

Experience a Dust Storm
Close Reading Guide: “Blankets of Black”

Stanzas 1–3 (“On the first clear day . . . could stay inside.”)	
<p>What is the author describing here?</p>	<p>Is the author giving you any hints about what might happen next?</p>
Stanzas 4–8 (“My father and I . . . like it had never swarmed before.”)	
<p>How does the author play with language in these stanzas?</p>	<p>What effect does her language play have on the meaning of these stanzas?</p>
Stanzas 9–14 (“The wind screamed . . . and settled slowly over us.”)	
<p>What message do you think the author wants to express in these stanzas?</p>	<p>What words or phrases help you find the author’s message?</p>
Stanzas 15–17 (“When it let up a bit, . . . it wouldn’t turn over.”)	
<p>What questions do you have about these stanzas?</p>	<p>What do you think the author wants you to understand at the end of the poem?</p>