

Name:

Period:

**Poem Analysis:**  
"Digging"



**I. Prediction**

Before reading the poem take a look at the poem's title and based on the title make a prediction of what this poem will be about.

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**II. Comprehension Questions**

1. Describe the setting of the poem. Where is the speaker, and what is he watching?
2. What is the speaker's attitude toward his father and grandfather?
3. Describe some of the sights, smells, and sounds described in this poem.
4. How will the speaker carry on the tradition of his father and grandfather?

### III. Analysis:

<p><b>Tone:</b> What is the speaker's tone? How do you know?</p>	
<p><b>Mood:</b> What kind of mood does this poem create? How do you feel after reading it?</p>	
<p><b>Theme:</b> What is the theme of message of this poem?</p>	
<p>Identify as many examples of <b>figurative language</b> as you can in your poem (3 examples <i>minimum</i>).</p>	
<p>What do you <b>visualize</b> when you read this poem? Write down any images that come to mind.</p>	
<p>What <b>questions</b> do you have about the poem? What is still unclear?</p>	

## **Digging**

Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.

Under my window a clean rasping sound  
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:  
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds  
Bends low, comes up twenty years away  
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills  
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft  
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.  
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep  
To scatter new potatoes that we picked  
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade,  
Just like his old man.

My grandfather could cut more turf in a day  
Than any other man on Toner's bog.  
Once I carried him milk in a bottle  
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up  
To drink it, then fell to right away  
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods  
Over his shoulder, digging down and down  
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mold, the squelch and slap  
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge  
Through living roots awaken in my head.  
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests.  
I'll dig with it.

Seamus Heaney