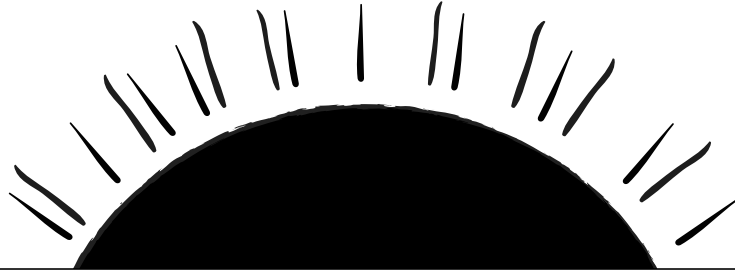




Name _____ Date _____

Still I Rise – Maya Angelou

Part 1 | Read Maya Angelou's poem "Still I Rise." Highlight or underline instances of figurative language (e.g., similes, metaphors and imagery) that you find.



You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.



Name _____ Date _____

Part 2 | Analyze the poem.

1. What is the primary repetition in this poem? What is Angelou's purpose in using this technique? Is it effective? Why or why not?

2. To whom do you think this poem is directed? Why?

3. What does Angelou mean when she writes, "I laugh like I've got gold mines / Diggin' in my own backyard"?



Name _____ Date _____

4. Angelou writes, “Up from a past that’s rooted in pain / I rise.” How do these lines relate to her life?

5. What does Angelou mean when she writes, “Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, / I am the dream and the hope of the slave”?

6. What do you think the overall theme or message of this poem is? Support your answer with at least two examples from the text.
