



Sujata Bhatt: from Search for My Tongue Anthology page18

This poem shows, even in the way it is written on the page,
that Sujata Bhatt feels as if she belongs to 2 different
cultures. I can see this because

..... She says "I have lost my tongue". This
normally means.....

.....but here it also means

.....
.....

She explains her feelings about her two languages with the
image of two tongues - a mother tongue (one's first
language) and a second tongue (the language of the place
where you live). She argues that you cannot use both
together. She suggests, too, that if you live in a place
where you must "speak a foreign tongue" then the mother

tongue will ".....

.....". (line 13 -14) She feels because

she thinks she has lost the ability to speak in her first
language. This has happened to her because.....

.....

The final section of the poem is the writer's dream - in
which her mother tongue grows back and ".....

.....". (Choose a quote from lines 32-35 to prove this.) Her tongue is described as a bud that opens in her mouth – the image of the bud suggests She ends the poem by declaring that "Everytime I think I've forgotten,/I think I've lost the mother tongue,/it blossoms out of my mouth." The word "blossoms" suggests that the writer feels because.....
.....
.....

Sujata Bhatt has written some of the poem in Gujarati because.....
..... She has also given an English translation of the Gujarati lines at the end of the poem because
..... The metaphor of the tongue suggests that losing one's language (and culture) is like losing part of one's body. It shows that she feels
.....

Some aspects of my culture which I would not like to see "rot and die" are
..... because
.....



Moniza Alvi - Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan

1. Presents from my Aunts... - discuss what kinds of presents such relatives usually give & how suitable/appreciated they are.
2. If you moved away to a very different country, what would you like to be sent to remind you of home?
3. Discuss their favourite clothing - how important is what you wear? How does it reflect your personality/sense of identity?
4. Read poem.
5. Make a list of the contrasts:

Pakistan	England
(Band 2 could sketch the contrasting objects, perhaps.)	

6. What do you notice about the differences between the things described or mentioned about each culture? Look at the different ways they are described too. Which seems more attractive? Why?
7. Which does the girl seem more at home with? Why? Pick out some lines where her feelings seem particularly mixed.
8. How is the girls' isolation/separation from both these cultures suggested?
9. What are the images or objects associated with your past/your present? What have you kept to remind you of your childhood? What have you been told about your childhood that you don't remember yourself?
10. Play the "empty room" game. Imagine that as a trick your friend empty your room completely leaving only 5 objects to represent you as a person (It happened to a friend of JMG's at university!) What would they choose and/or what would you like them to choose? What do these objects say about you? Write anonymous lists and guess who's who.
11. Do some imaginative writing or an oral from the point of view of a person who has moved to a place where they feel they don't belong OR someone who's not sure where home really is for some reason
OR some personal writing or poetry about some of the issues about identity and memories raised above.
12. Poems to compare - other poems where 2 cultures are contrasted or combined - Hurricane, Half-caste, Search for my Tongue. Outsiders within a culture - cf Nothing's Changed.

Poems of other Cultures - **Presents from my Aunts**

- Write down the best and the worst clothes present you've ever received and why.
- What do you like wearing best? Why? How do your favourite clothes make you feel?
- What's the most unusual costume you've ever had to wear ? How did you feel in it? e.g. for weddings, parties, fancy dress...
- On the poem, underline in one colour (maybe orange or pink) the clothes and other things to do with Pakistan.
- Underline in another colour (maybe blue or grey) the clothes and other things to do with England.

The girl feelsabout the clothes her aunts send her from Pakistan
because..... She says that they make her feel that
she "could never be as lovely as these clothes. " This shows that she feels
about herself. She would rather wear denim or corduroy because
..... The clothes from Pakistan include:
a).....b).....c)
d)..... A description that helps me to imagine one of the items
is..... This suggests to me that.....
..... The girls says that the
clothes look "alien in the sitting room." This shows that she feels
that.....When she looks at herself in the little mirrors on the skirt,
this suggests that Her ideas about Pakistan are shown at
the end of the poem. Although she was born there, she has learned about it through
..... When she imagines herself there, she is "of no fixed
nationality, staring through fretwork at the Shalimar gardens". She feels
.....

Pick out at least 5 quotes for each column. Draw a picture to illustrate each line. Try to show the contrasts the poem creates - look at the colours she uses in the poem and include them in your drawings.

English clothes and way of life

Pakistani clothes and way of life