Rain Above Town

A model poem for noticing image, sound, and rhyme.

8.T.T.4.b "Apply poetic techniques (e.g., stanzas, rhyme/rhyme scheme, imagery, figurative language, sound devices) to produce poetry and engage audiences. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one image in each stanza, circle the end words that rhyme in the first stanza, and number the repeated sound words in the second stanza to see how the poet builds a storm scene.

Rooftop Storm

1 At dusk, I climb the narrow apartment stairs, carrying a dented watering can.
Past warm-lit doors, supper scents drift out from every simmering kitchen pan.
Above, the quiet rooftop garden waits patiently, its basil leaves like the tiny sails.
Clouds stack along the wide western sky, leaving long silver winding trails.
Tomato vines curl around their sturdy wooden stakes, holding very firm green fruit close.
Below, streetlights bloom, each lamp a small and golden rose.

2 Then the wind worries the fence, and dry stems tap, tap, tap.
A silver flash splits the clouds, followed by a rolling drum.
Rain arrives in quick bright beads, drumming on metal rails.
It is a thousand small dancers, skipping across the tar roof.
I hold the can beneath an awning, listening to the steady rush.
The thirsty soil drinks deeply, and the sharp basil scent rises from the beds beside me into the cool air.

3 Minutes later, the storm moves east, leaving puddles in every cracked tray.
The roof exhales, and neon signs tremble in each shallow mirror.
A pigeon shakes its wings, scattering pearls over the lettuce bed.
Far below, tires whisper on wet streets, then fade around the block.
I pour the saved rainwater slowly, letting it darken the ground.
Night settles softly, and the garden keeps its green, gleaming secret until morning opens the pale sky again.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Write the six end words in the first stanza. What is that stanza's rhyme scheme?

2. Choose two details that create imagery in the poem. What does each detail help you picture, hear, smell, or feel?

3. What does the comparison “It is a thousand small dancers” mean? Explain how it changes the picture of the rain.

4. How does the repeated sound “tap, tap, tap” add to the storm scene?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one six-line stanza about a sudden weather change in a familiar place. Use an AABBCC end-rhyme pattern, clear sensory imagery, one figurative comparison, and one sound device.

ANSWER KEY

Rain Above Town

GRADE 8 · 8.T.T.4.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one image in each stanza, circle the end words that rhyme in the first stanza, and number the repeated sound words in the second stanza to see how the poet builds a storm scene. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Write the six end words in the first stanza. What is that stanza's rhyme scheme?	**can, pan, sails, trails, close, rose; AABBCC**
2	Choose two details that create imagery in the poem. What does each detail help you picture, hear, smell, or feel?	**Answers vary. Examples: "supper scents drift out" helps the reader smell cooking; "quick bright beads" helps the reader picture rain.**
3	What does the comparison "It is a thousand small dancers" mean? Explain how it changes the picture of the rain.	**It compares the rain to dancers. It makes the rain seem lively, quick, and constantly moving across the roof.**
4	How does the repeated sound "tap, tap, tap" add to the storm scene?	**It imitates dry stems hitting the fence and creates a rhythmic sound that suggests the storm is beginning.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The bus stop shivers beneath a slate-gray sky.
Loose flyers flutter past, then tumble by.
Rain beads on glass like bright, nervous eyes.
Tires hiss, and water leaps in silver cries.
Tap, tap, rain drums a beat upon my coat.
I laugh, a small ship singing through my throat.

Accept reasonable imagery choices when students identify a specific phrase and accurately explain its effect. For the original stanza, check for six lines, an AABBCC pattern, sensory detail, figurative language, and a sound device.