Poetry Practice

**The Eagle (Alfred, Lord Tennyson)**

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;

Close to the sun in lonely lands,

Ringed with the azure world he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him **crawls**;

He watches from his mountain walls,

And like a thunderbolt he falls.

1. Given the tone of the poem, and noting especially the last line, what is the eagle most likely doing in the poem?
   1. dying of old age b. hunting prey
      1. learning joyfully to fly d. keeping watch over a nest of young eagles
2. To which of the following does the underlined word azure world most likely refer?
   1. a forest b. the sky
      1. the cliff d. nature
3. To which of the following does the bolded verb **crawls** refer?
   1. waves b. sunlight on the water
      1. the eagle's prey d. the eagle itself

**Patriotism (Sir Walter Scott)**

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,

Who never to himself hath said,

"This is my own, my native land!"

Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned

As home his footsteps he hath turned

From wandering on a foreign strand?

If such there breathe, go, mark him well;

For him no Minstrel raptures swell;

High though his titles, proud his name,

Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;

Despite those titles, power, and pelf,

The wretch, concentred all in self,

Living, shall forfeit fair renown,

And, doubly dying, shall go down

To the vile dust from whence he sprung,

Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

1. What is the most likely meaning of the underlined word *pelf*, as used in this poem?
2. Power b. wealth

c. Stealth d. health

1. What is the poet's main idea in this poem?
2. Those who become rich must hate their country.
3. Traveling abroad helps a person appreciate home.
4. Those who do not love their country will not be honored.
5. Patriotism is the last refuge for scoundrels.
6. What does the poem mean that such people will be "doubly dying" (three lines from the end)?
7. They will not die alone.
8. They will die physically and also be forgotten.
9. Their death will be painful.
10. They will die, then rise again.
11. What does the underlined word *concentred* most likely mean?
12. swirling or curved b. arrogant, proud

c. focused on, concerned with d. looking upward

1. One can infer from this poem that Sir Walter Scott…
2. loved his homeland b. was from Great Britain

c. hated war d. spoke many languages

The Eagle

1. **b.** The eagle, who *watches from his mountain walls* and falls *like a thunderbolt*, is depicted as too alert and dynamic to be dying (choice **a**). There is really no joy depicted in the poem nor any sense that this is a baby eagle (choice **c**), and there is no mention of baby birds the eagle might be watching over (choice d). Saying that the eagle *watches* and then falls *like a thunderbolt* implies alertness and then striking, respectively. The most logical choice is that the eagle is hunting.
2. **b.** The word *azure* means *blue* and is often used to describe the sky. Neither a forest nor cliffs are azure (choices **a** and **c**), and nature is not mentioned as an entity in the poem (choice **d**).
3. **a.** It is the *wrinkled sea* that *crawls* in the first line of the second stanza of the poem.

Patriotism

1. **b.** The word *pelf* is an old fashioned term meaning wealth. The context of the poem does not support any of the other choices.
2. **c.** The poem's title lets the reader know right away that the poem is about patriotism. The poet focuses particularly on the person who is *not* patriotic, however, suggesting that the one who hates his own country will die without honor.
3. **b.** The phrase "doubly dying" causes the reader to stop and think about what the poet is trying to suggest. Scott is saying that the unpatriotic person will die physically, just as the patriot will die physically—but the unpatriotic person will also experience a sort of "second death" when he is completely forgotten in the future. The patriot, by contrast, is remembered by future generations.
4. **c.** The context of the poem is speaking of a person who cares only about himself, caring nothing for his country. Therefore, *concentred* most nearly means "focused on or concerned with" himself.
5. **a.** Sir Walter Scott draws a bleak picture of the person who hates his country. It is safe to assume, therefore, that he loved his homeland.