

# Literary Criticism Invitational B • 2021



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## University Interscholastic League Literary Criticism Contest • Invitational B • 2021

#### Part 1: Knowledge of Literary Terms and of Literary History

- 1. The Japanese three-line poetic form that exhibits in its Western formulation, usually, a count of seventeen syllables across the three lines, the first and third lines having five syllables each, *and* relies on humor or satire to maximize effect is the
  - A) haiku.
  - B) kabuki.
  - C) lai.
  - D) senryu.
  - E) tanka.
- 2. The Canadian poet, novelist, and environmental activist whose dystopian fiction including, especially, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* has assured her international fame is
  - A) Margaret Atwood.
  - B) Nadine Gordimer.
  - C) Ursula Le Guin.
  - D) Doris Lessing.
  - E) Alice Munro.
- 3. Something that is itself and which also stands for something else and that, in a literary sense, combines a literal and sensuous quality with an abstract or suggestive aspect is a(n)
  - A) emblem.
  - B) icon.
  - C) symbol.
  - D) type.
  - E) volta.
- 4. Generally, a patterning of vowel sounds without regard to consonants is called
  - A) assonance.
  - B) balance.
  - C) concordance.
  - D) consonance.
  - E) dissonance.
- 5. A figure of speech in which the literal sense of what is said falls detectably short of the magnitude of what is being talked about is (a/n)
  - A) ambiguity.
  - B) amphiboly.
  - C) demotion.
  - D) litotes.
  - E) understatement.
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- 6. The period in English literary history that reflects the rise of nineteenth-century British imperialism and a growth in British cosmopolitanism, as well as the emergence of the scientific revolution that distinguished nineteenth-century thought, is the
  - A) Modernist Period.
  - B) Neoclassical Period.
  - C) Post-Modernist Period.
  - D) Realistic Period.
  - E) Romantic Period.
- 7. The fourteenth-century English author known as the "father of English literature" who gave us *The Book of the Duchess, The House of Fame*, and *The Canterbury Tales* is
  - A) William Caxton.
  - B) Geoffrey Chaucer.
  - C) Thomas Malory.
  - D) William Shakespeare.
  - E) Thomas Wyatt.
- 8. The movement in literary, graphic, and cinematic art emphasizing the expression of the imagination as realized in dreams and presented without conscious control is
  - A) aestheticism.
  - B) cubism.
  - C) impressionism.
  - D) minimalism.
  - E) surrealism.
- 9. Not a term for a poem so constructed that its printed form suggests its subject matter is
  - A) altar poem.
  - B) *carmen figuratum*.
  - C) concrete poetry.
  - D) figure poem.
  - E) square poem.
- 10. The group of American writers of the 1950s and the 1960s in rebellion against what they conceived of as the failures of American culture is the
  - A) Agrarians.
  - B) Angry Young Men.
  - C) Beat Generation.
  - D) Lollards.
  - E) Muckrakers.

#### 30 items (1 point each)

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- 11. A term derived from the combining of two Greek words meaning 'sharp-dull' that denotes a self-contradictory combination of words or smaller verbal units is
  - A) hyperbole.
  - B) litotes.
  - C) mimesis.
  - D) oxymoron.
  - E) paradox.
- 12. The figure of speech that endows animals, ideas, abstractions, and inanimate objects with human form, and often with human personalities and human emotions is
  - A) affective fallacy.
  - B) allegory.
  - C) humanism.
  - D) pathetic fallacy.
  - E) personification.
- 13. Poet Laureate of Virginia (2004-2006), US Poet Laureate (1993-1995), and recipient of the 1987 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for her poetic chronology Thomas and Beulah is
  - A) Rita Dove.
  - B) Louise Glück.
  - C) Lisel Mueller.
  - D) Mary Oliver.
  - E) Mona Van Duyn.
- 14. Not among the many terms describing complimentary repetition of sounds in end rhyme without an exact correspondence is
  - A) assonant rhyme.
  - B) broken rhyme.
  - C) consonant rhyme.
  - D) near rhyme.
  - E) slant rhyme.
- 15. The Canadian short story writer, regarded by many as "Canada's Chekhov," who was awarded the 2013 Nobel Prize for Literature for her contribution to the development of the genre and for being a "master of the contemporary short story" is
  - A) Alice Munro.
  - B) Heather O'Neill.
  - C) Gabrielle Roy.
  - D) Carol Shields.
  - E) Catharine Parr Traill.

- 16. One of Kenneth Burke's four master tropes, the figure of speech that substitutes the name of an object closely associated with a word for the word itself is
  - A) metonymy.
  - B) paradox.
  - C) reification.
  - D) synecdoche.
  - E) zeugma.
- 17. The term used to designate the types or categories into which literary works are grouped according to form, technique, or, sometimes, subject matter is
  - A) abridgment.
  - B) genre.
  - C) philology.
  - D) synopsis.
  - E) typology.
- 18. The recipient of the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for her coming-of-age novel The Goldfinch, which was on the New York Times bestseller list for thirty weeks, is
  - A) Annie Proulx.
  - B) Marilynne Robinson.
  - C) Donna Tartt.
  - D) Anne Tyler.
  - E) Alice Walker.
- 19. The carrying over of grammatical structure from one line to the next within a stanza of verse constitutes (a/n)
  - A) boustrophedon.
  - B) end-stopped line.
  - C) metalepsis.
  - D) run-on line.
  - E) tagline.
- 20. The logical turn in thought-from question to answer, problem to solution-that occurs at the beginning of the sestet in the Italian sonnet, and sometimes between lines twelve and thirteen in the Shakespearean sonnet, is called (the)
  - A) climax.
  - B) modulation.
  - C) mythopoeia.
  - D) peripeteia.
  - E) volta.

#### 21. The term that, from the very late nineteenth through the twenty-first century, has denoted the various newspapers and magazines specializing in scandalmongering, sensation, and crude exaggeration instead of legitimate, well-researched news is

A) affective fallacy.

- B) intentional fallacy.
- C) metafiction.
- D) pathetic fallacy.
- E) yellow journalism.
- 22. Not among the many prose works by the twentieth-century Southern Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, essayist, poet, and screenplay writer William Faulkner is
  - A) An American Tragedy.
  - B) As I Lay Dying.
  - C) Light in August.
  - D) The Sound and the Fury.
  - E) *These 13*.
- 23. An anonymous story that presents supernatural episodes as a means of interpreting natural events is called a(n)
  - A) anecdote.
  - B) legend.
  - C) myth.
  - D) parable.
  - E) saga.
- 24. The term for a novel in which episodic action dominates and plot and character are subordinate to a thrilling event or events is
  - A) novel of character.
  - B) novel of incident.
  - C) novel of manners.
  - D) novel of sensibility.
  - E) novel of the soil.
- 25. Classically, the employment of some unexpected and improbable incident to make things turn out right, and currently, any device whereby an author solves a difficult situation by a forced or contrived invention is
  - A) coup de théâtre.
  - B) deus ex machina.
  - C) dolce stil nuovo.
  - D) in medias res.
  - E) scène à faire.

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- 26. A term applied in general to things English and in particular to the English royal court during the second quarter of the seventeenth century, a general term that can encompass both Cavalier and Puritan literary expression is
  - A) Augustan.
  - B) Caroline.
  - C) Edwardian.
  - D) Jacobean.
  - E) Victorian.
- 27. The term that means literally a manifestation or showing-forth that designates an event in which the essential nature of something-a person, a situation, an object-is suddenly perceived is (a/an)
  - A) epiphany.
  - B) exposition.
  - C) locus classicus.
  - D) nekuia.
  - E) zeugma.
- 28. The nineteenth-century British author of Oliver Twist, A Christmas Carol, David Copperfield, Hard Times, and A Tale of Two Cities is
  - A) Charles Dickens.
  - B) Thomas Hardy.
  - C) Robert Louis Stevenson.
  - D) William Makepeace Thackery.
  - E) Anthony Trollope.
- 29. The recipient of the 1955 Pulitzer Prize for Drama (his second Pulitzer) for his Cat on a Hot Tin Roof is
  - A) Edward Albee.
  - B) William Inge.
  - C) David Mamet.
  - D) Thornton Wilder.
  - E) Tennessee Williams.
- 30. The group of American poets who flourished between 1950 and 1970, the members distinguished by urbanity, wit, learning, spontaneity, and exuberance and having an interest in modern painting, French culture, and jazz, is the
  - A) Fireside Poets.
  - B) Hartford Wits.
  - C) Knickerbocker Group.
  - D) Muckrakers.
  - E) New York School.

#### Part 2: The UIL Reading List

#### Items 31-36 are associated with Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman.

#### Items 37-42 are associated with Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness.

#### Items 43-50 are associated with William Wordsworth's poetry (selected).

31. In Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* the second act's accusatory response "I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is" is delivered by

A) Biff to Willy.

- B) Happy to Birnbaum.
- C) Willy to Biff.
- D) Willy to Howard.
- E) Willy to Linda.
- 32. The former employer whom Biff, while discussing their futures with Happy, worries "still thinks that [Biff] stole that carton of basketballs" is
  - A) Red Grange.
  - B) Bill Oliver.
  - C) David Singleman.
  - D) Frank Wagner.
  - E) Howard Wagner.
- 33. In response to Happy's reminder that quarterbacks are "supposed to pass," Biff announces that when he takes off his helmet, it is a signal that he is "breakin' out" and "takin' one play," for
  - A) Happy.
  - B) Jenny.
  - C) Pop.
  - D) Sam.
  - E) Stanley.
- 34. Willy's pointed insult while discussing Willy's having put up a ceiling, "[a] man who can't handle tools is not a man," is directed toward
  - A) Bernard.
  - B) Charley.
  - C) Happy.
  - D) Howard.
  - E) Stanley.
- 35. The respective ages of Willy and Biff are
  - A) sixty and thirty-four.
  - B) sixty-eight and twenty-five.
  - C) sixty-five and twenty-eight.
  - D) thirty-eight and eighteen.
  - E) thirty-nine and nineteen.
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- 36. The explanation Howard offers Willy regarding the unexpected interruption in the recording of his son's recitation of the alphabet, "[t]he maid kicked the plug," points to a significant difference between Howard and Willy in terms of
  - A) age.
  - B) class.
  - C) gender.
  - D) interests.
  - E) marital status.
- 37. In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* Charlie Marlow's actual storytelling takes place on a boat anchored in the
  - A) Atlantic Ocean.
  - B) Congo River.
  - C) Mediterranean Sea.
  - D) Nile River.
  - E) Thames River.
- 38. The enthusiastically recollected "Ah! I'll never, never meet such a man again. You ought to have heard him recite poetry—his own too it was, he told me" is the
  - A) brickmaker's remembering Kurtz.
  - B) chief accountant's remembering Kurtz.
  - C) general manager's remembering Kurtz.
  - D) Intended's remembering Kurtz.
  - E) Russian trader's remembering Kurtz.
- 39. Marlow's recounting, "[t]he grass growing through his ribs was tall enough to hide his bones," describes
  - A) the brickmaker.
  - B) the chief accountant.
  - C) Fresleven.
  - D) the general manager.
  - E) Kurtz.
- 40. The person enthralled "to strange witchcraft" is
  - A) the brickmaker.
  - B) the chief accountant.
  - C) the fireman.
  - D) the general manager.
  - E) the Russian trader.

20 items (2 points each)

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- 41. The painting hanging in the brickmaker's room was painted by
  - A) the brickmaker.
  - B) the chief accountant.
  - C) Fresleven.
  - D) the general manager.
  - E) Kurtz.
- 42. Marlow's recounting to Kurtz's fiancée of Kurtz's last words is best categorized as (a/n)
  - A) confession.
  - B) euphemism.
  - C) indication that Marlow is an unreliable narrator. D) lie.
  - E) romanticizing.

#### Items 43-50 refer to William Wordsworth's

#### She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways

She dwelt among the untrodden ways Beside the springs of Dove. A Maid whom there were none to praise And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone Half hidden from the eye! -Fair as a star, when only one Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know When Lucy ceased to be; But she is in her grave, and, oh, The difference to me!

- 43. The stanza form of William Wordsworth's "She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways" is recognizably one of the several configurations of the
  - A) ballad.
  - B) couplet.
  - C) octave.
  - D) sestet.
  - E) tercet.
- 44. The significant comparison that dominates the second stanza relies on (a/n)
  - A) conceit.
  - B) hyperbole.
  - C) metaphor.
  - D) simile.
  - E) understatement.

- 45. The repetition in close proximity of words that have the same root, as in line 9's unknown and know, is
  - A) anaphora.
  - B) merism.
  - C) pleonasm.
  - D) polyptoton.
  - E) polysyndeton.
- 46. The repetition of a vowel sound, as is found within line 10 (Lucy, ceased, be), is an example of
  - A) assonance.
  - B) consonance.
  - C) dissonance.
  - D) resonance.
  - E) sigmatism.
- 47. The continuation of sense and grammatical construction that occurs between the first stanza and the second stanza is an instance of
  - A) chiasmus. B) enjambment. C) metaplasm. D) transliteration. E) truncation.
- 48. The comparison "A violet by a mossy stone" (line 5) is an example of (a/n)
  - A) conceit.

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- B) hyperbole.
- C) metaphor.
- D) simile.
- E) understatement.
- 49. One of the major thematic concerns of Wordsworth's "She Dwelt among Untrodden Ways" is (t)he
  - A) astronomical comparisons.
  - B) fear of stepping on a dove.
  - C) pastoral exploration.
  - D) possibility of loss.
  - E) study of violaceous botanicals.
- 50. The overall tone of Wordsworth's three-stanza lyric poem is
  - A) apologetic.
  - B) elegiac.
  - C) ironic.
  - D) maniacal.
  - E) romantic.

### Part 3: Ability in Literary Criticism 15 items (2 points each)

#### Items 51-55 refer to Marge Piercy's

#### What's That Smell in the Kitchen?

All over America women are burning dinners. It's lamb chops in Peoria; it's haddock in Providence; it's steak in Chicago; tofu delight in Big Sur; red rice and beans in Dallas. 5 All over America women are burning food they're supposed to bring with calico smile on platters glittering like wax. Anger sputters in her brainpan, confined but spewing out missiles of hot fat. 10 Carbonized despair presses like a clinker from a barbecue against the back of her eyes. If she wants to grill anything, it's her husband over a slow fire If she wants to serve him anything 15 it's a dead rat with a bomb in its belly ticking like the heart of an insomniac. Her life is cooked and digested, nothing but leftovers in Tupperware. Look, she says, once I was roast duck 20 on your platter with parsley but now I am Spam. Burning dinner is not incompetence but war.

- 51. The tone of "What's That Smell in the Kitchen?" is
  - A) compassionately threatening.
  - B) humorously apathetic.
  - C) lovingly hurtful.
  - D) sympathetically wrathful.
  - E) painfully sarcastic.
- 52. The "calico smile" (lines 7-8) suggests that true feelings are being
  - A) burned.
  - B) carbonized.
  - C) hidden.
  - D) melted.
  - E) sewn.
- 53. The simile in lines 16-17, "it's a dead rat with a bomb in its belly / ticking like the heart of an insomniac" is doubly forceful because it suggests that
  - A) insomniacs suffer from food poisoning.
  - B) dead rats are gunpowder flavored.
  - C) the problem is always on women's minds.
  - D) women can serve anything.
  - E) women cannot cook anything.

- 54. Piercy's choice of specific foods (lines 2-5) to represent particular customs and manners is a characteristic of
  - A) cynicism.
  - B) decadence.
  - C) Epicureanism.
  - D) regionalism.
  - E) spatialism.
- 55. Ultimately, both the imagery and diction that characterize Piercy's poem suggest that the burning of food should be understood as a statement of

A) culinary incompetence.

- B) gustatory excess.
- C) marital rebellion.
- D) nutritive nonsense.
- E) servile acceptance.

#### Items 56-60 refer to Robert Browning's

#### Meeting at Night

The grey sea and the long black land; And the yellow half-moon large and low; And the startled little waves that leap 3 In fiery ringlets from their sleep, As I gain the cove with pushing prow, And quench its speed i' the slushy sand. 6

π

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach; Three fields to cross till a farm appears; A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch 9 And blue spurt of a lighted match, And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears, Than the two hearts beating each to each! 12

- 56. The rhyme scheme of Browning's lyric poem is
  - A) aaabcb.
  - B) ababcc.
  - C) abbcba.
  - D) abccba.
  - E) abccda.
- 57. The comparison informing the poem's climax, "a voice less loud [...] / Than the two hearts beating each to each" (lines 11-12), is (a/n)
  - A) conceit.
  - B) litotes.
  - C) metaphor.
  - D) simile.
  - E) understatement.

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- 58. The melopoeic device that contributes to the imagery of lines 9 and 10 is
  - A) assonance.
  - B) onomatopoeia.
  - C) resonance.
  - D) sigmatism.
  - E) syzygy.
- 59. The end rhyme featured in the first stanza's pairing of lines 2 and 5 is an example of
  - A) broken rhyme.
  - B) compound rhyme.
  - C) eye rhyme.
  - D) leonine rhyme.
  - E) perfect rhyme.
- 60. The cutting short of the word *in* in line 6's "i' the slushy sand" in order to accommodate the line's meter is called
  - A) apocope.
  - B) apostrophe.
  - C) metathesis.
  - D) syncope.
  - E) truncation.

#### Items 61-65 refer to Donald Justice's

#### Sonnet: The Poet at Seven

And on the porch, across the upturned chair, The boy would spread a dingy counterpane Against the length and majesty of the rain And on all fours crawl in it like a bear, 4 To lick his wounds in secret, in his lair; And afterward, in the windy yard again, One hand cocked back, release his paper plane, Frail as a mayfly to the faithless air. 8 And summer evenings he would spin around Faster and faster till the drunken ground Rose up to meet him; sometimes he would squat Among the foul weeds of the vacant lot, 12 Waiting for dusk and someone dear to come And whip<sup>\*</sup> him down the street, but gently, home.

\* to move quickly

**Required Tie-Breaking Essay** 

- next page -

- 61. Every line of Donald Justice's "Sonnet: The Poet at Seven" features
  - A) eye end rhyme.
  - B) feminine end rhyme.
  - C) masculine end rhyme.
  - D) perfect end rhyme.
  - E) slant end rhyme.
- 62. The yoking of two objects of different natures with the preposition *for* in line 13 is called
  - A) ambiguity.
  - B) chiasmus.
  - C) metonymy.
  - D) synecdoche.
  - E) zeugma.
- 63. The first two stanzas of the sonnet feature comparisons in which the vehicle suggests vulnerability; the comparisons are
  - A) conceits.
  - B) metaphors.
  - C) paradoxes.
  - D) similes.
  - E) tautologies.
- 64. The repetition of initial sounds that characterizes, for instance, line 8 is called
  - A) alliteration.
  - B) anaphora.
  - C) assonance.
  - D) beginning rhyme.
  - E) euphony.
- 65. Justice's poem focuses on childhood
  - A) insurrection.
  - B) loneliness.
  - C) poverty.
  - D) seven o'clock curfew.
  - E) summer playtime.

**Required Tie-Breaking Essay** 

Note well: Contestants who do not write an essay will be disqualified even if they are not involved in any tie. Any essay that does not demonstrate a sincere effort to discuss the assigned topic will be disqualified. The judge(s) should note carefully this criterion when breaking ties: ranking of essays for tie-breaking purposes should be based primarily on how well the topic has been addressed.

Three sheets of paper have been provided; your written response should reflect the *Handbook*'s notion that an essay is a "moderately brief discussion of a restricted topic": something more than just a few sentences.

Read William Wordsworth's "To Sleep," and discuss the speaker's attitude regarding Sleep, focusing especially on the names that he uses to describe Sleep.

#### **To Sleep**

Fond words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep! And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names; The very sweetest, Fancy<sup>\*</sup> culls or frames, Imagination When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep! 4 Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep<sup>\*</sup> soak, drown In rich reward all suffering; Balm<sup>\*</sup> that tames soothing ointment All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and aims Takest away, and into souls dost creep, 8 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone, I surely not a man ungently made, Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is crost? \* crossed Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown, 12 Mere slave of them who never for thee praved, Still last to come where thou art wanted most!

## do NOT distribute this ${f KEY}$ to students before or during the contest.

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			35.	А	4; 5	
1.	D	438	36.	В	58	Please note that the objective
2.	А	160	37.	Е		scores should not be altered to reflect the breaking of any ties.
3.	С	467	38.	Е	73	Simply adjust ranking.
4.	А	43	39.	С	10	
5.	Е	490	40.	С	41	The thirty items in Part 1
6.	D	400	41.	Е	28	are worth one point each.
7.	В	522	42.	D	89	The twenty items in Part 2
8.	Е	464	43.	Α	49	are worth two points each.
9.	Е	453	44.	D	445	The fifteen items in Part 3 are worth two points each.
10.	С	51	45.	D	372	
11.	D	345	46.	А	43	DO NOT
12.	Е	361	47.	В	174	mark (cross out) actual LETTER answer;
13.	А	605	48.	С	294	mark the answer NUMERAL.
14.	В	68	49.	D		
15.	А		50.	В	167	
16.	А	298	51.	Е		
17.	В	215	52.	С		
18.	С		53.	С		
19.	D	425	54.	D	405	Page numbers refer
20.	Е	498	55.	С		to the Handbook 12e,
21.	Е	508	56.	D		Penguin Books Death of a Salesman,
22.	Α	575	57.	D	445	Penguin Classics Deluxe
23.	С	311	58.	В	337	Heart of Darkness, and
24.	В	330	59.	С	191	Penguin Classics Wordsworth: Selected Poems
25.	В	137	60.	D	469	Wordsworth. Statela I offis
26.	В	75	61.	С	287	
27.	Α	178	62.	Е	509	
28.	Α	558	63.	D	445	
29.	Е	607	64.	Α	13	I
30.	Е	324	65.	В		

#### Part 4: Tie-Breaking Essay

These notes are not intended to be understood as a key for the Tie-Breaking Essay prompt; rather, they should serve the judge(s) as a presentation of critical ideas that might appear in an essay responding to the prompt.

Criteria for judging the Tie-Breaking Essay SHOULD include

the degree to which the instructions have been followed,

the quality of the critical insight offered in response to the selection,

the overall effectiveness of the written discussion, and

the grammatical correctness of the essay.

Note well that the quality of the contestant's critical insight is more important than the contestant's prose style. In short, the Literary Criticism contest is one that promotes the critical analysis of literature. The quality of the writing, which should never go unappreciated, does not trump evidence of critical analysis.

#### Critical Notes on Wordsworth's "To Sleep"

Literary concepts that MIGHT be used by the contestant in a discussion of the speaker's attitude regarding Sleep in Wordsworth's "To Sleep," focusing especially on the names that the speaker uses to describe Sleep, include

> allusion, ambivalence (not ambiguity), apostrophe, litotes, muse, octave, personification, rhyme, sigmatism, simile, sonnet (Italian), speaker, synecdoche, turn (volta), and tone.

Recognizing that the speaker addresses Sleep in both positive terms and negative terms, the young writer might focus simply on the ambivalence that the range of terms suggests.

That the speaker admits that he alone might be the only person unhappy with Sleep (line 11) should be noted; however, if the young writer doesn't perceive that the problem might be insomnia (Sleep is "last to come where [it is] wanted most!"), it should not be seen as a failing in an otherwise solid discussion of the complimentary descriptors and, on the other hand, the disparaging, perhaps deprecating, descriptors.

In addition to noting both the ambivalence and the possibility that insomnia might be the subject of the poem, the perceptive competitor might recognize the sonnet's sestet as something of a prayer (the sonnet is an apostrophe)—troubling and mildly desperate in tone.

The well-read Lit Critter might recognize an echo of Macbeth's praise of sleep in the "fond words" found in lines 6-7: "Balm that tames / All anguish." Indeed, he or she might perceive the sonnet's octave as a catalogue of praise by poets past and the octave as a rebuttal of a history of praise in an attempt to induce Sleep to come to the speaker's aid.