

2. Instead of a first-person point of view, Pastan uses the second person. Does her strategy make any difference to your reading of "Pass/Fail"?
3. **CREATIVE RESPONSE.** Write a poem in Pastan's style that expresses your experience taking examinations.

#### CONNECTION TO ANOTHER SELECTION

1. Discuss the significance of being graded in this poem and in Pastan's "Marks" (p. 883).

#### RUTH FAINLIGHT (B. 1931)

##### *Crownses*

2006

Pale, bare, tender stems rising  
 from the muddy winter-faded grass,  
 shivering petals the almost luminous  
 blue and mauve of bruises on the naked  
 bodies of men, women, children  
 herded into a forest clearing  
 before the shouted order, crack of gunfire,  
 final screams and prayers and moans.

#### CONSIDERATIONS FOR CRITICAL THINKING AND WRITING

1. **FIRST RESPONSE.** Comment on Fainlight's choice of title. What effect does it have on your reading of the poem?
2. Trace your response to each image in the poem and describe the poem's tone as it moves from line to line.
3. **CREATIVE RESPONSE.** Try writing an eight-line poem in the style of Fainlight's based on images that gradually but radically shift in tone.

#### MARY ROBINSON (1758–1800)

##### *London's Summer Morning*

1806

Who has not wak'd to list'° the busy sounds  
 Of summer's morning, in the sultry smoke  
 Of noisy London? On the pavement hot  
 The sooty chimney-boy, with dingy face  
 And tatter'd covering, shrilly bawls his trade,  
 Rousing the sleepy housemaid. At the door  
 The milk-pail rattles, and the tinkling bell  
 Proclaims the dustman's office; while the street

*listen to*

5

Is lost in clouds impervious. No  
 The din of hackney-coaches, w  
 While timen's shops, and nois  
 Knife-grinders, coopers, squeal  
 Fruit-barrow, and the hunger  
 Of vegetable vendors, fill the air  
 Now ev'ry shop displays its vari  
 And the fresh-sprinkled pavem  
 Of early walkers. At the private  
 The ruddy housemaid twirls th  
 Annoying the smart' prentice, c  
 Tripping with band-box° lightl  
 Darts burning splendour on th  
 Save where the canvas awning t  
 On the gay merchandize. Now,  
 In shops (where beaury smiles v  
 Sits the smart damsel, while thi  
 Peeps thro' the window, watchin  
 Now pastry dainties catch the e  
 Of humming insects, while the  
 Waits to enthral them. Now the  
 Mounts the tall ladder, nimbly  
 To trim the half-fill'd lamp; whi  
 The pot-boy° yells discordant /  
 The sultry pavement, the old-cl  
 In tones monotonous, and side  
 The area for his traffic: now the  
 Is slyly open'd, and the half-wor  
 (Sometimes the pilfer'd treasur  
 Domestic spoiler), for one half-f  
 Sinks in the green abyss. The po  
 Bears his huge load along the p  
 And the poor poet wakes from h  
 To paint the summer morn'ng.

#### CONSIDERATIONS FOR CRIT

1. **FIRST RESPONSE.** How effective is the poem's imagery? Which images do you find most striking?
2. How does the end of the poem affect your response? What effect does this structure have on your reading?
3. **CREATIVE RESPONSE.** Try writing a poem in the style of Robinson's, at home, the street, or in a public place. What is the wide a vivid sense of what it is like to be there?

#### CONNECTION TO ANOTHER S

1. How does Robinson's description of "London," the next poem? What is the purpose between the two poems?