

Cold-Read Task

Read “Identity” by Julio Noboa Polanco. Then answer the questions.

1. Part A

What does the word *harnessed* mean as it is used in the first stanza of the poem?

- a. cherished or treasured
- b. restrained or restricted
- c. freed or liberated
- d. eternal or infinite

Part B

Which phrase from the poem best supports the answer to Part A?

- a. “always watered, fed, admired”
- b. “to a pot of dirt”
- c. “I’d rather be a tall, ugly weed”
- d. “beyond the mountains of time”

2. Read lines 3-4 from stanza two of “Identity.”

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

Part A

How does the author’s use of “an eagle/wind-wavering above the high, jagged rocks” impact the meaning of the poem?

- a. It alludes to the security of staying in place and following the rules.
- b. It emphasizes how high eagles can fly and build their nests.
- c. It creates imagery of the height of the cliffs where the eagle clings.
- d. It contrasts adventurous freedom to controlled safety.

Part B

Which line from “Identity” **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- a. “admired, but harnessed to a pot of dirt”
- b. “to live, to feel exposed to the madness”
- c. “growing in clusters in the fertile valley”
- d. “they’re praised, handled, and plucked”

3. Read lines 7-9 from “Identity.”

To have broken through the surface of stone,/to live, to feel exposed to the madness/of the vast, eternal sky.

Part A

What is implied by the phrase “To have broken through the surface of the stone”?

- a. Becoming a talented and admired sculptor
- b. Breaking the rules at home and school
- c. Independent success through hardship
- d. Failure to succeed and needing help

Part B

What other line in the poem best reflects the same idea?

- a. “I’d rather be unseen, and if”
- b. “by greedy, human hands”
- c. “I’d rather smell of musty, green stench”
- d. “If I could stand alone, strong and free”

4. Read lines 13-14 from “Identify”.

I’d rather be unseen, and if/then shunned by everyone.

Part A

What does the word *shunned* mean in this line?

- a. To leave someone alone by request
- b. To be invisible to others
- c. To purposely reject and avoid
- d. To struggle with fear of crowds

Part B

Which other line implies the same meaning as the lines in Part A?

- a. “Let them be as flowers”
- b. “To have broken through the surface of stone”
- c. “I’d rather smell of musty, green stench”
- d. “than of sweet, fragrant lilac”

5. Part A

How does the speaker feel about “them” and “everyone” from the poem?

- a. fear and paranoia
- b. love and compassion
- c. hatred and loathing
- d. contempt and scorn

Part B

Which lines from the poem best support the answer to Part A?

- a. “always watered, fed, guarded, admired”
- b. “I’d rather be a tall, ugly weed”
- c. “carrying my soul, my seed”
- d. “plucked by greedy, human hands

6. Part A

How does the author’s tone in “Identity” impact the mood of the reader?

- a. Polanco’s serious tone conveys a message of traditional conformity, which gives the reader a feeling of security.
- b. Polanco’s playful tone conveys a message of freedom from stress and care, which gives the reader a feeling of childlike innocence.
- c. Polanco’s angry tone conveys a message of rebellion and anarchy, which gives the reader a feeling of aggression and discontent.
- d. Polanco’s reflective tone conveys a message of thoughtful introspection, which gives the reader a feeling of inspiration and possibilities.

Part B

Which line best support the answer to Part A?

- a. “always watered, fed, guarded, admired”
- b. “than to be a pleasant-smelling flower”
- c. “by greedy, human hands”
- d. “If I could stand alone strong and free”

7. Part A

Why sentence best states the author's purpose in writing "Identity"?

- a. Polanco wrote the poem "Identity" to express hatred for society.
- b. Polanco wrote the poem "Identity" to contrast rural and urban living.
- c. Polanco wrote the poem "Identity" to inspire self-confidence.
- d. Polanco wrote the poem "Identity" to express his love for nature.

Part B

Which lines from the poem best support the answer to Part A?

- a. "always watered, fed, guarded, admired"
- b. "then shunned by everyone"
- c. "growing in clusters in the fertile valley"
- d. "If I could stand alone, strong and free"

8. Part A

How does the author contrast the weed and the flower to convey the central message of "Identity"?

- a. The author uses irony to convey a central message of how life is humorous at the best times. It's funny that people would rather have a plant that needs to be pampered than a plant that needs little attention.
- b. The author uses an extended metaphor to convey a central message of independence and nonconformity. People grow to be stronger and more independent without depending on others for approval and care.
- c. The author uses an entertaining rhythm and rhyme which engages the reader in the central message of the poem. The reader is more engaged with the repetitive lines that describe the weed and the flower.
- d. The author uses personification of the weed and flower to compare the differences among people. It's important for people to respect each other's differences.

Part B

Which lines from the poem best support the answer to Part A?

- a. "I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed" **and** "to have broken through the surface of stone"
- b. "I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed" **and** "to be swayed by the breezes of an ancient sea"
- c. "I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed" **and** "growing in clusters in the fertile valley"
- d. "I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed" **and** "plucked by greedy, human hands"

9. Read these lines from "Identity."

**If I could stand alone, strong and free,
I'd rather be a tall ugly weed."**

In an extended response explain what the speaker means by this statement. Then, explain how this point of view is reflected in *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* and compare and contrast how "Identity" and *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* approach the same theme. Cite textual evidence to support your explanation. Be sure to observe the conventions of standard English.