As I Gaze Upon My Father
By: Merlyn Pen

In the brownish photo, my father
Sits up straight
Like a wooden board
With his knees crossed
And his hand folded gently over his knee,
But the sheepish smile gives him away
Like a pen trying to be a pencil.

He wore a white oxford
That was perfectly pressed
And smooth as a newborn's flesh.
As a second layer he wore a wool sweater
That was rough as sandpaper,
As if to show his life.

Answer the following questions based on the poem above.

1. What word in stanza one tells that the speaker was looking at an old photo? ____

   a) Straight
   b) Wooden
   c) Crossed
   d) Brownish

2. Based on the title, what can we infer about the speaker's feelings for his/her father?

   a) Hated him
   b) Did not care about him
   c) Respected him
   d) None of the above

3. 'That was rough as sandpaper,
   As if to show his life'

   a) What figure of speech is used in the above lines?

   _____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

b) What is this comparison telling us about the father's life? _____

a) He liked to build things
b) He had a hard life
c) He loved movies
d) None of the above

4. Consider the phrase 'sheepish smile'.

a) What figure of speech is the phrase? _____

b) What does the phrase say about his smile? _____

a) It was ugly
b) It was shy
c) It was wide
d) It looked like a sheep

5. The poem does not have a rhyme scheme. What would we call this type of poem? _____

a) Free verse
b) ABCB
c) Imagery
d) None of the above

6. What is the name of the poet? _____

7. 'That was perfectly pressed
And smooth as a newborn's flesh'

a) What figure of speech is used in the above lines? _____

b) What does the comparison tell us about the father's shirt?

a) It was clean
b) It was dirty
c) It was ironed really well
d) None of the above

LIVEWORKSHEETS