



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

DIRECTORATE SENIOR CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT (SEN-FET)

HOME SCHOOLING SELF-STUDY WORKSHEET

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|------------------------|--|---|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| SUBJECT | English HL | GRADE | 11 | DATE | May 2020 |
| TOPIC | Poetry: We wear the mask | TERM 1 REVISION | (Please tick) | TERM 2 CONTENT | (Please tick) √ |
| TIME ALLOCATION | 90 Minutes | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>TIPS TO KEEP HEALTHY</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. WASH YOUR HANDS thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Alternatively, use hand sanitizer with an alcohol content of at least 60%.2. PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING – keep a distance of 1m away from other people.3. PRACTISE GOOD RESPIRATORY HYGIENE: cough or sneeze into your elbow or tissue and dispose of the tissue immediately after use.4. TRY NOT TO TOUCH YOUR FACE. The virus can be transferred from your hands to your nose, mouth and eyes. It can then enter your body and make you sick.5. STAY AT HOME. | | | |
| INSTRUCTIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read the poem entitled 'We wear the mask' from your anthology.• Read the background and notes on the poem.• Answer the questions set on the poem.• A memorandum has been attached for you to mark yourself. | | | | |

NOTES ON CONTENT

Pre-reading

Think of activities that people engage in that require masks. Right now people all over the world are walking with certain types of masks. For a certain reason.

Think of what type of masks are worn by people and for what reasons. A few examples:

- Clowns – entertainment purposes
- Medical personnel – protective measures
- Thugs and thieves – to hide their identity

Let's ask ourselves the following questions:

1. Why do people wear masks?
2. What's behind the mask?
3. What does the mask symbolize to you?
4. When you look at a masked person, what comes to your mind?
5. Can you 'read' what a person will be thinking or going through by merely looking at him or her in the face?
6. The masks, are they figurative or literal?
7. Reading this poem, we come to that question: Can we judge a book by its cover?

The Title

We wear the mask – interesting words there: 'we', 'wear' and 'the mask'

1. Who is 'we'? The speaker is part of this group of people who are wearing this mask.
2. 'Wear' – is it by choice or are they forced? Why are they wearing the mask? What are they hiding? Is this 'wearing' a physical act of putting on a mask that we see or a facial expression that they want the world to see?
3. 'the mask' – note the definite article 'the'. It seems as if the speaker expects us to know which specific mask he is referring to. If he had said 'a mask' then we would be left wondering.
 - The speaker and whoever else is with him are wearing 'the mask'. It seems as if it's an identical mask that they are all wearing – uniformity. They are suffering from the same iniquity or they have the same expression (Imagine a stadium full of Orlando Pirates fans with painted faces and cross bone masks).

Now that we have browned the title, you must have an idea of what the poem is all about.

Themes

- **Suffering and pain** – the speaker seems to be speaking on behalf of some people who are suffering 'with torn and bleeding hearts' – line 4

- 'counting all our tears and sighs' –line 7.

- **Deception**- wearing the mask is a deliberate act of deception, hiding one's true identity or feelings. Line 1- '...that grins and lies'. Question is: Why are they using deception and who are they deceiving?

What other central ideas did you identify?

Structure and form

- Written as a musical poem with the title being repeated in the poem itself.
- Written in uneven stanzas that vary in length, this poem packs a lament or sad tone that highlights suffering by a certain group of people. However, readers are left to speculate on who the speaker is, who the 'we' is and who is responsible for their pain. Are they being attacked, ill-treated or persecuted?

ACTIVITY

Question 1

1.1 Refer to the title. Name the figure of speech and explain how it introduces the main idea in the poem.

(2)

1.2 Explain the impact of the image of 'torn and bleeding hearts' (line 4).

(2)

1.3 How does the sound device in line 5 contribute to the meaning of the poem?

(3)

1.4 Critically comment on how the tone is 'masked' in the poem by referring to the contrast between 'grins' (line 1) and 'cries' (line 10).

(3)

[10]

Question 2

2.1 Explain how the word 'guile' (line 3) supports the title.

(2)

2.2 Comment on the speaker's attitude as it is revealed in stanza 2.

(3)

2.3 Discuss the poet's use of sound devices.

(2)

2.4 Explain how the diction in lines 10–11 creates the tone in the last stanza.

(3)

[10]

Question 3

3.1 Explain the poet's references to 'human guile' and 'subtleties'.

(2)

3.2 Discuss the impact of the question in lines 6 – 7.

(3)

3.3 To what extent does the rhythm of the final stanza reinforce the poet's message?

(3)

3.4 Is the poet's central image effective or clichéd? Justify your answer.

(2)

[10]

