

Read the poem "The Tidings" before answering questions 8 through 15.

# The Tidings

by Denis Florence MacCarthy

A bright beam came to my window frame,  
This sweet May morn,  
And it said to the cold, hard glass:  
Oh! let me pass,  
For I have good news to tell,  
The queen of the dewy dell,<sup>1</sup>  
The beautiful May is born!

Warm with the race, through the open space,  
This sweet May morn,  
Came a soft wind out of the skies:  
And it said to my heart—Arise!  
Go forth from the winter's fire,  
For the child of thy long desire,  
The beautiful May is born!

The bright beam glanced and the soft wind danced,  
This sweet May morn,  
Over my cheek and over my eyes;  
And I said with a glad surprise:  
Oh! lead me forth, ye blessed twain,<sup>2</sup>  
Over the hill and over the plain,  
Where the beautiful May is born.

Through the open door leaped the beam before  
This sweet May morn,  
And the soft wind floated along,  
Like a poet's song,  
Warm from his heart and fresh from his brain;  
And they led me over the mount and plain,  
To the beautiful May new-born.

My guide so bright and my guide so light,  
This sweet May morn,  
Led me along o'er the grassy ground,  
And I knew by each joyous sight and sound,  
The fields so green and the skies so gay,  
That heaven and earth kept holiday,  
That the beautiful May was born.

Out of the sea with their eyes of glee,  
This sweet May morn,  
Came the blue waves hastily on;  
And they murmuring cried—Thou happy one!  
Show us, O Earth! thy darling child,  
For we heard far out on the ocean wild,  
That the beautiful May was born. . . .

Under the eaves and through the leaves  
This sweet May morn,  
The soft wind whispering flew:  
And it said to the listening birds—Oh, you,  
Sweet choristers of the skies,  
Awaken your tenderest lullabies,  
For the beautiful May now born.

The white cloud flew to the uttermost blue,  
This sweet May morn,  
It bore, like a gentle carrier-dove,  
The blessed news to the realms above;  
While its sister coo'd<sup>3</sup> in the midst of the grove,  
And within my heart the spirit of love,  
That the beautiful May was born!

1. Dell = valley

2. Twain = two things

3. Coo'd = made the sound of a dove

Answer questions 8 through 15. Base your answers on the poem "The Tidings."

8 What does May represent in this poem?

- A. the beauty of a spring day
- B. the birth of a child
- C. the hope of finding love
- D. the end of a sorrowful time

- 9 Which word best describes the speaker of this poem?
- F. serious
  - G. joyful
  - H. anxious
  - I. adventurous
- 10 To what does the speaker of the poem compare the wind?
- A. a beam of light
  - B. a choir of birds
  - C. a holiday
  - D. a poet's song

- 11 Read this excerpt from the poem.

**And it said to the listening birds—Oh, you, / Sweet choristers of the skies, /  
Awaken your tenderest lullabies, / For the beautiful May now born.**

What does *choristers* mean?

- F. ears
  - G. breezes
  - H. singers
  - I. clouds
- 12 Why did the speaker of the poem say, "Lead me forth"?
- A. The sun was shining and a soft breeze blew.
  - B. Two people came to his window.
  - C. He wanted to escape the beam and wind.
  - D. He was following the queen.

13 Which sentence best describes the main idea of this poem?

- F. The ocean gets more active in the spring.
- G. In May, the sun begins to shine more forcefully.
- H. In spring, nature grows more beautiful.
- I. In May, the speaker's heart fills with love.

14 What is the author's purpose for writing this poem?

- A. to entertain readers with magical descriptions of spring
- B. to teach readers about the mythological legends of spring
- C. to reveal the history of people's beliefs about spring
- D. to persuade readers that spring is the most beautiful time of year



15 Describe the tone of "The Tidings," and explain how the author achieves that tone. Use details and information from the poem to support your answer.