

GHS S4 2014 LITERATURE WORK

Holiday work

1. The African Beggar

Sprawled in the dust outside the Syrian store,
a target for small children, dogs and flies,
a heap of verminous rags and matted hair,
he watches us with cunning, reptile eyes,
his noseless, smallpoxed face creased in a sneer.

Sometimes he shows his yellow stumps of teeth
and whines for alms, perceiving that we bear
the curse of pity; a grotesque mask of death,
with hands like laws about his begging bowl.

But often he is lying all alone
within the shadow of a crumbling wall,
lost in the trackless jungle of his pain,
clutching the pitiless red earth in vain
and whimpering like a stricken animal.

Questions:

- i. What is the poem about?
- ii. Identify three images and show how they have been used in the poem.
- iii. What feelings does the poet have towards the African beggar?
- iv. What feelings do you have towards the African beggar? Why?
- v. What is the intention of the poet?