

In the city

POETRY (20 MARKS)

Read the following poem and then answer the questions that follow.

All moving the Lord knows where,
Dressed in suits and tatters,
Bowties, tights, ochred sheets and earrings,
All thinking of things to come,
Africa is in a state of opportunity,
All look for easy chances.
Of self-upliftment or undeserved promotion
That often mirage further and further
Making frustrate
Minds that should be content
It is a time of opportunity-
When one line makes a poet
And a little acquaintance or chance
Rockets one to the highest office
But the peasant, the pillar of the nation,
Has only to cope with prices that shift
Like the waves that rock the ship
Carrying yellow maize to the city.
The employed call out strikes
That only deplete the little funds
That may relieve the peasant-
The elder brother keeps the younger in hunger

At home, if there's any,
The child plays with an empty bottle,
Cries for more milk
When the cost is daily on the rise
While the incomes remain static
And the higher brackets are daily filled
By youths that will not retire
Within this century.
The child laughs gaily,
Displaying its only four teeth
That show it grows to eat,
Unaware of all that shapes her decade
Adapted from a poem by Joseph G. Mutiga

Questions

1. Who is the persona in the poem? (2 marks)
2. Briefly describe what the poem is about. (3 marks)
3. Explain the significance of the first line in the poem. (2 marks)
4. Identify the aspect of style used in stanza six and show its effectiveness. (3 marks)
5. Describe the kind of society presented in this poem. (2 marks)
6. What is the tone of the poem? Support your answer. (3 marks)
7. Identify and discuss the use of sarcasm in the second-last stanza. (3 marks)
8. Explain the meaning of the following lines in the poem. (2 marks)
 - 8.1. Africa is in a state of opportunity
 - 8.2. The pillar of the nation