



These discussion questions were developed in conjunction with Lightbox interviews with [Tarfia Faizullah](#) and [Phillip B. Williams](#). For more information, please see [www.lightboxpoetry.com](http://www.lightboxpoetry.com).

## Discussion Questions

- Listen to Tarfia Faizullah reading her poem, “100 Bells,” on the Poetry Foundation website. How does the poem achieve coherence even as it seems fragmentary? What strands of narrative can you untangle? How do they relate to and inform each other?
- How does “100 Bells” imagine the importance truth-telling in the poem? How do the poem’s short, declarative sentences promote and cut against that interest?
- How does the interviewer acknowledge grief in “The Interviewer Acknowledges Grief”? What is the nature of that grief? Whom does she acknowledge it to?
- How does the speaker of “The Interviewer Acknowledges Grief” present her anxieties about being a witness to history, to the tragedies of other people’s lives? What questions do you think are important when writing poems about other people’s lives?
- Describe the two historical narratives at play in “1971.” How does Faizullah use landscape to unite them?
- Why does Faizullah vary the forms between sections of “1971”? How does each sonic or visual arrangement enact her speaker’s acts of witnessing? You might also describe why you think the poem unfolds as it does, especially given its chronological title.
- In what ways do Tarfia Faizullah’s selection of poems correspond to her and Phillip B. Williams’s definitions in their Lightbox interviews?