

Name: _____

Date: _____

Harlem
Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Questions:

1. What images do we see in the poem? What might these images have in common?

2. How does the speaker use these images to answer the first line of the poem? Is the first line of the poem answered?

3. Who is the speaker? What are their values and beliefs? How do we know of their values/beliefs from reading the poem?

4. What message does the speaker wish to convey to the reader about deferred dreams?