

Read pages 4-7 of the “Solarium” chapter in David Mitchell’s *Black Swan Green* from ‘A young man needs to learn when a woman’ to “‘My glass is empty.’ The last drops were the thickest” and answer the following questions:

1. How does Jason feel when Madame Crommelynck reads “Rocks”? Why does he feel this way?
2. What is Madame Crommelynck’s opinion of “Rocks”? How does she believe “Rocks” compares to other poems?
3. What is the meaning of Madame Crommelynck’s reference to Jason’s umbilical cords?
4. According to Madame Crommelynck what does poetry alone allow Jason to do?
5. According to Madame Crommelynck, how do beautiful words impact poetry? How does the “palate” reference develop this idea?
6. What is the “misconception” about poetry that Madame Crommelynck explains to Jason?

7. How does the reference to a “magnolia” develop Madame Crommelynck’s idea about beauty?
8. How does Madame Crommelynck develop a central idea of the text through the comparison between “the amateur” and “the master”?
9. How does the exchange about the definition of beauty develop a central idea?
10. How does the phrase “Beauty *is*” refine a central idea? Why does Mitchell use italics for the word *is*?
11. Summarize the conversation Madame Crommelynck and Jason have about a potter’s beautiful vase. How does this discussion develop a central idea?