

Name: _____ Class: _____

The Rose That Grew from Concrete

By Tupac Shakur
1999

Tupac Shakur (1971-1996) was an African American rapper, actor, poet, and activist. Shakur continues to be considered an influential rapper today and has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. As you read, take notes on how the speaker feels about the rose.

- [1] Did you hear about the rose that grew
from a crack in the concrete?
Proving nature's laws wrong it
learned to walk without having feet.
- [5] Funny it seems, but by keeping its dreams,
it learned to breathe fresh air.
Long live the rose that grew from concrete
when no one else ever cared.



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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following identifies a main theme of the text?
 - A. All living things need support from others in order to grow.
 - B. We must learn and grow from our failures.
 - C. People can overcome difficulties and succeed.
 - D. Nature can overcome problems better than people.

2. PART B: Which detail from the poem best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "Did you hear about the rose that grew" (Lines 1)
 - B. "learned to walk without having feet." (Line 4)
 - C. "Long live the rose that grew from concrete" (Line 7)
 - D. "when no one else ever cared." (Line 8)

3. How does the speaker's point of view influence how the rose is described?
 - A. Curious about the rose, the speaker asks several questions about it.
 - B. Believing that the rose is not real, the speaker exaggerates its qualities.
 - C. Feeling pity for the rose, the speaker lists all of the hardships it has faced.
 - D. Impressed by the rose, the speaker explains what makes it so admirable.

4. What does the phrase "the rose that grew from concrete" mean figuratively as used in this poem?

Discussion Questions

Directions: *Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.*

1. In the context of the poem, how does an individual rise above hardship? Have you ever felt like a “rose that grew from concrete,” as described by Tupac Shakur? If so, what was the difficult situation that you faced, and how did you rise above it? If not, who is someone else you might describe as a “rose that grew from concrete”? What makes them similar to this rose?

2. In the context of the poem, can we take full control over our own fate? Do you think it is necessary to get support from others, or can we succeed in difficult situations on our own, without others’ help?

3. Why do you think dreams are important for the rose’s survival? What dreams do you have for your own future? Are these dreams important to you? Why or why not?