“The Rose That Grew from Concrete”

By Tupac Shakur, 1999

*Tupac Shakur (1971-1996) was an African American rapper, actor, poet, and activist. Shakur continues to be considered an influential rapper today and has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. As you read, take notes on how the speaker feels about the rose.*

Did you hear about the rose that grew

from a crack in the concrete?

Proving nature’s laws wrong it

learned to walk without having feet.

Funny it seems, but by keeping its dreams,

it learned to breathe fresh air.

Long live the rose that grew from concrete

when no one else ever cared.

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences. **Write out your answer on your own sheet of paper. You do not have to copy the questions.** Multiple choice worth 1 point each.

1. PART A: Which of the following identifies a main theme of the text?

A. All living things need support from others in order to grow.

B. We must learn and grow from our failures.

C. People can overcome difficulties and succeed.

D. Nature can overcome problems better than people.

2. PART B: Which detail from the poem best supports the answer to Part A?

A. “Did you hear about the rose that grew” (Lines 1)

B. “learned to walk without having feet.” (Line 4)

C. “Long live the rose that grew from concrete” (Line 7)

D. “when no one else ever cared.” (Line 8)

3. How does the speaker's point of view influence how the rose is described?

A. Curious about the rose, the speaker asks several questions about it.

B. Believing that the rose is not real, the speaker exaggerates its qualities.

C. Feeling pity for the rose, the speaker lists all of the hardships it has faced.

D. Impressed by the rose, the speaker explains what makes it so admirable.

**Extended response worth 4 points each. Use the ACE strategy to answer or you will not receive full credit.**

4. What does the phrase “the rose that grew from concrete” mean figuratively as used in this

poem?

5. In the context of the poem, how does an individual rise above hardship? Have you ever felt

like a “rose that grew from concrete,” as described by Tupac Shakur? If so, what was the

difficult situation that you faced, and how did you rise above it? If not, who is someone else

you might describe as a “rose that grew from concrete”? What makes them similar to this

rose?

6. In the context of the poem, can we take full control over our own fate? Do you think it is

necessary to get support from others, or can we succeed in difficult situations on our own,

without others’ help?