



Year 10 Poetry 4: The Mask of Silence

Read the following poem and answer the questions below:

The Mask of Silence

Beneath the sky of darkest night,
A mask is worn, without a word.
It hides the tears, conceals the fright,
A silent scream, never heard.

The mask is strong, it does not break,
Though behind it lies a storm.
A heart that's weary, a soul that aches,
A longing to be warm.

But in the silence of the mask,
There's power, there's control.
A face that never has to ask,
A heart that never shows its toll.

The world sees only what's displayed,
The calm, the peace, the smile.
But hidden deep, a price is paid,
In silence, all the while.

The mask is worn through night and day,
A shield against the pain.
But what's the cost of this display,
What's lost, and what's gained?

For in the quiet of the night,
When the mask is set aside,
The tears fall free, the heart takes flight,
And the soul no longer hides.

Yet when the dawn returns anew,
The mask is placed once more.
A comfort, false, but it will do,
To keep the world from seeing the core.

So wear the mask, but know it well,
It's both a friend and foe.



It keeps you safe, but can compel,
A life lived in shadow.



Multiple Choice Questions

1. What does the mask symbolize in the poem?

- A) Strength
- B) Deception
- C) Protection and concealment
- D) Identity

2. The phrase "A silent scream, never heard" is an example of:

- A) Simile
- B) Hyperbole
- C) Metaphor
- D) Oxymoron

3. What is the tone of the poem?

- A) Hopeful
- B) Melancholic
- C) Angry
- D) Indifferent

4. The use of the word "storm" in the second stanza is an example of which language technique?

- A) Personification
- B) Metaphor
- C) Alliteration
- D) Imagery



5. How does the poet convey the theme of duality in the poem?
- A) Through contrasting imagery of day and night
 - B) By describing different weather patterns
 - C) By discussing the differences between the past and the present
 - D) Through the repetition of the word "mask"
6. The line "A comfort, false, but it will do" suggests what about the mask?
- A) It provides true happiness.
 - B) It offers only temporary relief.
 - C) It completely conceals the person's emotions.
 - D) It is a permanent solution.
7. What is the effect of the poet's use of personification in the poem?
- A) It makes the mask seem like a living being with its own intentions.
 - B) It creates a humorous tone.
 - C) It emphasizes the power of nature.
 - D) It downplays the importance of the mask.
8. Which of the following best describes the poem's structure?
- A) Free verse with irregular stanzas
 - B) Regular quatrains with a consistent rhyme scheme
 - C) A sonnet with an iambic pentameter
 - D) An ode with a celebratory tone



9. What is the significance of the "mask" being both a "friend and foe"?

- A) It highlights the conflicting emotions associated with wearing the mask.
- B) It suggests the mask is unreliable.
- C) It implies the mask is a necessary evil.
- D) It indicates that the mask is worn by others as well.

10. What theme does the poem explore?

- A) The power of nature
- B) The complexity of human emotions
- C) The inevitability of change
- D) The beauty of simplicity



Short Answer Questions

1. How does the poet use imagery to convey the theme of concealment in the poem?

2. Discuss the significance of the "mask" as a metaphor throughout the poem.

3. Analyze the use of the phrase "silent scream" and its impact on the reader.

4. What does the poet suggest about the relationship between the mask and the person wearing it?



5. How does the structure of the poem contribute to its overall meaning?

6. Explain the meaning of the line "A comfort, false, but it will do."

7. What does the poet imply about the cost of wearing the mask?

8. How does the poem's tone shift from the beginning to the end?



9. In what ways does the poet explore the theme of duality in the poem?

10. How does the ending of the poem reinforce its central message?



Answer Key

Multiple Choice Answers:

1. C) Protection and concealment
2. D) Oxymoron
3. B) Melancholic
4. B) Metaphor
5. A) Through contrasting imagery of day and night
6. B) It offers only temporary relief.
7. A) It makes the mask seem like a living being with its own intentions.
8. B) Regular quatrains with a consistent rhyme scheme
9. A) It highlights the conflicting emotions associated with wearing the mask.
10. B) The complexity of human emotions

Short Answer Key:

1. The poet uses imagery such as "the sky of darkest night" and "a silent scream" to evoke a sense of concealment and hidden emotions, reinforcing the theme of how people hide their true feelings behind a façade.
2. The "mask" serves as a metaphor for the emotional barriers people create to protect themselves from pain, but it also represents the isolation and distance that result from hiding one's true self.
3. The use of the phrase "silent scream" creates a powerful oxymoron, conveying the intense yet suppressed emotions that the speaker feels, which resonate deeply with the reader and emphasize the pain of concealment.
4. The poet suggests that the mask serves as both a protection and a burden for the person wearing it, offering temporary safety but also preventing genuine emotional expression and connection.
5. The structure of the poem, with its regular quatrains and consistent rhyme scheme, mirrors the controlled and deliberate act of wearing a mask, contributing to the poem's exploration of concealment and emotional duality.
6. The line "A comfort, false, but it will do" implies that while the mask offers a sense of security, it is ultimately an illusion, providing only temporary relief from emotional pain.
7. The poet implies that the cost of wearing the mask is the loss of authentic emotional expression and connection with others, leading to a life lived in the shadows.
8. The tone of the poem shifts from a focus on the strength and protection offered by the mask at the beginning to a more reflective and melancholic tone by the end, as the speaker acknowledges the emotional toll of wearing the mask.
9. The poet explores the theme of duality by contrasting the public and private selves, the day and night, and the friend and foe aspects of the mask, highlighting the complex nature of human emotions.



10. The ending of the poem reinforces its central message by reminding the reader that while the mask may offer protection, it also compels the wearer to live in emotional isolation, emphasizing the importance of confronting one's true feelings.



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