

Poetry in Motion

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What is poetry?

- Literary work in which special intensity is given to the expression of feelings and ideas
- To me the only poetry I think of is music because that's the only type I listen to on a daily basis.
- Poetry is very hard to interpret right which is in the way the write wants it to be.

Test taking time!

Do it. (Try to use process of elimination.)

Passage One

6

Identity

Let them be as flowers,
always watered, fed, guarded, admired,
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.

5

I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed,
clinging on cliffs, like an eagle
wind-wavering above high, jagged rocks.

10

To have broken through the surface of stone,
to live, to feel exposed to the madness
of the vast, eternal sky.
To be swayed by the breezes of an ancient sea,
carrying my soul, my seed, beyond the mountains of time
or into the abyss of the bizarre.

15

I'd rather be unseen, and if
then shunned by everyone,
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,
growing in clusters in the fertile valley,
where they're praised, handled, and plucked
by greedy, human hands.

20

I'd rather smell of musty, green stench
than of sweet, fragrant lilac.
If I could stand alone, strong and free,
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed.

"Identity" by Julio Noboa Polanco, from *The Rican, Journal of Contemporary Thought*. Copyright 1973 by Julio Noboa Polanco.

Passage One, #1

- Which idea does the poet most associate with the image of flowers?
- The correct answer is C, conformity.
- A is incorrect because the poet references no sort of competition. B is incorrect because the author gives no evidence of a complicated life. D is incorrect because no confusion is shown. The flowers are described as being comfortable in their boring lives.

#2

- What type of literary device does the first line of the poem contain?
- The correct answer is A, Simile
- B is incorrect because it is comparing two unlike things, but it uses the words like or as. C is incorrect because there is no combining of two unlike things into one thing. D is incorrect because there is no humorous truth that contradicts what is considered common. A is correct, because the literary device shown has the word as in a comparison of two unlike things, therefore making it a simile.

#3

- What does the speaker desire in lines 4-12?
- The correct answer is B, the freedom to live life as he chooses.
- The author says nothing of power or independence through out the poem, which rules out A and D. C can also be eliminated, because any locations he mentions are figurative, as shown be the way they are described.

#4

- Which term or phrase best expresses the meaning of the word seed as used in line 11?
- The correct answer is D, spiritual being.
- This is pretty much explicitly stated, as he says, 'carrying my soul, my **seed**, beyond the mountains of time.' None of the other choices (body, common sense, or scent) are remotely near the idea of his soul.

#5

- What effect does the poet achieve by repeating the phrase "I'd rather"?
- D, reinforcement of the poems theme of personal desire, is the right answer.
- A is not correct because the phrase doesn't contribute with the amount of syllables in each stanza. B is not correct because the poem does not even rhyme. C is not correct because the title just gives off what the author is talking about and doesn't really relate to the phrase.

Passage 2

My Father in the Navy: A Childhood Memory

Stiff and immaculate
in the white cloth of his uniform
and a round cap on his head like a halo,
he was an apparition on leave from a shadow-world
5 and only flesh and blood when he rose from below
the waterline where he kept watch over the engines
and dials making sure the ship parted the waters
on a straight course.

10 Mother, brother and I kept vigil
on the nights and dawns of his arrivals,
watching the corner beyond the neon sign of a quasar
for the flash of white our father like an angel
heralding a new day.

15 His homecomings were the verses
we composed over the years making up
the siren's song that kept him coming back
from the bellies of iron whales
and into our nights
like the evening prayer.

"My Father in the Navy: A Childhood Memory" by Judith Ortiz Cofer, from *Hispanics in the U.S.: An Anthology of Creative Literature*, Vol. 2, 1982.

Passage Two, #6

- Which device or technique used in the poem creates a conversational tone?
- C, free verse, is the right answer.
- A is not correct because using incomplete sentences doesn't show a conversation or a conversational tone in a poem. B is not correct because, while it does use figurative language, it's not used in a way to give off a conversational tone to it. D isn't correct because the poem doesn't use slang.

#7

- Which phrase contains a metaphor?
- The answer is D, coming back/from the bellies of iron whales.
- A is not comparing. B is not comparing. C is a simile. It is D because a metaphor is a comparison not using like or as

#8

- What literary device helps develop a religious theme in the poem?
- The correct answer is B, figurative language.
- The other answers you can find a little in the poem but doesn't relate to a religious theme. This whole poem is basically all figurative language.

#9

- What does the speaker most likely mean by referring to his father as an apparition? (Line 4)
- The correct answer is A, he was like a stranger to his family.
- New lands is used after that so you know by that it can't be frighten and C is just completely wrong.

#10

- Which literary device does the author use in line 3?
- The correct answer is C, Simile.
- That answer is correct because the first line is making a comparison using as.

#11

- As suggested by word choice in lines 4-8, what is the family's relationship with the father?
- The correct answer is A, admiring but distant.
- None of the other answers make sense. Nowhere in the poem doesn't it mention anything resentful, tense or frustrated.

#12

- In mythology, sirens used their voices to lure sailors off course. According to the speaker, what did the family's siren song encourage the father to do?
- The correct answer is D, to return home as often as possible.
- Religion is not touched upon in the poem, so B is incorrect. He did not resign from the military, so C is wrong. And between the two that are left, D is the best choice.

#13

- What phrase is most helpful in creating an adoring tone towards the father?
- The correct answer is A, a round cap on his head like a halo.
- The choice of words gives the father a heavenly quality, while the others are more earthly ideas.

Ask any questions now.