

## Holiday Memory – Dylan Thomas

Dusk came down; or grew up out of the sands and the sea; or curled around us from the calling docks and the bloodily smoking sun. The day was done, the sands brushed and ruffled suddenly with a sea-brush of cold wind. We gathered together all the spades and buckets and towels, empty hampers and bottles, umbrellas, bats and balls, and we went -oh, listen, Dad!- to the Fair in the dusk on the bald seaside field. 5

Fairs were no good in the day; then they were shoddy and tired; the voices of hoopla girls were crimped as elocutionists; no cannonball could shake the roosting coconuts; the gondolas mechanically repeated their sober lurch; the Wall of Death was safe as a baby's pram; the wooden animals were waiting for the night. 10

But in the night, the hoopla girls, like operatic crows, croaked at the coming moon; whizz, whirl, and ten for a tanner, the coconuts rained from their sawdust like grouse from the Highland sky; tipsy the griffon-prowed gondolas weaved on dizzy rails, and the Wall of Death was a spinning rim of ruin, and the neighing wooden horses took, to a haunting hunting tune, a thousand Beecher's Brooks as easily and breezily as hooved swallows. 15

**Activity**  
**Identify the steer**  
**For the steer, highlight in different colours:**  
descriptive vocabulary;  
powerful verbs  
effective sentence forms.

### Q1

Read again the first part of the source, lines 1 to 6.

List **three** details from this paragraph that describe the evening.

A

B

C

D

[3 marks]

### Q2 [AO2 - language]

Look in detail at this extract from lines 7 to 10 of the source:

Fairs were no good in the day; then they were shoddy and tired; the voices of hoopla girls were crimped as elocutionists; no cannonball could shake the roosting coconuts; the gondolas mechanically repeated their sober lurch; the Wall of Death was safe as a baby's pram; the wooden animals were waiting for the night. 10

How does the writer use language here to describe what fairs were like in the daytime?

You could include the writer's choice of:

- words and phrases
- language features and techniques
- sentence forms.

[8 marks]

### Q3

You now need to think about the **whole** of the **source**. It is from an account of a holiday.

How has the writer structured the text to interest you as a reader?

You could write about:

- what the writer focuses your attention on at the beginning
- how and why the writer changes this focus as the extract develops
- any other structural features that interest you.

[8 marks]

### Q4 [AO4 - evaluate with reference]

Focus this part of your answer on the second half of the source, **from line 11 to the end**.

A student, having read this section of the text said: "The writer vividly conveys how the fair changes from day to night. It is as if you are there with the narrator."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you should:

- write about your own impressions of the fair
- evaluate how the writer has created these impressions
- support your opinions with quotations from the text.

[20 marks]