

# Grandmother

## Bagrut Questions and Answers

**Winter 2016**

### **BRIDGING**

"I don't have regrets, there are only lessons. You learn from them, and you become a better person." — Nicole Polizzi.

Make a connection between the above quote and the poem. Give information from the poem to support your answer.

ANSWER: This quote helps me understand the poem better because it connects to the poem. The poem is about a granddaughter and her grandmother. In the beginning, the granddaughter just wants to say "Salaam" to her grandmother and walk away. However, the granddaughter asks her grandmother how she feels, and then the grandmother tells her all about her day. After hearing about her grandmother's hard day, the granddaughter feels regret that she did not plan to stay and listen to her. Her eyes fill with tears because of that. The granddaughter understands that her grandmother is an important person and not "just old life", and that from now on she needs to listen to her. This fits in with the quote which says that instead of regrets, we have lessons for life we should learn from, which make us good people.

**Summer 2015**

### **BRIDGING**

"When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen." – Ernest Hemingway

Make a connection between the above quote and the poem. Give information from the poem to support your answer.

ANSWER: The quote says that you should listen carefully to other people. In the poem, the granddaughter didn't plan to listen to her grandmother but when she did, she realized how much she had missed / how important it is to listen. Supporting information: She learned a lot about her grandmother that she didn't know before. // She realized that her grandmother was a person who had things to say / wanted people to listen to her. // The granddaughter learned that life was hard for her grandmother. // She learned how her grandmother spends her day. / She learned about all the things she did in the house and how hard it was for her.

## **Moed Bet 2012**

### **LOTS**

What did the granddaughter ask her grandmother at the beginning of the poem?

(Answer: She asked her grandmother how she felt.

Give ONE thing the grandmother said to her granddaughter.

Answer: She told her granddaughter about her day / that she washed the sheets / that the wet towels were so heavy / that she put the mattresses in the sun / that she felt so tired / had so much work to do

Explain in your own words why the granddaughter's "eyes filled with tears"?

Answer: The granddaughter's "eyes filled with tears" because she thought that she was just going to say hello / Salaam to her grandmother and then walk away without finding out how she really was. / She wanted to cry because she understood that her grandmother had so much to say and nobody to say it to / listened to her

### **HOTS**

The last lines of the poem are: "... as if / what lay between those bedclothes / was just old life / and not really my grandmother." Explain why the granddaughter makes the distinction between "just old life", on one hand, and her "grandmother", on the other hand.

Answer: Comparing and contrasting / Distinguishing different perspectives

Possible answers: • By the end of the poem, the speaker realizes her grandmother is a person who is not only very lonely but has feelings and emotions.

- The speaker realizes how she has taken her grandmother for granted until now.
- For the speaker, somebody who is "just old life" can be ignored and not related to.

## **ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS**

**What can we learn about the kind of life the grandmother lives from the poem?**

Answer: Answer must relate to ONE or BOTH of the following: i. her loneliness, e.g.:

The grandmother is lonely because she doesn't seem to have anyone to talk to. ii. her routine, e.g.: Her life consists of household chores that are tiring and difficult for her.

**What can we infer about family relationships from the poem?**

Answer: • Grandchildren often don't pay attention to the needs, loneliness, difficulties of their grandparents

. • We can understand that young people are taught to be polite because the granddaughter did ask her grandmother how she felt but she didn't intend to talk to her on any deeper, personal level

. • We can infer that grandchildren don't see their grandparents as people and don't expect them to have feelings.

• Grandparents do not seem to be involved very much in family life. They are the least important members of the family.

## **Summer 2012**

### **BRIDGING**

**"No matter what age you are, or what your circumstances might be, you are special, and you still have something unique to offer. Your life, because of who you are, has meaning."**

**– Barbara De Angelis**

**Explain how this quote adds to your understanding of the poem.**

Answer: This quote adds to our understanding of the poem because it gives us the message that all human beings have value. It connects to the message of the poem

because the speaker took her grandmother for granted without giving any thought to her grandmother's inner world. When she does stop to talk to her, she realizes that her grandmother has a lot to say and a lot to share about her life. We understand that if younger people just took notice of older people they would see that they are unique with unique experiences and they, too, want to share their daily experiences so as not to be lonely.

## **Moed Bet 2011**

### **BRIDGING**

“Who are they, the people you pass by on the street, avoiding eye contact or not even seeing? They are our aging friends. They are us. They feel like invisible people, without the identity that defined them when they were younger.” – “Why older people are becoming invisible”, Oakland Tribune, June 28, 2004. How does the above quote add to your understanding of the poem Grandmother? Support your answer with examples from the poem.

Answer: This quote helps me understand that the grandmother in the poem probably felt the way many old people feel, as described in the quote, that they are "invisible". The narrator's grandmother is just looking for someone to talk to, to share what happened to her that day. Although those things might not seem important to a younger person, they are important to the grandmother. In our society, which idolizes youth, we think of older people as worthless. And this is probably how the grandmother felt, and the granddaughter realizes this. She also realizes how she almost missed getting to know her grandmother better and what she would have missed if she had not stopped to talk to her.