

POEM

BAROLONG SEBONI

ANSWERS:

1. Refer to lines 1 to 2 (“jaggedged words”):
 - a. Identify an example of a metaphor in these lines.
“jaggedged words”.
 - b. Explain how this figure of speech contributes to the message of the poem.
In this metaphor words are compared to sharp, serrated edges of rocks or a knife. In the same way negative words can inflict painful wounds, physically and emotionally
2. Refer to line 3 (“that dig a trench between us”). Discuss the way “these jaggedged words” are personified.
Words are like a person who digs a ditch and creates a dividing line between himself and other people, making communication difficult
3. Refer to line 5 (those epithets”).
 - a. In your own words explain what an “epithet” is.
It is a negative label or hurtful name-calling
 - b. Give an example to illustrate its meaning in the context of the poem.
Examples = idiot, ugly, fat, stupid, useless
4. Refer to lines 6 to 7. A spoke is a sharp object, usually made of steel:
 - a. Explain the simile used in these lines.
Insulting words are compared to sharp spokes from a wheel used as a weapon to stab and kill.
 - b. In which way may “pierce” be seen as an example of personification? What is the effect created?
Personification = words stab, slice, puncture
Strong verbs that indicate force, violence, pain – the effect is that the words are said to be killing the feelings of the person spoken to.
5. Stanza 3 refers to “acidic words” that “corrode”:
 - a. What figurative device is used in these lines?
Metaphor
 - b. Considering the effect of acid, what is the poet’s intention in comparing sarcasm to an erosive substance?
Destructive words erode (“eat”) away at a person’s being, making a person permanently lose hope and their joy for life.
6. Refer to line 11 to 12 (“these cold and icy words tossed to deaden the heart”).
 - a. Do you think the word “tossed” is an effective word to use here? Give a reason for your answer.
Yes, I do. It means to fling something away in a careless way. I think it shows a lack of respect and the intention of hurting my feelings

- b. Explain how disagreements might be referred to as either ‘heated’ or ‘cold and icy’.
Arguments can be heated when people speak/shout hateful words at one another or call them names. This is usually an argument where people say many things. ‘Icy’ disagreements are known for the ‘silent treatment’ or where very few words spoken, and those that are, are full of disdain or contempt.
- c. How do you prefer to settle a disagreement – with a heated argument or with icy, sarcastic words? Give a reason for your answer.
Opinionated answer, but learner must indicate a clear understanding of the terms.
7. Refer to lines 13 to 15:
- a. To what is an opponent compared to in these lines? Provide two CONSECUTIVE words in support of your answer.
An opponent is compared to a venomous snake. ‘serpentine tongue’
- b. Explain the effect of these hurtful words according to line 15.
These words will spread venom/disease (in other words emotional pain) in his heart and life.
8. In Stanza 5, the tone of the poem changes. Discuss how the poet brings about a change in tone.
The lines are shorter with a gentler rhythm; the words used sound more gentle, less harsh, than words used in the previous stanzas. The poet offers a solution; he recommends the use of words which are loving and gentle; he chooses words like ‘lamb’, ‘soft’, ‘woolly’ to emphasise this point.
9. Do you agree with the poet’s belief in stanza 5 that ‘gentler tones’ can overcome ‘venomous words’? Give a reason for your answer.
Yes, I do. After a while it will rub off on the other party. If I keep on responding with kind, gentle words, they will eventually overcome the negativity with a positive attitude.
OR
No, I do not. If hateful and negative words are the only way of communication in a relationship, they will eventually break my spirit.
10. Refer to lines 18 to 19:
- a. Explain the simile used in these lines.
A gentle tone of voice compared to a shy lamb.
- b. Indicate in which way biblical references are used to show the contrast between the poet’s current method of communication and that which he hopes for.
In the previous stanza, a hateful speaker is compared to a serpent, which is a biblical symbol of evil, deceitful, lying. In this stanza, the lamb is vulnerable, a symbol of forgiveness and sacrifice.
11. In lines 20 to 22, the poet uses yet another metaphor (‘woolly words / word to stand strong against.’)
- a. Which two things are being compared in the metaphor?
Kind, gentle words are compared to warm woolly winter jerseys or socks – protection, safety, care.
- b. What does ‘cold-bitterness’ in line 22 refer to?
A harsh world with all its problems and difficulties is compared to bitterly cold winter.

- c. How does the poet use sound to emphasise the meaning of these words?
The alliteration of the w and s sounds makes the sentence compact and emphasises the softness of the words – ‘woolly words’ has a very comforting sound to it – and the strength of the protection that they give
12. In the last stanza the poet further emphasises the ideal way in which words should be communicated. What does he advise?
We should choose our words carefully; words should be meaningful. Even smiles (without words) are preferable as they will give an indication of positive thoughts/ attitudes.
13. Identify the sound device used in the last stanza and explain its effect.
s-alliteration slows the poem down and creates a calm effect – like “shhhh”

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

William Shakespeare

Questions

- 1. What type of poem is this? Supply THREE reasons for your answer.**
A Shakespearean sonnet. It consists of 14 lines; It consists of three quatrains and a rhyming couplet; It is written in iambic pentameter
- 2. What is the central theme of the poem?**
Love
Fading beauty
Time
The eternal nature of poetry
It contrasts the imperfections of a summer's day with the perfections of Shakespeare's friend who has been immortalized in this poem.
- 3. What figure of speech do we find in line 1?**
Rhetorical question
- 4. In which TWO ways is the poet's friend better than a summer's day?**
He is physically more attractive
He is more easy going and gentle.
- 5. What are the literal and the figurative meaning of 'a summer's day'?**
Literal: A beautiful, cloudless and sunny day and ideal weather conditions.
Figurative: When a person is in the prime of his life (the best time in your life).
- 6. Describe all the shortcomings of nature according to the poet.**
Summer has rough winds
The rough winds damage the tender plants
Summer is only a short season
It can become very hot
The beautiful, clear day can be spoiled by clouds obscuring the sun
- 7. What figure of speech do we find in line 3? Which two things are contrasted with each other?**
Antithesis
The strong winds are contrasted with the tender young blossoms
- 8. Quote TWO metaphors in which the sun is personified.**
"The eye of the heaven"

“Gold complexion dimmed”

9. Say briefly what contrast is depicted by the word dimmed.

The contrast of the brightness of the sun with the cloud-covered sun dims everything.

10. In what way is ‘nature’s course’ changing?

The continuous course of nature is the order or progress through successive stages in the life of man and all things in nature. If anything unforeseen happens this course is interrupted.

11. Explain the TWO meanings of the word fair in your own words.

Fair means beautiful

Fair means all forms of beauty

12. For what reason will death not be able to boast about the poet’s friend?

Because he will not fade into the obscurity of death when he dies, his memory will live as long as the poem is read.

13. In what way the friend’ grows to time’? Use your own words.

In times to come he will always be a part of Shakespeare’s poetry.

14. To what does the word this refer in the couplet?

To the lines Shakespeare has written here: this sonnet.

15. In what way will Shakespeare’s poetry live?

Whenever this sonnet is read.

16. How will Shakespeare’s poetry give life to his friend?

Life is given to him by the fact that Shakespeare wrote brilliant poetry that will be everlasting.

17. What word shows that Death is proud? Discuss the personification.

“brag”: Death is personified as a proud person because he defeats everyone.

18. Identify the speaker’s tone in this poem.

Adoration/devotion/affection

19. Do you agree with the speaker’s claim that his beloved is more beautiful than summer? Discuss your view.

Open-ended.

Accept a relevant response which shows an understanding of the following viewpoints, **among others**:

Yes.

- The speaker claims his beloved is not moody/temperamental like the season of summer.
- She is not harsh like the wind that could be destructive in damaging the buds.
- The beloved's beauty does not change unlike the sun which is either too scorching or at times hidden by the clouds.
- Summer is a short period of time; his beloved's beauty, however, is eternal and not even death can affect it as it will be immortalised in the poem.

OR

No.

- His beloved's beauty cannot be compared to a perfect summer's day.
- Summer is regarded by many as being a beautiful season. However, the speaker's perception of his beloved's beauty is personalised and not shared by everybody.
- Just as summer has imperfections (strong winds, hot sun), so too does the speaker's beloved (bad temper, mood swings).
- Everything is subject to the passage of time.

Transforming Moments

By Gcina Mhlope

Questions

1. In the opening paragraph the narrator describes her hair as “dry grass in winter”.
Explain the comparison, and say what it tells us about her self-image.
Dry grass in winter is stiff, lifeless and difficult to control. It shows that she does not like her hair, and her self-image is not strong.
2. What did the narrator do instead of going to the sports fields?
She read all sorts of books, first the prescribed books, and then other books.
3. Do you think this activity contributed to her growth?
Yes, she was always interested in reading, and then started to be a writer.
4. Compare the opening paragraph with the last two paragraphs in order to show how much the narrator has changed.
She has no confidence at the beginning, and does not like who she is, but at the end she has something she can do (she can write poems), and she changes in her feeling about herself. She starts to like who she is, she “fell in love” with herself.
5. What does the cock at the end of the story symbolize?
The cock crows because it is the dawn of a new time of life for her: it symbolizes a new beginning.
6. Refer to the line: “Some girls were forced to be my part-time friends.” Explain what this means.
She was not accepted into their circles. They only came to her for help when tests were to be written or when they needed some assistance with their school work.
7. Refer to the line: “He had chosen an unsuitable girl and has set the whole school on fire.” Identify the TWO figures of speech used in the line and comment on the effectiveness of each.
Hyperbole/metaphor
Hyperbole – It suggests an exaggeration of how quickly the news spread.
Metaphor – It shows the extent to which the gossip spread at school amongst the learners; just like how a fire easily spread when set
8. Why did the narrator think the good-looking boy was crazy?
She was surprised that the most popular and handsome boy at school was in love with her (miss-too-ugly-top of the class). She felt that she wasn't worthy of his love since nobody at school wanted her in their circles

9. Is the narrator justified in wishing to be like Mrs Fikeni?
Yes, because of how young she still was and how important looks were at her age. Mrs. Fikeni represented everything she wanted; her looks, having a loving family and being respected in the community.
 OR
No, because it was vain of her as someone who went to church, she could have known that God created her the way she was and should have accepted and loved herself irrespective of how she looked.
10. Refer to the line: "I felt very much at home." What does this tell us about the treatment that the narrator receives from the Fikeni family?
They had welcomed her warmly and had embraced her. They treated her as part of their family
11. How did the narrator benefit from attending the meeting at the village?
The meeting inspired and motivated her. She was also empowered. She met the praise-poet which meant a true beginning of her transformation. It opened an opportunity for her to fall in love with herself for the first time.
12. Shaking the praise-poet's hand felt like a baptismal to the narrator. Why do you think made her feel like being baptised?
It was like the moment a person is touched by water/moisture as a symbol of promises about the future – the moisture of the praise poet's hand held promise for her future (that she will one day also be like that).
13. Explain the relevance of the title by using examples from the story.
Transforming moments refers to how the author grows/develops as a result of moments in her life.

Examples:

- *Bulelwa becomes her friend and supports her when others tease her;*
- *The boy from PE tells her he loves her and wishes she can love him too;*
- *Joining the church choir lets her feel less rejected/ more accepted;*
- *The minister invites her to go away with his family – her confidence grows as a result of the attention she receives*
- *Hearing the praise poet inspires her and she feels that she can become one too – she adopts a personal vision of herself.*
- *Her feeling of confidence overrides her previously negative attitude.*

14. In the first paragraph the writer says that she was very unsure of herself. Quote four examples from this paragraph to prove this statement.

*"very unsure of myself" "did not do much for my confidence" "I hated myself"
 "...not as nice as other girls"*

15. The school choir simply collected trophies. What does this imply about the choir?
That they were very good and won many competitions.

16. "I was forever buried in my books". Identify the figure of speech used here and explain what it means.
Metaphor - That she was always busy reading. Quiet and still as if she was dead and buried
17. Did the narrator have people she trusted who supported her? Explain your answer.
Yes, the boy from Port Elizabeth enjoyed her company and Father Fikeni was like a mentor to her. Bulelwa as well, Her sister as well.
18. Mention three things the girls did to bully her.
They teased her. They made unkind remarks about her. The girls ignored her, looked the other way when she passed them. They judged their appearance
19. Why did the girl decide to accept the boy's friendship.
She thought he knew what kind of person she was and was still interested in her. She wanted to spite the girls. If she would show her interest in him it would make the other girls jealous.
20. "The winter sun seemed as lazy as we were." Name the figure of speech.
Personification and simile ("as")
21. What is a praise poet?
It is a person, chosen by the tribe, who sings the praises of a chief and his family or about his achievements or about past and present heroes.
22. Discuss how the outing to meet the praise poet changed her entire life.
She now had a purpose in life. She finally finds direction. For the first time she was really happy.
23. What is the setting of this story?
A high school in the Eastern Cape
24. Explain why it may be said that the setting and character of the story makes it a universal story.
Any teenager might identify with the narrator due to her age and the way she was treated. The Eastern Cape setting is not particularly important, but the high school setting is.
25. In spite of being teased by girls in her class, she helps them with work in the dormitory at night. What does this tell the reader about her character?
She is unselfish and willing to share her knowledge and her ability to remember details; she has a mature attitude in that she ignores what the girls say about her, and follows her own mind.

26. The praise poet makes a great impression on the girl. Why is she impressed by him?

She loves the way he uses language; the quality of his voice and his movements captivate her.

27. What was unusual about her deciding to become a praise poet?

It has always been something that a man might do/she would be the first woman praise poet.

28. Which stereotype is challenged in this story? Motivate your answer.

Gender roles and gender stereotypes are challenged, because it indicates the shy, downtrodden narrator's wish to be something usually regarded as a male role

29. Which transforming moment may be regarded as the most important and why?

The praise poet's performance is the greatest of the transforming moments she no longer sees herself as ugly; she realises that her voice sounds special and dignified when she reads her poems aloud; she learns to love herself; she has found a purpose in life.

30. What tone of voice do you think the narrator uses in the first part of the story.

Does it reflect her opinion of herself?

Although she has a low self-opinion and doesn't have much confidence, her tone does not sound like an unhappy or depressed person. She is matter-of-fact, describing the situation from her perspective. She gives the impression that she likes to speak, which later would support her idea of becoming a praise poet.