

How do fruits and vegetables from a roadside stand stir an artist's imagination? Read this poem about some poets and painters and answer the questions that follow.

Art in America

by Maggie Anderson

Three of us, two poets and one painter,
drive out into clear autumn weather
to gather in some harvest
from the roadside stands
5 where pumpkins are piled up
like huge orange marbles in the sun
and the gray Hubbard squash
are disguised as blue toy tops among
blueberries and jugs of apple cider.
10 We have to make our choices,
as in art, calculate the risk
of making them too ordinary, pale,
like a pool ball hit too thin
because we get afraid
15 when the table's so alive.
We also risk bravado
(too many pumpkins, or too large)
and, since nothing's ever free,
we might have to put things back.
20 But today, we think we'll
get it right because
we're not alone
and we're laughing,
arguing a bit,
25 examining the vegetables,
making up our minds, and
saying how we think we might
believe in the perfection
of communities of artists,
30 the common work among us.
What one of us does not get said,
the others will.

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1. Which of the following quotations **best** expresses the theme of the poem?
- A “We have to make our own choices”
 - B “calculate the risk / of making them too ordinary”
 - C “because we get afraid”
 - D “But today, we think we’ll / get it right because / we’re not alone”
2. Which of the following **best** describes the tone of the selection?
- A bittersweet
 - B humorous
 - C playful
 - D regretful
3. What effect does the author achieve with the imagery used in lines 5–9?
- A appealing to the senses in anticipation of a freshly-cooked meal
 - B showing readers how ordinary objects can be used to create works of art
 - C showing that vegetables and toys are important in our lives
 - D creating a peaceful farm scene to compare to a hectic city scene
4. What does the poet mean when she writes, “We also risk bravado” in line 16?
- A The artists may be overly ambitious in their enthusiasm.
 - B The artists may carelessly endanger their safety.
 - C The artists may appear too greedy and full of themselves.
 - D The artists may let their arguments interfere with their friendships.
5. The use of parallel verbs in lines 23–27 emphasizes which of the following?
- A the human processes involved in creating art
 - B what the artists do together in the autumn
 - C the details of buying good fruit
 - D that art is defined by the individual

6. What does the poet suggest by using the title “Art in America”?
- A Art is a national treasure and should be respected.
 - B Art is a product of both nature and community.
 - C Art may change according to different people’s opinions.
 - D Art involves difficult decisions and hard work.

End of Set

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*Answers to
English I Textual Analysis Sample Items*

Passage Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Art in America	1	D	Analyzing	5.01
Art in America	2	C	Analyzing	5.01
Art in America	3	B	Analyzing	5.01
Art in America	4	A	Analyzing	5.01
Art in America	5	A	Analyzing	4.02
Art in America	6	B	Integrating	5.01