
Oranges
by Gary Soto

The first time I walked
With a girl, I was twelve,
Cold, and weighted down
With two oranges in my jacket.
December. Frost cracking
Beneath my steps, my breath
Before me, then gone,
As I walked toward
Her house, the one whose
Porchlight burned yellow
Night and day, in any weather.
A dog barked at me, until
She came out pulling
At her gloves, face bright
With rouge. I smiled,
Touched her shoulder, and led
Her down the street, across
A used car lot and a line
Of newly planted trees,
Until we were breathing
Before a drug store. We
Entered, the tiny bell
Bringing a saleslady
Down a narrow aisle of goods.
I turned to the candies
Tiered like bleachers,
And asked what she wanted—
Light in her eyes, a smile
Starting at the corners
Of her mouth. I fingered
A nickel in my pocket,
And when she lifted a chocolate
That cost a dime,

I didn't say anything.
I took the nickel from
My pocket, then an orange,
And set them quietly on
The counter. When I looked up,
The lady's eyes met mine,
And held them, knowing
Very well what it was all
About.

Outside,

A few cars hissing past,
Fog hanging like old
Coats between the trees.
I took my girl's hand
In mine for two blocks,
Then released it to let
Her unwrap the chocolate.
I peeled my orange
That was so bright against
The gray of December
That, from some distance,
Someone might have thought
I was making a fire in my hands.

Name _____



Date _____

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Multiple Choice

<p>1. How might readers determine that this poem's setting is from another era in time?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A The woman in the shop accepts an orange as payment.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B A boy bought candy for a girl.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C The price of the chocolate was ten cents.</p>	<p>2. What does the speaker do to impress his girlfriend?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A He takes her out to dinner.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B He takes her to a candy shop.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C He buys her chocolate.</p>
<p>3. How old is the speaker when he first "walks" with a girl?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A twelve</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B sixteen</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C fourteen</p>	<p>4. How much money does the speaker have to spend on his date?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A ten cents</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B fifteen cents</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C five cents</p>

Short Answer Questions

5. Why doesn't the speaker just tell his date that he has a spending limit?

6. How does the lady in the shop help the speaker?

Poetic Techniques Short Answer Questions

7. Imagery is the use of language to appeal to the senses. List two examples of imagery used in the poem regarding the weather.

8. Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words. List an example of alliteration used in the poem.

9. A simile is a comparison between two things using the words "like" or "as". List an example of a simile used in the poem.

10. A symbol is a concrete object that represents an abstract feeling, idea, or belief. What do the oranges and chocolate symbolize in the poem?
