

Stephen Spender  
My parents kept me from children . . .  
Questions of an even more challenging nature!

Worksheet by:  
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1. "I feared the salt coarse pointing of those boys  
Who copied my lisp behind me on the road."
  - What does the poet mean when he speaks of "the salt coarse" pointing of the boys? (4)
  - What language device is being used in the expression "the salt coarse pointing of those boys"? What is being compared to what? (3)
  - Use just ONE WORD for "they copied my lisp". (1)
  
2. "They threw mud  
And I looked another way, pretending to smile,  
I longed to forgive them, yet they never smiled."
  - Why does the poet-child "look another way"? (4)
  - Why does he only pretend to smile? Why does he not smile properly? (4)
  - Why does the poet as a child only "long to forgive" the children? Why does he not forgive them? (4)
  - Is there any reason why the children themselves never smiled? (4)

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

3. What do you notice about the style of this poem? (10)
  
4. This is a poem about class, and about friction arising out of class and its misplaced ethical values.
  - What does one mean by "class" and "friction arising out of class"? (4)
  - Would you agree that the main theme of this poem is indeed about "misplaced ethical values"? (10)

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