

Figurative Language Poem 8

The Black Land

By Joseph Warren Beach

I will plough the land,
Turning up the black soil.
I will ride upon this heaving surface
As a boat rides upon the water.
Even as a boat
Cleaving the water with an eager keel,
I have run a furrow¹
Straight across the ridges.

I will sow down this field,
Scattering gems.
With both hands will I scatter
Quivering emeralds out of a bottomless pouch.

As I tread the loam²
My feet sink deep.
The black earth embraces my ankles
And clings to my bent knees.



I sing as I go
Scattering emeralds.
The wind sings upon my lips,
And pearls stream off my neck and forehead.
I am bathed in a sweat of pearls.

Eyes straight forward
Rest on a brightening ultimate slope.

1. A long narrow trench made in the ground by a plow,
2. Soil with equal amounts of sand, silt, and clay.

Review Questions

Directions: Respond to these questions to the best of your ability. Answer the questions completely. If you need more space, use the back or a separate sheet.

1. Identify one example of **simile**: explain which two things are being compared.
2. Identify two examples of **metaphor**: explain which two things are being compared in each metaphor.
3. Identify two examples of **personification**: explain what is being personified and how.
4. Identify one example of **hyperbole**: explain what is being exaggerated.
5. What is the subject of this poem? What is this poem about? Explain your response.
6. What is the **tone** of this poem? How does the speaker treat the subject of the poem? Refer to text.
7. What is the **mood** of this poem? How does this poem make you feel? Refer to text in your response.