

Poem 2, Questions 9-16. Read the following poem carefully before you choose your answers.

BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove; he knew no haste, 5
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school, where children strove, 10
At recess, in the ring,
We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun,

Or rather, he passed us;
The dews drew quivering and chill;
For only gossamer, my gown; 15
My tippet, only tulle.

We paused before a house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible.
The cornice, in the ground. 20

Since then, 'tis centuries, and yet
Feels shorter than the day
I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

9. The mood of the poem could best be described as one of

- (A) joyous welcome
- (B) calm acceptance
- (C) muted grief
- (D) quiet resignation
- (E) wistful sorrow

Kindly, civility,
paused

slow pace of
metals

- too negative

Speaker sees dying
as simply a
stage in
"eternity"

10. Which of the following does NOT contribute to the speaker's personification of Death?

- (A) "kindly" (line 2)
- (B) "knew no haste" (line 5)
- (C) "civility" (line 8)
- (D) "quivering and chill" (line 14)
- (E) "we paused" (line 17)

all other choices
show the kindness
and lack of haste
exhibited by Death
who deals gently
with the speaker
as she adjusts to the
changes in her life
stages

- Refers
to the
Dew's
rather than
to Death
who is always
referred to as
"he" or part of
"We"

11. The central, controlling imagery of the poem conveys the idea that

- (A) death is a constant companion of one who is ill
- (B) death is not necessarily the final stop in the journey of life
- (C) life is never appreciated until it is lost
- (D) ignoring death will not prevent one from dying
- (E) life is a short journey that should be enjoyed

main imagery is that of a slow carriage ride that shows the stages of life - horses' heads toward eternity

12. The third stanza provides

- (A) symbolic images of the stages of life
- (B) a contrast to the imagery of the second stanza
- (C) a concrete setting for the poem
- (D) a vision of the speaker's destination
- (E) a flashback of the speaker's early life

childhood (school) adulthood (fields of... grain) old age (setting sun) burial (sinking in the ground) death was at his seemed to last forever

13. The imagery in the fourth stanza describes

- (A) the speaker watching nightfall and donning a nightgown
- (B) a symbolic sunset of life, and early morning moisture
- (C) the speaker's death and final dressing of the corpse
- (D) the speaker's isolation as a child and as a young girl
- (E) the wedding day of the speaker

"Covering and chill" could describe a body dying and then growing cold after the "setting [of the] sun"; "gossamer, my gown, my tippet, only tulle" is the shroud wrapped around the corpse in preparation for burial

because of the shocking realization that corporeal life is a temporary state

14. The "house" described in line 17 is

- (A) Death's home
- (B) an inn on the journey
- (C) the speaker's grave
- (D) the speaker's childhood home
- (E) the speaker's ruined childhood

"house" for the speaker's body is a grave that is a mere "swelling of the ground" where the earth is mounded over a new grave. "The roof ... scarcely visible. The cornice in the ground" is a description of a gravestone

15. "Then" in line 21 refers to the speaker's

- (A) childhood
- (B) burial
- (C) beginning of life
- (D) onset of illness
- (E) awareness of death

"Then" = "house" pause before → in the previous stanza which is the burial.

16. The irony of the last stanza is conveyed through

- (A) alliteration
- (B) hyperbole
- (C) synecdoche
- (D) personification
- (E) paradox

Centuries have past since the speaker's death, yet the day that the speaker realized that all of life is simply a slow journey towards death was