You Can't Be That by Brian Patten

I told them:
When I grow up
I'm not going to be a scientist
Or someone who reads the news on TV.
No, a million birds will fly through me.
I'M GOING TO BE A TREE.

They said,
You can't be that. No, you can't be that.

I told them:
When I grow up
I'm not going to be an airline pilot,
A dancer, a lawyer or an MC.
No, huge whales will swim in me.
I'M GOING TO BE AN OCEAN!

They said,
You can't be that. No, you can't be that.

I told them:
I'm not going to be a DJ,
A computer programmer, a musician or beautician.
No, streams will flow through me, I'll be the home of eagles;
I'll be full of nooks, crannies, valleys and fountains.
I'M GOING TO BE A RANGE OF MOUNTAINS!

They said,
You can't be that. No, you can't be that.

I asked them:
Just what do you think I am?
Just a child, they said,
And children always become
At least one of the things
We want them to be.

They do not understand me.
I'll be a stable if I want, smelling of fresh hay,
I'll be a lost glade in which unicorns still play.
They do not realize I can fulfill any ambition.
They do not realize among them
walks a magician.

1. Read the passage. Time yourself. How long did it take?
2. Re-read the passage. Time yourself. How long did it take?

Dive Deeper 1
Answer the questions, that are on the next page.

Dive Deeper 2
Mark your answers.

Dive Deeper 3
Next to each answer, write the skill/s that you have used.

Questioning	Find the meaning of the text and further your understanding.
Visualising	Use your imagination to picture what is happening in a text.
Sequencing	Write the things in time order.
Summarising	Find the key points and explain your understanding.
Predicting	Use clues from what you have read and what you already know to make an educated guess about what might happen next.
Retrieval	Retrieve (fetch) and record information directly from the text.
Deduction	Search for clues in the text to find evidence.
Inference	Use what you have read. Use what you know or have experienced before.
Stamina	Read quickly and with understanding for longer periods of time.
Speed.	Read quickly. Understand the text.

1. Is the narrator of this poem an adult or a child?

   Explain how you know.

   _____

2. Why do you think the narrator doesn't name "*them*" or say who "*they*" are?

   _____

3. The poem is divided into verses.

   Choose **two** reasons why the poet starts a new verse.

   A different person is speaking. ☐

   It looks good on the page. ☐

   Poems need verses. ☐

   Each verse is a maximum of six lines long. ☐

   Longer verses introduce new ideas. ☐

4. "*They do not realise among them*

   Walks a magician."

   Where does the magician come from?

   _____

5. Look at all the things the speaker says he wants to be. Write one thing they all have in common.

   _____

6. What do you think is the poet's message to children in this poem?

   Explain your answer, using quotations from the poem.

   _____

   _____

Dive Deeper 4

Do you like the way it has been written? Would you include anything else?

Compare the text that you have read this week with the one you read last week.

What is similar about the two texts? What is different?

ANSWERS

1. A child because the poem is about "when I grow up".
2. One of the following:
   - Because he thinks it's obvious in the context.
   - Because the narrator knows who "they" are and we're reading the narrator's thoughts.
   - Because it doesn't really matter – "they" can be anyone who doesn't understand.
3.

A different person is speaking.	☑
It looks good on the page.	☐
Poems need verses.	☐
Each verse is a maximum of six lines long.	☐
Longer verses introduce new ideas.	☑

4. The magician is the writer/poet/child.
5. Any answer that links all of the things. For example,
   - They are all places.
   - They are all big and contain a lot of space.
   - They all have creatures living in them.
   - They are all linked to nature.
6. One of the following:
   - Parents don't understand you: "They do not understand me" (verse 7).
   - You should be whatever you want to be: "They do not realize I can fulfil any ambition" (verse 8).
   - Being a poet is the best job because you are a magician so you "can fulfil any ambition" (verse 8).