Personification Exercise

To make writing more vivid, an author sometimes treats ideas, animals, or objects like persons. This device is called Personification. To describe the sound of a stream, an author may borrow an ability that only a person possesses in order to make his imagery more vivid. He may write that “the stream murmured” instead of “the stream flowed with almost no noise.” The use of “murmured” suggests that the stream is a person.

Directions: In each blank space below, an expression of personification is omitted. Choose from the list of words below the expression which would complete each sentence most vividly. The rest of the sentences will help you decide which expression is most appropriate for each sentence.

1. A long line of cars ________________________ about the delay at the bridge.
2. The melting candles ________________________ on the polished table.
3. In the center of town was a cathedral ________________________ the other roofs.
4. Tall sunflower stalks began to swing ________________________ in the breeze.
5. The cabin had no damage except a broken window which a spider ________________________.
6. Shadows of the vine ________________________ on the bedroom wall.
7. Five violets ________________________ on the rim of the vase.
8. Brightly ________________________ maples stood ________________________ along the driveway.
9. In the hayloft the mice squeaked and ________________________.
10. As the earth shook, our house ________________________.
11. Sandpipers ________________________ the edge of the beach with millions of tiny stitches.
12. The ranger watched helplessly as ________________________ of flame ________________________ one tall tree after another.
13. A huge limb of the oak broke off, leaving a gap which dripped sap ________________________.
14. As the storm approached ________________________ leaves ________________________ at my screen door for protection.
15. The ________________________ of the aged apple tree ________________________ under the weight of its fruit.
16. ________________________ clouds of smoke rose from the chimneys of the ________________________ village.

baked frightened danced and curtseyed looking down upon

gagged embroidered shed their wax tears like a bleeding wound

sagged knee-deep their golden heads

begged red tongues had tried to mend

sleepy gnarled arms chinned themselves

complained uniformed began to groan and tremble

demanded lazy shoulder to shoulder