Oranges
by Gary Soto

Gary Soto
Oranges
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
Porch light 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 drugstore. 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 nickle in my pocket,
And when she lifted a chocolate
That cost a dime,
I didn’t say anything.
I took the nickle 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.
**Multiple Choice**

1. How might readers determine that this poem's setting is from another era in time?
   - A. The woman in the shop accepts an orange as payment.
   - B. A boy bought candy for a girl.
   - C. The price of the chocolate was ten cents.

2. What does the speaker do to impress his girlfriend?
   - A. He takes her out to dinner.
   - B. He takes her to a candy shop.
   - C. He buys her chocolate.

3. How old is the speaker when he first "walks" with a girl?
   - A. twelve
   - B. sixteen
   - C. fourteen

4. How much money does the speaker have to spend on his date?
   - A. ten cents
   - B. fifteen cents
   - C. five cents

**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?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

7. In what way does the speaker illustrate a proactive approach to a form of external conflict?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________
### Poetic Techniques Short Answer Questions

8. Form refers to how the words of a poem are laid out on the page. Discuss the form of this poem.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

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

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

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

________________________________________________________________________

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

________________________________________________________________________

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

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________