

Session 1, Reading Selection #3

The poem “A Drowsy Day” describes impressions of a rainy day. Read the poem below. Use information from the poem to answer the questions that follow.

A Drowsy Day

The air is dark, the sky is gray,
The misty shadows come and go,
And here within my dusky room
Each chair looks ghostly in the gloom.
5 Outside the rain falls cold and slow—
Half-stinging drops, half-blinding spray.

Each slightest sound is magnified,
For drowsy quiet holds her reign;
The burnt stick in the fireplace breaks,
10 The nodding cat with start awakes,
And then to sleep drops off again,
Unheeding Towser¹ at her side.

I look far out across the lawn,
Where huddled stand the silly sheep;
15 My work lies idle at my hands,
My thoughts fly out like scattered strands
Of thread, and on the verge of sleep—
Still half awake—I dream and yawn.

What spirits rise before my eyes!
20 How various of kind and form!
Sweet memories of days long past,
The dreams of youth that could not last,
Each smiling calm, each raging storm,
That swept across my early skies.

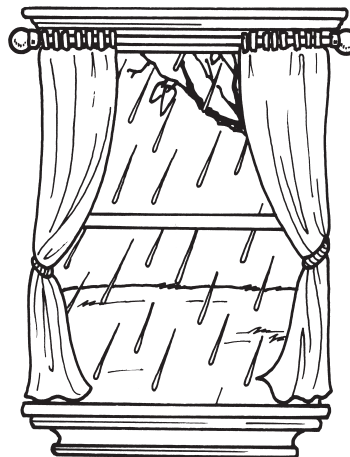
25 Half seen, the bare, gaunt-fingered boughs
Before my window sweep and sway,
And chafe² in tortures of unrest.
My chin sinks down upon my breast;
I cannot work on such a day,
30 But only sit and dream and drowse.

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

¹ *Towser* — traditional name for a dog

² *chafe* — to feel irritated or impatient

Reprinted with the permission of Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division from I GREET THE DAWN Selected, Illustrated, and with an Introduction by Ashley Bryan. Copyright © 1978 Ashley Bryan.



English Language Arts, Grade 7

Session 1, Multiple-Choice Questions

- 14 In stanza 2, the speaker describes what he can
- A. feel.
 - B. taste.
 - C. hear.
 - D. smell.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 14: Literature/Learning Standard 14

- 15 In line 26, “sweep and sway” is an example of
- A. irony.
 - B. alliteration.
 - C. hyperbole.
 - D. symbolism.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 15: Literature/Learning Standard 15

- 16 Stanza 4 provides clues about the speaker’s
- A. cat.
 - B. friends.
 - C. age.
 - D. work.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 16: Literature/Learning Standard 14

- 17 The exclamation points at the end of lines 19 and 20 are meant to express the speaker’s
- A. grief.
 - B. anger.
 - C. curiosity.
 - D. amazement.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 17: Language/Learning Standard 5

English Language Arts, Grade 7

- 18 Lines 23 and 24 let the reader know that during the speaker's youth, he
- A. would daydream frequently.
 - B. experienced good and bad times.
 - C. played outside during storms.
 - D. was happy all of the time.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 18: Literature/Learning Standard 14

English Language Arts, Grade 7

Session 1, Open-Response Question

- 19 In the poem, how does the weather influence the speaker's mood? Use details from the poem to support your answer.

*Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 19: **Literature/Learning Standard 14***