

Harbor Through Hours

Read a classroom free-verse poem with its lines and stanzas intact.

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 Read the three labeled stanzas of this classroom poem. Underline two sensory images. Circle tap, tap; dong, dong; and rock and knock. Track how the time shifts and the sounds change from dawn to dusk. Stanza labels are reading aids, not poem lines.

Harbor Wall

Stanza 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.

Stanza 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.

Stanza 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.

Write your two-stanza poem

Use three or four lines in each labeled space. Show the change in time or activity through imagery, a deliberate sound pattern, and a simile or personification. Keep each poem line on one ruled line.

Stanza 1 - begin the scene

Stanza 2 - reveal the change

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Read the three labeled stanzas of this classroom poem. Underline two sensory images. Circle tap, tap; dong, dong; and rock and knock. Track how the time shifts and the sounds change from dawn to dusk. Stanza labels are reading aids, not poem lines. 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)**Stanza 1**

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.

Stanza 2

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.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT NOTES

The poem is an original classroom free-verse work with three explicitly labeled stanzas and thirty actual printed lines. Stanza headings are reading labels, not verse lines. Accept supported analysis of chronological structure, repeated sounds, taste/touch imagery and the blanket simile. The teacher model prints eight separate lines in two labeled stanzas. Students may use three or four lines in each stanza; require six to eight total and the stated sensory, sound, and figurative elements. Different supported interpretations of mood are welcome.