Instructions: Read the following poem carefully. Then answer questions 1–5.

Identity

Let them be as flowers,
always watered, fed, guarded, admired,
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.

I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed,
5 clinging on cliffs, like an eagle
wind-wavering above high, jagged rocks.

To have broken through the surface of stone,
to live, to feel exposed to the <u>madness</u>
of the vast, eternal sky.
10 To be swayed by the breezes of an ancient sea,
carrying my soul, my seed, beyond the mountains of time
or into the abyss of the bizarre.

I'd rather be unseen, and if
then shunned by everyone,
15 than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,
growing in clusters in the fertile valley,
where they're praised, handled, and plucked
by greedy, human hands.

I'd rather smell of musty, green stench
20 than of sweet, fragrant lilac.
If I could stand alone, strong and free,
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed.

"Identity" by Julio Noboa Polanco, from *The Rican, Journal of Contemporary Thought*. Copyright 1973 by Julio Noboa Polanco.

_____ 1. What word most closely describes the feeling or atmosphere created for the audience in
the poem?
   a. Motivated
   b. Depressed
   c. Insulted
   d. Lighthearted

_____ 2. What word has the closest meaning to the underlined word in line 8?
   a. Insanity
   b. Foolishness
   c. Excitement
   d. Obsession

_____ 3. What two words best describe the tone of the poem?
   a. Condescending and passionate
   b. Fearful and happy
   c. Somber and serious
   d. Threatening and optimistic

_____ 4. Why does the author use the word "harnessed" to describe the flowers in line 3?
   a. To show that the flowers are tied with rope
   b. To show that the flowers are trapped
   c. To show that the flowers are tough
   d. To show that the flowers are happy

_____ 5. Which term or phrase best expresses the meaning of the word "seed" as used in line 11?
   a. Body
   b. Common sense
   c. Scent
   d. Spiritual being