



## Year 9 Poetry 11: Whispers of the Old Oak

Read the following poem and answer the questions below:

### Whispers of the Old Oak

Beneath the sprawling branches wide,  
Where light and shadow dance and hide,  
An ancient oak, with roots so deep,  
Holds secrets that the earth does keep.

Its bark is scarred, its leaves are old,  
Yet stories in its heart are told,  
Of seasons past and years gone by,  
Of whispers lost beneath the sky.

The wind that stirs its mighty crown,  
Brings tales of cities long brought down,  
Of kingdoms lost to time's cruel hand,  
Of deserts born from fertile land.

The birds that nest within its boughs,  
Sing songs of then, not songs of now,  
For in this tree, the past does live,  
With all the tales that it can give.

Yet still it stands, so firm, so tall,  
A sentinel through each nightfall,  
A guardian of time and space,  
A witness to the human race.



## Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the main subject of the poem?

- A) A flowing river
- B) A mountain peak
- C) An ancient oak tree
- D) A small flower garden

2. What does the oak tree symbolize in the poem?

- A) Youth and vitality
- B) Change and adaptation
- C) Age and wisdom
- D) Fragility and decay

3. How is the wind described in the poem?

- A) As a fierce storm
- B) As a gentle breeze
- C) As a teller of tales
- D) As a destructive force

4. What literary device is used in "Where light and shadow dance and hide"?

- A) Simile
- B) Personification
- C) Onomatopoeia
- D) Metaphor



5. What do the “scarred bark” and “old leaves” of the tree represent?
- A) The tree’s fragility
  - B) The tree’s age and experiences
  - C) The tree’s beauty
  - D) The tree’s decline
6. How does the poet create a sense of time in the poem?
- A) By describing the oak’s ancient roots
  - B) By focusing on the oak’s current state
  - C) By mentioning future possibilities
  - D) By avoiding any reference to time
7. What does the phrase “guardian of time and space” suggest about the oak tree?
- A) The tree is only important in the present
  - B) The tree protects the secrets of the past
  - C) The tree is a symbol of destruction
  - D) The tree is irrelevant to the theme
8. What mood is evoked by the line “Yet still it stands, so firm, so tall”?
- A) Defiant
  - B) Joyful
  - C) Anxious
  - D) Serene



9. What does the poet mean by “A witness to the human race”?

- A) The tree is part of human history
- B) The tree is disconnected from humanity
- C) The tree has observed the changes in human civilization
- D) The tree is destroyed by humans

10. Which technique is used in “With all the tales that it can give”?

- A) Simile
- B) Alliteration
- C) Metaphor
- D) Personification



## Short Answer Questions

1. What is the significance of the oak tree in the poem?

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2. How does the poet use imagery to convey the theme of history?

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3. What role does the wind play in the poem's narrative?

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4. Explain the personification of the oak tree in the context of the poem.

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5. How does the poet create a contrast between the oak's age and its strength?

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6. Discuss the symbolism of the "scarred bark" and "old leaves."

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7. What does the poet mean by "guardian of time and space"?

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8. How does the poem explore the theme of the passage of time?

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9. Describe the mood created by the phrase "A sentinel through each nightfall."

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10. How does the ending of the poem contribute to its overall theme of resilience?

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## Answer Key

### Multiple Choice Answers:

1. C) An ancient oak tree
2. C) Age and wisdom
3. C) As a teller of tales
4. B) Personification
5. B) The tree's age and experiences
6. A) By describing the oak's ancient roots
7. B) The tree protects the secrets of the past
8. D) Serene
9. C) The tree has observed the changes in human civilization
10. D) Personification

### Short Answer Key:

1. The oak tree symbolizes endurance, wisdom, and a deep connection to the past, serving as a living witness to the passage of time and the changes in the world around it.
2. The poet uses imagery like "scarred bark" and "roots so deep" to convey the theme of history, emphasizing the oak's age and the many stories it holds within.
3. The wind serves as a messenger that brings tales of the past, stirring the oak's branches and connecting it to the broader history of the world.
4. The oak tree is personified as a guardian and sentinel, standing firm through time and holding the secrets and stories of the past within its ancient form.
5. The poet contrasts the oak's age, as shown by its "scarred bark" and "old leaves," with its enduring strength, as it continues to stand tall and firm through the ages.
6. The "scarred bark" and "old leaves" symbolize the tree's long life and the many experiences it has weathered, marking it as a survivor of countless seasons.
7. "Guardian of time and space" suggests that the oak tree protects the memories and secrets of the past, standing as a symbol of continuity through the ages.
8. The poem explores the passage of time by highlighting the oak's ancient history and its role as a witness to the changes in the world and human civilization.
9. The phrase "A sentinel through each nightfall" creates a mood of calm resilience, emphasizing the oak's steady presence and its role as a protector of the past.
10. The ending reinforces the theme of resilience by depicting the oak as a steadfast guardian that continues to stand tall and protect the secrets of the past despite the passage of time.





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