

Name: _____ Class: _____

Wind, Water, Stone

By Octavio Paz
1984

Octavio Paz (1914-1998) was a Mexican poet and diplomat. In 1990, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. In this poem, a speaker describes wind, water, and stone. As you read, take notes on how wind, water, and stone affect one another.

[1] Water hollows stone,
wind scatters water,
stone stops the wind.
Water, wind, stone.

[5] Wind carves stone,
stone's a cup of water,
water escapes and is wind.
Stone, wind, water.

[10] Wind sings in its whirling,
water murmurs going by,
unmoving stone keeps still.
Wind, water, stone.

Each is another and no other:
crossing and vanishing
[15] through their empty names:
water, stone, wind.



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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement describes the theme of the poem?
 - A. Everything in nature comes from the same place.
 - B. Some things in nature are stronger than others.
 - C. Nature is constantly interacting with itself.
 - D. Nature can be both strong and gentle.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "wind scatters water" (Line 2)
 - B. "Water, wind, stone." (Line 4)
 - C. "unmoving stone keeps still." (Line 11)
 - D. "through their empty names" (Line 15)

3. How does stanza 2 contribute to stanza 1?
 - A. It explores the different ways in which the three elements affect one another.
 - B. It supports the idea that wind is the strongest of the three elements.
 - C. It challenges the idea that there is a single strongest element.
 - D. It shows the different ways in which natural elements work together.

4. How does the repetition and reorganization of the words "water," "wind," and "stone" in sequence contribute to the theme of the poem?
