

Mongane Wally Serote
For Don M. — Banned
More challenging questions!

Worksheet by:
Keith Tankard
Knowledge4Africa.com

1. "it is a dry white season"
 - Three times the poet repeats the statement, "it is a dry white season". What is the metaphorical meaning of this "dry white season"? (4)

2. "dark leaves don't last, their brief lives dry out
and with a broken heart they dive down gently headed for the earth
not even bleeding."
 - What does the poet mean by his reference to the "dark leaves"? (4)
 - Why do the dark leaves' "brief lives dry out" and fall gently "with a broken heart"? (4)
 - What is the significance of the words, "not even bleeding"? (4)

3. "only the trees know the pain as they still stand erect
dry like steel, their branches dry like wire"
 - What does the poet mean when he says that "only the trees know the pain as they still stand erect"? (4)

4. "indeed it is a dry white season
but seasons come to pass."
 - Are these words significant as an ending to the poem? Give your reasons. (4)

5. The poem is entitled, "For Don M. - Banned".
 - What is the significance of a person being "banned" in apartheid South Africa? (4)
 - Why does the poet never mention the person of Don M.? (4)

6. The word "dry" is mentioned no less than six times in this brief eight-line poem.
 - Is there any reason for this? (4)

7. Do you think there is any significance for the poem being written entirely in the lower-case? (4)

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