

**Reading Comprehension 9- Poem**

**Grade 5**

**The Tyger**

*By William Blake*

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,  
In the forests of the night;  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain,  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? What dread grasp,  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears  
And water'd heaven with their tears:  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,  
In the forests of the night:  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

## Comprehension Questions

1. What animal is the main subject of this poem?
2. Where is the tiger located in the poem?
3. What word does the poet use to describe the tiger's glow?
4. What body parts of the tiger are mentioned in the poem?
5. What tools does the poet mention that might have been used to create the tiger?
6. What other animal is mentioned in the poem?
7. In the poem, the tiger is described as having "fearful symmetry." What might this mean?
8. The poem asks many questions. What is the main thing the poet is wondering about?

## Vocabulary Questions

9. What does "symmetry" mean in the poem?
10. What does "immortal" mean in the first stanza?
11. What are "sinews" mentioned in the third stanza?
12. What is an "anvil" mentioned in the fourth stanza?
13. What does "aspire" mean in the second stanza?

## Grammar Questions

14. In the line "Tyger Tyger, burning bright," identify the adjective and the adverb.
15. The word "Tyger" is spelled in an unusual way. How is it typically spelled today?
16. The poem is written primarily in what type of sentences?
17. Find an example of alliteration in the poem.
18. The phrase "burning bright" is an example of what poetic device?

## Answer Key

### Comprehension Answers

1. A tiger is the main subject of the poem.
2. The tiger is located "in the forests of the night."
3. The word "burning" is used to describe the tiger's glow.
4. The tiger's body parts mentioned are eyes, heart, brain, and feet (or any two of these).
5. Tools mentioned are hammer, chain, furnace, and anvil (or any two of these).
6. A lamb is the other animal mentioned.
7. "Fearful symmetry" might mean the tiger's powerful and perfectly balanced form that inspires both awe and fear. (Accept reasonable interpretations)
8. The poet is wondering about who or what created the tiger and how such a fearsome creature was made.

### Vocabulary Answers

9. "Symmetry" means balanced proportions, harmony of parts, or perfect form.
10. "Immortal" means eternal, living forever, or divine/godlike.
11. "Sinews" are tough tissues connecting muscle to bone; tendons.
12. An "anvil" is a heavy iron block on which metal is shaped by hammering.
13. "Aspire" means to rise up, to soar, or to seek to attain something.

### Grammar Answers

14. Adjective: "burning"; There is no adverb in this line. (If students identify "bright" as an adverb, this can be accepted as it functions adverbially in this context)
15. It is typically spelled "tiger" today.
16. The poem is primarily written in interrogative sentences (questions).
17. Examples of alliteration include "distant deeps," "dare seize," or "what wings" (any valid example).
18. "Burning bright" is an example of alliteration (repetition of initial consonant sounds).