

“Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains: round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

POST-READING QUESTIONS

1. What is the theme of the poem? Explain.
2. How does the poem use irony to build its theme? Explain.
3. Does the poem have a rhyme scheme? Explain.
4. Underline some of the hardest-to-define words in the poem. If you know what they mean, write their definition above them.
5. Ozymandias was the Greek name for Rameses the Great. He was the third pharaoh of the 19th Dynasty (1292-1186 BC) and won many decisive victories over the enemies of the Egyptians during his reign. What does knowing that Ozymandias was a real person add to the poem? Explain.
6. What life lesson can we learn from the poem?