

Harbor Through Hours

Analyze how a poem's craft follows a day at the harbor.

ELA.8.R.1.4 "Analyze structure, sound, imagery, and figurative language in poetry."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the three stanzas in order. Underline two sensory images and circle three sound-making words or repeated sounds, then use your marks to notice how the poem changes from dawn to dusk.

Harbor Wall

- ① Before sunrise, I walk the harbor wall, where ropes sleep in loose coils beside the boats. The tide taps the pilings, tap, tap, while gulls stitch sharp calls across the gray air. Salt settles on my lips, and cold wind needles my cheeks. Below, the water wears a coat of wrinkled steel. I wait beside the dark basin, listening for the first engine, the first door, the first sign that morning has found this place.
- ② By noon, the docks wake fully. Crates clack against carts, chains chime, and a hammer answers from a repair shed. Fishers sort silver catch into bins, their gloves flashing with scales and seawater. The harbor is a busy throat, swallowing trucks and sending out voices. Yet beneath the noise, the tide keeps its patient rhythm, pushing foam through cracks in the wall. I lean over the edge and see sunlight break into coins on the moving water.
- ③ At dusk, the workers leave, and the harbor loosens its grip. Windows blink on shore. A buoy bell says, dong, dong, from beyond the breakwater, and the gulls settle into quieter shapes. The same wall that held my morning footsteps now holds moonlight. I walk home as the tide pulls at the shore like a hand drawing a blanket. Behind me, the boats rock and knock, rock and knock. The day closes softly, but the water keeps speaking.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How does the poem's three-stanza structure show a change in the harbor?

2 What effect do the repeated sounds "tap, tap," "dong, dong," and "rock and knock" create?

3 Which two details in the first stanza appeal to the senses of taste and touch? What mood do they help create?

4 What does the simile comparing the tide to "a hand drawing a blanket" suggest about the harbor at dusk?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a 6 to 8 line poem about a place changing over part of a day. Arrange it in two stanzas, and include one sensory image, a deliberate sound pattern, and a simile or personification that help show the change.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number the three stanzas in order. Underline two sensory images and circle three sound-making words or repeated sounds, then use your marks to notice how the poem changes from dawn to dusk. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the poem's three-stanza structure show a change in the harbor?	The stanzas move from the quiet, cold harbor before sunrise, to its busy noon activity, to a quieter dusk after the workers leave.
2	What effect do the repeated sounds "tap, tap," "dong, dong," and "rock and knock" create?	They imitate recurring harbor noises and create a steady rhythm that continues through the day.
3	Which two details in the first stanza appeal to the senses of taste and touch? What mood do they help create?	"Salt settles on my lips" appeals to taste, and "cold wind needles my cheeks" appeals to touch. They create a cold, sharp, quiet mood.
4	What does the simile comparing the tide to "a hand drawing a blanket" suggest about the harbor at dusk?	It suggests that the tide gently covers or settles the shore, making the ending feel calm and restful.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At noon, the basketball court blazes white. Sneakers squeak, squeak over painted lines. Heat presses its palm against my back. A red ball drums the pavement. After rain, the court becomes a dark mirror. Puddles swallow the last bright shouts. The net whispers in the cooling wind. I leave while clouds fold over the lights.

Accept supported explanations of how the chronological stanzas, sound patterns, imagery, and figurative language shape meaning or mood. For the poem, accept varied subjects and techniques if the response has 6 to 8 lines, two stanzas, and all required craft elements.