"All the World's a Stage"- by William Shakespeare

"All the world's a stage" is the phrase that begins a monologue from William Shakespeare's comedy As You Like It, spoken by the melancholy Jaques in Act II, Scene 7, Line 139. The speech compares the world to a stage and life to a play and catalogues the seven stages of a man's life, sometimes referred to as the seven ages of man. For a synopsis of the play, click HERE.

Before you read the speech, double click the image on the right to watch a video of Benedict Cumberbatch reciting it.





Read the speech, then highlight the seven ages of man as you find them. The first one is done for you.

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances, And one man in his time plays many parts,

- His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
 Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
 And then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
 And shining morning face, creeping like snail
 Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
- 10 Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier, Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel, Seeking the bubble reputation
- 15 Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice, In fair round belly with good capon lined, With eyes severe and beard of formal cut, Full of wise saws and modern instances; And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
- 20 Into the lean and slippered pantaloon, With spectacles on nose and pouch on side; His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice, Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
- And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
 That ends this strange eventful history,
 Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

*players - actors

*mewling - making a small, weak noise *satchel - a kind of old fashioned book bag

*mistress - female lover; girlfriend

*pard - a large cat; leopard

*jealous in honor - caring about his reputation

*bubble reputation - short-lived reputation

*justice - judge; wise man; someone respected

*capon - small chicken

*wise saws - wise sayings

*pantaloon - old man

*hose - tights; thin trousers worn by men in Shakespeare's time

*shank - a leg

*treble - the higher part of a piece of music

*sans - French for "without"

Above each image below, write the "age of man" portrayed by the image. The first one is done for you. (2 images will not be used.)

A the Infant	В	С
D	Е	F
G	Н	I
O O UPPARMIONIST		

Analysis. Answer the questions for each set of lines.					
All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances, And one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages.	What things are being compared? What are the "exits" and the "entrances"? What is "one man" being compared to?				
At first the infant, Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms	This is the shortest description. Why?				
And then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel And shining morning face, creeping like snail Unwillingly to school.	Is the schoolboy's behavior typical? Why?				
And then the lover, Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad Made to his mistress' eyebrow.	What is the lover's problem?				
Then a soldier, Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel, Seeking the bubble reputation Even in the cannon's mouth.	What does the soldier care most about? Is he brave? How do you know?				
And then the justice, In fair round belly with good capon lined, With eyes severe and beard of formal cut, Full of wise saws and modern instances; And so he plays his part.	The justice is an older adult who has a lot of life experiences. How does he share his wisdom?				
The sixth age shifts Into the lean and slippered pantaloon, With spectacles on nose and pouch on side; His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice, Turning again toward childish treble, pipes And whistles in his sound.	What has happened to this man? What physical changes has he undergone?				
Last scene of all, That ends this strange eventful history, Is second childishness and mere oblivion, Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.	What does "second childishness" mean? What's the effect of the repetition of "sans"?				



For more information about any of these examples, click <u>HERE</u>.

Figurative Language - Read each definition below, then find an example from the speech for each.
Simile. A comparison of two things using "like" or "as." (For example: "She looks like an angel")
Metaphor. A comparison of two things without the use of "like" or "as." (For example: "She is an angel")
Personification. Giving human characteristics to nonhuman things. (For example: "The moon smiled at me")
Synecdoche (si-nek-duh-kee). A figure of speech in which a part of something is used to represent the whole thing. (For example: "you're in good hands" or "I bought some new wheels")
Alliteration. The repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words in a line. Usually the words begin with the same letter. (For example: "sound" and "silence)
Consonance. The repetition of consonant sounds at the end of words in a line. Usually the words end with the same letter. (For example: "luck" and "deck")



Note: Enter all responses in red boldface type

Each age of man is associated with a particular sound. Go back to the speech and identify the sound associated with each age.				
Age	Name	Sounds associated with the age		
First	the Infant	The infant is mewling in the nurse's arms. Crying is the sound associated with the infant.		
Second				
Third				
Fourth				
Fifth				
Sixth				
Seventh				

choose one and re-write the description using modern terms, as if the character were living today.				