**Nettles  by Vernon Scannell 30 marks**

My son aged three fell in the nettle bed.
'Bed' seemed a curious name for those green spears,
That regiment of **spite** behind the shed:
It was no place for **rest**. With sobs and tears
The boy came seeking comfort and I saw
White blisters beaded on his tender skin.
We soothed him till his pain was not so raw.
At last he offered us a watery grin,
And then I took my billhook, honed the blade
And went **outside** and slashed in fury with it
Till not a nettle in that **fierce** parade
Stood upright any more. And then I lit
A funeral pyre to burn the **fallen** dead,
But in two weeks the busy sun and rain
Had called up tall recruits behind the shed:
My son would often feel sharp wounds again.

Make sure that you have read the poem carefully before you attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is this poem about? (2)
2. Why does the poet say that ‘Bed’ is a curious name for those spears? (2)
3. What do you think a ‘billhook’ could be? (1)
4. The whole poem is actually a metaphor, using the nettles as part of the information.
	1. What is a metaphor? (1)
	2. What is the metaphor being explored in the poem? (2)
	3. Quote ONE phrase or word that substantiates (proves) your previous answer. (1)
	4. What is the meaning of the metaphor? (What is the message of the metaphor?) (2)
	5. If you had to rename the poem to show its real meaning, what would your title be? (2)
5. List three colours either mentioned or implied in the poem. (You may have to work out the colour.) (3)
6. The poet has very strong feelings about the incident.
7. How did the poet feel about the incident? (1)
8. Quote ONE phrase or word that substantiates your previous answer. (1)
9. Does the poem have a rhyming pattern? If so, write down the pattern. If not, explain your answer. (1)
10. Give ONE example of alliteration in the poem. (1)
11. Give synonyms for the underlined words, keeping the meanings in context of the poem. Write down the word and its synonym. (5)
12. Give **antonyms** for the words in **bold**, Write down the word and its antonym. (5)