

Read the poem and then answer the questions that follow.

Storm

As if the earth
Stopped,
The air hushes.
You feel the heat
5 Rising
Out of fields,
Out of asphalt.
And then a
Single leaf
10 Turns
Its silver back.
Air claps air
And all the grasses
Lie down.
15 Do not stand
Beneath this tree.
If you must be brave,
Then for one second
Only
20 Lift your face
To the darkest of
Blues
And feel the Sea,
The cool,
25 Faraway Sea,
Surging
Wind-whirled
Through the
Trees.

—Kathryn Winograd

NECAP Practice Test

Grade 7

Reading

Sample Constructed-Response Item (4 points)

- 7 How does the weather change from the beginning of the poem to the end? Use specific examples from the poem to support your answer.

Scoring Guide

| Score | Description |
|--------------|---|
| 4 | Response provides a thorough explanation of how the weather changes from the beginning of the poem to the end. Response includes relevant and specific examples from the poem. |
| 3 | Response provides an explanation of how the weather changes from the beginning of the poem to the end. Response lacks some relevant and/or specific examples from the poem or is not fully developed. |
| 2 | Response provides a partial explanation of how the weather changes from the beginning of the poem to the end. Response uses limited examples from the poem. |
| 1 | Response is vague or minimal. OR Response only provides a personal opinion with no text support. |
| 0 | Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant. |
| Blank | Blank/no response. |

Training Notes:

- In the beginning (lines 1–7), the weather is still, calm, and hot (“ . . . the air hushes” and “You feel the heat/Rising”).
- In the middle of the poem, the wind picks up “And all the grasses/Lie down.” Then a leaf turns—a symbol of rain approaching. There is the noise of thunder when “Air claps air.” The storm is building.
- At the end of the poem, the sky darkens, the temperature changes, and it begins to rain.

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Grade 7
Reading

Sample 4-Point Response

In the beginning of the poem, right before the storm, everything was calm. - "As if the earth stopped, the air hushes." Then, the weather starts picking up, and it gets windy. - "Air claps air and the grasses lie down." Then there is a flash of lightning. - "Do not stand beneath this tree." Then the author tells the person to face the storm. - "Lift your face to the darkest of blues." Then, at the very end of the poem, the storm hits where the person is. - "And feel the sea, the cool, faraway sea, surging, wind-whirled through the trees."

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Grade 7
Reading

Sample 3-Point Response

The weather in the poem seems to go from a hot summer day to a loud, threatening, thundering hurricane. In the beginning, the poet Kathryn Vinograd clearly describes the day: hot, the pavement burning, and then, the small sign of the hurricane comes as the wind that at first wasn't there, turns over a leaf from there, the tragic scene progresses to a point where it sounds like a tornado is sweeping through.

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Grade 7
Reading

Sample 2-Point Response A

In the beginning it's calm, hot and quite. Then throughout the poem it gets windier and windier. You know it's getting windy because the poem says "surging wind whirled through the trees". Then it starts thundering. You know that because it says "Air claps air".

Sample 2-Point Response B

The poem starts out with it being sunny. Then starts to beginning to be come horrible. After it starts it's sunny it begins being a storm. Thunder starts coming, and then a storm comes

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Grade 7
Reading**

Sample 1-Point Response

First it's hot, then at the end it's a
thunder storm.