

'A poem to be spoken silently' by Pie Corbett

- 1) What does the word 'rustle' tell you about the sound of the author's thoughts?
- 2) What does the author mean by 'the paving stones *muscled for space*'?
- 3) What other words mean a similar thing to 'silent' in this poem?
- 4) Give two examples of how objects act like people in this poem (an example of personification).
- 5) Give an example of a simile that has been used.
- 6) Do you think the author could actually hear 'a smile crack the face of a stranger?' Give a reason.
- 7) What mood does this poem create?
- 8) List 4 adjectives in the poem
- 9) What time of day is the poem set? Please provide evidence to support your answer and describe what is happening in this line of the poem.
- 10) What is your favourite descriptive line out of the poem and give reasons for your choice?

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Answers:

1) It tells us that the author was feeling very calm and at peace - so much so that his thoughts made a noise as if they were waking up, coming to life.

2) The paving stones muscled for space as if they were pushing each other away with force from each other, wanting their own place on their ground.

3) Other words for silent could include:

peaceful, still, calm, quiet

4) 'the trees ease off their coats of bark'

'the paving stones groan as they muscled for space'

'a page of this book whisper to its neighbour'

'I felt a raindrop grin as it tickled the window's pane'

'the morning earth roll over in its sleep....'

5) 'my thoughts rustle like leaves in a paper bag.'

6) No, I don't think the author could actually hear a smile crack on the face of a stranger as the face doesn't actually crack - it is a way of describing how there was a change of expression. I think the author was trying to present an atmosphere so peaceful and perfectly silent that even the most silent of noises could be heard.

7) The mood of this poem is pure and tranquil, where there is only peace and harmony within its surroundings.

8) Any of the following adjectives could be listed:

silent	paper (describing the bag),
peaceful	paving (describing the stones)
still	calm
morning (describing the earth)	

9) We know this poem was set in the morning as it states 'It was so quiet that I heard the morning earth roll over in its sleep and doze for five minutes more.' This tells us that it was so quiet that the earth wasn't ready to wake up, in fact it wanted to roll over and have a snooze, just as we might like to do when we wake up in our bed.

10) My favourite line from the poem would be 'It was so silent that I heard a page of this book whisper to its neighbour...' 'Look he's peering at us again.'

I love the idea of pages in a book communicating with each other about the person who is reading them. The fact that it is so silent to be able to hear this imagined noise creates even more of an impact of how quiet the surroundings actually is.