The poet relates his experiences teaching a college English class.

Students
by Tom Wayman

The freshman\(^1\) class first printouts showed birthdates so recent Wayman was sure the computer was in error. One young man, however, was curious about Wayman’s mention near the start of term of his old college newspaper: “You were an editor when? Wow, that’s before I was born.”

The wisdom of the students hadn’t altered, though. Wayman observed many clung to The Vaccination Theory of Education he remembered: once you have had a subject you are immune and never have to consider it again. Other students continued to endorse The Dipstick Theory of Education: as with a car engine, where as long as the oil level is above the add line there is no need to put in more oil, so if you receive a pass or higher why put any more into learning?

At the front of the room, Wayman sweated to reveal his alternative. “Adopt The Kung Fu Theory of Education,” he begged. “Learning as self-defence. The more you understand about what’s occurring around you the better prepared you are to deal with difficulties.”

\(^1\) freshman: first-year students
The students remained skeptical.
A young woman was a pioneer
of The Easy Listening Theory of Learning:
spending her hours in class
with her tape recorder earphones on,
silently enjoying a pleasanter world.
“Don’t worry, I can hear you,”
she reassured Wayman
when after some days he was moved to inquire.

Finally at term’s end
Wayman inscribed after each now-familiar name on the list
the traditional single letter.
And whatever pedagogical\(^2\) approach
he or the students espoused\(^3\),
Wayman knew this notation would be pored over
with more intensity than
anything else Wayman taught.

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\(^2\) *pedagogical*: relating to teaching and learning

\(^3\) *espoused*: adopt or support
10. What is the main source of conflict in the first stanza?
   A. lack of ability
   B. differences in age
   C. frustrations with technology
   D. inappropriateness of questions

11. What is suggested by Wayman’s thoughts about “The wisdom of the students” (line 9)?
   A. Wayman doubts his abilities as a teacher.
   B. Wayman ignores the needs and wants of his students.
   C. Wayman feels that the intellectual capacities of the students are impressive.
   D. Wayman believes that each generation of students share the same attitudes and values.

12. According to “The Vaccination Theory of Education,” what does it mean to be immune?
   A. never having to take that subject again
   B. being exempted from writing the final exam
   C. understanding a subject to the point of mastery
   D. finally realizing that not all course content will be tested

13. How do the students react to Wayman’s theory of teaching?
   A. with intensity
   B. with enjoyment
   C. with indifference
   D. with inquisitiveness

14. What is implied about the young woman who pioneers “The Easy Listening Theory of Learning” (lines 31 and 32)?
   A. She is deliberately defying Wayman.
   B. She is convinced that Wayman’s ideas are outdated.
   C. She does not value the lesson the way that Wayman does.
   D. She does not understand the subject despite Wayman’s efforts.
15. Which technique does the poet employ throughout the poem in order to help explain each theory of education?

A. rhyme  
B. allusion  
C. metaphor  
D. oxymoron

16. Which statement best expresses the students’ attitudes towards education?

A. A positive attitude is more important than good grades.  
B. The mark you receive matters more than what you learn.  
C. The effort you put into learning determines your level of satisfaction.  
D. A good teacher is more inspirational than interesting subject material.

17. Which statement best expresses the central message of the poem?

A. All educational theories are equally valid.  
B. Students often fail to recognize the true value of learning.  
C. Real learning cannot take place without an effective philosophical approach.  
D. Education will not improve until educators work harder at understanding their students.

18. Which word best captures the overall tone of the poem?

A. passionate  
B. lighthearted  
C. argumentative  
D. condescending