

Q 9

The poem "Slow reader" by Vicki Feaver is about a boy who is multi talented at other things, but struggles to read. The poem explains the struggle and problems that the boy has and how he reacts to them. It explains the frustration at how he gives up and accepts that he has lost the battle, like a "silk returning to its elements".

The first stanza is explaining the wonderful things the boy can do, how he can "make sculptures" and "tell tales". The start of the stanza is full of all these positive things but as the stanza gets nearer the end, nearer nearer the end, the tone gets dropped into a negative atmosphere. It says that the barrier in between the boy and being able to read is "impassable" which ends the reader's hopes for the boy, wishing him to succeed in his quest. The second stanza carries on in the same vein with cold and stark dark imagery such as "grinding meat" which makes the reader feel empathise with the boy because the word "grinding" plays with their senses.

5.3

Feaver uses real life situations to emphasise how the boy struggles with reading. She says "The boy with the words letting them go cold". This suggests that maybe the boy is not trying to learn as hard; or as serious as we first thought. The word "cold" suggests

6.2

that it is not just a game and the boy wants to be carry on in the same fashion. The word "cold" could be interpreted as there is no joy for the boy when he is reading. Cold is the opposite of warm and warmth is often associated with comfort and

6.3

substitution so by using the word "cold" it implies that the boy does not feel these emotions when reading the words, they don't mean much to him. The last sentence of the quote also suggests that the boy has no or little desire to learn because he "lets" it go cold. There is no fight in the boy to try and succeed.

6.2

The speaker also implies that they are trying to push the boy as hard as they can. They say "until I relax and let him wriggle free". This shows the determination of the speaker to succeed in his mission to help the boy learn to read, but sometimes it comes to no avail. The speaker tries and tries to push the boy to the limit, but sometimes he has to let the boy "wriggle free". The reader can empathise with the speaker because they feel his dismay and frustration at the boy's lack of will and desire, or it could be interpreted that it is not the boy's fault and he is trying but again, the barrier is "impassable".

In conclusion, Feaver is trying to get across the message that some people do struggle with reading. Maybe she has done this due to personal experiences or she has seen this happen to someone else. She tries to make the reader understand the problems that, not only does the child face, but also the person that is trying to teach whether it be a teacher, a parent or another family member.

6.1 approach,
all band 6