**Putting it all Together: “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley**

1. Interpretation of First Person POV
   1. Make educated guesses about the person who is telling the story and his/her situation
   2. What can the reader guess about the *second* speaker, or primary narrator, of “Ozymandias”?
   3. Where has this person been?
   4. Where do you think he or she is now?
   5. What has he or she seen?
   6. On your own paper, draw a picture of the scene the narrator describes.
2. A third narrator appears! The long-dead Ozymandias himself, who speaks to the second narrator (and to the reader) through the words carved on the pedestal that once held his statue. Ozymandias, too, speaks in the first person.
   1. How does the second narrator (the “traveler from an antique land”) describe the face of the statue of Ozymandias?
3. Inferences and Details
   1. What inferences does the narrator make about Ozymandias from the way the face of the statue looks?
   2. Write down important words, images, and details that the narrator uses to describe Ozymandias.
4. Draw inferences to respond to the following questions:
   1. What kind of a person is Ozymandias?
   2. When did he live? (He is actually a real person. A nerdy person could look this up to know for sure…)
   3. Where did he live? (Again, nerdiness could be rewarded)
   4. What did he achieve?
   5. How did he view his achievements?
   6. How does the reader view his achievements?
   7. How and why are the two perceptions different?
   8. What inferences does the narrator make about the person who carved the statue?
   9. How do Ozymandias’s own words give the reader a sense of his character?
   10. What is the effect of the poet’s using multiple narrators to tell the story?
   11. What is the effect of the poet having each narrator speak in the first person?
5. Evaluation
   1. How would the poem be different had the poet used a single narrator?
   2. Rewrite the poem in ***third-person*** point of view. How is it different in third-person point of view rather than first-person point of view?
      * Hint: Consider relationships between poet, narrator, and reader as well as the relationships between the narrators.
6. Diction and Imagery
   1. Diction and Imagery –write down feelings and associations that are connected with these words in your own mind
      * Antique land
      * Vast
      * Trunkless legs
      * Shattered
      * Visage
      * Wrinkled lip
      * Sneer
      * Cold command
      * Pedestal
      * Colossal
      * Wreck
      * Decay
      * Boundless and bare
      * Lone and level
   2. What overall feelings are created by the use of these words and images?
   3. Write down several tone words that might describe the attitude of the author toward the subject. (The subject of the poem is Ozymandias, the ancient king.)
   4. The last word of the line carved on the pedestal is “despair.” (How does the poet help the reader to see the meaning of this word in more than one way?)
7. Examine the Grammar : Shelley uses punctuation in an interesting and complex manner in this poem.
   1. A careful reader will notice the way the poet uses punctuation to guide the reader’s thoughts.
8. Look at each sentence separately…
   1. Put a slash (/) at the end of each *sentence* (not *line*, **SENTENCE**)
   2. What is unusual about the first sentence? The second sentence? The third?
   3. The fourth sentence begins with what kind of phrases? How many are there? Why do you think the poet chose to begin with them rather than with the subject of the sentence?
   4. List the prepositional phrases in the poem. What would be the effect of omitting most or all of the prepositional phrases?
   5. Why does the poet use so many colons and semicolons?
   6. What is the effect of the ellipses (…) in the first sentence?
   7. Why do you think the author wrote these particular kinds of sentences in this particular order?
9. Examine the Sound Devices
   1. The poet uses *alliteration* to make his words memorable, to weave phrases together, and to delight the reader with the music of language. Sometimes alliteration can be combined with *consonance* to create an even more complex pattern of sound. Alliterative and consonant sounds are marked in **BOLD**

I met a traveler from an antique land

Who s**aid**: Two vast and trunkless legs of **stone**

**Stand** in the desert…Near them, on the **sand**,

Half **sunk**, a **shattered** visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and **sneer** of **cold** **command**,

Tell that its **sculptor** well those passions read

Which yet **survive**, **stamped** on these **lifeless** things,

The **hand** that mocked them, and the **heart** that fed;

And on the pedestal these words appear:

“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, **boundless** and **bare**

The **lone** and **level** **sands** **stretch** far away.

* 1. Rewrite the poem, substituting your own alliterative and consonant words and phrases for those Shelley used.

1. Irony
   1. What examples of irony can you find in this poem?
   2. How does the use of irony contribute to the reader’s perception of the poet’s attitude toward the subject?
2. Search for Symbols
   1. Shelley uses just one major image as the centerpiece for his poem…what is it?
   2. What abstract quality or human characteristic might the figure of Ozymandias suggest to the reader?
   3. What occurrence in human life might the disintegration of the statue suggest?
3. Look for Tone and Theme:
   1. How do you think the “traveler” (the second narrator) felt when he saw the broken statue of King Ozymandias lying in the desert?
   2. How do you think his feelings changed after he read the words written on the pedestal?
   3. How do you think each of the following would feel if they saw the same sight?
      * A modern ruler of a country
      * The president of a large corporation
      * A salesman who works for the company
      * The commander of an army
      * A private in the army
   4. How would an artist perceive it?
   5. The first narrator feels that this story is worth relating to a wider audience. Why does he tell it to us?
   6. What ironic aspects does this story have?
   7. What is ironic about the fact that the poem about Ozymandias has survived for many years?
4. Complexity of Theme
   1. After reading the poem, what has the reader learned about life on each of the following levels?
      * **Literal**: What does the poem say will happen to great statues and great rulers?
      * **Personal**: What does the poem tell you about the durability of fame and of material wealth in your own life?
      * **Political**: What does the poem tell you about the lasting qualities of cities, countries, governments, and their leaders?
      * **Moral**: What does the poem suggest about human beings and their relationships to others?
      * **Spiritual or Universal**: What does the poem suggest about human beings and their spiritual lives?
5. Writing Practice
   1. Choose one of the writing prompts on the flip side of the poem copy. Respond fully to the prompt, and turn it in on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
      * Write a paragraph that describes a time when you felt a sense of despair. Do not use the word “despair” in your paragraph, but suggest the feeling by using the image of a concrete (inanimate – not necessarily *literally* made from concrete) object to symbolize it.
      * Write a story or narrative poem in which a person from the future discovers a remnant of our own civilization (perhaps a monument, a building, a diary, etc.) and ponders about what America in the twenty-first century must have been like. In your story or narrative poem, experiment with Shelley’s technique of using multiple narrators.
      * Choose a book or short story you have read in which the author uses more than one narrator to tell the story. How does the use of two or more different perspectives affect the meaning of the work as a whole?