

Questions 14-23. Read the following poem carefully before you choose your answers.

Sestina

September rain falls on the house.
In the failing light, the old grandmother
sits in the kitchen with the child
beside the Little Marvel Stove*,
5 reading the jokes from the almanac,
laughing and talking to hide her tears.

She thinks that her equinoctial tears
and the rain that beats on the roof of the
house
were both foretold by the almanac,
10 but only known to a grandmother.
The iron kettle sings on the stove.
She cuts some bread and says to the child,

It's time for tea now; but the child
is watching the teakettle's small hard tears
15 dance like mad on the hot black stove,
the way the rain must dance on the house.
Tidying up, the old grandmother
hangs up the clever almanac

on its string. Birdlike, the almanac
20 hovers half open above the child,
hovers above the old grandmother
and her teacup full of dark brown tears.
She shivers and says she thinks the house
feels chilly, and puts more wood in the
stove.

25 *It was to be,* says the Marvel Stove.
I know what I know, says the almanac.
With crayons the child draws a rigid house
and a winding pathway. Then the child
puts in a man with buttons like tears
30 and shows it proudly to the grandmother.

But secretly, while the grandmother
busies herself about the stove,
the little moons fall down like tears
from between the pages of the almanac
35 into the flower bed the child
has carefully placed in the front of the
house.

Time to plant tears, says the almanac.
The grandmother sings to the marvelous
stove
and the child draws another inscrutable
house.

* Brand name of a wood- or coal-burning stove

14. The mood of the poem is best described as
 - (A) satiric
 - (B) suspenseful
 - (C) reproachful
 - (D) elegiac
 - (E) quizzical
15. In line 10, "known to" is best interpreted as
 - (A) imagined by
 - (B) intended for
 - (C) predicted by
 - (D) typified in
 - (E) experienced by
16. In line 19, "Birdlike" describes the
 - (A) markings on the pages of the almanac
 - (B) whimsicality of the almanac's sayings
 - (C) shape and movement of the almanac
 - (D) child's movements toward the almanac
 - (E) grandmother's movements toward the almanac
17. Between lines 24 and 25 and between lines :32 and 33, there is a shift from
 - (A) understatement to hyperbole
 - (B) realism to fantasy
 - (C) optimism to pessimism
 - (D) present events to recalled events
 - (E) formal diction to informal diction
18. The child's attitude is best described as one of
 - (A) anxious dismay
 - (B) feigned sympathy
 - (C) absorbed fascination
 - (D) silent remorse
 - (E) fretful boredom
19. All of the following appear to shed tears or be filled with tears EXCEPT the
 - (A) child
 - (B) teacup
 - (C) almanac
 - (D) teakettle
 - (E) grandmother
20. The grandmother and the child in the poem are portrayed primarily through descriptions of their
 - (A) actions
 - (B) thoughts
 - (C) conversation
 - (D) facial expressions
 - (E) physical characteristics
21. Throughout the poem, the imagery suggests that
 - (A) both nature and human beings are animated by similar forces
 - (B) most human activities have more lasting consequences than is commonly realized
 - (C) past events have little influence on activities of the present
 - (D) both natural and artificial creations are highly perishable
 - (E) the optimism of youth differs only slightly from the realism of age
22. Which of the following literary devices most significantly contributes to the unity of the poem?
 - (A) Use of internal rhyme
 - (B) Use of epigrammatic expressions
 - (C) Use of alliteration
 - (D) Repetition of key words
 - (E) Repetition of syntactic patterns
23. The poet's attitude toward the characters in the poem is best described as a combination of
 - (A) detachment and understanding
 - (B) disdain and curiosity
 - (C) envy and suspicion
 - (D) approval and amusement
 - (E) respect and resentment

- 14 *tone, vocabulary*
- 15 *vocabulary*
- 16 *imagery*
- 17 *figurative language*
- 18 *detail*
- 19 *detail*
- 20 *detail*
- 21 *detail*
- 22 *form, structure*
- 23 *tone, detail*