

Name: _____ Date: _____

Text Marking: "On Turning 10"

In this activity, you will explore how the speaker of "On Turning 10" feels about growing up by marking the text and answering questions. **Directions:** To begin, grab a blue pen and a red pen. Follow the directions in the left side of each box to mark up the poem. Then answer the questions in the right side of each box. (Note: To keep things simple, we refer to the speaker of this poem as "he." But the speaker could also be a "she.")

First Stanza

- ▶▶ In blue, circle the main simile the speaker uses to describe how turning 10 makes him feel.
- ▶▶ The speaker provides three examples of what he feels like he's coming down with. Underline them in blue.

Q: In your own words, explain how turning 10 makes the speaker feel.

Second Stanza

- ▶▶ In red, circle the phrase the speaker uses to describe what it was like being 1, and the phrase he uses to describe what it was like being 2.
- ▶▶ In red, circle what the speaker says he was at age 4, what he says he was at age 7, and what he says he was at age 9. Also circle what he says he could do at age 4.

Q: When the speaker says he *was* certain people when he was younger, and that he *could* become invisible, what does he mean? Was he really those people? Could he actually become invisible?

Q: Write one or two sentences summarizing the speaker's description of his childhood from ages 1 through 9.

Third Stanza

- ▶▶ The speaker looks out his window at two objects. Circle them in red.
- ▶▶ The speaker says that when he was younger, two things never happened that are happening now. Circle those two things in blue.

Q: Describe the verbs in this stanza. What do they have in common? What kind of activity do they describe?

Q: Consider the two objects the speaker looks at. Why do you think he mentions these objects in particular? With what are they associated?

Fourth Stanza

- ▶▶ The speaker says that age 10 is the beginning of something. Circle it in blue.
- ▶▶ In red, circle something that is associated with childhood.
- ▶▶ In blue, circle what the speaker says it is time for him to do.

Q: The speaker says that turning 10 is the beginning of something and the end of something. What? Use your own words to explain.

Fifth Stanza

- ▶▶ In red, circle the things the speaker says were true about himself when he was younger.
- ▶▶ In blue, circle what the speaker says happens to him now when he falls upon "the sidewalks of life."

Q: Why do you think the speaker says "sidewalks of life" instead of just "sidewalks"? In other words, how does the phrase "of life" affect the meaning of the second-to-last line?

Whole Poem

Q: How does the speaker feel about growing up? Use details from the poem to support your answer.