

Name: _____ Class: _____

Dawn

By Paul Laurence Dunbar
1913

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) was an important African American poet, novelist, and playwright. In this poem, a speaker describes dawn — when light first starts to appear in the sky before the sun rises. As you read, take notes on the author's choice of words to describe nature.

- [1] An angel, robed¹ in spotless white,
Bent down and kissed the sleeping Night.
Night woke to blush; the sprite² was gone.
Men saw the blush and called it Dawn.



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1. clothed in long, loose clothing
2. an elf or fairy

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: What is the main theme of the poem?
 - A. There is nothing more beautiful than a sunny day.
 - B. It sometimes feels like the day goes faster than the night.
 - C. People enjoy the night more than they enjoy the day.
 - D. Humans can appreciate beautiful events in nature.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "An angel, robed in spotless white" (Line 1)
 - B. "Bent down and kissed the sleeping Night." (Line 2)
 - C. "the sprite was gone." (Line 3)
 - D. "Men saw the blush and called it Dawn." (Line 4)

3. Which of the following describes what the "angel, robed in spotless white" represents in line 1?
 - A. a made-up creature
 - B. the beginnings of daylight
 - C. the fading sunlight
 - D. a beautiful woman

4. How does line 4 contribute to the structure of the poem?
