

# 04.15.19, Philosophy

Connections: muMs, Plato, the Tao

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions related to muMs' poem "The Truth, parts I & II." The poet's purpose is to distinguish *truth* from *reality*. As you read the piece and answer these questions, consider each line and stanza as having something to do with that purpose. What is muMs saying? What is muMs doing?

1. Paraphrase line 02 in your words. What is muMs saying about truth and reality?
2. Examine the block of lines from 03-09. Notice the play or tension between opposites: peaceful/raptures, joy/rain, pleasure/pain, nothing/something, suffering/seeking. Why do you think the poet presents these opposing forces right after introducing the audience to Truth? What might he want us to consider?
3. What is the connection between lines 03-09 and lines 40-44?
4. Lines 11-12: "Time is loot." By comparing time to money, what is the poet saying about time?
5. Read lines 13-14. The poet speaks metaphorically about the universe as a gigantic bowl of *Alphabet Soup*. In this context, what is he saying about his own life ("his mind")?
6. Continue in the same stanza with lines 15-16. Read the lines, think about them, and then finish this statement: *Even though my own life is so tiny...*
7. The poet reminds us later in line 51 that each life is tiny. How?

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8. What is the connection between lines 17-18 and lines 47-50?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. In your opinion, who (or what) is the “nurse” in line 48, and what is her relationship to truth?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Line 19 is about *access* to the truth. Explain.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. In lines 20-26 muMs gives an example of an ordinary person talking about truth. “I’ll know it if I see it…” and so forth. The “it” is “truth.” What is the purpose of these lines (21-26)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Look at line 28.
  - a. What does muMs mean when he says that truth is “trans-universal”? [Hint: Look up the root *trans*.]
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What do you think the poet’s purpose is when he uses the metaphor of truth as thread?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. Line 30: “Real don’t make strangers.” The poet is saying that people are familiar with their own realities – they understand the real circumstances that surround them – yet they ~~may not understand the essential truth of the reality~~. For example, an unemployed worker on welfare may understand the reality of poverty in America, but he/she may not understand what it means to be *truly poor*. **Give another example of this idea modeled after the *poverty* example.** [Suggested topics: love; sight; freedom; black; war]



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