

EYE CONTACT

1. **What is your normal response to people who ask for money on the street? What does your response depend on?**
2. **Read "*Eye Contact*".**
3. **Choose the stanza that most appeals to you. Copy it in your notebook and write a short paragraph about it. - (*what it says / why you chose it / what makes this poem effective*)**

Eye Contact

By Sandy Shreve

Days repeat themselves in a grey
weight of clouds, pressed against
her shoulders like a drenched coat
On this street, she reflects
an absence of trees-seems only
a remote flower, a petal
sealed within a bud that spring
keeps missing

I've been striding past her
every day now, for weeks
Each time, my body taut
as thread about to break
as if it will
if I look straight at her smile at her
smile and nod when she holds
out her hand for a quarter

(continued on next page)

I pass into the store
pretend I do not hear
her winced plea
knowing I'll save the change
for her anyway-will come out
head clamped to avoid her glance
drop the silver where I expect
her palm to be

But yesterday, she'd
curled her fingers to her coat
against the cold, and the sound
of money tickling concrete
broke my practiced trance

for an instant, our eyes met awkwardly
Then mine sidled away like thieves
as her gaze spilled to the pavement
to capture metal seeds