**Belfast Confetti**

Suddenly as the riot squad moved in it was raining exclamation

marks,

Nuts, bolts, nails, car-keys. A fount of broken type. And

the explosion

Itself – an asterisk on the map. This hyphenated line, a burst

of rapid fire …

I was trying to complete a sentence in my head, but it kept

stuttering,

All the alleyways and side streets blocked with stops and

colons.

I know this labyrinth so well – Balaklava, Raglan, Inkerman,

Odessa Street –

Why can’t I escape? Every move is punctuated. Crimea Street.

Dead end again.

A Saracen, Kremlin-2 mesh. Makrolon face-shields. Walkie-

talkies. What is

My name? Where am I coming from? Where am I going?

A fusillade of question-marks.

**Task 1**

Draw a table and put the quotes highlighted above in the first column. In the second column, note what they refer to in the poem. In the third column note any feelings or emotions the narrator might be feeling at this point. The first has been done for you.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Quote | Represents what? | Feelings or emotions |
| raining exclamation  marks, | The Belfast Confetti. Could be gunfire or things being thrown. Links to the point that the riot squad moved in. | Fear, wanting to escape |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Task 2:

Answer the following questions in full sentences:

1. What event is being described in this poem?
2. Where is the narrator?
3. What is the effect of starting the poem with the adverb ‘Suddenly’?
4. Why does the sentence in his head keep ‘stuttering’? What does it suggest about how he is feeling?
5. Look up the word ‘labyrinth’ then explain why this line is confusing or paradoxical. ‘I know this labyrinth so well’.
6. What does this list describe? ‘A Saracen, Kremlin-2 mesh. Makrolon face-shields. Walkie-talkies.’ Why does he state it in this way rather than more obviously?
7. What is the effect of 3 questions in succession in the penultimate line?

TASK 3:

Now imagine that this is the aftermath of the bombing described in ‘Belfast Confetti’. Label and annotate the picture with phrases, words and punctuation marks from the poem to show what has happened and what the people caught up in the event could be thinking, feeling or saying.

