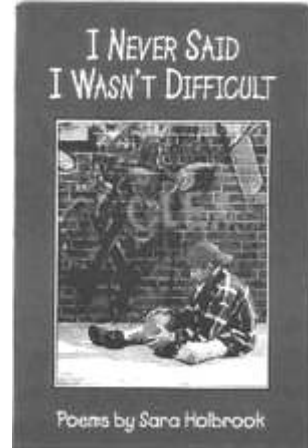


Name: _____ Date: _____

**Selected
Poems from
Sara
Holbrook's**



***I Never
Said I
Wasn't
Difficult***

THE STORM THAT WAS

Me?

I rolled in like a storm,
darkening the room,
ominously rumbling,
then erupting with a BOOM!

I HATE PEOPLE.
I HATE SCHOOL.
I HATE WHAT'S HOT.
I HATE WHAT'S COOL.
I CAN'T STAND RIDING BUSES.
ALL MY FRIENDS ARE MEAN.
THE WORLD IS GUACAMOLE
AND
I HATE THE COLOR GREEN.

And you?

You didn't run for cover
or have that much to say.
You listened to my cloudburst.

And the storm?

It blew away.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is "the storm" that the speaker is referring to?

2. Explain who "you" is in the poem.

3. Apply the knowledge you got from the previous two questions and explain how the storm "blew away."

4. Compare and contrast the "you" and the "me". What kind of people are they?

5. Suppose you were "you", how would you have handled the situation?

WRONG

I'd rather starve myself
or pay a million-dollar fine,
or serve a lengthy sentence
of the solitary kind.

I'd stay grounded from T.V.
for I don't care how long.
If I only had a choice.
I hate to say I'm wrong.

If I had a place to crawl,
I'd never come back out.
Then you wouldn't have to lecture
and I wouldn't have to shout.

I'd rather hide for life in dark
than face you in the light.
Because,
what's worse than being wrong is ...
maybe
you were right.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the speaker want to hide from?

2. Who are the possible people "you" could be referring to?

3. Does the speaker like it when "you" is right? Why or why not?

4. Compare and contrast the "you" from this poem and the last one. Are they different people? Why or why not?

5. Do you ever feel the same way as the speaker? Why or why not?

A STEP

Two,
awkward about the front door
fiddling with good-bye.
Too close for a wave or a handshake.
Too close.
Too far.
Too shy.

A step in the dark...
Would it be an intrusion?
Would it ruin a friendship?
Cause conflict?
Confusion?

Two,
poised on that risky step,
not quite eye-to-eye,
searching for the right key
to get them through
good-bye.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who are the two people in the poem?

2. What is going on in the poem?

3. Identify the fear portrayed in the poem?

4. Analyze the second stanza. Is “it” really a step? If not, what is “it”?

5. What do you think would happen if the “step” is taken?

PRIVATE PROPERTY

It's my body,
my choice,
what food I put inside.
What I wrap around me.
What I show
and
what I hide.

I'm not a public trashcan,
a public road,
a public beach.
Public is for others.

Me?
I'm private property.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the title, Private Property, mean?

2. Who does the speaker refer to when they say "others"?

3. Why does the speaker choose trashcan, road, and beach as things they are not?

4. What is the theme of this poem?

5. Going back to our discussion on school uniforms, does this poem reflect your thoughts on them? How does it or doesn't it?

SCREAM BLOODY MURDER

When I see bodies on the news
it makes me want to cry all night.
'Course even if I do
it doesn't bring them
back to life.

What's the use in caring?
Can't we just pretend?
That everyone is nice –
and that all lives have happy ends?

If I turn my back to horror
or hum and close my eyes.
If I just refuse to see,
does it mean
those wronged
die twice?

QUESTIONS:

1. How does this poem make you feel about violence on the news?

2. Answer the questions the speaker asks in stanza 2.

3. Do you think your answers are the speaker's answers? Why or why not?

4. What does the speaker mean by "die twice"?

5. Do you feel that turning your back on the horror can cause the "wronged" to "die twice"? If so, what could you do to stop it?

NO

When I say I'd rather not
and you try to change my mind,
when I say that I don't want to
and you ask me
one more time...

When you tell me
that I have to
and I start to squint my eyes
in firm determination
and your volume
amplifies...

When you turn your voice to scream
because you think that works,
you're wrong.
I can turn my ears to numb.
Your yelling
makes my stubborn strong.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is "you" in this poem? Is it the same "you" from the poem, "Wrong"? Why or why not?

2. What is being described in this poem?

3. According to the poem, screaming does not work. What does it not work with?

4. How does "yelling" make the speaker's "stubborn strong"?

5. Have you ever been in this situation? Did yelling work on you? Why or why not?
