

High Flight

Poem by John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds—and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air. . . .

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark, or even eagle flew—
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

Fueled

Poem by Marcie Hans

Fueled
by a million
man-made
wings of fire—
the rocket tore a tunnel through the sky—
and everybody cheered.
Fueled
only by a thought from God—
the seedling
urged its way
through the thickness of black—
and as it pierced
the heavy ceiling of the soil—
and launched itself
up into outer space—
no
one
even
clapped.

RESPONDING TO THE POEMS

- What are the moods of the poems? How do the speakers feel?
- What are the main ideas of the poems? Why do you think so?
- What kind of craft do you think the speaker is flying in "High Flight"?
- Which of the two actions in "Fueled" do you think is the most difficult to do? Explain.
- What two things is the poet in "Fueled" comparing? Do you find the comparison effective? Why or why not?
- How do these poems fit into a theme on exploration and technology?