



Blessing – Imtiaz Dharker

- ❖ The context of the poem
 - a. Where do you think this poem is set?
 - b. What clues does Dharker give the reader?
- ❖ What is the poem about?
 - a. Write a short sentence to explain what YOU think the poem is about.
 - b. What phrases does the poet use to describe water? What value is placed on water?
- ❖ How is the poem written?
- ❖ Tone
 - a. How do you think the poem should be read?
- ❖ Structure and sound
 - a. How many stanzas has the poet used?
 - b. Why has she organised her thoughts in this way?
 - c. Why does she start new paragraphs at lines 3, 7 and 18?
 - d. Write a short sub-heading for each stanza.
 - e. Look at the **full stops** in this poem. Divide the poem in two at line 11. Which half contains the most full stops? What is the effect of this?
 - f. Look at the rhythm of the poem. How does the pace of the poem change? Why?
 - g. Is there any rhyme or alliteration in this poem? What effect do they have?
- ❖ Language and Imagery
 - a. Look at the opening lines. How does a pod crack? What sort of skin/pod do you imagine here? This is a simile – what effect does it have on you?
 - b. What words has the poet chosen to describe the moment the water appears? What do these words have in common? What's the effect of putting them close together?
 - c. List the metaphors for water Dharker has used. What do these words have in common?
 - d. Why did Dharker choose 'Blessing' as the title for her poem? What religious imagery does she use? What does this suggest about the importance of water?
 - e. Compare the reactions of the adults and the children to the pipe bursting. Why does the poet end with the image of the children?



Blessing

The skin cracks like a pod.
There is never enough water.

Imagine the drip of it,
the small splash, echo
in a tin mug,
the voice of a kindly god.

Sometimes, the sudden rush
of fortune. The municipal pipe bursts,
silver crashes to the ground
and the flow has found
a roar of tongues. From the huts,
a congregation: every man woman
child for streets around
butts in, with pots,
brass, copper, aluminium,
plastic buckets,
frantic hands,

and naked children
screaming in the liquid sun,
their highlights polished to perfection,
flashing light,
as the blessing sings
over their small bones.

IMTIAZ DHARKER