

# What is it? II

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**This task is about making inferences to interpret a poem.**

They wash their hands in it.  
The salt turns to soap  
In their hands. Wearing it  
At their wrists, they make bracelets  
Of it; it runs in beads  
On their jackets. A child's  
Plaything? It has hard whips  
That it cracks, and knuckles  
To pummel you. It scrubs  
And scours; it chews rocks  
To sand; its embraces  
Leave you without breath. Mostly  
It is a stomach, where bones,  
Wrecks, continents are digested.

*Author: R. S.*

*Thomas*

a) What is "it" in line 13?

b) In lines 6 and 7, the poet asks a question, "A child's plaything?"  
In your own words, explain the poet's answer to this question.

c) Explain the meaning of the last two lines of the poem.