



Walt Whitman

O captain my

Captain

POETRY INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Read Walt Whitman's poem, "O Captain! My Captain!". Answer the questions that follow in complete sentences.

## "O Captain! My Captain!"

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red,  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills;  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding;  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
Here Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head;  
It is some dream that on the deck,  
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;  
From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won;  
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!  
But I, with mournful tread,  
Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

# O Captain! My Captain! QUESTIONS

1. After reading "O Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman, who can you infer the speaker of the poem is? Use evidence of a line or verse that helped you come to your conclusion.
2. In poetry, a title is a great indicator to what or whom a poem is about. In "O Captain! My Captain!", whom or what is the "captain"? Make a conclusion as to why the title of the poem uses exclamation points.
3. The opening line states, "O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done". Based on this line, what type of mood does this line foreshadow?
4. "O Captain! My Captain!" contains 3 stanzas, what is the rhyme scheme??
5. In Line 2 Stanza 1, the speaker says, "The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won". What is the "prize" that is "won"?
6. The term "captain" is a metaphor. Whom or what is the metaphor being compared to?

## Independent Research "O Captain! My Captain!"

DIRECTIONS: RESEARCH THE MEANING OF 'O CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN'. WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE POEM? WHO WAS IT ABOUT? WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF THIS POEM IN POPULAR CULTURE? WHY IS IT SUCH AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF POETRY? SHARE YOUR FINDINGS IN AT LEAST ONE PARAGRAPH, INCLUDING ANYTHING BEYOND THE ABOVE QUESTIONS THAT YOU FOUND TO BE INTERESTING.

