

The Coming of the Cold

by Theodore Roethke

- The ribs of leaves lie in the dust,
The beak of frost has picked the bough,
The briar bears its thorn, and drought
Has left its ravage on the field.
- 5 The season's wreckage lies about,
Late autumn fruit is rotted now.
All shade is lean, the antic branch
Jerks skyward at the touch of wind,
Dense trees no longer hold the light,
- 10 The hedge and orchard grove are thinned.
The dank bark dries beneath the sun,
The last of harvesting is done.
All things are brought to barn and fold.
The oak leaves strain to be unbound,
- 15 The sky turns dark, the year grows old,
The buds draw in before the cold.

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1. Which phrase **best** describes the main theme of this poem?
 - A the reasons that a field has been abandoned
 - B the results of a powerful winter storm
 - C the effects of a change in season from autumn to winter
 - D the difficulty of farming in a cold climate with little water

2. To which sense does this poem **most** appeal?
 - A hearing
 - B sight
 - C smell
 - D touch

3. In line 2, what is being compared to frost?
 - A a field
 - B the dust
 - C the bears
 - D a bird

4. In line 4, what does *ravage* mean?
 - A fruit
 - B frost
 - C rain
 - D waste

5. In line 14, what is meant by "The oak leaves strain to be unbound"?
 - A The leaves are ready to fall.
 - B The leaves have turned to dust.
 - C The leaves have begun to rot.
 - D The leaves are ready to bud.

6. Which **best** describes the mood of this poem?
 - A amusing
 - B gloomy
 - C peaceful
 - D suspenseful

7. Which set of words contributes *most* to the tone of the poem?
- A wreckage, dark, old
 - B autumn, harvesting, barn
 - C touch, light, sun
 - D branch, hedge, leaves

End of Set

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