

“Cooks Brook” Questions

1. Why do you think the speaker felt that “it would be better to die / skull smashed open in the water / than it would be to climb / backwards down to the beach”?

2. How would you describe the speaker of the poem? Explain using evidence from the poem.

3. Why do you think the poet chose to leave out punctuation and most capitalization?

4. Think about the point of view. The poet uses the second person (“you”) rather than the first person (“I”) or the third person (“he”). Why is that an effective choice in this poem? What difference does it make to your response to the poem?

5. What two comparisons are made with the water? What effect do these create? Which figurative devices are used?

6. What lines in the poem suggest its theme or deeper meaning? Using your own words, express the theme of the poem.