

“Packing for the Future: Instructions” Questions

1. List all the items that the speaker suggests you should take with you to prepare for the future. How is each one described? Why do you think these descriptions are used?

2. What view of life does the speaker seem to hold? Explain using two direct references why you believe that it is pessimistic, realistic, or optimistic.

3. Analyze how the poet expresses complex ideas elegantly through such literary devices as symbolism, metaphor, simile, and repetition.

4. How would you describe the speaker of this poem?

5. Comment on the symbolism of the key, photograph, or ball of string.

6. How do you interpret the final two lines of the poem? How does this contribute to the theme?