*To A Mouse*

By Robert Burns

On turning her up in her nest, with the plough, November 1785

Wee, sleeket, cowran, tim'rous beastie,

O, what panic's in thy breastie!

Thou need na start awa sae hasty,

Wi' bickering brattle!

I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,

Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry Man's dominion   
Has broken Nature's social union,   
An' justifies that ill opinion,   
Which makes thee startle,   
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,   
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;   
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!   
A daimen-icker in a thrave 'S a sma' request:   
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,   
An' never miss't!

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!   
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!   
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,   
O' foggage green!   
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,   
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' wast,   
An' weary Winter comin fast,   
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,   
Thou thought to dwell,   
Till crash! the cruel coulter past   
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee-bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,   
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!   
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,   
But house or hald.   
To thole the Winter's sleety dribble,   
An' cranreuch cauld!

But Mousie, thou are no thy-lane,   
In proving foresight may be vain:   
The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men,   
Gang aft agley,   
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,   
For promis'd joy!

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!   
The present only toucheth thee:   
But Och! I backward cast my e'e,   
On prospects drear!   
An' forward, tho' I canna see,   
I guess an' fear!

*OF MICE AND MEN* POEM ASSIGNMENT

DUE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part A. Read the poem and the accompanying explanation. Write about why and how the poem is connected to the novel (or the characters or events in the novel). How are they the same? Write this information in the column provided.**

**/16 TOTAL**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Stanza | Explanation | Connection to Novel |
| Wee, sleeket, cowran, tim'rous beastie,  O, what panic's in thy breastie!  Thou need na start awa sae hasty,  Wi' bickering brattle!  I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,  Wi' murd'ring pattle! | The poet is trying his best to assure the mouse that he has no intention of hurting it.  bickerin’ brattle =scurry, run  laith = loath  pattle = a small spade for cleaning a plough |  |
| I'm truly sorry Man's dominion  Has broken Nature's social union,  An' justifies that ill opinion,  Which makes thee startle,  At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,  An' fellow-mortal! | The poet then goes on to apologize to the mouse for how he is treated (ie. How man treats/mistreats nature)  The poet also sympathizes with the mouse; he says that he feels just as small as a mouse when compared to the rest of existence. |  |
| I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;  What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  A daimen-icker in a thrave 'S a sma' request:  I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,  An' never miss't! | Here, the poet tells the mouse that he understands that it may need to steal some of his corn. The poet says that he will be fine with what’s left and will never miss the stolen corn.  daimen = occasional  icker = an ear of corn  thrave = twenty four sheaves  lave = remainder |  |
| Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!  It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!  An' naething, now, to big a new ane,  O' foggage green!  An' bleak December's winds ensuin,  Baith snell an' keen! | The poet is upset by the problems that he has caused for the mouse. He reflects upon what he has done: destroyed the mouse’s home during winter when it has no chance to rebuild.  Big = build  foggage = moss  baith = both |  |
| Thou saw the fields laid bare an' wast,  An' weary Winter comin fast,  An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  Thou thought to dwell,  Till crash! the cruel coulter past  Out thro' thy cell. | The mouse thought she was prepared for the winter in her comfortable nest, but is now struggling to survive in the winter climate-it is very unlikely she will survive.  cosie = comfortable  coulter; = iron cutter in front of a ploughshare |  |
| That wee-bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,  Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!  Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,  But house or hald.  To thole the Winter's sleety dribble,  An' cranreuch cauld! | The poet is comparing his own hard times with those of the mouse-both have had to struggle with hardship and ended up with little or no reward.  monie = many  thole = to endure  dribble = drizzle  cranreuch = hoar-frost  cauld = cold |  |
| But Mousie, thou are no thy-lane,  In proving foresight may be vain:  The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men,  Gang aft agley,  An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,  For promis'd joy! | How many times have people had the best intentions and ended up failing?  no ‘thy lane = not alone  gan aft agley = often go awry |  |
| Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!  The present only toucheth thee:  But Och! I backward cast my e'e,  On prospects drear!  An' forward, tho' I canna see,  I guess an' fear! | Burns is depressed! He feels that all of his efforts have been for nothing and that his future prospects are dim. |  |

Explanation & Audio from http://www.electricscotland.com/burns/mouse.html

Part B. **In a paragraph please explain the following: what is your opinion of the idea that circumstances are unpredictable? How does the poem support your opinion? Please answer this question on a separate sheet of paper.**

Paragraph Assessment:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Paragraph is properly structured: Topic sentence, supporting points (approx. 3 of them), and concluding sentence.   * Topic sentence should include the title of the text and the author * Supporting details must be from the text * The concluding sentence ties everything together. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Well-written, excellent word choice and topic description. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Proper punctuation, sentence structure and spelling. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Paragraph successfully answers the question using details from the poem. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | | | | | **/20** |

Part C. Stanza Illustration

* **Choose ONE stanza from the poem.**
* **On a separate piece of blank paper, neatly write out the stanza.**
* **Add illustrations to your stanza to explain what is going on-these illustrations can be literal or symbolic. BE CREATIVE!**
* **Put your name on the back of your illustration**

Stanza Illustration Assessment:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Content: Do your pictures explain your stanza? | /5 |
| Visual/Creativity: Is your illustration visually appealing? | /10 |
| Spelling/Neatness: Did you copy the stanza correctly? Does your work show effort? | /5 |
| **TOTAL** | **/20** |