# Honors English 11
# Summer 2026

Mrs. Weeks

I am excited about the 2026/2027 school year. The goal of Honors English 11 is to prepare you for AP English and college level English classes; as well as to develop an appreciation of literature. You are required to read poems and short stories as well as complete the assignments aligned to the thematic unit **this summer.** Read each short story and answer the margin questions. You should read each poem at least two times. The first read should just be to get the gist or the general understanding. The second read should be for a literal understanding, and when you should answer the margin questions.

The unit is multi-genre and explores the complex relationships between parents and children while emphasizing author's word choice and use of literary devices. These texts and assignments will enhance your understanding of our first major text of the school year, *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls.

Assignments are due by **Monday, August 24**. Late assignments will be accepted for half credit on Tuesday, August 26. I encourage you to wait until mid or late summer to read and complete assignments since you will be working extensively with it during the first quarter of the school year. You are welcome to start earlier if you prefer, but should take detailed notes! You will complete an in-class writing assessment based on the assigned summer readings during the week of August 26. This is a baseline writing assessment that will be used to set your writing goals for the school year.

While I check my email in the summer, it is not daily. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, but please do not wait until the last minute to ask questions.

I am looking forward to an awesome school year! Enjoy your summer while reading some interesting, new texts!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Heather Weeks
Honors English 11
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# "Rules of the Game"

by Amy Tan

[1] I was six when my mother taught me the art of invisible strength. It was a strategy for winning arguments, respect from others, and eventually, though neither of us knew it at the time, chess games.

[2] "Bite back your tongue," scolded my mother when I cried loudly, yanking her hand toward the store that sold bags of salted plums. At home, she said, "Wise guy, he not go against wind. In Chinese we say, Come from South, blow with wind-poom!-North will follow. Strongest wind cannot be seen."

[3] The next week I bit back my tongue as we entered the store with the forbidden candies. When my mother finished her shopping, she quietly plucked a small bag of plums from the rack and put it on the counter with the rest of the items.

[4] My mother imparted her daily truths so she could help my older brothers and me rise above our circumstances. We lived in San Francisco's Chinatown. Like most of the other Chinese children who played in the back alleys of restaurants and curio shops, I didn't think we were poor. My bowl was always full, three five-course meals every day, beginning with a soup of mysterious things I didn't want to know the names of.

[5] We lived on Waverly Place, in a warm, clean, two-bedroom flat that sat above a small Chinese bakery specializing in steamed pastries and dim sum. In the early morning, when the alley was still quiet, I could smell fragrant red beans as they were cooked down to a pasty sweetness. By daybreak, our flat was heavy with the odor of fried sesame balls and sweet curried chicken crescents. From my bed, I would listen as my father got ready for work, then locked the door behind him, one-two-three clicks.

[6] At the end of our two-block alley was a small sandlot playground with swings and slides well-shined down the middle with use. The play area was bordered by wood-slat benches where old-country people sat cracking roasted watermelon seeds with their golden teeth and scattering the husks to an impatient gathering of gurgling pigeons. The best playground, however, was the dark alley itself. It was crammed with daily mysteries and adventures. My brothers and I would peer into the medicinal herb shop, watching old Li dole out onto a stiff sheet of white paper the right amount of insect shells, saffron-colored seeds, and pungent leaves for his ailing customers. It was said that he once cured a woman dying of an ancestral curse that had eluded the best of American doctors. Next to the pharmacy was a printer who specialized in gold-embossed wedding invitations and festive red banners.

[7] Farther down the street was Ping Yuen Fish Market. The front window displayed a tank crowded with doomed fish and turtles struggling to gain footing on the slimy green-tiled sides. A hand-written sign informed tourists, "Within this store, is all for food, not for pet." Inside, the butchers with their bloodstained white smocks deftly gutted the fish while customers cried out their orders

1. **Paragraphs 1-3: Interpret Waverly's mother's advice: "Strongest wind cannot be seen." How does Waverly apply this advice?**

2. **Paragraphs 6-7: Highlight at least 3 descriptions of the alley in Waverly's neighborhood. What mood do these descriptions create?**

and shouted, "Give me your freshest," to which the butchers always protested, "All are freshest." On less crowded market days, we would inspect the crates of live frogs and crabs which we were warned not to poke, boxes of dried cuttlefish, and row upon row of iced prawns, squid, and slippery fish. The sanddabs made me shiver each time; their eyes lay on one flattened side and reminded me of my mother's story of a careless girl who ran into a crowded street and was crushed by a cab. "Was smash flat," reported my mother.

[8] At the corner of the alley was Hong Sing's, a four-table cafe with a recessed stairwell in front that led to a door marked "Tradesmen." My brothers and I believed the bad people emerged from this door at night. Tourists never went to Hong Sing's, since the menu was printed only in Chinese. A Caucasian man with a big camera once posed me and my playmates in front of the restaurant. He had us move to the side of the picture window so the photo would capture the roasted duck with its head dangling from a juice-covered rope. After he took the picture, I told him he should go into Hong Sing's and eat dinner. When he smiled and asked me what they served, I shouted, "Guts and duck's feet and octopus gizzards!" Then I ran off with my friends, shrieking with laughter as we scampered across the alley and hid in the entryway grotto of the China Gem Company, my heart pounding with hope that he would chase us.

[9] My mother named me after the street that we lived on: Waverly Place Jong, my official name for important American documents. But my family called me Meimei, "Little Sister." I was the youngest, the only daughter. Each morning before school, my mother would twist and yank on my thick black hair until she had formed two tightly wound pigtails. One day, as she struggled to weave a hard-toothed comb through my disobedient hair, I had a sly thought.

[10] I asked her, "Ma, what is Chinese torture?" My mother shook her head. A bobby pin was wedged between her lips. She wetted her palm and smoothed the hair above my ear, then pushed the pin in so that it nicked sharply against my scalp.

[11] 'Who say this word?" she asked without a trace of knowing how wicked I was being. I shrugged my shoulders and said, "Some boy in my class said Chinese people do Chinese torture."

[12] "Chinese people do many things," she said simply. "Chinese people do business, do medicine, do painting. Not lazy like American people. We do torture. Best torture."

[13] My older brother Vincent was the one who actually got the chess set. We had gone to the annual Christmas party held at the First Chinese Baptist Church at the end of the alley. The missionary ladies had put together a Santa bag of gifts donated by members of another church. None of the gifts had names on them. There were separate sacks for boys and girls of different ages.

[14] One of the Chinese parishioners had donned a Santa Claus costume and a stiff paper beard with cotton balls glued to it. I think

3. **Paragraphs 9-12: How is Waverly being "wicked" in this interaction with her mother?**

the only children who thought he was the real thing were too young to know that Santa Claus was not Chinese. When my turn came up, the Santa man asked me how old I was. I thought it was a trick question; I was seven according to the American formula and eight by the Chinese calendar. I said I was born on March 17, 1951. That seemed to satisfy him. He then solemnly asked if I had been a very, very good girl this year and did I believe in Jesus Christ and obey my parents. I knew the only answer to that. I nodded back with equal solemnity.

[15] Having watched the older children opening their gifts, I already knew that the big gifts were not necessarily the nicest ones. One girl my age got a large coloring book of biblical characters, while a less greedy girl who selected a smaller box received a glass vial of lavender toilet water. The sound of the box was also important. A ten-year old boy had chosen a box that jangled when he shook it. It was a tin globe of the world with a slit for inserting money. He must have thought it was full of dimes and nickels, because when he saw that it had just ten pennies, his face fell with such undisguised disappointment that his mother slapped the side of his head and led him out of the church hall, apologizing to the crowd for her son who had such bad manners he couldn't appreciate such a fine gift.

4. **Paragraphs 15-16: What does Waverly's strategy for selecting gifts reveal about her?**

[16] As I peered into the sack, I quickly fingered the remaining presents, testing their weight, imagining what they contained. I chose a heavy, compact one that was wrapped in shiny silver foil and a red satin ribbon. It was a twelve-pack of Life Savers and I spent the rest of the party arranging and rearranging the candy tubes in the order of my favorites. My brother Winston chose wisely as well. His present turned out to be a box of intricate plastic parts; the instructions on the box proclaimed that when they were properly assembled he would have an authentic miniature replica of a World War II submarine.

[17] Vincent got the chess set, which would have been a very decent present to get at a church Christmas party, except it was obviously used and, as we discovered later, it was missing a black pawn and a white knight. My mother graciously thanked the unknown benefactor, saying, "Too good. Cost too much." At which point, an old lady with fine white, wispy hair nodded toward our family and said with a whistling whisper, "Merry, merry Christmas."

[18] When we got home, my mother told Vincent to throw the chess set away. "She not want it. We not want it." she said, tossing her head stiffly to the side with a tight, proud smile. My brothers had deaf ears. They were already lining up the chess pieces and reading from the dog-eared instruction book.

[19] I watched Vincent and Winston play during Christmas week. The chessboard seemed to hold elaborate secrets waiting to be untangled. The chessmen were more powerful than old Li's magic herbs that cured ancestral curses. And my brothers wore such serious faces that I was sure something was at stake that was greater

5. **Paragraph 19: What do Waverly's descriptions of the chess board suggest about her motivations for learning the game?**

than avoiding the tradesmen's door to Hong Sing's.

[20] "Let me! Let me!" I begged between games when one brother or the other would sit back with a deep sigh of relief and victory, the other annoyed, unable to let go of the outcome. Vincent at first refused to let me play, but when I offered my Life Savers as replacements for the buttons that filled in for the missing pieces, he relented. He chose the flavors: wild cherry for the black pawn and peppermint for the white knight. Winner could eat both.

[21] As our mother sprinkled flour and rolled out small doughy circles for the steamed dumplings that would be our dinner that night, Vincent explained the rules, pointing to each piece. "You have sixteen pieces and so do I. One king and queen, two bishops, two knights, two castles, and eight pawns. The pawns can only move forward one step, except on the first move. Then they can move two. But they can only take men by moving crossways like this, except in the beginning, when you can move ahead and take another pawn."

[22] "Why?" I asked as I moved my pawn. "Why can't they move more steps?"

[23] "Because they're pawns," he said.

[24] "But why do they go crossways to take other men? Why aren't there any women and children?"

[25] "Why is the sky blue? Why must you always ask stupid questions?" asked Vincent. "This is a game. These are the rules. I didn't make them up. See. Here in the book." He jabbed a page with a pawn in his hand. "Pawn. P-AW-N. Pawn. Read it yourself."

[26] My mother patted the flour off her hands. "Let me see book," she said quietly. She scanned the pages quickly, not reading the foreign English symbols, seeming to search deliberately for nothing in particular.

[27] "This American rules," she concluded at last. "Every time people come out from foreign country, must know rules. You not know, judge say, Too bad, go back. They not telling you why so you can use their way go forward. They say, Don't know why, you find out yourself. But they knowing all the time. Better you take it, find out why yourself." She tossed her head back with a satisfied smile.

[28] I found out about all the whys later. I read the rules and looked up all the big words in a dictionary. I borrowed books from the Chinatown library. I studied each chess piece, trying to absorb the power each contained. I learned about opening moves and why it's important to control the center early on; the shortest distance between two points is straight down the middle.

[29] I learned about the middle game and why tactics between two adversaries are like clashing ideas; the one who plays better has the clearest plans for both attacking and getting out of traps. I learned why it is essential in the endgame to have foresight, a mathematical understanding of all possible moves, and patience; all weaknesses and advantages become evident to a strong adversary and are obscured to a tiring opponent. I discovered that for the whole game one must gather invisible strengths and see the

6. **Paragraph 27: What is Waverly's mother's attitude toward "American rules?"**

7. **Paragraphs 28-30: What does Waverly learn about the qualities that make someone excel at chess?**

8. **Paragraphs 28-30: Waverly says that chess "is a game of secrets in which one must show and never tell." How is this similar to her mother's advice?**

endgame before the game begins. I also found out why I should never reveal "why" to others. A little knowledge withheld is a great advantage one should store for future use. That is the power of chess. It is a game of secrets in which one must show and never tell.

[30] I loved the secrets I found within the sixty-four black and white squares. I carefully drew a handmade chessboard and pinned it to the wall next to my bed, where I would stare for hours at imaginary battles. Soon I no longer lost any games or Life Savers, but I lost my adversaries. Winston and Vincent decided they were more interested in roaming the streets after school in their Hopalong Cassidy cowboy hats.

[31] On a cold spring afternoon, while walking home from school, I detoured through the playground at the end of our alley. I saw a group of old men, two seated across a folding table playing a game of chess, others smoking pipes, eating peanuts, and watching. I ran home and grabbed Vincent's chess set, which was bound in a cardboard box with rubber bands. I also carefully selected two prized rolls of Life Savers. I came back to the park and approached a man who was observing the game.

**9. Paragraphs 31-35: What do you notice about what all of the names of the strategies or "secrets" have in common?**

[32] "Want to play?" I asked him. His face widened with surprise and he grinned as he looked at the box under my arm.

[33] "Little sister, been a long time since I play with dolls," he said, smiling benevolently. I quickly put the box down next to him on the bench and displayed my retort.

[34] Lau Po, as he allowed me to call him, turned out to be a much better player than my brothers. I lost many games and many Life Savers. But over the weeks, with each diminishing roll of candies, I added new secrets. Lau Po gave me the names. The Double Attack from the East and West Shores. Throwing Stones on the Drowning Man. The Sudden Meeting of the Clan. The Surprise from the Sleeping Guard. The Humble Servant Who Kills the King. Sand in the Eyes of Advancing Forces. A Double Killing Without Blood.

[35] There were also the fine points of chess etiquette. Keep captured men in neat rows, as well-tended prisoners. Never announce "Check" with vanity, lest someone with an unseen sword slit your throat. Never hurl pieces into the sandbox after you have lost a game, because then you must find them again, by yourself, after apologizing to all around you. By the end of the summer, Lau Po had taught me all he knew, and I had become a better chess player.

[36] A small weekend crowd of Chinese people and tourists would gather as I played and defeated my opponents one by one. My mother would join the crowds during these outdoor exhibition games. She sat proudly on the bench, telling my admirers with proper Chinese humility, "Is luck."

**10. Paragraphs 36-39: How does Waverly get her mother's support?**

[37] A man who watched me play in the park suggested that my mother allow me to play in local chess tournaments. My mother smiled graciously, an answer that meant nothing. I desperately

wanted to go, but I bit back my tongue. I knew she would not let me play among strangers. So as we walked home I said in a small voice that I didn't want to play in the local tournament. They would have American rules. If I lost, I would bring shame on my family.

[38] "Is shame you fall down nobody push you," said my mother.

[39] During my first tournament, my mother sat with me in the front row as I waited for my turn. I frequently bounced my legs to unstick them from the cold metal seat of the folding chair. When my name was called, I leapt up. My mother unwrapped something in her lap. It was her chang, a small tablet of red jade which held the sun's fire. "Is luck," she whispered, and tucked it into my dress pocket. I turned to my opponent, a fifteen-year-old boy from Oakland. He looked at me, wrinkling his nose.

[40] As I began to play, the boy disappeared, the color ran out of the room, and I saw only my white pieces and his black ones waiting on the other side. A light wind began blowing past my ears. It whispered secrets only I could hear.

**11. Paragraphs 40-42: Highlight 3 descriptions of wind and what it "says" to Waverly. What does the wind represent?**

[41] "Blow from the South," it murmured. "The wind leaves no trail." I saw a clear path, the traps to avoid. The crowd rustled. "Shhh! Shhh!" said the corners of the room. The wind blew stronger. "Throw sand from the East to distract him." The knight came forward ready for the sacrifice. The wind hissed, louder and louder. "Blow, blow, blow. He cannot see. He is blind now. Make him lean away from the wind so he is easier to knock down."

[42] "Check," I said, as the wind roared with laughter. The wind died down to little puffs, my own breath.

[43] My mother placed my first trophy next to a new plastic chess set that the neighborhood Tao society had given to me. As she wiped each piece with a soft cloth, she said, "Next time win more, lose less."

**12. Paragraphs 43-47: Why can't Waverly "say anything" in response to her mother's criticism?**

[44] "Ma, it's not how many pieces you lose," I said. "Sometimes you need to lose pieces to get ahead."

[45] "Better to lose less, see if you really need."

[46] At the next tournament, I won again, but it was my mother who wore the triumphant grin.

[47] "Lost eight piece this time. Last time was eleven. What I tell you? Better off lose less!" I was annoyed, but I couldn't say anything.

[48] I attended more tournaments, each one farther away from home. I won all games, in all divisions. The Chinese bakery downstairs from our flat displayed my growing collection of trophies in its window, amidst the dust covered cakes that were never picked up. The day after I won an important regional tournament, the window encased a fresh sheet cake with whipped-cream frosting and red script saying "Congratulations, Waverly Jong, Chinatown Chess Champion." Soon after that, a flower shop, headstone engraver, and funeral parlor offered to sponsor me in national tournaments. That's when my mother decided I no longer had to do the dishes. Winston and Vincent had

to do my chores.

[49] "Why does she get to play and we do all the work," complained Vincent.

[50] "Is new American rules," said my mother. "Meimei play, squeeze all her brains out for win chess. You play, worth squeeze towel."

[51] By my ninth birthday, I was a national chess champion. I was still some 429 points away from grand-master status, but I was touted as the Great American Hope, a child prodigy and a girl to boot. They ran a photo of me in Life magazine next to a quote in which Bobby Fischer said, "There will never be a woman grand master." "Your move, Bobby," said the caption.

[52] The day they took the magazine picture I wore neatly plaited braids clipped with plastic barrettes trimmed with rhinestones. I was playing in a large high school auditorium that echoed with phlegmy coughs and the squeaky rubber knobs of chair legs sliding across freshly waxed wooden floors. Seated across from me was an American man, about the same age as Lau Po, maybe fifty. I remember that his sweaty brow seemed to weep at my every move. He wore a dark, malodorous suit. One of his pockets was stuffed with a great white kerchief on which he wiped his palm before sweeping his hand over the chosen chess piece with great flourish.

[53] In my crisp pink-and-white dress with scratchy lace at the neck, one of two my mother had sewn for these special occasions, I would clasp my hands under my chin, the delicate points of my elbows poised lightly on the table in the manner my mother had shown me for posing for the press. I would swing my patent leather shoes back and forth like an impatient child riding on a school bus. Then I would pause, suck in my lips, twirl my chosen piece in midair as if undecided, and then firmly plant it in its new threatening place, with a triumphant smile thrown back at my opponent for good measure.

**13. Paragraph 53:Consider Waverly's description of how she acts in front of her opponent.**
**Why does she "swing her patent leather shoes back and forth like a impatient child riding on a school bus?"**

[54] I no longer played in the alley of Waverly Place. I never visited the playground where the pigeons and old men gathered. I went to school, then directly home to learn new chess secrets, cleverly concealed advantages, more escape routes. [55] But I found it difficult to concentrate at home. My mother had a habit of standing over me while I plotted out my games. I think she thought of herself as my protective ally. Her lips would be sealed tight, and after each move I made, a soft "Hmmmmph" would escape from her nose.

[56] "Ma, I can't practice when you stand there like that," I said one day. She retreated to the kitchen and made loud noises with the pots and pans. When the crashing stopped, I could see out of the corner of my eye that she was standing in the doorway. "Hmmmmph!" Only this one came out of her tight throat.

**14. Paragraphs 55-56: Waverly says of her mother: "I think she thought of herself as my protective ally." How does Waverly view her mother?**

[57] My parents made many concessions to allow me to practice. One time I complained that the bedroom I shared was so noisy that I couldn't think. Thereafter, my brothers slept in a bed in the living

room facing the street. I said I couldn't finish my rice; my head didn't work right when my stomach was too full. I left the table with half finished bowls and nobody complained. But there was one duty I couldn't avoid. I had to accompany my mother on Saturday market days when I had no tournament to play. My mother would proudly walk with me, visiting many shops, buying very little. "This my daughter Wave-ly Jong," she said to whoever looked her way.

[58] One day after we left a shop I said under my breath, "I wish you wouldn't do that, telling everybody I'm your daughter." My mother stopped walking. Crowds of people with heavy bags pushed past us on the sidewalk, bumping into first one shoulder, than another.

[59] "Aii-ya. So shame be with mother?" She grasped my hand even tighter as she glared at me.

[60] I looked down. "It's not that, it's just so obvious. It's just so embarrassing."

[61] "Embarrass you be my daughter?" Her voice was cracking with anger.

[62] "That's not what I meant. That's not what I said."

[63] "What you say?"

[64] I knew it was a mistake to say anything more, but I heard my voice speaking, "Why do you have to use me to show off? If you want to show off, then why don't you learn to play chess?"

[65] My mother's eyes turned into dangerous black slits. She had no words for me, just sharp silence.

[66] I felt the wind rushing around my hot ears. I jerked my hand out of my mother's tight grasp and spun around, knocking into an old woman. Her bag of groceries spilled to the ground.

[67] "Aii-ya! Stupid girl!" my mother and the woman cried. Oranges and tin cans careened down the sidewalk. As my mother stooped to help the old woman pick up the escaping food, I took off.

[68] I raced down the street, dashing between people, not looking back as my mother screamed shrilly, "Meimei! Meimei!" I fled down an alley, past dark, curtained shops and merchants washing the grime off their windows. I sped into the sunlight, into a large street crowded with tourists examining trinkets and souvenirs. I ducked into another dark alley, down another street, up another alley. I ran until it hurt and I realized I had nowhere to go, that I was not running from anything. The alleys contained no escape routes.

[69] My breath came out like angry smoke. It was cold. I sat down on an upturned plastic pail next to a stack of empty boxes, cupping my chin with my hands, thinking hard. I imagined my mother, first walking briskly down one street or another looking for me, then giving up and returning home to await my arrival. After two hours, I stood up on creaking legs and slowly walked home.

[70] The alley was quiet and I could see the yellow lights shining from our flat like two tiger's eyes in the night. I climbed the sixteen steps to the door, advancing quietly up each so as not to make any warning sounds. I turned the knob; the door was locked. I heard a

15. **Paragraphs 58-68: After the argument with her mother, Waverly feels "the wind rushing around her hot ears" and realizes that the alley "contained no escape routes" (paragraphs 66-68). What does this language suggest about the interaction with her mother?**

# "Rules of the Game"

by Amy Tan

chair moving, quick steps, the locks turning-click! click! click!-and then the door opened.

[71] "About time you got home," said Vincent. "Boy, are you in trouble."

[72] He slid back to the dinner table. On a platter were the remains of a large fish, its fleshy head still connected to bones swimming upstream in vain escape. Standing there waiting for my punishment, I heard my mother speak in a dry voice.

[73] "We not concerning this girl. This girl not have concerning for us."

[74] Nobody looked at me. Bone chopsticks clinked against the inside of bowls being emptied into hungry mouths.

[75] I walked into my room, closed the door, and lay down on my bed. The room was dark, the ceiling filled with shadows from the dinnertime lights of neighboring flats.

[76] In my head, I saw a chessboard with sixty-four black and white squares. Opposite me was my opponent, two angry black slits. She wore a triumphant smile. "Strongest wind cannot be seen," she said.

[77] Her black men advanced across the plane, slowly marching to each successive level as a single unit. My white pieces screamed as they scurried and fell off the board one by one. As her men drew closer to my edge, I felt myself growing light. I rose up into the air and flew out the window. Higher and higher, above the alley, over the tops of tiled roofs, where I was gathered up by the wind and pushed up toward the night sky until everything below me disappeared and I was alone.

[78] I closed my eyes and pondered my next move.

16. **Paragraphs 76-78: What does the chess imagery in these paragraphs represent about Waverly's relationship with her mother?**

## *The Possessive*
## by Sharon Olds

**About the text:**
Sharon Olds is an American poet and winner of several major awards, including the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Critics Circle Award. Her poetry is known for its honest and emotional examination of marriage, sexuatlity, and parenthood. In this poem, the speaker reacts to her daughter getting a haircut.

**First Read**

Read the poem for the gist.

[1] My daughter – as if I
[2] owned her – that girl with the
[3] hair wispy as a frayed bellpull

[4] has been to the barber, that knife grinder,
[5] and had the edge of her hair sharpened.

[6] Each strand now cuts
[7] both ways. The blade of new bangs
[8] hangs over her re-brown eyes
[9] like carbon steel.

[10] All the little
[11] spliced ropes are sliced. The curtain of
[12] dark paper-cuts veils the face that
[13] started from next to nothing in my body –

[14] My body. My daughter. I'll have to find
[15] another word. In her bright helmet
[16] she looks at me as if across a
[17] great distance. Distant fires can be
[18] glimpsed in the resin light of her eyes:

[19] the watch fires of an enemy, a while before
[20] the war starts.

**Second Read**

Read the poem for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.

**Lines 1-9**
Highlight the words and phrases related to knives or cutting.

What tone do these words and phrases develop?

**Lines 10-11**
Interpret the figurative meaning of lines 10-11.

**Lines 17-20**
Highlight the words and phrases that describe what the speaker sees when she looks at her daughter.

What similarities do you see among these words and phrases?

***Children***
by Khalil Gibran

**About the text:**
Khalil Gibran (1883-1931) was a Lebanese American poet and visual artist. This poem is an excerpt from The Prophet. His masterpiece, The Prophet (1923), sold millions of copies and made him the best-selling American poet of the twentieth century. In this verse novella, Almustafa, a prophet, is leaving the city where he has lived for many years and returning to his childhood home. The people of the city come to the dock and ask him to share some final wisdom with them before he goes.

**First Read**
Read the poem for the gist.

**Second Read**
Read the poem for literal understanding.
As you read, answer the questions.

[1] And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, 'Speak to us of Children.'
[2] And he said:
[3] Your children are not your children.
[4] They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
[5] They come through you but not from you, [6] And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.

**Lines 3-4**
Rewrite these lines in your own words.

[7] You may give them your love but not your thoughts.
[8] For they have their own thoughts.
[9] You may house their bodies but not their souls,
[10] For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
[11] You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

**Lines 7-11**
What do lines 7, 9, and 11 suggest about the tension in parents' attitudes toward their children?

[12] You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.
[13] The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.
[14] Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;
[15] For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

**Lines 12-15**
Interpret the figurative meaning of line 13.

**"Two Kinds"**

By Amy Tan

[1] My mother believed you could be anything you wanted to be in America. You could open a restaurant. You could work for the government and get good retirement. You could buy a house with almost no money down. You could become rich. You could become instantly famous.

[2] "Of course, you can be a prodigy, too," my mother told me when I was nine. "You can be best anything. What does Auntie Lindo know? Her daughter, she is only best tricky."

[3] America was where all my mother's hopes lay. She had come here in 1949 after losing everything in China: her mother and father, her family home, her first husband, and two daughters, twin baby girls. But she never looked back with regret. There were so many ways for things to get better.

[4] We didn't immediately pick the right kind of prodigy. At first my mother thought I could be a Chinese Shirley Temple. We'd watch Shirley's old movies on 1 TV as though they were training films. My mother would poke my arm and say, "Ni kan — You watch." And I would see Shirley tapping her feet, or singing a sailor song, or pursing her lips into a very round O while saying "Oh, my goodness."

[5] "Ni kan," said my mother as Shirley's eyes flooded with tears. "You already know how. Don't need talent for crying!"

[6] Soon after my mother got this idea about Shirley Temple, she took me to a beauty training school in the Mission District and put me in the hands of a 2 student who could barely hold the scissors without shaking. Instead of getting big fat curls, I emerged with an uneven mass of crinkly black fuzz. My mother dragged me off to the bathroom and tried to wet down my hair.

[7] "You look like Negro Chinese," she lamented, as if I had done this on purpose.

[8] The instructor of the beauty training school had to lop off these soggy clumps to make my hair even again. "Peter Pan is very popular these days" the instructor 3 assured my mother. I now had bad hair the length of a boy's; with straight-across bangs that hung at a slant two inches above my eyebrows. I liked the haircut, and it made me actually look forward to my future fame.

[9] In fact, in the beginning I was just as excited as my mother, maybe even more so. I pictured this prodigy part of me as many different images, trying each one on for size. I was a dainty ballerina girl standing by the curtain, waiting to hear the music that would send me floating on my tiptoes. I was like the Christ

1. **Paragraphs 1-3: How do June's mother's beliefs about America motivate her actions?**

2. **Paragraphs 4-8: What do June's interactions with her mother suggest about their relationship?**

3. **Paragraphs 9-11: June imagines the "prodigy" part of herself in many different ways. What do these thoughts suggest about how June see herself?**

child lifted out of the straw manger, crying with holy indignity. I was Cinderella stepping from her pumpkin carriage with sparkly cartoon music filling the air.

[10] In all of my imaginings I was filled with a sense that I would soon become perfect: My mother and father would adore me. I would be beyond reproach. I would never feel the need to sulk for anything.
[11] But sometimes the prodigy in me became impatient. "If you don't hurry up and get me out of here, I'm disappearing for good," it warned. "And then you'll always be nothing."

[12] Every night after dinner my mother and I would sit at the Formica topped kitchen table. She would present new tests, taking her examples from stories of amazing children that she read in Ripley's Believe It or Not or Good Housekeeping, Reader's Digest, or any of a dozen other magazines she kept in a pile in our bathroom. My mother got these magazines from people whose houses she cleaned. And since she cleaned many houses each week, we had a great assortment. She would look through them all, searching for stories about remarkable children.

[13] The first night she brought out a story about a three-year-old boy who knew the capitals of all the states and even most of the European countries. A teacher was quoted as saying that the little boy could also pronounce the names of the foreign cities correctly.

[14] "What's the capital of Finland?" My mother asked me, looking at the story.

[15] All I knew was the capital of California, because Sacramento was the name of the street we lived on in Chinatown. "Nairobi!" I guessed, saying the most foreign 6 word I could think of. She checked to see if that was possibly one way to pronounce Helsinki before showing me the answer.

[16] The tests got harder — multiplying numbers in my head, finding the queen of hearts in a deck of cards, trying to stand on my head without using my hands, predicting the daily temperatures in Los Angeles, New York, and London.

[17] One night I had to look at a page from the Bible for three minutes and then report everything I could remember. "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance and... that's all I remember, Ma," I said.

[18] And after seeing, once again, my mother's disappointed face, something inside me began to die. I hated the tests, the raised hopes and failed expectations. Before going to bed that

4. **Paragraphs 18-20:**
   **A. Describe how June's image in the mirror transforms.**

night I looked in the mirror above the bathroom sink, and I saw only my face staring back — and understood that it would always be this ordinary face — I began to cry. Such a sad, ugly girl! I made high-pitched noises like a crazed animal, trying to scratch out the face in the mirror.

**B. What does this transformation suggest about how June views her identity now?**

[19] And then I saw what seemed to be the prodigy side of me — because I had never seen that face before. I looked at my reflection, blinking so that I could see more clearly. The girl staring back at me was angry, powerful. This girl and I were the same. I had new thoughts, willful thoughts — or rather, thoughts filled with lots of won'ts. I won't let her change me, I promised myself. I won't be what I'm not.

[20] So now when my mother presented her tests, I performed listlessly, my head propped on one arm. I pretended to be bored. And I was. I got so bored that I started counting the bellows of the foghorns out on the bay while my mother 8 drilled me in other areas. The sound was comforting and reminded me of the cow jumping over the moon. And the next day I played a game with myself, seeing if my mother would give up on me before eight bellows. After a while I usually counted only one, maybe two bellows at most. At last she was beginning to give up hope.

[21] Two or three months went by without any mention of my being a prodigy. And then one day my mother was watching the Ed Sullivan Show on TV. The TV was old and the sound kept shorting out. Every time my mother got halfway up from the sofa to adjust the set, the sound would go back on and Ed would be talking. As soon as she sat down, Ed would go silent again. She got up — the TV broke into loud piano music. She sat down — silence. Up and down, back and forth, quiet and loud. It was like a stiff, embraceless dance between her and the TV set. Finally, she stood by the set with her hand on the sound dial.

[22] She seemed entranced by the music, a little frenzied piano piece with this mesmerizing quality, sort of quick passages and then teasing lilting ones before it returned to the quick playful parts.

[23] "Ni kan," my mother said, calling me over with hurried hand gestures. "Look here."

[24] I could see why my mother was fascinated by the music. It was being pounded out by a little Chinese girl, about nine years old, with a Peter Pan haircut. The girl had the sauciness of Shirley Temple. She was proudly modest, like a proper Chinese Child. And she also did this fancy sweep of a curtsy, so that the fluffy skirt of her white dress cascaded slowly to the floor like the petals of a large carnation.

**"Two Kinds"**
By Amy Tan

[25] In spite of these warning signs, I wasn't worried. Our family had no piano and we couldn't afford to buy one, let alone reams of sheet music and piano lessons. So I could be generous in my comments when my mother badmouthed the little girl on TV.

[26] "Play note right, but doesn't sound good! No singing sound," complained my mother.

[27] "What are you picking on her for?" I said carelessly. "She's pretty good. Maybe she's not the best, but she's trying hard." I knew almost immediately I would be sorry I said that.

[28] "Just like you," she said. "Not the best. Because you not trying." She gave a little huff as she let go of the sound dial and sat down on the sofa.

[29] The little Chinese girl sat down also, to play an encore of "Anitra's Tanz," by Grieg. I remember the song, because later on I had to learn how to play it.

...

[30] Three days after watching the Ed Sullivan Show my mother told me what my schedule would be for piano lessons and piano practice. She had talked to Mr. Chong, who lived on the first floor of our apartment building. Mr. Chong was a retired piano teacher, and my mother had traded housecleaning services for weekly lessons and a piano for me to practice on every day, two hours a day, from four until six.
[31] When my mother told me this, I felt as though I had been sent to hell. I whined, and then kicked my foot a little when I couldn't stand it anymore.

[32] "Why don't you like me the way I am? I'm not a genius! I can't play the piano. And even if I could, I wouldn't go on TV if you paid me a million dollars!" I cried.

[33] My mother slapped me. "Who ask you be genius?" she shouted. "Only ask you be your best. For you sake. You think I want you be genius? Hnnh! What for! Who ask you!"

[34] "So ungrateful," I heard her mutter in Chinese, "If she had as much talent as she has temper, she would be famous now."

[35] Mr. Chong, whom I secretly nicknamed Old Chong, was very strange, always tapping his fingers to the silent music of an invisible orchestra. He looked ancient in my eyes. He had lost most his hair on the top of his head, and he wore thick glasses and had eyes that always looked tired and sleepy. But he must

have been younger than I thought, since he lived with his mother and was not yet married.

[36] I met Old Lady Chong once, and that was enough. She had this peculiar smell, like a baby that had done something in its pants. And her fingers felt like a dead person's, like an old peach I once found in the back of the refrigerator; the skin just slid off the meat when I picked it up.

[37] I soon found out why Old Chong had retired from teaching piano. He was deaf. "Like Beethoven!" he shouted to me: "We're both listening only in our 11 head!" And he would start to conduct his frantic silent sonatas.

[38] Our lessons went like this. He would open the book and point to different things, explaining their purpose: "Key! Treble! Bass! No sharps or flats! So this is C major! Listen now and play after me!"

[39] And then he would play the C scale a few times, a simple chord, and then, as if inspired by an old unreachable itch, he would gradually add more notes and running trills and a pounding bass until the music was really something quite grand.

[40] I would play after him, the simple scale, the simple chord, and then I just played some nonsense that sounded like a cat running up and down on top of garbage cans. Old Chong would smile and applaud and then said, "Very good! But now you must learn to keep time!"

[41] So that's how I discovered that Old Chong's eyes were too slow to keep up with the wrong notes I was playing. He went through the motions in half time. To help me keep rhythm, he stood behind me pushing down on my right shoulder for every beat. He balanced pennies on top of my wrists so I would keep them still as I slowly played scales and arpeggios. He had me curve my hand around an apple to keep that shape when playing chords. He marched stiffly to show me how to make each finger dance up and down, staccato, like an obedient little soldier.

[42] He taught me all these things and that was how I also learned I could be lazy and get away with mistakes, lots of mistakes. If I hit the wrong notes because I hadn't practiced enough, I never corrected myself. I just kept playing in rhythm. And Old Chong kept conducting his own private reverie.

[43] So maybe I never really gave myself a fair chance. I did pick up the basics pretty quickly, and I might have become a good pianist at that young age. But I was so determined not to

5. **Paragraphs 40-43:**
   **A. Highlight three phrases in paragraph 41 that develop the idea that Old Chong is teaching June to be an "obedient little soldier."**

   **B. What is significant about the use of the word "discordant" in paragraph 43?**

try, not to be anybody different, that I learned to play only the most ear-splitting preludes, the most discordant hymns.

[44] Over the next year I practiced like this, dutifully in my own way. And then one day I heard my mother and her friend Lindo Jong both talking in a loud bragging tone of voice so others could hear. It was after church, and I was leaning against a brick wall wearing a dress with stiff white petticoats. Auntie Lindo's daughter, Waverly, who was about my age, was standing farther down the wall about five feet away. We had grown up together and shared all the closeness of two sisters, squabbling over crayons and dolls. In other words, for the most part, we hated each other. I thought she was snotty. Waverly Jong had gained a certain amount of fame as "Chinatown's Littlest Chinese Chess Champion."

[45] "She bring home too many trophy," lamented Auntie Lindo that Sunday. "All day she play chess. All day I have no time do nothing but dust off her winnings." She threw a scolding look at Waverly, who pretended not to see her.

[46] "You lucky you don't have this problem," said Auntie Lindo with a sigh to my mother.

[47] And my mother squared her shoulders and bragged: "Our problem worser than yours. If we ask Jing-mei wash dish, she hear nothing but music. It's like you can't stop this natural talent."

[48] And right then I was determined to put a stop to her foolish pride.

[49] A few weeks later Old Chong and my mother conspired to have me play in a talent show which would be held in the church hall. By then my parents had saved up enough to buy me a secondhand piano, a black Wurlitzer spinet with a scarred bench. It was the showpiece of our living room.

[50] For the talent show I was to play a piece called "Pleading Child," from Schumann's Scenes from Childhood. It was a simple, moody piece that sounded more difficult than it was. I was supposed to memorize the whole thing, playing the repeat parts twice to make the piece sound longer. But I dawdled over it, playing a few bars and then cheating, looking up to see what notes followed. I never really listened to what I was playing. I daydreamed about being somewhere else, about being someone else.

[51] The part I liked to practice best was the fancy curtsy: right foot out, touch the rose on the carpet with a pointed foot, sweep to the side, left leg bends, look up, and smile.

6. **Paragraphs 44-53: How do the details in this section develop the idea of "foolish pride?"**

**"Two Kinds"**
By Amy Tan

[52] My parents invited all the couples from the Joy Luck Club to witness my debut. Auntie Lindo and Uncle Tin were there. Waverly and her two older brothers had also come. The first two rows were filled with children both younger and older than I was. The littlest ones got to go first. They recited simple nursery rhymes, squawked out tunes on miniature violins, twirled hula hoops in pink ballet tutus, and when they bowed or curtsied, the audience would sigh in unison, "Awww," and then clap enthusiastically.

[53] When my turn came, I was very confident. I remember my childish excitement. It was as if I knew, without a doubt, that the prodigy side of me really did exist. I had no fear whatsoever, no nervousness. I remember thinking to myself, This is it! This is it! I looked out over the audience, at my mother's blank face, my father's yawn, Auntie Lindo's stiff-lipped smile, Waverly's sulky expression. I had on a white dress, layered with sheets of lace, and a pink bow in my Peter Pan haircut. As I sat down, I envisioned people jumping to their feet and Ed Sullivan rushing up to introduce me to everyone on TV.

[54] And I started to play. Everything was so beautiful. I was so caught up in how lovely I looked that at first I didn't worry about how I would sound. So it was a surprise to me when I hit the first wrong note and I realized something didn't sound quite right. And then I hit another and another and another followed that. A chill started at the top of my head and began to trickle down. Yet I couldn't stop playing, as though my hands were bewitched. I kept thinking my fingers would adjust themselves back, like a train switching to the right track. I played this strange jumble through two repeats, the sour notes staying with me all the way to the end.

[55] When I stood up, I discovered my legs were shaking. Maybe I had just been nervous, and the audience, like Old Chong, had seen me go through the right motions and had not heard anything wrong at all. I swept my right foot out, went down on my knee, looked up and smiled. The room was quiet, except for Old Chong, who was beaming and shouting, "Bravo! Bravo! Well done!" But then I saw my mother's face, her stricken face. The audience clapped weakly, and as I walked back to my chair, with my whole face quivering as I tried not to cry, I heard a little boy whisper loudly to his mother, "That was awful," and the mother whispered back, "Well, she certainly tried."

[56] And now I realized how many people were in the audience — the whole world, it seemed. I was aware of eyes burning into my back. I felt the shame of my mother and father as they sat stiffly throughout the rest of the show.

**"Two Kinds"**
By Amy Tan

[57] We could have escaped during intermission. Pride and some strange sense of honor must have anchored my parents to their chairs. And so we watched it all. The eighteen-year-old boy with a fake moustache who did a magic show and juggled flaming hoops while riding a unicycle. The breasted girl with white makeup who sang an aria from Madame Butterfly and got an honorable 18 mention. And the eleven-year-old boy who was first prize playing a tricky violin song that sounded like a busy bee.

[58] After the show the Hsus, the Jongs, and the St. Clairs, from the Joy Luck Club, came up to my mother and father.
[59] "Lots of talented kids," Auntie Lindo said vaguely, smiling broadly.

[60] "That was somethin' else," said my father, and I wondered if he was referring to me in a humorous way, or whether he even remembered what I had done.

[61] Waverly looked at me and shrugged her shoulders. "You aren't a genius like me," she said matter-of-factly. And if I hadn't felt so bad, I would have pulled her braids and punched her stomach.

[62] But my mother's expression was what devastated me: a quiet, blank look that said she had lost everything. I felt the same way, and it seemed as if everybody were now coming up, like gawkers at the scene of an accident to see what parts were actually missing. When we got on the bus to go home, my father was humming the busy-bee tune and my mother was silent. I kept thinking she wanted to wait until we got home before shouting at me. But when my father unlocked the door to our apartment, my mother walked in and went up to the back, into the bedroom. No accusations, no blame. And in a way, I felt disappointed. I had been waiting for her to start shouting, so that I could shout back and cry and blame her for all my misery.

[63] I had assumed my talent-show fiasco meant that I would never have to play the piano again. But two days later, after school, my mother came out of the kitchen and saw me watching TV.

[64] "Four clock," she reminded me, as if it were any other day. I was stunned, as though she were asking me to go through the talent-show torture again. I planted myself more squarely in front of the TV.

[65] "Turn off TV," she called from the kitchen five minutes later.

7. **Paragraphs 61-62:**
   **A: Think back to Waverly's successes in "Rules of the Game." How are Waverly and June's attitudes towards success different?**

   **B: Why do both June and her mother feel as though they've "lost everything?"**

**"Two Kinds"**
By Amy Tan

[66] I didn't budge. And then I decided, I didn't have to do what mother said anymore. I wasn't her slave. This wasn't China. I had listened to her before, and look what happened. She was the stupid one.

[67] She came out of the kitchen and stood in the arched entryway of the living room. "Four clock," she said once again, louder.

[68] "I'm not going to play anymore," I said nonchalantly. "Why should I? I'm not a genius."

[69] She walked over and stood in front of the TV. I saw her chest was heaving up and down in an angry way.

[70] "No!" I said, and I now felt stronger, as if my true self had finally emerged. So this was what had been inside me all along.

[71] "No! I won't!" I screamed.

[72] She yanked me by the arm, pulled me off the floor, snapped off the TV. She was frighteningly strong, half pulling, half carrying me toward the piano as I kicked the throw rugs under my feet. She lifted me up and onto the hard bench. I was sobbing by now, looking at her bitterly. Her chest was heaving even more and her mouth was open, smiling crazily as if she were pleased I was crying.

[73] "You want me to be someone that I'm not!" I sobbed. "I'll never be the kind of daughter you want me to be!"

[74] "Only two kinds of daughters," she shouted in Chinese. "Those who are obedient and those who follow their own mind! Only one kind of daughter can live in this house. Obedient daughter!"

[75] "Then I wish I weren't your daughter, I wish you weren't my mother," I shouted. As I said these things I got scared. It felt like worms and toads and slimy things crawling out of my chest, but it also felt good, as if this awful side of me had surfaced, at last.

[76] "Too late to change this," my mother said shrilly.

[77] And I could sense her anger rising to its breaking point. I wanted to see it spill over. And that's when I remembered the babies she had lost in China, the ones we never talked about. "Then I wish I'd never been born!" I shouted. "I wish I were dead! Like them."

8. **Paragraphs 68-78: Through the story, June has always been the second kind of daughter: one who "follows her mind." Do you agree or disagree? Defend your claim with evidence from the text.**

**"Two Kinds"**
By Amy Tan

[78] It was as if I had said magic words. Alakazam! — and her face went blank, her mouth closed, her arms went slack, and she backed out of the room, stunned, as if she were blowing away like a small brown leaf, thin, brittle, lifeless.

...

[79] It was not the only disappointment my mother felt in me. In the years that followed, I failed her so many times, each time asserting my own will, my right to fall short of expectations. I didn't get straight As. I didn't become class president. I didn't get into Stanford. I dropped out of college.

[80] For unlike my mother, I did not believe I could be anything I wanted to be. I could only be me.

[81] And for all those years we never talked about the disaster at the recital or my terrible accusations afterward at the piano bench. All that remained unchecked, like a betrayal that was now unspeakable. So I never found a way to ask her why she had hoped for something so large that failure was inevitable.

[82] And even worse, I never asked her about what frightened me the most: Why had she given up hope?

[83] For after our struggle at the piano, she never mentioned my playing again. The lessons stopped. The lid to the piano was closed, shutting out the dust, my misery, and her dreams.

[84] So she surprised me. A few years ago she offered me the piano, for my thirtieth birthday. I had not played in all those years. I saw the offer as a sign of forgiveness, a tremendous burden removed.

[85] "Are you sure?" I asked shyly. "I mean, won't you and Dad miss it?"

[86] "No, this your piano," she said firmly. "Always your piano. You only one can play."

[87] "Well, I probably can't play anymore," I said. "It's been years."

[88] "You pick up fast," my mother said, as if she knew this was certain. "You have natural talent. You could been genius if you want to."

[89] "No, I couldn't."

[90] "You just not trying," my mother said. And she was neither

9. **Paragraphs 79-83:**
   **A: As an adult, how does June assert her own identity?**

   **B: Based on their interactions, what does the gift of the piano represent for June and her mother?**

angry nor sad. She said it as if announcing a fact that could never be disproved. "Take it," she said.

[91] But I didn't at first. It was enough that she had offered it to me. And after that, every time I saw it in my parents' living room, standing in front of the bay window, it made me feel proud, as if it were a shiny trophy that I had won back.

[92] Last week I sent a tuner over to my parent's apartment and had the piano 20 reconditioned, for purely sentimental reasons. My mother had died a few months before and I had been getting things in order for my father a little bit at a time. I put the jewelry in special silk pouches. The sweaters she had knitted in yellow, pink, bright orange — all colors I hated — I put in moth-proof boxes. I found some old Chinese silk dresses, the kind with little slits up the sides. I rubbed the old silk against my skin, then wrapped them in tissue and decided to take them home with me.

[93] After I had the piano tuned, I opened the lid and touched the keys. It sounded even richer than I remembered. Really, it was a very good piano. Inside the bench were the same exercise notes with handwritten scales, the same secondhand music books with their covers held together with yellow tape.

[94] I opened up the Schumann book to the dark little piece I had played at the recital. It was on the left-hand page, "Pleading Child." It looked more difficult than I remembered. I played a few bars, surprised at how easily the notes came back to me.

[95] And for the first time, or so it seemed, I noticed the piece on the right-hand side. It was called "Perfectly Contented." I tried to play this one as well. It had a lighter melody but with the same flowing rhythm and turned out to be quite easy. "Pleading Child" was shorter but slower; "Perfectly Contented" was longer but faster. And after I had played them both a few times, I realized they were two halves of the same song.

10. **Paragraphs 93-95: What do the songs "Pleading Child" and "Perfectly Contented" symbolize about June's relationship with her mother and her own identity?**

***The Raincoat***
by Ada Limon

**About the text:**
Ada Limón's poem "The Raincoat" is included in her book of poetry, The Carrying. In this poem, she describes her experiences and time spent with her mother.

**First Read**
Read the poem for the gist.

**Second Read**
Read the poem for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.

[1] When the doctor suggested surgery

[2] and a brace for all my youngest years,

[3] my parents scrambled to take me

[4] to massage therapy, deep tissue work,

[5] osteopathy, and soon my crooked spine

[6] unspooled a bit, I could breathe again,

[7] and move more in a body unclouded

[8] by pain. My mom would tell me to sing

[9] songs to her the whole forty-five minute

[10] drive to Middle Two Rock Road and forty-

[11] five minutes back from physical therapy.

[12] She'd say, even my voice sounded unfettered

[13] by my spine afterward. So I sang and sang

[14] because I thought she liked it. I never

[15] asked her what she gave up to drive me,

[16] or how her day was before this chore. Today,

[17] at her age, I was driving myself home from yet

18] another spine appointment, singing along

**Lines 1-8**
Highlight two images that reveal how the speaker is affected by her parents' actions.

**Lines 16-17**
What do these lines reveal about the speaker's point of view in this poem?

***The Raincoat***
by Ada Limon

[19] to some maudlin but solid song on the radio,

[20] and I saw a mom take her raincoat off

[21] and give it to her young daughter when

[22] a storm took over the afternoon. My god,

[23] I thought, my whole life I've been under her

[24] raincoat thinking it was somehow a marvel

[25] that I never got wet.

**Lines 20-25**
What does the raincoat symbolize?

## *Those Winter Sundays*

by Robert Hayden

**About the text:**

Robert Hayden (1913-1980) was an American poet haunted by history. In his quest to describe the Black experience through poetry, Hayden wrote about such historical figures as Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Harriet Tubman, and Cinquez. He also wrote poems about the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and the American slave trade. In this poem, Hayden explores the lingering effects of a more personal history.

**First Read**

Read the poem for the gist.

[1] Sundays too my father got up early

[2] and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,

[3] then with cracked hands that ached

[4] from labor in the weekday weather made

[5] banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

[6] I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.

[7] When the rooms were warm, he'd call,

[8] and slowly I would rise and dress,

[9] fearing the chronic angers of that house,

[10] Speaking indifferently to him,

[11] who had driven out the cold

[12] and polished my good shoes as well.

[13] What did I know, what did I know

[14] of love's austere and lonely offices?

**Second Read**

Read the poem for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.

**Lines 1-9**

A: Highlight 3 descriptions of the father's daily efforts.

B: How does the sentence in line 5 contrast with the rest of the stanza?

**Lines 10-14**

A: How do lines 10-12 develop the contrast introduced in the first stanza?

B: Paraphrase the speaker's final 2 lines.

## *Route 1 North, Philadelphia to Highland Park*

by Hayes Davis

**About the text:**

Hayes Davis is a writer whose first book of poetry, Let Our Eyes Linger, explores themes of family. In the following poem, the speaker reflects on learning how to drive with his dad.

**First Read**

Read the poem for the gist.

[1] Your father has given you the wheel.

[2] The mostly-empty highway offers

[3] your 17-year-old eyes no distractions,

[4] and the Firebird descending the on-ramp is red.

[5] The left turn signal isn't instinctive yet.

[6] Nor is the glance that checks your blind spot

[7] before the lane change. But as you settle

[8] back into the forward focus of highway driving

[9] your father's hand covers your gearshift-perched

[10] right, his mouth curling before opening, "Good job."

[11] He doesn't remind you that sharing the road

[12] with newcomers is less instinctual for you

[13] than your blind-spot check. He is all praise,

[14] and when the therapist asks, ten years later,

[15] what you miss — how you imagined him

[16] feeling when you pictured handing over

[17] the grandchild he will never know — you remember

[18] that he never held praise too tightly, that he

[19] knew confidence as a vested commodity,

[20] its installation as vital as anything fathers give sons.

**Second Read**

Read the poem for literal understanding. As you read, answer the questions.

**Lines 1-7**

To whom is the speaker referring when he says "you" and "your"?

**Lines 13-20**

A.How does the poem shift in these stanzas?

B. Interpret the metaphors in lines 18-19.