**Year 8 ILT- Spring Term**

**Reading Comprehension 3- An extract from *The Hill We Climb* by Amanda Gorman**

Read the extract from the poem below and complete the comprehension tasks which follow.

When day comes, we ask ourselves where can we find light in this never-ending shade?  
The loss we carry, a sea we must wade.  
We’ve braved the belly of the beast.  
We’ve learned that quiet isn’t always peace,  
and the norms and notions of what “just” is isn’t always justice.  
And yet, the dawn is ours before we knew it.  
Somehow we do it.  
Somehow we’ve weathered and witnessed a nation that isn’t broken,  
but simply unfinished.  
We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president, only to find herself reciting for one.

And yes, we are far from polished, far from pristine,  
but that doesn’t mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect.  
We are striving to forge our union with purpose.  
To compose a country committed to all cultures, colours, characters, and conditions of man.  
And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us.

Understanding Questions:

1. Rephrase the first question in your own words. Use a dictionary to help you define unfamiliar words.
2. Read the first four lines again. What is one of the main lessons that people have learned?
3. How does the poet want people to see their nation?
4. Consider the lines: ‘We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president, only to find herself reciting for one.’ Why does the poet see America as being a special place?
5. Who is the poet reciting this poem in front of?
6. List two details that we learn about the poet’s life. Look at the section beginning ‘We, the successors of a country’ to help you.
7. Which line tells us that things are not perfect in America?
8. What does the poet suggest that Americans are not aiming to do?
9. Look at the final two lines of the poem. What does the poet want America to look like?
10. Considering the whole poem, how can we tell that the poet thinks this has been a difficult time in America?

Watch the poet performing this piece by following this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZ055ilIiN4