

## Poem Assignment: Analyzing for Imagery

### 1.

### "There Was a Child Went Forth"

By Walt Whitman

Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.

There was a child went forth every day,  
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became,  
And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part  
of the day,  
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.  
5 The early lilacs became part of this child,  
And grass and white and red morning-glories, and white and  
red clover, and the song of the phoebe-bird,  
And the Third-month lambs and the sow's pink-faint litter, and  
the mare's foal and the cow's calf,  
And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the mire of the  
pond-side,  
10 And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there, and the beautiful curious liquid,  
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads, all became  
part of him.  
The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-month became  
part of him,  
Winter-grain sprouts and those of the light-yellow corn, and the  
esculent roots of the garden,  
And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms and the fruit  
afterwards, and woodberries, and the commonest weeds by  
the road,  
And the old drunkard staggering home from the outhouse of  
the tavern whence he had lately risen,  
15 And the schoolmistress that pass'd on her way to the school,  
And the friendly boys that pass'd, and the quarrelsome boys,  
And the tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls, and the barefoot negro boy  
and girl,  
And all the changes of city and country wherever he went.  
His own parents, he that had father'd him and she that had  
conceiv'd him in her womb and birth'd him,  
20 They gave this child more of themselves than that,  
They gave him afterward every day, they became part of him.  
The mother at home quietly placing the dishes on the supper-  
table,  
The mother with mild words, clean her cap and gown, a  
wholesome odor falling off her person and clothes as she  
walks by,  
25 The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, anger'd, unjust,  
The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty  
lure,  
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture,  
the yearning and swelling heart,  
Affection that will not be gainsay'd, the sense of what is real, the

thought if after all it should prove unreal,  
 The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-time, the  
 curious whether and how,  
 Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and  
 specks?  
 30 Men and women crowding fast in the streets, if they are not  
 flashes and specks what are they?  
 The streets themselves and the facades of houses, and goods in  
 the windows,  
 Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd wharves, the huge crossing at  
 the ferries,  
 The village on the highland seen from afar at sunset, the river  
 between,  
 Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on roofs and gables  
 of white or brown two miles off,  
 35 The schooner near by sleepily dropping down the tide, the little  
 boat slack-tow'd astern,  
 The hurrying, tumbling waves, quick-broken crests, slapping,  
 The strata of color'd clouds, the long bar of maroon-tint away  
 solitary by itself, the spread of purity it lies motionless in,  
 The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance of salt  
 marsh and shore mud,  
 These became part of that child who went forth every day, and  
 who now goes, and will always go forth every day.

### Questions:

1. Describe the image in each of the following groups of lines: 1-13, 14-17, 19-26, 30-34, 35-38.
2. Do these images form a pattern? If so, what is it?
3. How does the imagery serve to unify and connect the poem?
4. Discuss the meaning of lines 19-21. How did the child's parents become "part of him"?
5. What is the poet describing through the use of images in line 37?  
How long is the time span in the poem?

### 2.

#### "Meeting at Night" By Robert Browning

**Annotate the following poem, paying particular attention to the sensory imagery**

1  
 The gray sea and the long black land;  
 And the yellow half-moon large and low;  
 And the startled little waves that leap  
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,  
 As I gain the cove with pushing prow,  
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

2  
 Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;  
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears;  
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch  
 And blue spurt of a lighted match,  
 And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,

Than the two hearts beating each to each!

3.  
“Annabel Lee”  
By Edgar Allan Poe

Read the following two poems by Poe and answer the questions that follow.

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;  
5 And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
    Than to love and be loved by me.  
*I* was a child and *she* was a child,  
    In this kingdom by the sea;  
But we loved with a love that was more than love-  
10 I and my ANNABEL LEE;  
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven  
    Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
    In this kingdom by the sea,  
15 A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling  
    My beautiful ANNABEL LEE;  
So that her highborn kinsmen came  
    And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulcher  
20 In this kingdom by the sea.  
The angels, not half so happy in heaven,  
    Went envying her and me-  
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,  
    In this kingdom by the sea)  
25 That the wind came out of the cloud by night,  
    Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
    Of those who were older than we—  
    Of many far wiser than we--  
30 And neither the angels in heaven above,  
    Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
    Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams  
35 Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;  
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes  
    Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling,—my darling—my life and my bride  
40 In the sepulcher there by the sea.  
    In her tomb by the sounding sea.

**“To Helen”**  
**By Edgar Allan Poe**

Helen, thy beauty is to me  
    Like those Nicean barks of yore,  
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,  
    The weary, wayworn wanderer bore  
5 To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,  
    Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,  
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home  
    To the Glory that was Greece,  
10 And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche  
    How statue-like I see thee stand,  
    The agate lamp within thy hand!  
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which  
15 Are Holy Land!

***Questions***

1. Characterize the descriptions of women in these two poems. How are they alike?
2. The meaning of "To Helen" depends on the classical imagery in which it is expressed. What parallel does Poe draw between Helen and the "Nicean barks" in the first stanza?
3. How does the simile in the previous question serve to describe the poet himself?
4. Find the metaphors in the second and third stanzas of "To Helen." Then, show how they reinforce Poe's theme. What is the theme of this poem?
5. In either poem, find examples of the following types of figurative language:
  - alliteration
  - assonance
  - repetition
6. Find examples of rhyme in both poems. Look especially for end rhyme.