WORKSHEET

ANALYZING POETRY

As we look at We’re Riding on a Caravan and “Shirt” today, answer the following questions to help you determine how the poets are using language to convey meaning.

Questions for We’re Riding on a Caravan

1. What is the rhythm and meter of the text? What is the rhyme scheme?

2. Tap out the rhythm on your desk. How does the rhythm reflect the journey itself? List some adjectives you would use to describe the journey as it is depicted in this book.

3. Name some of the things you learned about the Silk Road through the descriptions of the journey in this book.

4. How do the descriptions and the artwork demonstrate both the adventurous and the difficult aspects of the journey along the Silk Road?

5. Overall, what tone and message are the author and artist trying to convey in this book?

Questions for “Shirt”

1. Although it is a rather mundane object, the shirt is surrounded by history. In this poem, we see many different historical associations with the shirt. In the space below, create a bubble map with “shirt” in the middle and all of the historical references in the poem surrounding it.

2. Pinsky uses a technique called cataloging, or listing, in this poem. Take a look at the lists he creates in this poem and describe the effect it has on you, the reader.

3. What are some of the details the author uses in this poem and why does he mention them?

4. What message do you think Pinsky is trying to convey in this poem? Make sure you explain what makes you think so.