas Hardy, pages 72-73

### **Vocabulary**

**coppice** – a thicket of trees or shrubs

**dregs** – remains

**fervourless** – void of emotion

**illimited** – unlimited

1. How do the dominant colors of the poem (black, white, and red) connote death and ghostliness and further indicate the desolation of the speaker and the scene?
2. Which specific words connote both spiritual and physical cold and discomfort?
3. What essential paradox does the flight and the song of the thrush in the midst of a moribund landscape present?
4. How does Hardy establish a sense of time, place, and mood in this poem?
5. The image of “The weakening eye of day,” is a metaphor for what?
6. What surprises the speaker in the middle of this cold winter night?
7. What does the speaker feel might be carried in the tune the thrush sings?

## **“The Windhover”**

by Gerard Manley Hopkins, pages 73-74

### **Vocabulary**

**minion** – subordinate

**dauphin** – prince

**wimpling** – cloth headpiece

**chevalier** – knight

1. Among the poem’s themes is the smooth merging of the windhover with the air. What literary devices does Hopkins employ to have his language appear equally smooth and fluid?
2. “The Windhover” is written with a meter in which the number of accents in a line is counted, but not the number of syllables. What is the term for this type of meter?
3. The poem is a fourteen-line sonnet, consisting of an octave and two tercets. The subject matter of the poem switches after the octave from the windhover to the speaker’s chevalier, a medieval image of Christ on a horse. How are the two subjects linked by the speaker?
4. What is the speaker referring to when he says in line ten, “—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!”?

## **“Pied Beauty”**

by Gerard Manley Hopkins, page 74

### **Vocabulary**

**dappled** – spotted

**brinded** – streaked

**stipple** – to paint, draw

**fickle** – unstable, picky

1. How does this poem attempt to "free" nature from saturation by human consciousness?
2. The poem ends with the line "praise him"—i.e. praise God for the great diversity of things as described in the first ten lines. How is the appreciation of nature's diversity, for Hopkins, a kind of affirmation of God's creative energy?
3. Hopkins was a Jesuit priest, and as such knew the order's motto well: *Ad majorem dei gloriam*, or glory to God in the highest. This motto is briefly mentioned in the poem's lines, "Glory be to God," and "Praise him." What literary and poetic device are these references examples of?
4. How might Hopkins defend his comparison of a chestnut to a piece of coal?
5. You might notice that this poem has a great deal of repetition of consonant sound. What is the term for this technique that Hopkins uses so much? Provide an example.

## **“Requiem”**

by Robert Louis Stevenson, pages 74-75

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Read the introduction to this writer’s life. What is significant about this particular poem?
2. What does the repetition of “glad” and “I” suggest the tone of the poem to be?
3. As the note that precedes the poem explains, Stevenson was an avid world-traveler. What lines of the poem suggest his worldliness?
4. The poem’s final line contains three words that begin with a hard ‘h’ sound: “hunter,” “home,” and “hill.” What is the term used to describe such repetition?
5. What kind of feeling does this poem leave you with after you have read it?

**“To an Athlete Dying Young”**  
by A.E. Housman, pages 75-76

**Vocabulary**

threshold – doorway

rout – to poke

lintel – door frame

1. What is posited as eternal in Housman's poem?
2. The poem's first two stanzas are set in the same place but at two very different times. Why is the athlete being honored in the first and second paragraphs?
3. The image of a wilting laurel wreath in the third stanza is recalled later in the poem's concluding lines. What does the speaker intend for the laurel to symbolize in the two usages?
4. The repetition of the 'o' sound in “hold” and “low” is an example of what literary and poetic device?
5. How does the author feel the young athlete will benefit from dying young? Explain your answer.

## **“Gunga Din”**

by Rudyard Kipling, pages 76-78

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Who is the speaker of the poem?
2. What is Gunga Din’s job? How do the others treat him?
3. Throughout the poem, the speaker employs the use of military terms and regional language. What is the term for such use of non-standard English?
4. What does the speaker mean when he says, on line forty-five, “An’ for all ‘is dirty ‘ide/ ‘E was white, clear white, inside/ When ‘e went to tend the wounded under fire.”
5. In your own words, describe what amazed the speaker about Gunga Din.
6. Why does the speaker retort, “You’re a better man than I am, Gunga Din!” at the poem’s conclusion?
7. What is the tragic end of Gunga Din?

**“Recessional”**

by Rudyard Kipling, pages 78-79

**Vocabulary**

**contrite** – remorseful, apologetic

**pomp** – splendor

1. The poem, an ode, takes the form of a prayer by the speaker. For what is the speaker praying?
2. What is the ancient sacrifice being alluded to in the poem’s second stanza? What is its relationship to the third stanza?
3. Why do you suppose the poem is subtitled, “A Victorian Ode”? Who is the speaker of the Ode and to whom is the ode attributed?
4. The speaker repeatedly ends his stanzas with “Lest we forget – lest we forget.” What do you think he is concerned people will forget?

**“If— ”**

by Rudyard Kipling, pages 79-80

**Vocabulary**

knaves – male servants

sinew – muscle

1. The poem seems to be a long list of ‘ifs’. What is the ‘then’?
2. What, according to the speaker, are the qualities of a Man?
3. Describe in your own words what Kipling meant when he wrote, “If you can dream—and not make dreams your master.”
4. To whom does it seem Kipling wrote this poem?
5. According to the last few lines of this poem, what does the speaker feel is the most important goal in a young boy’s life?

**“The Lake Isle of Innisfree”**

by William Butler Yeats, pages 80-81

**Vocabulary**

**wattles** – twigs, reeds, and branches

**linnet** – a small bird

1. The poem is written in hexameter, with the last line of each stanza in tetrameter. How many syllables are in each of the poem’s lines? What is its rhyme scheme?
2. In the first two poems, Yeats attempts to describe nature through sensory details and imagery. What does the wording of the second stanza, “veils,” “peace,” and “glow,” suggest nature is most like?
3. What could you find if you went to visit Innisfree?
4. How does the speaker personify peace?
5. Describe what you feel the speaker of this poem is trying to say in the last stanza.
6. The poem’s concluding thought, that truth is found in “the deep heart’s core,” is a theme that resonates throughout Yeats’ poetry. What, according to the poem, is the significance of the heart’s core?

**“When You Are Old”**

by William Butler Yeats, page 81

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What does the poem infer about the power of poetry and the written word?
2. The term “glad grace” is an example of what literary device?
3. In what ways is the soul, to the speaker, a “pilgrim”?
4. By having love flee to join the “crowd of stars” overhead, what is the speaker suggesting is its role in life?





## **“Miniver Cheevey”**

by Edwin Arlington Robinson, pages 82-83

### **Vocabulary**

**assailed** – attacked

**albeit** – even though; although

**diction** – choice of words

**incessantly** – without stopping

1. Why does Miniver Cheevey drink and accomplish so little?
2. What does Robinson refer to when he uses the words “iron clothing”?
3. The last two lines of the next-to-last stanza read: “Miniver thought, and thought, and thought, And thought about it.”

What is the effect of the repetition of the phrase “and thought”? Why do you think Robinson did not simply write “Miniver thought about it repeatedly”?

4. What are the possible allusions in Miniver Cheevey’s name?

**“The Road Not Taken”**

by Robert Frost, page 84

**Vocabulary**

**diverged** – went in different directions; forked

**trodden** – stamped down

**hence** – from this time

1. Read the poem carefully, then describe the two roads and explain whether or not they are very different from one another.
2. Was the speaker at all interested in taking the road he did not end up choosing?
3. Why do you think the speaker will be telling this tale “with a sigh” later in life?
4. Why is the poem called “The Road Not Taken” instead of “The Road Less Traveled”?
5. How would you describe the tone of this poem?



## **“Chicago”**

by Carl Sandburg, pages 85-86

### **Vocabulary**

**brawling** – fighting noisily

1. Who or what is the speaker addressing in this poem?
2. How does the speaker handle complaints about the city?
3. Comment briefly on the form of this poem.
4. Earlier in the anthology, we encountered a poet whose long, sweeping lines and celebratory tone clearly seem to have influenced Sandburg. Name the poet.

## **“Fog”**

by Carl Sandburg, page 86

### **Vocabulary**

**haunches** – hips and thighs

1. Is Sandburg’s comparison of the fog to a cat a metaphor or a simile?
2. Why do you think Sandburg chose to leave white space between the first two lines of the poem and the last four?



**“The Red Wheelbarrow”**

by William Carlos Williams, page 87

**Vocabulary**

[none]

1. Although we would call this a free verse poem, each strophe is precisely arranged in the same way as the others. What “form” do the strophes take?
2. Why do you think Williams does not go into greater detail when describing the wheelbarrow and chickens? Why only tell us one thing about them (in this case, their colors)?
3. “Wheelbarrow” is written as one word in the title, but divided in the second strophe. Why does Williams divide it in the body of the poem?
4. What is your interpretation of the poem?

**“The River-Merchant’s Wife: A Letter”**

by Ezra Pound, pages 87-88

**Vocabulary**

**eddies** – currents

1. The first strophe of this poem ends with “Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.” The second begins with “At fourteen I married My Lord you.” Comment on the transition. What has changed about their relationship in addition to their getting married?
2. How do the butterflies “hurt” the river-merchant’s wife?

### **“Poetry”**

by Marianne Moore, pages 88-89

#### **Vocabulary**

**dilate** – grow wider; expand

**derivative** – unoriginal

**insolence** – rudeness; arrogance

1. While Moore does not use meter in this poem, she does impose a strict form on it. How is the form achieved?
2. What, according to the speaker, should ideally be like “imaginary gardens with real toads in them”? Explain the meaning of this phrase.

### **“First Fig”**

by Edna St. Vincent Millay, page 90

#### **Vocabulary**

**renascence** – rebirth

1. Is the candle of the poem literal or figurative? Why do you think the author begins the poem with such a common cliché?
2. Describe the voice and tone of the speaker.
3. What is defended in this poem?

**“Anthem For Doomed Youth”**

by Wilfred Owen, page 90

**Vocabulary**

**orisons** – prayers

**shires** – counties

**pallor** – paleness

**pall** – a cover for a coffin

1. What does the simile, “who die as cattle” suggest about the death of the young soldiers?
2. What literary device is used to create images rather than simply offer descriptions of the weapons of war in the first octet of the poem?
3. Why do you think the speaker employs religious terminology in the first stanza of the poem? What does it say about his view of organized religion and war?
4. How does Owen link the two stanzas of his poem? Why does it break?
5. What do the soldiers receive in lieu of a funeral?
6. What is the term for the repetition of the ‘r’ sound in “rifles’ rapid rattle”?

**“anyone lived in a pretty how town”**  
by e.e. cummings, pages 91-92

**Vocabulary**  
[none]

1. Who is “anyone”? Describe “anyone”’s relations to “noone.”
2. What tense is the poem written in? Does the tense shift at all?
3. What does the rearrangement of the seasons and stellar beings suggest about time?
4. The only two capitalized words of the poem are “Women.” Why do you suppose Cummings capitalizes them?

**“Musee des Beaux Arts”**

by W.H. Auden, page 92

**Vocabulary**

**martyrdom** – suffering of death for one’s beliefs

**forsaken** – renounced

1. What is the poem suggesting about the nature of cruelty?
2. Who in the poem cares about human suffering?
3. What is the theme of the poem? Choose one image from the poem and explain how it reinforces this message.
4. Why do you think the poet chose Peter Bruegel's "Icarus" to illustrate his theme of the world's indifference to human suffering ?
5. Some critics have argued that this poem hints at Auden’s decision to turn back to Christianity. What signs do you find in this poem that signal this may be true?

## **“Do Not Go Gentle Into that Good Night”**

by Dylan Thomas, page 93

### **Vocabulary**

[none]

1. What is the tone of the poem?
2. What is the “dying of the light”?
3. As the note above the poem suggests, it is an example of a villanelle. A villanelle is a poem consisting of 19 lines, but only two rhymes. It also repeats two lines throughout the poem. Why do you think Thomas has chosen to write his poem following the traditional form of a villanelle?
4. According to the first stanza, what does the speaker seem to be asking? Put your response in your own words.
5. What kind of men should rage against the dying of the light? What four types of men does Thomas address?
6. Consider the punctuation used in the first two lines of the poem’s last stanza. What do the caesurae (commas) suggest about the speaker’s feelings toward his father?

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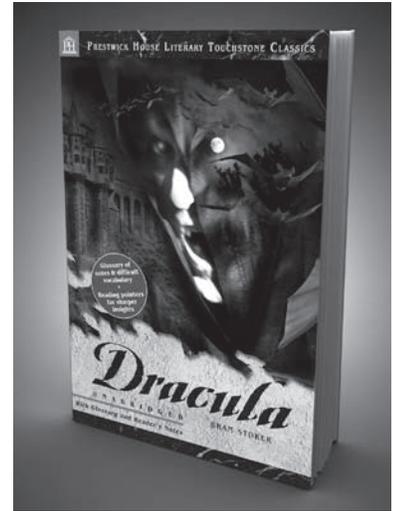
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