

Funeral blues/stop all the clocks W. H. Auden



Watch the famous scene in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* in which one of the characters recites "Funeral Blues"

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDXWclpGhcg>)

Stop all the clocks, _____ the telephone,
Prevent the dog from _____ with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled _____
Bring out the _____, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplanes circle _____ overhead
_____ on the sky the message *He Is Dead*,
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public _____,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton _____.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday _____,
My _____, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now: put out every one;
Pack up the moon and _____ the sun;
_____ away the ocean and sweep up the wood.
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

Comprehension Questions

1. After completing and reading the poem, write a caption to describe the content of each stanza:

Stanza 1 _____

Stanza 2 _____

Stanza 3 _____

Stanza 4

Analysis Questions

1. To whom does the speaker address his poem? How can you tell? What's the effect of this point of view?
2. Find the personification in the second stanza.
3. Analyze the metaphors used in lines 9 and 14. Why do you think the speaker wants to remove the moon and the sun?
4. How does the narrator use objects to represent feelings within this poem? What external elements does the narrator want to control? [clocks, telephones, dogs, piano, scribbling on the sky, moon and sun, ocean and wood]
5. Describe the poet's attitude in line 12.
6. Describe how the hyperbole in the last line adds to the poem.
7. After watching the scene in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* in which one of the characters recites "Funeral Blues." Does this rendition of the poem change the way that you think about it?

TASK

In groups of five, write a poem using the first word in each of the verses of Funeral Blues. It doesn't necessarily have to be a dirge!!

