**How to approach a poem on the exam (and keep all of your hair)**

1. Scan the text for pictures, titles and bold words to help you predict what it will be about.

2. Read the questions

3. Read the poem and think about the following: \* Pay attention to the title; it may provide insight.

\* Read the poem twice. Start with the most basic level of understanding. Try putting each stanza in your own words. Can you explain what is happening in the poem or what is being described?

\* Identify the speaker of the poem. Who is telling you a story or describing something?

\* Look for clues that might give the poem cultural or historical context.

\* Consider the mood of the poem. Is it light, funny, reflective, somber…?

\* Look at the imagery. Which images are powerful?

\* Finally, what’s the point? Is there a theme?

4. Read the poem again and answer the questions.

“Students” by Tom Wayman

The freshman class­list printouts  
showed birthdates so recent  
Wayman was sure the computer was in error.

One young man, however, was curious  
about Wayman's mention near the start of term  
of his old college newspaper:  
"You were an editor when? Wow,  
that's the year I was born."  
The wisdom of the students  
hadn't altered, though.  
Wayman observed many clung to  
The Vaccination Theory of Education  
he remembered: once you have had a subject  
you are immune  
and never have to consider it again.  
Other students continue to endorse  
The Dipstick Theory of Education:  
as with a car engine, where as long as the oil level

is above the add line  
there is no need to put in more oil,  
so if you receive a pass or higher  
why put any more into learning?

At the front of the room, Wayman

sweated to reveal his alternative.  
"Adopt The Kung Fu Theory of Education,"

he begged.

"Learning as self­defence. The more you understand

about what's occurring around you  
the better prepared you are to deal with difficulties."

The students remained skeptical.  
A young woman was a pioneer  
of The Easy Listening Theory of Learning:

spending her hours in class  
with her tape recorder earphones on,  
silently enjoying a pleasanter world.  
"Don't worry, I can hear you,"  
she reassured Wayman  
when after some days he was move to inquire.

Finally, at terms' end  
Wayman inscribed after each now ­familiar name on the list

the traditional single letter.  
And whatever pedagogical approach  
he or the students espouse,  
Wayman knew this notation would be pored over  
with more intensity  
than anything else Wayman taught.

1. What is the main source of conflict in the first stanza?

A. Lack of ability B. Difference in age

C. Frustrations with technology D. Inappropriateness of questions

2. What is suggested by Wayman’s thoughts about “the wisdom of the students” (line 9)

A. Wayman doubts his abilities as a teacher

B. Wayman ignores the needs and wants of his students

C. Wayman fells that the intellectual capacities of the students are impressive

D. Wayman believes that each generation of students share the same attitudes and values

3. According to “The Vaccination Theory of Education,” what does is mean to be immune?

A. Never having to take that subject again B. Being exempted from writing the final exam

C. Understanding a subject to the point of mastery D. Finally realizing that not all course will be tested

4. How do the students react to Wayman”s theory of teaching?

A. With intensity B. With enjoyment C. With indifference D. With inquisitiveness

5. What is implied about the young woman who pioneers “The Easy Listening Theory of Learning” (lines 31-32)

A. She is deliberately defying Wayman

B. She is convinced that Wayman’s ideas are outdated

C. She does not value the lesson the way Wayman does

D. She does not understand the subject despite Wayman’s efforts

6. Which technique does the poet employ throughout the poem in order to explain each theory of education?

A. Rhyme B. Alliteration C. Metaphor D. Oxymoron

7. Which statement best expresses the students’ attitude towards education?

A. A positive attitude is more important than good grades

B. The mark you receive matters more than what you learn

C. The effort you put into learning determines your level of satisfaction

D. A good teacher is more inspirational than learning subject material.

8. Which statement best expresses the central message (theme) of the poem?

A. All educational theories are equally valid.

B. Students often fail to recognize the true value of learning

C. Real learning cannot take place without an effective philosophical approach

D. Education will not improve until educators work harder at understanding their students

9. Which word best captures the overall tone of the poem?

A. Passionate B. Lighthearted C. Argumentative D. Condescending

1. Which statement is true about the “young man and woman” in line 5?

A. The speaker imagined them. B. They are the speaker’s ancestors.

C. The speaker dreamed about them. D. They lived to be a hundred years old.

2. Which is an example of a metaphor?

A. “as they gazed from its windows” (line 6) B. “the currents of feelings that flowed” (line 11)

C. “If this were an old house” (line 17) D. “and plastic weather seals” (line 24)

3. In stanzas three and four (lines 17 – 27), which literary technique is used to present the ideas?

A. contrast B. dialogue C. foreshadowing D. understatement

4. Where was the house when the basement ceiling became mud-splattered?

A. on the trucks B. in the factory C. in Stephenville D. on the building lot

5. How does the speaker react to the builders of the house?

A. with surprise B. with acceptance C. with hopelessness D. with disappointment

6. According to the last stanza of the poem (lines 43 to 49), which is an accurate statement about the house? A. Its history is unknown. B. Its history is almost nonexistent.

C. The speaker wishes he knew its history. D. The builders explain its history to the speaker.

7. According to the poem as a whole, when does a house establish a meaningful history?

A. when someone buys it B. after people have lived in it

C. after it has begun to deteriorate D. when its construction is completed

8. What is the point of view in the poem?

A. objective B. omniscient C. first person D. limited omniscient