

ANSWER KEY · ENGLISH CLASS 07 · SOMBRE TONE FAMILY

Sombre · Elegiac · Plaintive · Melancholic — Decisive Cues

ANSWER GRID

Q 1-50 | 4-option key: SB / EL / PL / ML

Q	A	Q	A	Q	A	Q	A	Q	A
1	SB	11	PL	21	SB	31	PL	41	SB
2	EL	12	ML	22	EL	32	ML	42	EL
3	PL	13	SB	23	PL	33	SB	43	PL
4	ML	14	EL	24	ML	34	EL	44	ML
5	SB	15	PL	25	SB	35	PL	45	SB
6	EL	16	ML	26	EL	36	ML	46	EL
7	PL	17	SB	27	PL	37	SB	47	PL
8	ML	18	EL	28	ML	38	EL	48	ML
9	SB	19	PL	29	SB	39	PL	49	SB
10	EL	20	ML	30	EL	40	ML	50	EL

SB · Sombre 13	EL · Elegiac 13	PL · Plaintive 12	ML · Melancholic 12
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Distribution roughly balanced across the four cousins (SB 13 · EL 13 · PL 12 · ML 12). Each Q rewards a one-line evidence read — the grim fact (SB), the act of remembering (EL), the interrogative lament (PL), or the personal nostalgic image (ML). Discuss disagreements with the question open and the cue word(s) circled.

SECTION 1 · THREE-LINER EXPLANATIONS

Q 1-50

- Q1. SB** — Sombre. Objective description of grim reality — no personal grief, no mourning of a specific loss.
- Q2. EL** — Elegiac. "once" + "now" + "what has been lost" — remembrance of a vanished function.
- Q3. PL** — Plaintive. Rhetorical "how many" + "deeply frustrating" — a lament-with-appeal pattern.
- Q4. ML** — Melancholic. "childhood" + "memories" + "quiet sadness" — personal nostalgia, no specific loss named.
- Q5. SB** — Sombre. "humanitarian crisis" + "alarming" — grave description, third-person stance.
- Q6. EL** — Elegiac. "recalls" + "traditions... disappeared" — mourning a vanished practice.
- Q7. PL** — Plaintive. "Why do we" + "demands urgent attention" — direct complaint and appeal.
- Q8. ML** — Melancholic. "wistful" + sensory trigger of personal memory — textbook melancholic.
- Q9. SB** — Sombre. Natural disaster + ongoing displacement — grim, factual, no mourning.
- Q10. EL** — Elegiac. "once spoken" + "loss feels irreversible" — formal mourning of cultural loss.
- Q11. PL** — Plaintive. "Must every" — interrogative lament against a trend.
- Q12. ML** — Melancholic. "long ago" + "gentle sadness" — soft, reflective, personal.
- Q13. SB** — Sombre. "investigation reveals" + "troubling" — grave reporting, no mourning.
- Q14. EL** — Elegiac. "memorial" + "remembrance" — explicit commemorative function.
- Q15. PL** — Plaintive. "Why must" + "difficult to accept" — sorrowful protest.
- Q16. ML** — Melancholic. "quiet ache" + personal artifact triggering reflection — melancholic signature.
- Q17. SB** — Sombre. Drought + crop failure + expert warning — grim, impersonal, alarming.
- Q18. EL** — Elegiac. "commemorates" + "end of an era" — formal tribute to a closed institution.
- Q19. PL** — Plaintive. "How much longer" — impatient plea for governmental response.
- Q20. ML** — Melancholic. "quietly reflective" + personal memory of a parent — melancholic.
- Q21. SB** — Sombre. "crisis continues to deepen" — grave social documentation.
- Q22. EL** — Elegiac. "author mourns" — explicit verb of mourning, formal elegy.
- Q23. PL** — Plaintive. "Why are" + "Our indifference" — accusatory lament toward collective conduct.
- Q24. ML** — Melancholic. "carefree afternoons" + "unexpectedly sad" — nostalgic personal flashback.
- Q25. SB** — Sombre. "war" + "consequences are severe" — solemn fact-reporting, no mourning.
- Q26. EL** — Elegiac. "author remembers" + "absence is deeply felt" — communal-loss elegy.
- Q27. PL** — Plaintive. "Must we" + "heartbreaking" — protest-pleading idiom.
- Q28. ML** — Melancholic. "quietly nostalgic" — explicit melancholic label.
- Q29. SB** — Sombre. "data is alarming" — analytical-grim reporting.
- Q30. EL** — Elegiac. "no longer" + "sense of mourning" — explicit elegy for an age.
- Q31. PL** — Plaintive. "How many... must" — interrogative lament with implicit appeal.
- Q32. ML** — Melancholic. "soft sadness" + personal artifact + decades-old — melancholic.
- Q33. SB** — Sombre. "future remains uncertain" — grim economic reporting.
- Q34. EL** — Elegiac. "pays tribute" + "lamented" — formal elegy with mourning verb.
- Q35. PL** — Plaintive. "Why do" + "frustrating" — sorrowful protest.
- Q36. ML** — Melancholic. "thoughtful silence" + personal nostalgic trigger — melancholic.

Q37. SB — Sombre. "aftermath... years later" — solemn factual stocktaking.

Q38. EL — Elegiac. "deeply mourned" — explicit mourning verb.

Q39. PL — Plaintive. "Must future generations... inherit" — moral plea cast as question.

Q40. ML — Melancholic. "conversations that could never happen again" + "silence" — quietly nostalgic.

Q41. SB — Sombre. "dire conditions" — grim humanitarian report.

Q42. EL — Elegiac. "poem mourns" — explicit mourning, vanishing tradition.

Q43. PL — Plaintive. "Why has" + "disappointment" — personal lament against social drift.

Q44. ML — Melancholic. "now only silence" — gentle, personal, nostalgic.

Q45. SB — Sombre. "findings are grave" — analytical grim documentation.

Q46. EL — Elegiac. "honors" + "remember its legacy" — formal commemorative posture.

Q47. PL — Plaintive. "How many... must" + "author laments" — lament with implicit appeal.

Q48. ML — Melancholic. "gentle sadness" + "years passed too quickly" — pure melancholic.

Q49. SB — Sombre. "refugee crisis" + "uncertain outlook" — grim macro report.

Q50. EL — Elegiac. "farewell and tribute" — explicit elegy in the closing line.

Teacher's Notes

Five things the paper tested on the Sombre family. Lead the discussion before students attempt the next set.

- Sombre is the "narrator-zero" tone.** The writer is a third-person describer of a grim reality — war, famine, displacement, corruption. There is no I, no mourned object, no plea. Watch for clinical reporting verbs: "documents", "highlights", "reveals", "warns". Q1, Q5, Q9, Q13, Q17, Q21, Q25, Q29, Q33, Q37, Q41, Q45, Q49 all sit here.
- Elegiac always names a loss.** Look for the structure "X once existed · X no longer exists · we remember X". The object that has vanished is concrete: a station (Q2), a craft (Q42), a bookstore (Q38), a river (Q34), a generation (Q50). If the passage does not name what is being mourned, it is not elegiac — mark sombre or melancholic instead.
- Plaintive lives in the punctuation.** The interrogative "Why must / How long / How many / Must we" is the structural signature. The writer is voicing sorrow combined with appeal. Q3, Q7, Q11, Q15, Q19, Q23, Q27, Q31, Q35, Q39, Q43, Q47 — every single plaintive item in this paper opens with a question or a "must we" idiom. If the passage describes a grim fact in declarative third-person, it is sombre, not plaintive, even when the topic is upsetting.
- Melancholic is the only personal tone here.** A specific person (he / she / her / him) experiences a soft, lingering sadness triggered by a memory — a diary (Q32), a photograph (Q16), an old bench (Q40), a snowfall (Q12), a melody (Q36). The trigger is private and sensory. If the focus shifts to a vanished social practice, escalate to elegiac. If the personal pronoun disappears and the scope becomes society-wide, drop to sombre.
- The most common student trap on this set is SB ↔ ML.** A sad passage with no I/he/she and no named loss is almost always sombre, not melancholic, no matter how heavy the subject. Conversely, a sad passage with a single character, an old object, and the word "quiet" or "gentle" is melancholic even if the topic looks small. Train students to look for the pronoun and the named trigger before the mood word.



Decide flavour, not fact. Four words: grim, mourned, lamented, reflective.

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