

from BLUES POEMS**Selection Test A****Comprehension**

Read each of the following questions. Then choose the letter of the best answer.

(6 points each)

1. What is the most likely reason that the author wrote this essay?
 - A. to remember a favorite singer
 - B. to debate other writers
 - C. to entertain musicians
 - D. to explain the blues
2. Which note could you take to show the usual subject of the blues?
 - A. loss and survival
 - B. money and hope
 - C. victory and celebration
 - D. success and gain
3. The essay tells you that a typical blues approach to trouble would be to
 - A. scream about it
 - B. laugh about it
 - C. hide it
 - D. fight it
4. The author says that the blues themselves make us forget our troubles by
 - A. causing us to dance all night
 - B. convincing us that our troubles are gone
 - C. helping us write down our troubles
 - D. letting us admit that life is hard
5. Because the blues agree with us about our problems, the author concludes that the blues are
 - A. tragic
 - B. despairing
 - C. loyal
 - D. entertaining

SELECTION TEST A, CONTINUED

Written Response**Short Response** Answer the following questions based on your knowledge of the essay.

Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper. (10 points each)

6. Why do you think the author claims “the blues insist” that people must laugh “even when there’s trouble”?
7. Why does Ralph Ellison compare the blues form with autobiography?
8. What details in the essay tell you that Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith are blues singers?
9. What does the author say about the blues being polite?

Extended Response Answer the following question based on your knowledge of the essay. Write one or two paragraphs on a separate sheet of paper. (20 points)

10. Explain how the blues are positive instead of negative. Use details from the text to support your response.