

Reading

“Same Song” by Pat Mora¹

Directions: Follow your teacher’s instructions for how to read and annotate the poem. Then discuss the connection questions with a partner or in a small group.

While my sixteen-year-old son sleeps,
my twelve-year-old daughter
stumbles into the bathroom at six a.m.
plugs in the curling iron
squeezes into faded jeans
curls her hair carefully
strokes Aztec Blue shadow on her eyelids
smoothes frosted Mauve blusher on her cheeks
outlines her mouth in Neon Pink
Peers into the mirror, mirror on the wall
frowns at her face, her eyes, her skin,
not fair.

At night this daughter
stumbles off to bed at nine
eyes half-shut while my son
jogs a mile in the cold dark
then lifts weights in the garage
curls and bench presses
Expanding biceps, triceps, pectorals,
one-handed push-ups, one hundred sit ups
peers into that mirror, mirror and frowns too.

¹ From Pat Mora, *My Own True Name: New and Selected Poems for Young Adults* (Houston, TX: Piñata Books: Arte Publico Press, 2000).

Connection Questions

1. What ideas of “normal” do you think the teenagers in this poem are responding to?
2. Where do you think the two teens in this poem get the ideas about beauty and body image that they are striving for?
3. Reflect on the title of the poem. Why do you think poet Pat Mora made the choice to title this poem “Same Song”?
4. When and why does someone tend to look in the mirror? How much of a person’s identity is reflected in their appearance?
5. Do you generally believe that a person’s appearance can show their personality? Why or why not?