



EP.E85 Comprehension: Poetry Set 9

GL ASSESSMENT / CSSE 11+ Entrance English (GL Assessment / CSSE style) · Calculators not allowed ·
about 40 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

Frost

Source written for Revision Library (original, copyright-free). Original poem created for 11+ comprehension practice.

While sleepers dream and no one sees,
Frost creeps across the sleeping ground,
It climbs the fences, finds the trees,
And works its craft without a sound.
It finds a web strung thin and grey
And turns each thread to silver lace,
It falls upon the grass like spray,
A thousand jewels in one small space.
The garden gate, the water butt,
The washing line, the broken swing,
Are wrapped in white and gently shut
Inside a hush frost seems to bring.
Then suddenly the sky turns gold,
The sun climbs slowly up the hill,
And frost, that quiet, patient cold,
Begins at last to melt and spill.
It slides from every blade and thread,
It drips from fence and gate and door,
The silver jewels it had spread
Sink back into the earth once more.
By breakfast time the frost has fled,
As though it never touched the ground,

No trace remains of silver thread,
No proof that such a night was found.

1 Choose the option that best matches the poem.

(a) What is the poem mainly about?

(1)

- ☐ A) A snowstorm burying a village
- ☐ B) Frost transforming a garden overnight, then melting away by morning
- ☐ C) A gardener planting flowers in spring
- ☐ D) A rainstorm flooding a garden

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Choose the option that best matches stanza 1.

(a) In stanza 1, how does the poet describe frost's arrival?

(1)

- ☐ A) Loud and abrupt
- ☐ B) Quiet and unnoticed
- ☐ C) Bright and colourful
- ☐ D) Slow and clumsy

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Find and copy one word from stanza 1 that describes how frost moves across the ground.

(Total for Question 3 is 1 mark)

4 Choose the option closest in meaning to the word as it is used in the poem.

(a) 'craft' (stanza 1, line 4) is closest in meaning to:

(1)

- ☐ A) A small boat
- ☐ B) Skilful work
- ☐ C) A loud noise
- ☐ D) A type of plant

(Total for Question 4 is 1 mark)

- 5 Look at stanza 2, line 6: 'And turns each thread to silver lace.' Explain what 'lace' suggests about how the spider's web now looks.

(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)

- 6 Look at stanza 2, line 7: 'It falls upon the grass like spray.' Explain the effect of this simile.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

- 7 Choose the option that best matches stanza 2.

(a) Which literary device is used in stanza 2, line 7: 'It falls upon the grass like spray'?

(1)

- ☐ A) Simile
- ☐ B) Onomatopoeia
- ☐ C) Rhyme
- ☐ D) Personification

(Total for Question 7 is 1 mark)

- 8 Look at stanza 1, line 2: 'Frost creeps across the sleeping ground.' Explain the effect of this personification.

(Total for Question 8 is 2 marks)

- 9 Find and copy one word from stanza 3 that suggests everything becomes silent and still.

(Total for Question 9 is 1 mark)

10 Choose the option that best matches stanza 3.

(a) According to stanza 3, which everyday garden objects does the frost cover? **(1)**

- ☐ A) Flowers, trees and birds
- ☐ B) The gate, the water butt, the washing line and the swing
- ☐ C) Cars, roads and bicycles
- ☐ D) Only the grass

(Total for Question 10 is 1 mark)

11 Look at stanza 3, lines 11 to 12: 'Are wrapped in white and gently shut / Inside a hush frost seems to bring.' Explain the effect of this description.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

12 Look at stanza 3, lines 9 to 10: 'The garden gate, the water butt, / The washing line, the broken swing.' Identify the technique used across these two lines, and explain its effect.

(Total for Question 12 is 2 marks)

13 Choose the option that best matches stanza 4.

(a) According to stanza 4, what happens 'suddenly'? **(1)**

- ☐ A) The frost spreads further across the garden
- ☐ B) The sky turns gold and the sun begins to rise
- ☐ C) Rain begins to fall
- ☐ D) The wind grows stronger

(Total for Question 13 is 1 mark)

14 Find and copy the two words from stanza 4 that describe frost's character just before it begins to melt.

(Total for Question 14 is 1 mark)

- 15** Look at stanza 4, lines 15 to 16: 'And frost, that quiet, patient cold, / Begins at last to melt and spill.' Explain the effect of describing frost as 'patient'.

(Total for Question 15 is 2 marks)

- 16** Choose the option that best matches stanza 5.

(a) What happens to the frost in stanza 5? **(1)**

- ☐ A) It spreads to cover more of the garden
- ☐ B) It slides, drips and sinks back into the earth
- ☐ C) It turns to snow
- ☐ D) It disappears instantly, all at once

(Total for Question 16 is 1 mark)

- 17** Find and copy one word from stanza 5 that shows the melted frost returning into the ground.

(Total for Question 17 is 1 mark)

- 18** Look at stanza 5, line 20: 'Sink back into the earth once more.' Explain the effect of this line, thinking about what has been described earlier in the poem.

(Total for Question 18 is 2 marks)

- 19** Look at stanza 6, line 22: 'As though it never touched the ground.' Explain what the poet means by this line.

(Total for Question 19 is 1 mark)

- 20** How many stanzas does the poem contain, and how many lines are in each stanza?

(Total for Question 20 is 1 mark)

- 21** Identify the rhyme scheme used in each stanza of the poem, and support your answer with one example.

(Total for Question 21 is 1 mark)

- 22** Look at stanza 6, lines 23 to 24: 'No trace remains of silver thread, / No proof that such a night was found.' Explain the effect of ending the poem in this way.

(Total for Question 22 is 2 marks)

- 23** Explain how the poet shows a turning point between stanza 3 and stanza 4, from stillness to change.

(Total for Question 23 is 3 marks)

- 24** Compare the mood created in stanza 1 with the mood created in stanza 4. How does the poet's choice of language create these different moods?

(Total for Question 24 is 3 marks)

- 25** How does the poet use language and structure to show that beauty can be both wonderful and fleeting? Refer to the whole poem in your answer.

(Total for Question 25 is 6 marks)

Mark scheme · EP.E85 Comprehension: Poetry Set 9

Question 1

- (a) **B1 B**
- (a) **Answer: B) Frost transforming a garden overnight, then melting away by morning**

Question 2

- (a) **B1 B**
- (a) **Answer: B) Quiet and unnoticed**

Question 3

- **B1** 'creeps', from stanza 1, line 2
- **Answer: creeps**

Question 4

- (a) **B1 B**
- (a) **Answer: B) Skilful work**

Question 5

- **B1** Suggests the web now looks delicate, decorative and finely patterned, like fine white fabric
- **Answer: It suggests the web now looks delicate and finely patterned, like fine white fabric.**

Question 6

- **Level 1** (1): Simple identification of the simile with little or no explanation of its effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Clear, developed explanation of how the simile suggests the frost settles lightly and finely across the grass.
- **Indicative content:**
 - The simile compares frost settling on the grass to fine spray, such as mist or sea spray
 - This suggests the frost settles very lightly and finely, covering everything evenly
 - It creates a delicate, almost weightless image of the frost's arrival

Question 7

- (a) **B1 A**
- (a) **Answer: A) Simile**

Question 8

- **Level 1** (1): Simple identification of the personification with little or no explanation of its effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Clear, developed explanation of how the personification suggests frost's arrival is secretive and deliberate.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Frost is personified as 'creeping', a stealthy, deliberate movement usually associated with a living creature
 - The ground is also personified as 'sleeping', suggesting the whole world is at rest
 - Together this creates a hushed, secretive atmosphere, as if frost is a quiet visitor arriving while nobody is watching

Question 9

- **B1** 'hush', from stanza 3, line 12
- **Answer: hush**

Question 10

- (a) **B1 B**
- (a) **Answer: B) The gate, the water butt, the washing line and the swing**

Question 11

- **Level 1** (1): Simple comment that the objects are covered in frost, with little or no explanation of effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Clear, developed explanation of how the description suggests frost covers the garden gently and protectively, creating a calm, hushed atmosphere.
- **Indicative content:**
 - 'Wrapped in white' suggests the objects are gently covered, almost like being wrapped in a blanket
 - 'Gently shut' personifies frost as careful and deliberate, rather than harsh or violent
 - Together these phrases create a calm, hushed atmosphere across the whole garden

Question 12

- **Level 1** (1): Correctly identifies the listing or repetition with little or no explanation of its effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Correctly identifies the technique and clearly explains how it emphasises the completeness of frost's transformation.
- **Indicative content:**
 - The technique is a list of everyday garden objects, each introduced with the repeated word 'the'
 - This creates a steady, listing rhythm as the poem moves from object to object
 - It emphasises how completely frost has covered the garden, touching every ordinary thing, one by one

Question 13

- (a) **B1 B**
- (a) **Answer: B) The sky turns gold and the sun begins to rise**

Question 14

- **B1** 'quiet, patient', from stanza 4, line 15 ('And frost, that quiet, patient cold')
- **Answer: quiet, patient**

Question 15

- **Level 1** (1): Simple comment that frost is described as calm, with little or no explanation of effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Clear, developed explanation of how the personification of frost as 'patient' suggests it has known all along its time was limited.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Describing frost as 'patient' personifies it with a calm, deliberate character
 - This suggests frost has known all along that its time in the garden was limited
 - It adds a gentle, slightly wistful tone to frost's retreat, rather than presenting it as sudden or unwilling

Question 16

- (a) **B1 B**
- (a) **Answer: B) It slides, drips and sinks back into the earth**

Question 17

- **B1** 'Sink', from stanza 5, line 20
- **Answer: Sink**

Question 18

- **Level 1** (1): Simple comment that the frost disappears, with little or no explanation of effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Clear, developed explanation of how the line contrasts the frost's earlier beauty with its ordinary, unremarkable ending.
- **Indicative content:**
 - 'Sink back into the earth' suggests the frost simply returns to where it came from, without ceremony
 - This contrasts with the earlier image of frost as jewels and silver lace decorating the garden
 - It suggests that, however beautiful the transformation was, it was always temporary

Question 19

- **B1** By morning there is no visible sign frost was ever there; it disappears so completely that it seems as if it never happened

Question 20

- **B1** 6 stanzas of 4 lines each (24 lines in total)
- **Answer: 6 stanzas of 4 lines each.**

Question 21

- **B1** Identifies the ABAB rhyme scheme (the first and third lines rhyme, and the second and fourth lines rhyme) and supports it with an accurate example, such as 'sees' / 'trees' and 'ground' / 'sound' in stanza 1
- **Answer: ABAB: the first and third lines of each stanza rhyme, and the second and fourth lines rhyme, for example 'sees' and 'trees' (A), and 'ground' and 'sound' (B), in stanza 1.**

Question 22

- **Level 1** (1): Simple comment on the final lines, with little or no explanation of effect.
- **Level 2** (2): Clear, developed explanation of how the repetition of 'No' creates a quiet, reflective ending focused on complete disappearance.
- **Indicative content:**
 - The repetition of 'No' at the start of both lines emphasises the completeness of frost's disappearance
 - 'No proof that such a night was found' makes the night's beauty feel almost imagined, once it has vanished
 - Together this creates a quiet, wistful, reflective ending, leaving the reader thinking about how something so beautiful can vanish so completely

Question 23

- **Level 1** (1): A simple comment that the poem changes, with little or no reference to specific language.
- **Level 2** (2): A clear explanation with reference to specific language from at least one of the two stanzas.
- **Level 3** (3): A developed explanation referring closely to language from both stanzas, clearly tracking how the poem shifts from stillness to change.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Stanza 3 builds a sense of hushed, gentle stillness through phrases like 'gently shut' and 'a hush frost seems to bring'
 - This extended calm creates a settled, sleepy atmosphere
 - Stanza 4 breaks this abruptly with 'Then suddenly the sky turns gold', a clear turning point in the poem
 - The change in pace and imagery, from stillness to the sun rising and frost beginning to 'melt and spill', marks the poem's shift from night to day

Question 24

- **Level 1** (1): A simple comment that the moods are different, with little or no reference to specific language.
- **Level 2** (2): A clear comparison with reference to specific words or phrases from at least one of the two stanzas.
- **Level 3** (3): A developed comparison referring closely to language from both stanzas, clearly explaining how word choice creates each contrasting mood.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Stanza 1 creates a hushed, secretive mood through words such as 'creeps', 'sleeping' and 'without a sound'
 - Stanza 4 creates a bright, active mood through words such as 'suddenly', 'gold' and 'climbs'
 - The contrast reflects the wider movement of the poem from a quiet, secret night to an open, changing day
 - This suggests frost's hidden nighttime magic cannot last once daylight arrives

Question 25

- **Level 1** (1-2): Simple, generic comments about frost in the poem with little or no reference to specific language, and little or no reference to more than one stanza.
- **Level 2** (3-4): Some clear understanding, identifying relevant techniques (such as simile, personification or repetition) with accurate quotation, and explaining their effect with reference to at least two stanzas.
- **Level 3** (5-6): A sustained, developed response that tracks both the wonder and the fleeting nature of frost's beauty across most or all of the poem, integrates well-chosen quotations, explains the effect of specific techniques precisely, and considers how the calm and changing moments combine to create the poem's overall meaning.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Stanza 1 and 2 present the wonder of frost's arrival through personification and the simile 'like spray', and the metaphor of 'silver lace' and 'a thousand jewels'
 - Stanza 3 extends this wonder, describing ordinary objects wrapped gently 'in white', made special by frost's touch
 - Stanza 4 marks the turn towards impermanence, personifying frost as 'quiet, patient' just before it begins to melt
 - Stanza 5 shows the beauty draining away as frost 'slides', 'drips' and 'sinks back into the earth'
 - Stanza 6 makes the fleeting nature explicit, with the repeated 'No trace' and 'No proof', suggesting the night's beauty leaves nothing behind
 - The poem's consistent ABAB rhyme scheme and steady four-line stanzas hold both the wonder and the loss within the same calm, controlled form throughout