Analyzing Poetry
The Power of One Choice

“That Was Then, This is Now”
by anonymous

That was then...
We were best friends
Laughing, talking, crying, with you.
You were my peanut butter,
I was your jelly.

This is now...
We’re practically strangers.
Averting eyes, looking away.
You look right through me
And I look away from you.

That was then...
Midnight phone calls, sleepovers.
Movies, parties, even vacations.
Anywhere you were, I’d be there.
And the same went for you.

This is now...
Lonely Saturday nights.
Arm brushes in the halls.
The chit-chatty small talk
Is worse than silence.

That was then...
This is now...
You hurt me, and I hurt you too.
But I have to let you go...

1. Identify a character from S.E. Hinton’s novel, *That was Then, This is Now*, that could be the speaker of this poem and support your decision with two examples from the novel. Make sure you include page numbers.

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2. What was a choice that was made in the poem? Support your answer by including the line(s) from the poem that helped you to make your decision.

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3. How does that choice compare with the choice that Bryon had to make in S.E. Hinton’s novel, *That was Then, This is Now*? Support your answer with lines from the poem and/or examples from the novel.

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4. Read the poem on the left by Misti L. Green, then rewrite the poem on the right from either Mark or Bryon’s perspective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Complication”</th>
<th>“Complication”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by Misti L. Green</td>
<td>by _______________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a world filled with changes</td>
<td>In a world filled with changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>each and every day...</td>
<td>each and every day...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I’m being judged</td>
<td>I feel I’m being judged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for what I do ‘n say...</td>
<td>for what I do n say...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I remember back to Barbies        | I remember back to ______________________
| and play days at the park...      | and ________________________________|
| When I didn’t worry about         | When I didn’t worry about          |
| other people’s remarks...         | ________________________________|
| Now lookin’ in the mirror         | Now lookin’ in the mirror          |
| I see to my surprise...           | I see to my surprise...            |
| A completely different person     | A completely different person      |
| staring in my eyes...             | staring in my eyes...              |
| The care-free little girl          | The ______________________________|
| I saw at 4 and 5...               | I saw at _________________________|
| Is now becoming a teen...         | Is now becoming a ____________________|
| Just trying to survive...         | Just trying to ____________________|

2
**“One Decision”**  
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The day was going along just fine  
One or two mistakes, but I guess I crossed the line  
Not thinking too much about the consequence  
Looking back it doesn’t seem to make much sense

These are the choices that we make  
These are the chances that we take

Banging my head against the wall  
Watching all the red bricks start to fall  
Wondering how it could of played out  
What’s my life all about?  
What’s it all about?

Chorus  
One decision could change your life  
And you can’t take it back,  
Can’t change the past  
You’re just trying to do what’s right  
One decision could change your life  
No you can’t take it back,  
Can’t change the past  
You’re just trying to live your life

I can feel the weight of your glare  
And this pain and hurt I feel is beyond repair  
Each day I wake up just trying to breathe  
From this anguish inside there is no relief

So take my body and I’ll take the blame  
Can’t live my days with all this pain  
And everything that happened is such a blur  
I wish that I could get back to where I was before  
My head will explode and I’m going insane  
Nothing makes sense I’m so ashamed  
How do I get through this?  
How do I get through this?

Chorus  
So take my body and I’ll take the blame  
Can’t live my days with all this pain  
And everything that happened is such a blur  
I wish that I could get back to where I was before  
My head will explode and I’m going insane  
Nothing makes sense I’m so ashamed  
How do I get through this?  
How do I get through this?

Chorus

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5. Why do you think the author of this song chose to express her feelings through a song?

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6. How do the song lyrics compare to the previous poems?

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7. Identify a character from S.E. Hinton’s novel, *That was Then, This is Now*, that could be the speaker of this poem and support your decision with two examples from the novel. Make sure you include page numbers.

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3
8. What was a choice that was made in the poem? Support your answer by including the line(s) from the poem that helped you to make your decision.

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“I Went to a Party Mom”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“I Went to a Party Mom”</th>
<th>I’m sure the guy had no idea, while he was flying high, because he chose to drink and drive, now I would have to die.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I went to a party,</td>
<td>So why do people do it, Mom Knowing that it ruins lives? And now the pain is cutting me, like a hundred stabbing knives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and remembered what you said.</td>
<td>Tell Sister not to be afraid, Mom tell Daddy to be brave, and when I go to heaven, put ‘Daddy’s Girl’ on my grave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You told me not to drink, Mom so I had a Sprite instead.</td>
<td>Someone should have taught him, that it’s wrong to drink and drive. Maybe if his parents had, I’d still be alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt proud of myself, the way you said I would, that I didn’t drink and drive, though some friends said I should.</td>
<td>My breath is getting shorter, Mom I’m getting really scared. These are my final moments, and I’m so unprepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I made a healthy choice, and your advice to me was right as the party finally ended, and the kids drove out of sight.</td>
<td>I wish that you could hold me, Mom, as I lie here and die. I wish that I could say I love you, Mom So I love you and good-by.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got into my car, sure to get home in one piece, I never knew what was coming, Mom something I expected least.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now I’m lying on the pavement, And I hear the policeman say, ‘The kid that caused this wreck was drunk’ His voice seems far away. Is this right?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My own blood’s all around me, as I try hard not to cry. I can hear the paramedic say, ‘This girl is going to die.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. What is a poor decision that Bryon made?
10. What is a poor decision that Mark made?
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11. What are the consequences of making poor decisions? Support your answer with lines from the poem and the novel.
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12. Identify a theme for the novel and explain how it applies to it.
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13. Identify a theme for the poems you just read and explain how it applies to them.
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14. How does the theme for the novel compare to the theme you determined for the poems?
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15. How does the power of one choice apply to the poems that you read? Use lines from at least two of the poems to support your answer.
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