

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

A Real Case

by Sara Holbrook

Doubtful,
I have a fever
or any other measurable symptom.
I'm just down with a sniffly case
5 of sudden-self-loathing-syndrome.

TODAY!
It hit like a thwop of mashed potatoes
snapped against a plate,
An unrequested extra serving
10 of just-for-now-self-hate.

Today, I'm worthless,
a leftover bath,
a wad of second-hand gum.
I belong in a twist-tied bag
15 with the rest of the toys that won't run.

My mood's as welcome as
incoming dog breath,
or a terminal case of split ends.
I sparkle like a dust rag,
20 I could attract mosquitoes—
maybe—not friends.

In fact, I could be contagious!
I'm a downer to say the least.
And if you try to push
25 my mood swing, I'll only drag my feet.

Why? I couldn't tell you.
Just, some days, I get up and get down.
It's not a permanent disability, though.
Tomorrow,
30 I'll come around.

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1. Which lines from the poem best suggest that the speaker's situation is temporary?

- F Doubtful,/I have a fever
- G Tomorrow,/I'll come around.
- H TODAY!/It hit like a thwop of mashed potatoes
- J I could attract mosquitoes—/maybe—not friends.

2. What is the most likely reason that the poet uses capitalization in line 6?

- A To highlight a problem the speaker experiences
- B To stress the speaker's expectations for tomorrow
- C To indicate that the speaker's condition happens unexpectedly
- D To show the speaker's excitement about an upcoming event

3. Read the following lines from the poem.

And if you try to push
my mood swing, I'll only drag my feet.

The poet includes these lines most likely to suggest that the speaker —

- F does not wish to be pushed on a swing
- G wants to deal with the situation alone
- H does not often receive help from others
- J is not physically strong

4. The imagery in lines 16 through 19 helps the reader understand —

- A the shift in the speaker's attitude
- B the speaker's unpleasantness
- C why the speaker has no friends
- D what the speaker thinks of others

5. The poet reveals the speaker's feelings mainly by —
- F using similes and metaphors to describe them
 - G explaining their effect on others
 - H connecting them to memories
 - J repeating specific words for emphasis

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The Storyteller

by Jennifer Hu

The tree in my backyard
Has two hundred rings,
Two hundred years of history,
Hidden behind her bark.

- 5 She was here as a seedling,
A mere child to the rest,
Young and naïve among her dark, old elders.

- But now she is a guardian,
Tall and welcoming,
10 Gathering and shielding the children in her arms.

- She has scarred wood,
With intricate designs carved into her face.
And she changes her clothes each season:
A dress of pink blossoms in the spring,
15 A gown of green leaves in the summer.
Skirts of fiery sanguine hues in autumn,
And a snowy, white robe in winter.

- Her hands intertwine together,
Gnarled fingers twisted into shapes.
20 Her face looks out to the world,
A grandmother to us all.

- She has stood there for so long,
Been here since before I was born,
Saw the flow of the seasons,
25 Heard the drumming of the rain,
Smelled the dew on summer dawns,
And felt the moist soil at her feet.

- The tree in my backyard
Has two hundred years of history.
30 What stories she must tell.

By Jennifer Hu. Reprinted with permission from *Skipping Stones Magazine*, Sept./Oct. 2006.

1. What does the poet suggest about the tree in lines 24 through 30?

- A It is nearing the end of its life.
- B It was in danger one year during a particularly rainy season.
- C It has many descriptions of events carved into its wood.
- D It has witnessed many events through the years.

2. Which lines from the poem suggest that the tree deserves respect?

- F And she changes her clothes each season:
A dress of pink blossoms in the spring,
- G She has scarred wood,
With intricate designs carved into her face.
- H Her face looks out to the world,
A grandmother to us all.
- J Smelled the dew on summer dawns,
And felt the moist soil at her feet.

3. Which word best describes the speaker's attitude toward the tree?

- A Appreciative
 - B Cheerful
 - C Sorrowful
 - D Envious
-

4. In line 16, the word hues means —

- F injuries
 - G plants
 - H expressions
 - J colors
-

5. Why are the first and third lines of the poem echoed in the last stanza?

- A To show how large the tree has grown
- B To highlight that the age of the tree makes it special
- C To remind the reader of the importance of the environment
- D To explain what the speaker enjoys most about the tree's appearance

6. Read lines 5 through 10 from the poem.

She was here as a seedling,
A mere child to the rest,
Young and naïve among her dark, old elders.

But now she is a guardian,
Tall and welcoming,
Gathering and shielding the children in her arms.

The poet uses personification in these lines most likely to show that the tree —

- F protects the other trees
- G provides a warning about approaching danger
- H has become stronger as it has matured
- J prevents smaller plants from having room to grow

Put your answers in the Google form
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