

POETRY

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THE FROG AND THE NIGHTINGALE

By Vikram Seth

SUMMARY

In a bog, which was called Bingle Bog, there lived a frog, who was crazy about his singing and incessantly sang from the evening to the morning light. All the creatures living in the bog found his songs to be most unpleasant and they tried to beat and insult him, but the frog was very insensitive and boastful. The frog kept singing with extreme passion because this was his way of expressing his heart-felt elation.

One day the creatures of the bog were pleasantly surprised to hear a very melodious and soothing song sung by a nightingale. The frog was shocked and felt jealous. He wanted to be the undisputed singer of the bog. The nightingale's song created a sensation and all the creatures praised it tremendously.

The frog was very cunning and he introduced himself as the owner of the tree, on which the nightingale sang. He also boasted that he was a music critic, who wrote for 'Bog Trumpet'. The nightingale was impressed that a musician like Mozart was taking interest in her. When the frog offered to train her for a modest fee, the nightingale felt that her dream had come true. The exploitation of the nightingale began. The frog would organise musical concerts and mint money. He would make the nightingale practise even in adverse weather. He instructed her to sing passionately and with full force, since that was what the public wanted. Initially a number of creatures flocked to listen to her, but later the crowd dwindled because the nightingale's songs became routine, lustreless and her voice was tired. The frog would scold and humiliate her for no reason. One day, out of sheer stress and fatigue, the nightingale's vein burst and she died.

The frog called the nightingale 'stupid', 'nervous' and 'without originality'. His ego was satisfied and he again became the 'unrivalled singer' of the bog.

सारांश

बिंगल नामक एक दलदल में एक मेढक रहता था जिसे गाने का उन्माद था वह सायंकाल से उषाकाल तक गाता ही रहता था। सभी जीव-जंतुओं को जो उस दलदल में रहते थे, उसका गाना अप्रिय लगता था। वे उसे पीटने और उसका अपमान करने का प्रयत्न करते परंतु मेढक बहुत ही संवेदनहीन और बड़बोला था। वह भावावेश में गाता ही रहता।

दिल के उद्गार और उल्लास व्यक्त करने का उसके पास यही एक विकल्प था।

एक दिन दलदल वासियों ने एक मधुर और सुरीला गीत सुना जो एक कोयल गा रही थी। गीत सुनकर मेढक को गहरे सदमे और द्वेष का अनुभव हुआ। वह दलदल का अकेला और अविवादित गायक बना रहना चाहता था। बुलबुल के गीत ने एक हलचल मचा दी थी। दल-दल के सभी प्राणी बढ़-चढ़कर उसकी प्रशंसा कर रहे थे।

मेढक बहुत चालाक था। उसने कोयल को अपना परिचय उस वृक्ष के मालिक के रूप में दिया, जिस वृक्ष पर बैठकर बुलबुल गाती थी। उसने शेखी बघारी कि वह एक संगीत आलोचक है जो "दलदल तुरही" के लिए गीत लिखता है।

बुलबुल अत्यंत प्रभावित हुई कि मोजार्ट जैसा प्रतिभाशाली संगीतज्ञ इसमें रूचि ले रहा है। जब मेढक ने बहुत ही साधारण फीस के बदले उसे संगीत प्रशिक्षण देने का प्रस्ताव रखा तो बुलबुल को लगा उसके सपने साकार होने जा रहे हैं और बुलबुल का शोषण शुरू हो गया। मेढक ने संगीत समारोह आयोजित करने शुरू कर दिए। खराब मौसम में भी वह बुलबुल को गाने के लिए बाध्य करता। वह उसे भावमग्न होकर गाने को कहता क्योंकि जनता को यही पसन्द था। आरम्भ में कुछ जीव-जंतु सुनने को जमा हुए परन्तु धीरे-धीरे भीड़ कम होती गई क्योंकि बुलबुल का गीत नित्यक्रम बन कर रह गया था जिसमें कोई रस न था और उसकी आवाज़ भी थकी सी हो गई थी। मेढक उसे डाँटता और अपमानित करता। एक दिन अत्यंत दबाव व तनाव में बुलबुल की नस फट गई और उसकी मृत्यु हो गई।

मेढक ने बुलबुल को मूर्ख और उतेजना का शिकार बताया और कहा उसके पास मौलिकता नहीं थी। उसका अहंभाव शांत हो गया था और वह दोबारा दलदल का बेजोड़ गायक बन गया था।

WORD-MEANINGS

- **dusk** : late evenings
- **blared** : loud & irritable sound
- **stilled** : reduced
- **dumbstruck** : as if under a spell
- **waded** : came through water
- **twitched** : moved, shook
- **wield** : use
- **Mozart** : a great musician from Austria
- **twittering** : talking with great excitement
- **mid-flight** : In the middle of changing notes
- **frills** : embellished musical compositions
- **precision** : accuracy
- **bounced** : just went on
- **addicted** : used to, become habitual
- **prone** : used to

LITERARY DEVICES

SYMBOLS

- The Frog :symbolises opportunistic and cunning people who exploit others for their own benefits
- The Nightingale : represents naturally talented artists who fail to achieve fame due to their innocence.

METAPHORS

- a solitary loon ● Mozart in disguise ● Foghorn

ALLITERATION

- Bingle Bog ● dawn, awn

EXPLANATION OF SOME EXPRESSIONS

1. Croaked away in Bingle **Bog**..... (line 2)

Explanation ...

Bog is a wet and marshy land. The poet has deliberately used 'Bingle' for alliteration.

2. He croaked **awn** and **awn** and **awn**..... (line 4)

Explanation ...

It means 'on and on'. These words are phonetically selected and also rhyme with dawn.

3. And the **crass cacophony**..... (line 7)

Explanation ...

'Crass' means meaningless and cacophony is a very loud and unpleasant noise. Here it is used to refer to the unpleasant voice of the frog.

4. To display his heart's **elation**..... (line 14)

Explanation ...

Elation means happiness. In this context, it means that the frog sang to express the happiness of his heart.

5. Stared toward the **sumac**, **rapt**..... (line 21)

Explanation ...

Sumac is a tree with cane-shaped fruits. When the nightingale sat on a sumac tree and sang her melodious song, all the creatures of the bog were mesmerised and were curious to know who the singer was.

6. For my splendid **baritone**..... (line 44)

Explanation ...

The frog gets a complex after hearing the nightingale and the praise she has got. But he is very boastful and calls his unpleasant voice as 'baritone', which is good for male singers.

7. The **technique** was fine of course.

But it lacked a certain force..... (line 50)

Explanation ...

The frog is jealous so he gives a negative complement in a very tactful manner. He cannot find any fault, so admits that the 'technique' is flawless but the song is not full of passion.

8. I don't think the song's **divine**

But -oh-well-at least it's mine..... (lines 55-56)

Explanation ...

The nightingale is trying to be very modest since the creatures of the bog had already declared her song to be 'too divine'. She is overawed by a great critic like frog, so she says in a timid manner that she is proud of the originality of her song. Ironically, she is chastised in the end for not being original.

9. *Breathed: "This is a fairy tale -*

And you're Mozart in disguise" (lines 64-65)

Explanation ...

The nightingale cannot believe her luck, since dreams only materialise in fairytales. Moreover, she is too impressed and overawed by the frog's offer to train her. So she compares him to the famous German musician Mozart.

10. *Flushed with confidence, and fired*

with both art and adoration (lines 70-71)

Explanation ...

The nightingale is greatly inspired. She has already received praise and appreciation from the creatures of the bog, so she is full of confidence and is ready to create ripples in the world of art.

11. *Journeyed up and down the scale* (line 84)

Explanation ...

The frog persuades the nightingale to sing in rainy weather, which is not suitable to her. He makes her practise at various pitch-levels, tries many musical notes, and as a result the nightingale is too tired.

12. *Owl of Sandwich, Duck of Kent*.....

Mallard and Milady Trent

Martin Cardinal Mephisto

And the Coot of Monte Cristo..... (lines 90-94)

Explanation ...

The poet wishes to create humour so this refers to the titled crowd, which are authentic royal titles.

Earl of Sandwich, Duke of Kent

My lord and Milady of Trent

Martin and Cardinal from Mephisto

Count of Monte Cristo.

13. “We must aim for better *billings*
You still owe me sixty shillings”..... (line 109-110)

Explanation ...

The frog’s greed is insatiable. He coaxes the nightingale to sing more passionately, so that more creatures come to hear her and he can mint more money. Moreover, he exploits her further by charging her for giving music training.

14. And, my dear, “lay on more *trills*,
Audiences enjoy such *frills*.....” (lines 105-106)

Explanation ...

The frog wants to tire the nightingale, so he asks her to sing very fast-paced musical notes, repetitively, which will prove to be very exhausting. He gives the logic that the audience prefer very fast, sensational embellishments in a song.

15. Night on night her tired song
Zipped and trilled and bounced along..... (lines 113-114)

Explanation ...

The nightingale is thoroughly exhausted; her voice has lost its freshness and magic. The melody of her voice has been replaced by musical notes that are repetitive but not pleasant to hear. The songs just appear to drag on. So the creatures of the bog lose interest.

16. “Use your wits and follow fashion
Puff your lungs out with passion”..... (lines 125-126)

Explanation ...

This piece of advice from the frog proves to be the nightingale’s undoing. She tries to perform as instructed by the callous frog and tries to infuse more energy and force in her song. Unfortunately, this results in bursting a vein and the nightingale succumbs to her death under pressure.

17. But she was a stupid creature -
.....Far too prone to influence..... (lines 132-134)

Explanation ...

These lines reveal how malicious and hard-hearted the frog is. He starts criticising the nightingale the moment she dies. Instead of a worthy tribute, he calls her stupid, vulnerable and too nervous. Basically he wants to be rid of any blame that may be heaped on him, for her death. He is right in calling the nightingale ‘too prone to influence’ because it was her vulnerability that led to her death.

18. “That your song must be your own
that’s why I sing with *panache*”

Explanation ...

Nightingale was proud of her originality and the frog had earlier also criticised her that it was not enough reason to boast about. He continues in his conceited manner, telling everyone that no one could imitate his confident and elegant style.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Ans. 1. Listed below are a few character traits of people. Some are positive qualities, while others are not. Tick mark the ones you feel are desirable qualities in a person.

Characteristic	Tick Mark	Characteristic	Tick Mark	Characteristic	Tick Mark
Insensitive		High-headed		Manipulative	
Humorous	3	Egoistic		Patronising	
Naive		Humble	3	Submissive	3
Opportunistic		Foolish		Arrogant	
Creative	3	Original	3	Conniving	
Disapproving		Helpful	3	Innocent	3
Commanding		Calculative		Condescending	
Benevolent	3	Crafty		Scheming	
Simple	3	Wise	3	Rude	
Overbearing		Generous	3	Boastful	
Sly		Gentle	3	Proud	
Territorial	3	Aggressive		Servile	

6. Complete the table given below. You can use the words in the box given below.

Character	Extract	Personality traits
Nightingale	Sorry - was that you who spoke?	polite, timorous
Frog	Yes, ... you see, I'm the frog who owns this tree In this bog I've long been known For my splendid baritone.	boastful conceited
Nightingale	Did you ... did you like my song?	submissive, meek, innocent, naive
Frog	Not too bad - but far too long The technique was fine, of course, But it lacked a certain force.	arrogant conniving crafty
Frog	Without proper training such as I And a few others can supply You'll remain a mere beginner, But with me you'll be a winner.	manipulative clever scheming dominating
Nightingale	But I can't sing in this weather.	meek, submissive timid, nervous
Nightingale	... This is a fairy tale- And you're Mozart in disguise Come to earth before my eyes.	innocent naive humble foolish
Frog	Come, my dear - we'll sing together.	manipulative patronising
Frog	We must aim for better billing You still owe me sixty shillings.	mercenary manipulative opportunistic
Frog	Brainless bird - you're on the stage Use your wits and follow fashion. Puff your lungs out with your passion.	dominating superior insensitive patronising rude
Frog	... I tried to teach her, But she a was stupid creature.	arrogant crafty insensitive

Dismissive	Nervous	Timid	Presumptuous
Superior	Fawning	Shy	Polite
Meek	Possessive	Dominating	Mercenary

8. On the basis of your understanding of the poem, complete the sentences given below by choosing the appropriate option.

1. The frog's aim was to

- (a) make the nightingale a sensation
- (b) make the nightingale as good a singer as him
- (c) maintain his supremacy in the bog
- (d) make a lot of money

2. The animals reacted to the nightingale's song with

- (a) hatred
- (b) admiration
- (c) indifference
- (d) suggestions for improvement

3. The nightingale accepted the frog's tutelage as she

- (a) was not confident of herself
- (b) wanted to become as good a singer as the frog
- (c) wanted to become a professional singer
- (d) was not a resident of Bingle Bog

4. The nightingale was sorrowful and pale because

- (a) she had been practising in the rain
- (b) she had been performing all night
- (c) she was losing confidence in herself
- (d) she was falling ill

5. The audience was tired of her song because

- (a) they had heard it many times
- (b) it had become mechanical
- (c) she sounded tired
- (d) she had added trills to her song

6. She no longer enjoyed singing alone as

- (a) she wanted to sing only for the titled crowd
- (b) she was now used to the appreciation she got
- (c) the frog was no longer with her

(d) she had become proud of herself

Answers : 1. (c) 2. (b) 3. (a)

4. (b) 5. (b) 6. (b)

10. Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) How did the creatures of Bingle Bog react to the nightingale's singing ?

Ans. The creature of Bingle bog were surprised to hear the melodious and soothing voice of the Nightingale. Her singing created a sensation and won tremendous praise.

(b) Which are the different ways in which the frog asserts his importance ?

Ans. The frog pretended to be a great singer and he also said that he was the reporter of Bog 'Trumpet'. He boasted that he was a music critic and a musician like Mozart and was ready to train her.

(c) Why is frog's joy both sweet and bitter ?

[C.B.S.E. 2011 (T-1)]

Ans. Frog was happy to charge money for Nightingale's song but was unhappy at the popularity of the nightingale in the bog. Financially he was happy to make profit but he did not like the competition and the applause that the nightingale was giving him.

(d) Why was the frog angry ?

Ans. The nightingale's songs became dull, listless and routine due to exertion and stress. The crowds dwindled and stopped coming for the nightingale's songs. He was not making money so he was very unhappy.

(e) How did the frog become the unrivalled king of the bog again? [C.B.S.E. 2011 (T-1)]

Ans. The frog insulted and humiliated the nightingale. He made her practice continuously in rain and thunder. He instructed her to sing at very high notes. So out of sheer fatigue and stress, nightingale's vein burst and she died. So the bog had to tolerate the frog's singing once again.

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Why does the frog persist in singing though no one in the bog wishes to hear him?

Ans. The frog is too conceited and has an exaggerated opinion of himself as a singer. He thinks that his voice is a 'splendid baritone'. He wishes to remain the unrivalled singer of the bog. The frog is loud and most unmusical. All the creatures of the bog tried all the tricks

to drive him away. But the frog is too thick-skinned and continues to sing his 'crass cacophony' from the sumac tree. The frog was so passionate about his singing that he would sing incessantly from evening till morning light. This was his way of expressing his heart-felt joy, he claimed. The frog is a hypocrite, who only lives for himself. He is least concerned for the discomfort he is causing to others.

2. Do you think the nightingale was responsible for her own exploitation? Why/Why not?

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans. The nightingale is a singing 'genius' but she is not worldly-wise. Her serenade in the bingle bog leaves the creatures mesmerised but she does not have the foresight or the cleverness to cash upon her asset. She knows that she is a great sensation for the bog music lovers but gets exploited by the manipulative frog. The frog makes her practise again and again, exhausts her and she loses her star status. The nightingale is too vulnerable and becomes susceptible to fan following. She is a poor judge of psychology and does not see through the frog's clever plans. So she ends up paying with her life. Her end is a great tragedy, a sad culmination of an unfulfilled artist, who dies prematurely.

3. What does the poet wish to convey in the poem 'The Frog and the Nightingale'?

Ans. This is an allegorical poem by Vikram Seth and reveals a deeper meaning beneath the emotional story line. The frog is a living symbol of cunning and conniving

people, while the nightingale represents innocence and vulnerability to the extreme. Artists like the frog are shams without substance and thrive on the misfortune of others. They are loathed, hated and have little worth themselves, so they derive sadistic pleasure in tormenting and exploiting others. Naturally talented singers are sometimes not worldly-wise, so they fall prey to scheming 'touts'.

The poet ridicules such music organisers who mint money by cheating and exploiting others. There is a hint of satire evident, when the poet talks about money making people, who make false promises and destroy natural talent.

The poet also highlights the significance of public adulation in the life of an artist like the nightingale. She is innocent to praise and admiration but gradually, she also becomes addicted to it. So it can be said that even modest artists wish to perform before power-packed audience and the jingle of cash-counters gives them an emotional high.

The poet concludes that success is a game like tug-of-war, in which the clever survive and the innocent and vulnerable succumb to bitter defeat.

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the following and choose the most appropriate option from the ones provided to you.

1. *Other creatures loathed his voice,
But, alas, they had no choice,
And the crass cacophony
Blared out from the sumac tree
At whose foot the frog each night
Minstrelled on till morning light*
- (i) **Where did this creature live?**
(a) It lived near the pond
(b) It lived on the mountain
(c) It lived under the sumac tree
(d) It lived in a deep valley
- (ii) **Why is his voice referred to as 'crass cacophony'?**
(a) It was boring
(b) It was unmusical and loud
(c) It had a weak voice
(d) It had no control over his voice
- (iii) **Why did he sing all night? How did his singing affect others?**
(a) They were indifferent
(b) They felt cheerful
(c) They encouraged him all the more
(d) They were irritated and felt a lot of discomfort

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (b) (iii) (d)

2. *And a solitary loon
Wept, beneath the summer morn
Toads and teals and tiddlers, captured
By her voice cheered on, enraptured
'Bravo!' "Too divine!" "Encore!"
So the nightingale once more.
Quite unused to such applause
Sang till dawn, without a pause.*
- (i) **How did the nightingale reciprocate their compliments?**
(a) She was indifferent
(b) She was afraid of the fog
(c) She was so happy that she sang till morning
(d) She went back to her nest
- (ii) **How did the solitary loon behave differently from others?**
(a) he went to sleep
(b) he clapped loudly
(c) he gave lot of compliments
(d) he wept
- (iii) **Who are 'toads, teals and tiddlers'?**
(a) insects
(b) big animals
(c) amphibians like ducks and fish
(d) animals which live in water

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (d) (iii) (c)

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – NON-MCQs

Read the following extracts and answer the following questions.

- (1) *And the whole admiring bog
Stared towards the sumac, rapt
And when she had ended, clapped
Ducks had swum and herons waded
to her as she serenaded*

(a) **What was the reaction of the nightingale's song?**

Ans : All the residents near the sumac tree clapped, praised and felt ecstatic at the nightingale's song.

(b) **Explain 'serenaded' and 'rapt'.**

Ans : 'Serenaded' means sang beautifully and 'rapt' means totally mesmerised.

(c) **How did the nightingale sing and make a difference to the frog's songs?**

Ans : She sang very musically and with great emotion which was very different from the frog's loud and harsh voice.

- (2) *"Not too bad - but far too long
The technique was fine of course
But it lacked a certain force".*

(a) **Why is the frog making the above comments?**

Ans : The frog wishes to impress the nightingale as if he is an expert and get her to train.

(b) **What defects does he point out in the nightingale's songs ?**

Ans : The frog states that her song lacked energy and was too long.

(c) **What was the reaction of the nightingale to the above comments ?**

Ans : The nightingale was impressed as she was very vulnerable and innocent.

- (3) *Flushed with confidence and fired
with both art and adoration
song and was a huge sensation
... And the frog with great precision
counted heads and charged admission*

(a) **How had nightingale changed after her success?**

Ans : The nightingale became confident and enjoyed her success.

(b) **How did the frog make use of this situation?**

Ans : The frog arranged concerts for her and minted lot of money.

(c) **What do the above lines reflect about the nightingale and the frog's temperament?**

Ans : The nightingale was a true artist who thrived on the adulation of the crowd. The frog was a shrewd businessman, and was very materialistic.

- (4) *For six hours, till she was shivering
and her voice was hoarse and quivering
Though subdued and sleep deprived
In the night her throat revived*

(a) **Why had the nightingale come to this state?**

Ans : The nightingale had sung for six hours at a stretch, so she was very tired.

(b) **How did she revive?**

Ans : At night her throat healed after rest.

(c) **What would be the future of this kind of exertion?**

Ans : She would succumb to such pressure and exertion and that is what happened.

- (5) *"And my dear, lay on more trills
Audiences enjoy such frills
You must make your public happier
Give them something sharper, snappier
We must aim for better billings."*

(a) **What are the suggestions given by the frog for improvement?**

Ans : The frog wanted more embellishments and fast-paced notes from the nightingale.

(b) **Do you believe the frog's suggestions are justified?**

Ans : No, the frog wanted to tire and exploit the nightingale.

(c) **What objective is there for the frog in giving the suggestions?**

Ans : The frog wanted money and be the undisputed singer of the bog.

- (6) *At a voice so uninspired
And the ticket office gross
Crashed and she grew more morose
For her ears were now addicted
to applause quite restricted.*

(a) **Why did the crowd stop listening to the nightingale?**

Ans : The nightingale's songs became dull, routine and uninspiring due to continuous singing.

(b) How did it affect the nightingale?

Ans : She was depressed because she had become addicted to praise and adulation.

(c) The nightingale is a typical artist. What character-trait of hers is being reflected here?

Ans : She thrives on the adulation and praise of her fans, and had become addicted to it.

**(7) Well, poor bird - she should have known.
That your song must be your own
That's why I sing with panache**

(a) How does the frog express his sympathy?

Ans : The frog pretends to be sympathetic by saying that the nightingale should have restricted herself to her own style.

(b) What character-traits are reflected by the frog's comments?

Ans : He is inhuman, manipulative and cruel.

(c) Explain 'panache'.

Ans : It means 'elegant style', grand manner

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How was the frog in the poem, 'The Frog and the Nightingale' responsible for the death of the nightingale?

Ans : The frog was very manipulative and inhuman. He took full advantage of the nightingale's innocence and vulnerability. He was clever to exploit the nightingale's weakness for, fame and adoration of the fans. He made her sing in rough weathers, in rain and storm, continuously for hours together. He forced her to pack more energy and sing fast-paced notes. So sheer exertion made the nightingale burst a vein and die.

2. "Artists thrive and flourish due to the admiration of their fans." Do you think this statement proves true in case of the nightingale? Discuss.

Ans : Yes, the nightingale did get addicted to praise and fan-following. It is natural for any artist to look for fame

and popularity because they not only thrive on it but also derive inspiration to perform better. The nightingale was no different. She did not enjoy singing when the residents of the bog stopped coming to listen to her concerts.

3. In spite of the frog's singing the whole night, why did the creatures in the Bingle Bog hate him?

OR

How did the Bingle Bog creatures react to frog's song and the nightingale's song?

Ans : The creatures of Bingle Bog were very irritated by the loud, brash singing of the frog. The frog was totally insensitive to their discomfort and no amount of threats, beating could stop the frog. The nightingale's songs were a pleasant relief. She was musical, melodious and never disturbed the creatures of Bingle Bog for no reason.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. The nightingale was foolish and could be exploited. Explain in 100-125 words.

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans : The nightingale had a typical temperament of an artist. She was very musical and her melody not only earned her great appreciation but also made some creatures cry. The crowd of her concerts consisted of some with titles and creatures from far also flocked to listen to her. She quickly became addicted to their praise but lacked acute business sense. She was not practical or worldly wise and got very foolishly trapped by the clever frog. She never realised that he was making money and cheating her. She never saw through his manipulations that he wanted her to overexert. He criticised her needlessly and made her

lose confidence. So it was the nightingale's fault to succumb to the clever frog's tricks. She never realised her own interest and welfare till the end. Her end was inevitable.

2. The frog was too boastful and conceited. The nightingale was too modest and unaware of her latent talent. The frog was insensitive to public reaction. The nightingale thrived solely on public adulation. Compare and contrast the singing of the frog with that of the nightingale in the light of the above statements.

Ans : The frog was conceited and self-centred. He sang loudly, brashly all through the night, thus disturbing all the creatures of the Bingle Bog. The frog was rude, arrogant and too boastful. The bog-creatures were so fed up that

they prayed, resorted to beating but nothing could stop his irritating and noisy singing. The frog basically lived and sang to please himself. He was egoistic and self-centred.

In contrast the nightingale was too sensitive and polite. She was innocent and very gullible. Despite being an excellent singer, she loses confidence because of the frog. So she is an artist who has no confidence in herself and needs others to either boost her morale or break it. The nightingale was most pleasant and the frog was most irritating and unmusical.

3. Vikram Seth has used irony and symbols with great dexterity in the poem ‘The Frog and the Nightingale.’ Discuss by giving examples.

Ans : The poet has incorporated a large variety of meanings beneath the emotional storyline. The poem is allegorical in nature for the frog is a symbol of very clever and manipulative people who exploit young artists and abort their careers. The nightingale represents true and innocent artists who are taken for a ride by the people like frog in the guise of organisers who harm the blooming careers of great ‘geniuses’ in the making. It is ironical that nightingale enchants and pleases everyone, but does not understand her own strength or talent. The poet also highlights the importance of public applause and the importance of blooming careers. It is ironical that many times a good talent is nipped in the bud, like that of the nightingale.

4. How did the Frog break the nightingale’s spirit and destroy her? (100 to 125 words)

Ans : The frog wanted to be the undisputed king of Bingle Bog. He sang to his delight and could not stand any kind of rivalry. Even though he was hated by all but there was no one to compete with. He is extremely passionate about his loud and unmusical voice and has an exaggerated opinion about himself. When the nightingale arrives, she mesmerises everyone with her politeness and musical voice. The frog senses competition. So he forcibly becomes her tutor and mentor and strategically plans, not only to finish her career but also to end her life. He makes her sing in rough weather, endlessly and advises her to exert more and more. As a result, the nightingale succumbs to pressure and the frog emerges as the king of Bingle Bog again.

5. Do you think that ‘The Frog and the Nightingale’ is a humorous poem or a tragic one? Give arguments to support your answer.

Ans : The basic storyline of the poem is humorous. The poet has added lot of humorous touches like the pun of words like “owl of Sandwich” etc. The frog’s exaggerated opinion of himself is really funny and the fact that he is compared to ‘Mozart’, a great musician, is quite hilarious. There are bits of humour here and there but the message and essence of the story is tragic. The poem is a tragic tale of a great singer whose flourishing and thriving career is ended prematurely. The nightingale is too innocent, too gullible and her succumbing to her death is a masterpiece of great tragedy. Her end arouses sympathy for her and hatred for such conniving cheats who exploit natural talent and destroy it for their own selfish interests.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Lata Mangeshkar’s achievements are a saga of bitter struggle and survival. Her accomplishments are enough to set an example for others. Research facts about her life and make a project on the topic “LATA MANGESHKAR—THE NIGHTINGALE OF INDIA.”

2. Make a powerpoint presentation on the poems of Vikram Seth.

3. Read the screenplay version of ‘My Fair Lady’ or arrange for the screening of the movie ‘My Fair Lady.’

Later discuss with your friends the kind of relationship that should exist between a mentor and a student.

4. Debate “Should there be mentor system in the school curriculum?” Agree / Disagree.



Lata Mangeshkar

By Sylvia Plath

SUMMARY

This poem is written in free verse and does not depend on any rhythm to convey the message. It is a poem describing a woman's struggle against the falsity of lies and the truthful harshness of her own image from the perspective of an unsympathetic mirror. 'I' in the poem represents the mirror as Sylvia Plath is trying to see the mirror's view of herself.

The poem is written in the style of a monologue. Sylvia Plath was suffering from severe depression and she had very little compassion for herself. This poem shows how she is really scared of the truth the mirror is reflecting. Unlike other people, the mirror is free from any preoccupations or prejudices. Unlike human beings, it is free from any likes and dislikes and reflects only the truth. It is omniscient like the God, and sees everywhere. The mirror has God-like powers over the woman. The mirror constantly gazes at the wall opposite to it and the wall has pink spots of age, or discoloration on it. The view in the mirror is interrupted by the 'to and fro' movements of the woman. This refers to the passing of time and the young girl ageing into an old woman.

The image of the sea and water is a foreboding motif in many poems of Sylvia Plath. In this poem also the mirror is compared to a lake. The mirror is able to 'swallow' like a lake and the lake gives a seemingly crystal clear image like a mirror. The lake can also refer to the creatures, who exist in the lake because time flies too soon. The mirror of the lake unemotionally observes how the woman is shaken by its reflection. Not everyone is ready to accept the reality depicted by the mirror, so people prefer to live in a world of illusions, in the dim light of candles or moonlight, which hides their flaws. The mirror is unsympathetic, it is unmindful of the tension of people and continues to reflect their true selves.

The mirror is supposed to be cruel but the woman cannot do without it. Repeated viewing of the mirror and seeing her own reflection leads to self-loathing as Sylvia Plath sees less and less of the young girl and more of the old woman. The old woman reflected in the mirror is reminded of her past youth and she feels herself trapped in the cruel jaws of time like a fish. In the last lines the poetess has incorporated mythology into her poem. 'Drowned' apparently refers to the Greek prince Narcissus who was very handsome. He kept gazing at his reflection

in the lake for so long that he drowned. So the poem is about a woman who is torn between the true picture of herself and the distorted image that others see of her. She wants to escape from the reality of harsh ugliness that time inflicts upon her.

सारांश

यह कविता मुक्त छंद में रची गई है और लय आदि पर संदेश देने के लिए निर्भर नहीं है। यह कविता नारी के झूठ के विरुद्ध संघर्ष और उसके अपने यथार्थवादी प्रतिरूप छवि की गाथा एक संवेदनहीन दर्पण की जुबानी है। कविता में "मैं" दर्पण का प्रतीक है। कवियत्री सिल्विया प्लाथ दर्पण के दृष्टिकोण से स्वयं को देखने का प्रयत्न कर रही हैं।

कविता 'एकालाप' की शैली में है। सिल्विया प्लाथ बहुत अधिक मानसिक तनाव और खिन्नता का शिकार थीं और उन्हें अपने आप से कोई हमदर्दी नहीं थीं। कविता दर्शाती है कि किस तरह उन्हें डर था कि दर्पण कौन से सत्य को दिखाएगा। और लोगों से हटकर दर्पण किसी भी अच्छे-बुरे दृष्टिकोण से स्वतन्त्र है। मनुष्यों की तरह वह पसंद-नापसंद नहीं दर्शाता - केवल सत्य को दिखाता है। वह ईश्वर की तरह सर्वज्ञ है और सब कुछ देखता है। उसके पास ईश्वर तुल्य शक्तियाँ हैं। दर्पण एक टक सामने वाली दीवार को देखता है - दीवार पर गुलाबी धब्बे या बदरंगे धब्बे हैं - दर्पण में नजर आने वाले दृश्य में नारी के हिलने-डुलने के कारण बार-बार बाधा पड़ रही है। इसका इशारा नारी का लड़की से बूढ़ी स्त्री बनने की प्रक्रिया को दर्शाता है।

सागर और पानी की छवि सिल्विया प्लाथ की कई कविताओं में एक चेतावनी हेतु है। इस कविता में भी दर्पण की तुलना एक झील से की गई है। दर्पण झील की तरह निगलने की योग्यता रखता है और झील दर्पण की तरह निर्मल दिखती है। झील उन प्राणियों का प्रतीक भी हो सकता जो उसके अन्दर रहते हैं क्योंकि समय जल्दी बीत जाता है। झील का दर्पण भावुकता-रहित होकर गौर से देखता है कि नारी दर्पण में दिख रही अपनी छवि से प्रभावित है। हर कोई दर्पण में दिखने वाले सत्य को देखने के लिए तैयार नहीं। इसलिए मनुष्य अधिकतर भ्रांति का शिकार हो मिथ्या संसार में विचरना पसंद करते हैं। चाँदनी या मोमबत्ती की धुँधली रोशनी उनकी त्रुटियों पर पर्दा डालती है। दर्पण को सहानुभूति नहीं है उसे मनुष्यों के तनावों से कोई सरोकार नहीं और इसलिए वह सदा सत्य को दर्शाता है।

कहा जाता है दर्पण निष्ठुर है परन्तु नारी उसके बिना नहीं रह सकती। लगातार दर्पण में अपने को निहारने से उसे अपने आप से घृणा हो गई है क्योंकि सिल्विया प्लाथ अपने अंदर की लड़की को कम और बूढ़ी स्त्री को अधिक देखती है। बूढ़ी स्त्री बार-बार बीते यौवन को याद करती और अपने आपको निष्ठुर समय के जबड़ों में फँसा पाती है मानो वह कोई मछली हो। अंतिम पंक्तियों में कवियत्री पौराणिक कथा का सहारा लेती है। 'Drowned' का संकेत-यूनानी राजकुमार Narcissus

की तरफ़ है जो बहुत सुंदर थे। वह टकटकी लगाकर अपनी छवि को झील की सतह पर देखते-देखते पानी में डूब गये। अतः कविता एक ऐसी नारी पर आधारित है जो सत्यता पर आधारित अपनी छवि और मिथ्या छवि के बीच में फैसला नहीं कर पाती। वह समय के निष्ठुर परन्तु, सत्य-यथार्थ से बचना चाहती है जो कुरूप है।

WORD-MEANINGS

- **preconceptions** : pre-conceived notions or ideas
- **swallow** : absorb ● **unmistaken** : not affected
- **meditate** : contemplate ● **speckles** : some blemishes or spots
- **flickers** : hazy ● **agitation** : to be angry or upset

EXPLANATION OF SOME EXPRESSIONS

1. *I am silver and exact.....*

Explanation ...

Many mirrors have an electroplated thin sheet of silver to reflect light.

2. *I have no preconceptions.....*

Explanation ...

Human beings are coloured and biased in their judgement of others and they have pre-conceived notions about others. The mirror only reflects the truth without prejudice.

3. *Whatever I see I swallow immediately.....*

Explanation ...

The mirror is able to absorb whatever it sees and it in return reflects the picture clearly.

4. *I am not cruel, only truthful.....*

Explanation ...

The mirror reflects the reality, the true image and gives no illusion. It may be considered cruel but it is truthful. It does not hide any flaws.

5. *The eye of a little god, four-cornered.....*

Explanation ...

The mirror is like a world with its four directions. The four corners of the mirror make it look like a microcosm of the world.

6. *Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.....*

Explanation ...

The mirror constantly keeps gazing on the opposite wall and appears to be contemplating deeply. The wall has become a part of the life of the mirror.

7. *It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long.....*

Explanation ...

The opposite wall is of pink colour with patches of discoloration. This also implies the young girl whose fresh glow of youth has given way to the freckles, and other visible signs of old age on her face.

8. *Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me.....*

Explanation ...

The mirror and a lake are similar. The lake also gives a crystal clear image like a mirror. Just as mirror does not hide age and reality, similarly a lake also depicts true reality. 'Lake' is used because even away from the mirror, the woman is forced to see the reality through nature.

9. *Searching my reaches for what she really is.....*

Explanation ...

This refers to the extent of the lake's reach. The woman who bends to see her reflection in the lake explores the depth of time, goes into the depth of her past and bemoans the loss of her youth.

10. *Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.....*

Explanation ...

Candles and moonlight are associated with romance. Now with age, there is no romance left. The candles and the moonlight are dim and they help in hiding one's flaws. So these are called 'liars' for they offer illusions to women about their beauty or youth. The candles and moon only reveal shadows and not the true picture. These are just distractions to avoid the essential self.

11. *She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.....*

Explanation ...

The mirror is unsympathetic. It reveals the ugly reality, so the only reward it gets is tears and agitation over the loss of youth. The mirror reinforces the belief that reality is bitter to accept.

12. *I am important to her. She comes and goes.....*

Explanation ...

It is an accepted fact that a mirror is a woman's companion and is indispensable to her. A woman needs a mirror all the time and she cannot do without it.

13. *In me an old woman rises towards her day after day.....*

Explanation ...

No matter how much the woman wants, the mirror only reveals her old face. Every morning, the woman looks in the mirror, full of hope, but she only gets to see her old wrinkled and lustreless appearance.

14. *In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman.....*

Explanation ...

This refers to the myth of the Greek prince Narcissus, who kept looking at his handsome appearance in the lake for so long that he drowned into the lake. The poetess regrets the loss of youth which is associated with 'drowning'. 'Drowning' indicates the consequences of vanity. The poet uses this metaphor to show that the little girl that used to look in the mirror has drowned and an old woman has replaced her.

15. *Rises toward her day after day like a terrible fish.....*

Explanation ...

This is reminiscent of Sylvia Plath's repeated viewing of her own reflection which leads to self-loathing as she sees less and less of the young girl and more of the old woman. The fish epitomises a creature's inability to escape from the sea of time.

It is interesting that Plath chose a fish instead of any other animal. When she used a lake in place of a mirror, she may have needed a creature that lived in the lake to compare her feeling of living in the mirror. She is trying to make a point that a fish depends on water, the same way, a woman depends on the mirror.

Use of Literary Devices

1. Personification

It is a kind of metaphor and is one of the most frequently used resources of poetry. It represents inanimate objects or abstract ideas or objects as persons, endowed with personal attributes. The mirror is presented as a person ('I am not cruel, only truthful'), then as a 'Lake'. Candles and moon are called 'liars'.

2. Symbolism

Symbolism is the use of one object to represent another. In this poem the poet feels herself trapped in the sea of time, like an ugly fish. She feels helpless like a fish who cannot cross the sea of time and regain her lost youth.

3. Metaphor

Metaphor is a figure of speech used for comparison but in this, words 'like' and 'as' are not used. The poet does not say that one thing is like another. For example,

'Now I am a lake'.

In this context lake is a metaphor of mirror or reflection.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Answer the following questions briefly

(a) *What is the poetic device used when the mirror says 'I swallow'?* [C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans : It is personification because the mirror swallows images like an animal or any other living being.

(b, c) *How does the mirror usually pass its time? What disturbs the mirror's contemplation of the opposite wall?*

Ans : The Mirror keeps gazing at the wall opposite to it. This view is sometimes interrupted by the 'to' and 'fro' movements of the woman.

(d) *Why does the mirror appear to be a lake in the second stanza? What aspect of the mirror do you think is being referred to here?*

Ans : The mirror and lake are similar. The lake also gives a crystal clear image like a mirror. Just as the mirror

does not hide deformities, similarly the lake also projects a true reflection, without hiding any flaws.

(e) *What is the woman searching for in the depths of the lake?*

Ans : The woman explores the depths of time, goes to the depth of her past and regrets the loss of her youth.

(f) *How does the narrator convey the fact that the woman looking at her reflection in the lake is deeply distressed?*

Ans : The woman bending over the lake is not happy to see her reflection which is full of flaws. The lake presents a true picture of the woman. So to give mental solace, she turns to dim light and candles, who present a better picture. The narrator wishes to convey that the woman turns to distractions to avoid the essential reality.

(g) *What makes the woman start crying?*

Ans : The mirror is unsympathetic. It reveals the ugly reality. So the only reaction of the woman is tears and agitation over the loss of youth. The mirror reinforces the fact that one must accept the reality now or ever.

(h) *What do you think the 'terrible fish' in the last line symbolises?*

Ans : The poet compares herself to a fish to point out that just as a fish depends on water, she depends on mirror. The poet used 'fish' to depict a creature that lives in the lake and cannot escape from it.

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. What lesson does the poem 'Mirror' teach us? Discuss.

Ans. This poem is an emotional expression of human suffering due to the process of ageing. Beauty, youth are just transitory and it is very difficult for women to accept it. Illusions, lies and falsehood are adopted to run away from the ugly reality. Most of us are too judgemental and we are prejudiced by our likes and dislikes. We need to see things in the right perspective. We must accept that real beauty is not just physical and we should try to transcend these physical barriers. Beauty of the soul is permanent and we should never allow ourselves to be obsessed by our physical looks, otherwise we will also become 'trapped' in the physicality of this world. Then there is no salvation for us.

2. Why is the mirror like a god and a lake? [C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans. The mirror is powerful like a 'God' and it has a powerful hold over the women. It is unbiased, omniscient like a God and encapsulates the entire universe. The lake is also like the mirror because it also reflects the image of things truthfully. There are many creatures that live and survive in the lake, they are trapped in it and have no other existence outside the lake. Similarly, the mirror also acts as a trap because the woman is obsessed by it, even if she does not like what it reflects. So both God and the lake are honest in reflection and are unbiased.

3. What characteristics of 'Mirror' are pointed out in the poem? Discuss.

Ans. The mirror is a symbol of truth, reality and objectivity. It is silver-plated and reflects the reality in its true form. The mirror is unprejudiced, 'unmistaken' and it is not swayed by love or hatred. It is unemotional, dispassionate and is unmoved by the tears, worries or the anxieties of the viewers. The mirror is like a God, omniscient and unbiased. It watches over all in a fair manner. The mirror is considered cruel because it doesn't hide any flaws. Still it is indispensable for the woman, who turns to it, again and again. The mirror is too reliable and shatters all the illusions which a woman weaves about herself.

4. What is the theme of the poem 'Mirror' by Sylvia Plath? [C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans. Throughout the poem, there is a theme of the truth and lies. Sylvia Plath is torn between the true picture of herself and the distorted image others see of her. The mirror represents the truth as it is described as 'exact' 'just as it is' 'only truthful'. Human beings are prejudiced, coloured by preconceived notions of love or dislike but the mirror is 'unmistaken'.

The mirror in the poem symbolises truth. Truth is a powerful tool in the poem. If a person has flaws, the mirror displays them without any hesitation. The mirror has godlike power and there is an obsessive relationship between the mirror and the woman because she looks to the mirror for comfort but is confronted with her ugly reality. Even though 'candles and moon' are liars, still the woman wants to embrace them and live in illusion.

Then away from the mirror, the woman is forced to face reality through nature. Lake is similar to the mirror as they both reveal honest reflection. The candles and the moon are just distractions to find the essential self. 'In me she has drowned a young girl' depicts that it is difficult for a woman to accept her aging process.

Sylvia compares herself to a fish to point out that just as fish depends on water, she depends on mirror. When the poet used a lake in place of a mirror, she may have needed a creature that lived in the lake to compare her feeling of living in the mirror. The poetess realises that she cannot escape reality, even outside her home. Even the 'lake' reveals the same transformation.

So the poem shows how the woman was scared of the truth and reality that the mirror represents. Throughout the poem there is talk of truth, lies, illusions and reality. So this poem juxtaposes the somewhat harsh, clear cut mirror-given image of a woman against false witnesses and how this seeming obsession with physical beauty leads to escapism in a world of illusion and distractions.

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the following and write the most appropriate option from the ones given to you.

1. *I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions:
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful.*

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

- (i) The use of 'I' is there because the poem is presented in the form of a :
- (a) Soliloquy (b) Dialogue
(c) Monologue (d) Autobiography
- (ii) How is 'I' different from the other human beings?
- (a) Mirror is made of metal
(b) It can be stuck on the wall
(c) It is not prejudiced and has no pre-conceived notions
(d) It has a wide frame
- (iii) What makes the mirror cruel?
- (a) Because it cannot speak
(b) It cannot praise
(c) It does not hide ugliness
(d) cannot be carried everywhere
- (iv) Human beings are 'misted' by love or dislike. What does this expression reflect about their nature?
- (a) They are cruel
(b) They are emotional
(c) They are hypocrites
(d) They are truth-loving

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (c) (iii) (c) (iv) (c)

2. *The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.*

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

- (i) What do the four corners of the mirror symbolise?
- (a) four corners
(b) four walls
(c) four rooms
(d) four directions of the entire universe

- (ii) Why is the mirror compared to a god?
- (a) It is beautiful
(b) It looks awesome
(c) It has heavenly colour
(d) It is unbiased and has strong influence over women
- (iii) The gazing of the mirror on the opposite wall is termed as 'meditate.' Why?
- (a) It has no choice
(b) It loves that wall
(c) It gazes steadily
(d) There is a lot of intensity in that look
- (iv) 'Pink speckles' has double meaning. What does it symbolise?
- (a) Pink colours
(b) Patches of discoloration
(c) Disappearance of youthful flush and glow
(d) Embarrassment

Answer : (i) (d) (ii) (d) (iii) (c) (iv) (b)

3. *Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.*

- (i) Who is 'I' in the above stanza?
- (a) woman (b) lake
(c) mirror (d) the poetess
- (ii) Why does the woman bend over the lake? What is she searching for?
- (a) her ring (b) her make-up
(c) her lost beauty and youth
(d) her future
- (iii) The candles and moon are called 'liars.' Why?
- (a) They get extinguished quickly
(b) They are dim and dull
(c) They hide the reality
(d) They bring darkness
- (iv) What is the poetic device used here?
- (a) Simile (b) Personification
(c) Metaphor (d) Allegory
- (v) What does the mirror reflect 'faithfully'?
- (a) her clothes (b) her wrinkles
(c) her jewellery (d) her youth
- (vi) How is the mirror rewarded for 'truthful

reflection'?

- (a) It is hugged
- (b) It is cleaned and put decoratively
- (c) It results in cries and agitation
- (d) It is thrown down and broken

Answers : (i) (b) (ii) (c) (iii) (c) (iv) (b) (v) (b) (vi) (c)

4. *I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces
the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an
old woman
Rises toward her day after day like a terrible fish.*

- (i) Why is the mirror indispensable for the woman?
 - (a) It has been her constant companion
 - (b) It has truthfully reflected the changes

- (c) It flatters her
- (d) It degrades her

- (ii) Explain 'drowned'.
 - (a) drowning in the lake
 - (b) forgetfulness
 - (c) loss of balance
 - (d) permanent loss of youth
- (iii) Why does the woman compare herself to a 'terrible fish'?
 - (a) Because of the beautiful skin
 - (b) Because of quick movements
 - (c) Because she is fond of the lake
 - (d) Because like a fish she is trapped in the sea of time

Answers : (i) (a) (ii) (d) (iii) (d)

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – NON-MCQs

1. Read the given extracts and answer the questions that follow :

*A woman bends over me
Searching my reaches for what she really is
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the
moon* [C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

(a) What is the woman bending over?

Ans : The woman is bending over the lake.

(b) Why have the candles and the moon been called "liars"?

Ans : The candles and the moon hide the reality and the flaws or wrinkles on the woman's face.

(c) Why does she turn to them in spite of calling them 'liars'?

Ans : The woman wants to nurture illusions about herself. She is afraid to confront the reality of her aging.

2. *I am not cruel, only truthful*

*The eye of a little god, four-cornered
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall*

(a) Why does the mirror say, "I am not cruel"?

Ans : The mirror is not cruel because it is unbiased. Its intention is not to hurt but to tell the exact reality to the person.

(b) Why has the mirror been called a 'four - cornered' god?

Ans : The mirror comprises the entire universe for the woman, it is like a world with four directions and it has God-like powers over women.

(c) How does the mirror spend its time?

Ans : It keeps gazing at the wall opposite and keeps looking at the wall with pink spots and discoloration.

3. *In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an
old woman*

Rises towards her day after day like a terrible fish

(a) What does the word drowned indicate?

Ans : The loss of youth is associated with 'drowning'. The poet uses this metaphor to show that the little girl in the mirror has drowned and an old woman has replaced her.

(b) What does the fish signify?

Ans : The poet has used 'fish' to indicate that just as fish depends on water, the same way, a woman depends upon the mirror.

(c) Why does the woman call herself a terrible fish?

Ans : The fish indicates the creature's inability to escape from the sea of time and the poet is also caught up in the web of age.

4. *I am important to her. She comes and goes.*

*Each morning it is her face that replaces the
darkness.*

(a) Why is the mirror important to the woman.

Ans : The woman depends on the mirror and it is her constant companion. Any woman cannot do without a mirror.

(b) Explain the second line.

Ans : The mirror is blank without the face of the woman. It is only bright when the woman looks into it.

(c) Why does the woman come and go away?

Ans : The woman cannot continuously keep gazing at the mirror. Many times she goes and then comes again as a routine.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why is the old woman compared to a terrible fish in the poem, 'Mirror?'

Ans : Sylvia Plath chose the metaphor of the fish because seeing her own reflection leads to self-loathing and she sees less of young girl and more of the old woman in the mirror. She feels herself trapped in the cruel jaws of time like a fish. Just as a fish depends on water, the woman depends upon the mirror.

2. Why is the mirror's reflection unacceptable to most of the people?

Ans : The mirror is unbiased in its reflection. It presents the flaws and signs of aging truthfully. Truth, ugliness, signs of aging are unacceptable to most women. That is why the woman gets agitated to look at her wrinkles and does not feel like accepting the reality.

3. Do you agree that the poem 'Mirror' presents a pessimistic view of life?

Ans : Truth is often cruel. The poem is unbiased, blunt and too frank in its statement. Truth when it is unmisted, often hurts. So the poem is frank, confessional from the point of women, though sad in nature. It does present grim reality of life. It depends upon the individual, how he accepts the reality. So the poem cannot be called pessimistic.

4. Why does the woman turn to the moon and the candles?

Ans : Women are most concerned for their physical appearance and it is difficult for women to digest the truth of their aging. The mirror and the lake present a true reflection of the woman with signs of age and flaws. So to live in a world of illusion, the woman turns to the moon, candles, dim light which hide her flaws and give her temporary solace.

5. What does the poem reveal about the character of the woman?

Ans : The woman dwells too much on physical beauty, she is almost obsessed by it. She appears to be vain and never accepts aging as a natural outcome of life. She looks for illusions, escapism from the world of reality, which will never benefit her. The woman is fickle with shallow values and does not realise that life cannot be lived on the basis of temporary distractions.

6. Why does the woman not like the mirror?

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans : The mirror in the poem symbolises truth, reality and objectivity. If a person has flaws, the mirror displays them without any hesitation. The woman looks into the mirror for comfort but is confronted with her ugly reality, so she does not like the mirror.

7. Why does the mirror state that the pink coloured, opposite wall is a part of its heart?

Ans : The mirror constantly gazes at the wall opposite to it and appears to be contemplating deeply. The wall has pink spots of discolouration on it. When no one is around these pink spots get reflected in the mirror and have become a part of the life of the mirror.

8. The poet describes the mirror as a little four cornered God. Why?

Ans : The mirror is like a world with its four directions. The four corners of the mirror make it look like a microcosm of the world. It is omniscient like God, free from any prejudices or preoccupations any likes and dislikes and reflects only the truth. Thus the poet describes mirror as little four cornered God.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. In what way is the mirror different from the people who view it? How does it affect the people?

Ans : The mirror is truthful, unbiased. It reflects the reality as it sees. It is cruel, blunt and frank whereas the people who view the mirror are hypocrites who cannot

accept the reality. They are not truthful, are biased, have preconceived notions. Women and men who view the mirror, have double standards and they lead artificial lives. They seek to escape from reality, they prefer to hide their flaws in dim light. If a person has flaws, the mirror reflects it without hesitation. The human beings are most reluctant

to state the reality or accept it.

2. Discuss the obsessive relationship between the mirror and the woman.

OR

The poem ‘Mirror’ shows the problems of an ageing woman. Elaborate in 100-125 words.

Ans : Age is the most cruel factor for any woman, especially for those women who lay great store on physical beauty. Physical beauty is temporary and one cannot escape the ravages of age. Most women are afraid to confront the reality of their ugliness or wrinkles. So they prefer to present themselves in dim light. Such women forget that the ultimate aim of life should be salvation and spiritual upliftment, rather than the trap of youth or beauty. One needs to transcend such physical barriers and see the beauty of the soul. So women should protect themselves from being obsessed by the charms of youth. Any woman should hanker after permanent pleasures of life like one’s spiritual elevation.

3. “In me she has drowned a young girl.” Explain the significance of ‘drowned.’ What does it refer to?

Ans : ‘Drowned’ means “swallowed”. Apparently this refers to the Greek prince Narcissus, who was very handsome. He kept gazing at his reflection in the lake for so long that he drowned. So the poem is about a woman

who is torn between the true picture of herself and the distorted image that others see of her. ‘Drowning’ also indicates the consequences of vanity. The poet uses this metaphor to show that the little girl that used to look in the mirror has drowned and the old woman has replaced her. Basically the woman is obsessed of her looks and when she gazes in the mirror or in a lake, she feels cheated. So the woman gets upset that the lake has swallowed the image of the young girl.

4. “The world of illusion and flights of fancy give happiness. The stark world of reality is too depressing and ugly. The only way out is escapism.” Why/Why not?

Ans : The world of imagination and fancy is always so glorious and bright. But one cannot dwell in it for long. Anything that takes one away from reality should not be accepted. Women and men many times take recourse to flights of fancy to escape reality. But for how long? Life has to be lived not on temporary basis but on the hard ground of reality even if it is ugly or harsh. The ultimate aim of life is to face the realities bravely and find new challenges. Illusions and escapism are the diversions of the weak-willed or the hypocrites. So one must grow and groom oneself into the real world and take on life in its true spirit or colour. Then only life will prove to be worthwhile.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Locate the complete works of Sylvia Plath.

Make a **PROJECT** on it.

2. Answer the following from Sylvia Plath’s biography.

QUIZ

- (a) Sylvia Plath’s pen-name _____
- (b) Prize she won for the poetry _____
- (c) She was married to _____
- (d) Her father died when she was _____
- (e) She gave up her life on _____

3. Write a short poem on “Mirror & Me” expressing you ideas.

By William Shakespeare

INTRODUCTION

Sonnet 55 builds up on Horace's theme of poetry outlasting physical monuments to the dead. In Horace's poetry, the poet is himself immortalised by his poetry but in this sonnet, Shakespeare seeks to build a figurative monument to his beloved, the fair lord. The fair lord is not described or revealed in any way in this sonnet. Instead, the sonnet just addresses the idea of immortality through verse. The ravages of time is a recurrent theme in the sonnets of Shakespeare. So sonnet 55 is one of the most famous works of Shakespeare and a notable deviation from other sonnets in which he appears insecure about his relationships and his self-worth. Here we find an impassioned burst of confidence as the poet claims to have the power to keep his friend's memory alive evermore.

PARAPHRASE

1 – 4 lines – (Not marble sluttish time)

The first stanza talks about how time will not destroy the poem, though it will destroy the world's most magnificent structures. He wishes to say that poetry is stronger than these structures. At the very beginning, the poet says that whether it is marble or gold plated monuments of princes, all will get destroyed but the magnificence of his poetry will live. The subject of poetry will remain bright and will shine forever in comparison to a neglected stone monument which is spoilt with Time. Time is compared to a slut who loses her glow and beauty with time. Shakespeare compares Time unfavourably to a female subject.

5 – 8 lines – (when wasteful memory)

These lines begin with a new idea. Shakespeare has so far spoken of two destructive forces : time and war. He is here describing war destroying stone structures, which relates back to the 'marble' and 'gilded monuments' in line 1, that likewise do not last. The poet says that when destructive wars will take place, they will destroy statues also and due to its tumult all the work of the masons will be destroyed. Even the Sword of Mars, God of war, or the destructive fires of war will be able to destroy your memory. The poet is basically saying that even wars will not destroy the written memories of your life for they will survive even after deadly wars.

Lines 9 – 14 – (Gainst death Lover's eyes)

This stanza does not talk about survival, but of human appreciation. The poet continues to praise his

subject. There is still a suggestion of survival, but survival of human appreciation and not of the verse itself. Doom refers to the Judgement day, suggesting that this poetic record of his subject will survive and be praised to the end of time. Slight deviation of the metre in the words "Even in" creates emphasis for this permanency.

The poet is saying that death and enmity destroys everything but poetry written on the subject will survive, will move ahead, find place and will be immortalised for all generations to come. Everything else will be judged on the Judgement Day.

The ending couplet is a summary of the survival theme. The couplet not only summarises the rest of the sonnet, but also seems to contradict itself. "Judgement" goes with the talk of the judgement day in the last stanza, but implies that the subject is alive and will be judged on that day, but 'dwelling in lover's eyes' suggest that the subject is love itself. Thus Shakespeare seems to consider the subject so lovely that he is a personification of love, which could be conquered and to which no poetry can do justice.

So the theme of the sonnet is that the subject will be honoured forever in the verses, though the verses are unworthy of them.

सारांश

1-4 Lines

पहले छंद में कवि कहता है कि समय कविता को नष्ट करने में असमर्थ है जबकि संसार के शानदार भवन समय के थपेड़ों का शिकार हो सकते हैं। वे कहना चाहते हैं कि कविता इमारतों और भव्य भवनों से कहीं अधिक मजबूत है। आरम्भ में ही कवि कहता है कि चाहे वह संगमरमर या सोने का बना हो – राजकुमारों के द्वारा निर्मित भवन एक

दिन नष्ट हो जायेंगे परन्तु उनकी कविता का सौन्दर्य बना रहेगा। काव्य का विषय भी चमकेगा शानदार भवनों की तुलना – जो वक्त के साथ खराब हो जाते हैं – एक दुश्चरित्र स्त्री से की गई है। शेक्सपियर समय की तुलना अनुपयुक्त ढंग से 'नारी' विषय के साथ करते हैं।

5-8 Lines

ये पंक्तियाँ एक नये विचार से प्रारम्भ होती हैं। शेक्सपियर ने अभी तक दो विनाशकारी शक्तियाँ – समय और युद्ध का वर्णन किया है। यहाँ वे बताते हैं कि युद्ध पत्थर से बनी इमारतों को तोड़ सकता है जिसका संबंध पहली पंक्ति के 'संगमरमर और सोने के पत्तर चढ़ी' इमारतों से है – जो कायम नहीं रहती, गिर जाती हैं। कवि कहता है कि जब विनाशकारी युद्ध होंगे तो वे मूर्तियों को खंडित कर देंगे और उसकी दहल से मिस्त्रियों की कारीगरी टूट-फूट जायेगी। युद्ध के देवता मार्स की तलवार और युद्ध की नाशक अग्नि आपकी यादों को नष्ट कर देगी। कवि कह रहा है कि ये ताकतें शक्तियाँ भी आपकी लेखनीबद्ध यादों को नहीं मिटा पायेंगी क्योंकि इन नाशकारी युद्धों के बाद भी वे जीवित रहेंगी।

9-14 Lines

यह छंद सुरक्षित बचे रहने की बात नहीं कर रहा बल्कि, मनुष्य के गुण-दोष विवेचना – गुण-ग्रहण की योग्यता का विवरण प्रस्तुत करता है। कवि निरंतर अपने विषय की प्रशंसा में संलग्न है। अभी भी सुरक्षित रहने की ओर एक हल्का सा इशारा है। परन्तु

यह इशारा मनुष्य की गुण-ग्रहण योग्यता की ओर है, कविता की ओर नहीं। "Doom" शब्द का इशारा उस दिन की ओर है जब ईश्वरीय दंड दिया जायेगा। और समय का अंत होगा। तब भी कवि का यह अभिलेख बच जायेगा और अंत तक प्रशंसनीय रहेगा। इन शब्दों द्वारा कवि अपने लेख के अमरत्व की ओर इशारा करता है।

कवि कह रहा है कि मृत्यु और शत्रुता सब कुछ नष्ट कर देती है। परन्तु काव्य जीवित रहता है वक्त के साथ आगे बढ़ता है, अपना स्थान ग्रहण करता है और पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी अमर हो जायेगा। बाकी सब कुछ निर्णय के दिन फैसला होगा।

अंतिम छंद फिर एक संक्षिप्त विवरण है "सुरक्षित बचे रहने" के विषय प्रसंग का! इसमें बची हुई कविता की पंक्तियों का भी

समावेश है, साथ में आभास होता है मानो वह स्वयं का खंडन कर रहा है। "Judgement" अन्तिम छंद में निर्णय के दिन के साथ जाता है परन्तु निहितार्थ तात्पर्य में वर्णन का विषय कर्ता जीवित है और उसका फैसला उस दिन किया जायेगा परन्तु "dwelling in lover's eyes" का संकेत है कि कर्ता स्वयं प्रेम है। इस तरह शेक्सपियर की दृष्टि में कर्ता इतना सुंदर और आकर्षक है कि वह प्रेम का स्वरूप है जिस पर विजय प्राप्त की जा सकती है और जिसके साथ कोई काव्य न्याय नहीं कर सकता। इस तरह कविता के अनुसार काव्य में उसे सदा सम्मानित किया जायेगा जबकि कोई काव्य उसके साथ न्याय नहीं कर सकता।

WORD-MEANINGS

- **outlive** : live afterwards
- **rhyme** : poetry
- **overturn** : destroy
- **room** : place, space
- **dwel** : live

LITERARY DEVICES

PERSONIFICATION

- **'Gilded monuments'**: Shakespeare personified these by giving them life-spans.
- **Posterity** : It is given a human characteristic of 'sight'
- **Mars** : war is given the title of 'mars'. This is rooted in Greek mythology, as Mars is the God of war.
- **Time** : as a slut. Just as the beauty of a slut undergoes great changes, so does time usher in great changes.

HYPERBOLE

This means exaggeration, but too much exaggeration which sometimes becomes unbelievable. In this poem, the poet claims that no amount of time or change can obliterate the words he writes, shall make his reader understand the awesome power as he as a wordsmith wields.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

7. Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) Why do you think the rich and the powerful people get monuments and statues erected in their memory?

Or

What, according to the poet, do the rich and

powerful long for? [C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans. The rich and the powerful people erect monuments to not only show their wealth and power but as living reminders of those people. They want the future generations to know and remember them. They are extremely vain people.

(b) Describe how the monuments and statues brave the ravages of time?

Ans. Whether the monuments are gold-plated or otherwise, all the monuments crumble with time or they are destroyed by war. Climatic reasons, manual desperation or otherwise all crumble and break with time.

(c) Why does the poet refer to Time as being sluttish?

Ans. A slut loses her charm and beauty with time. Similarly time also changes fast as the charms of a prostitute. Time keeps changing, so does the beauty of such an inferior female.

(d) The poet says that neither forces of nature nor wars can destroy his poetry. In fact, even godly powers of Mars will not have a devastating effect on his rhyme. What quality of the poet is revealed through these lines?

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans. The poet believes that his subject will be honoured forever in his verses and they will never face extinction or destruction by the powers of nature and time. The poet's extreme optimism and deep faith in the power of love is revealed in these lines.

8. Shakespeare's sonnet has been divided into three quatrains of 4 lines each followed by a rhyming couplet. Each quatrain is a unit of meaning. Read the poem carefully and complete the following table on the structure of the poem.

Ans.	Rhyme scheme	Theme
Quatrain 1	ab ab	Comparison between poetry and monuments.
Quatrain 2	cd cd	Ravages of time on monuments contrasted with living record of the beloved.
Quatrain 3	ef ef	The recorded memory of beloved will continue till posterity
Couplet	g g	Poetry immortalises friend

SOME OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. What is the theme of sonnet 55?

Ans. Shakespeare believes that love is eternal and everlasting. It cannot be destroyed or controlled by materialistic things that are made to stand forever, but in the end all are doomed to destruction like the gilded monuments. Not even the sword of Mars or wars can destroy love, Shakespeare's true idea of love is that love will exist till the end of time. Since there is no end to love it will exist forever.

This sonnet shares this theme with other sonnets which oppose the power of verse to death and Time's cruel knife and promise immortality to the beloved. The

concluding couplet seems to curiously satisfy the curiosity as to who is being referred to. It is enough that it lives in 'the lover's eyes for all the mysteries will be comprehended on the last day of judgement. What distinguishes Shakespeare from others is that he values the identity of the beloved, he recognises that the beloved has his own personal immortality, that is no way dependent upon his poetry. So the poet's verse will continue strongly even in the face of death and dispassionate enmity. It will always live in poetry and in the eyes of the lovers who will read this. So the theme is love and the power of love that outlives all.

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow:

1. "Not marble nor the gilded monuments
Of prices, shall outlive this powerful rhyme"

- (i) Here poetry as compared to monuments is
- (a) long lasting
 - (b) short-lived
 - (c) as powerful as gilded monuments

2. "You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes."
 (ii) The phrase 'lovers' eyes signify
 (a) the loving eyes of a lover
 (b) the poetry will be forgotten forever
 (c) the poetry will survive all destruction
3. *Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn*
 (iii) Here sword of Mars is referred to
 (a) sword of Mars, God of war

- (b) fires of wars
 (c) Destructive nature of war
4. "Living record of your memory."
 (iv) Here living record refers to
 (a) the sonnet the poet has written for his friend
 (b) an existing statue of his friend
 (c) his friend who lives in the poet's memory
- Answer :** (i) (a) (ii) (c) (iii) (c) (iv) (a)

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – NON-MCQs

Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow.

1. *Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
 of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme*

(a) **What are gilded monuments?**

Ans : The monuments that are decorated and embellished with gold.

(b) **What purpose do the monuments serve?**

Ans : They are symbols of power and riches to remember the dead and the mighty.

(c) **What will powerful rhyme achieve?**

Ans : The powerful rhyme will immortalise the person in whose memory it is written.

2. *But you shall shine more brightly in these contents
 Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time*

(a) **Identify 'you'**

Ans : The subject of the poet's poem (it is not clearly indicated)

(b) **Explain – "sluttish time"**

Ans : Time is known to bring great changes. Similarly, the beauty of a slut also undergoes changes.

(c) **Who shall shine more brightly?**

Ans : The subject of the poet's poem will be remembered forever and its worth will not diminish with the passage of time.

3. *Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.*

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

(a) **Who is 'Mars' ?**

Ans : In Greek mythology, he is the 'god of war'.

(b) **How will 'living record' survive the test of time?**

Ans : The written words of the poet will never be destroyed by nature or time.

(c) **How are other things destroyed with time?**

Ans : Other things, like monuments, statues will be destroyed by nature-made or man-made disasters or war.

4. *Shall you pace forth, your praise shall find room
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom*

(a) **What will happen to the praise of the poet's friend?**

Ans : The poet's friend will be remembered even by the coming generations.

(b) **What is the future of the world predicted?**

Ans : The physical world is doomed, it will be destroyed.

(c) **What do the above lines reflect about the poet's personality?**

Ans : The poet is too concerned and loves his friend too much.

5. *So till the judgement, that yourself arise
 You live in this and dwell in lover's eyes*

(a) **What is 'judgement'? Who delivers it?**

Ans : Judgement Day or Doomsday is when everyone is rewarded or punished for their deeds by God.

(b) **Who will survive? How?**

Ans : All else will be destroyed but poet's love for his friend will survive.

(c) **Explain – "dwell in lover's eyes".**

Ans : Poet's love for his friend will survive because it will live on in the eyes of the lovers.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How does the poet compare ‘gilded monuments’ with ‘powerful rhyme’?

Ans : Both gilded ‘monuments’ and ‘rhyme’ are for someone’s memory. But all kinds of monuments will never stand the test of time, they all will be destroyed with time. But the poet’s love for his friend will survive and be immortalised.

2. What happens to monuments with time?

Ans : The monuments are erected to honour someone or to show one’s wealth or power. Any man-made disaster like war or natural calamities can destroy these physical signs of memory. They can be razed to the ground.

3. Explain – “Nor Mars his sword nor wars’ quick fire shall burn the living record of your memory.”

Ans : The poet says that no kind of wars and even the God of war with his powerful sword can ever destroy the poems the poet has written for his friend. He means to say that written words are immortal and cannot be destroyed by anyone.

4. How will ‘posterity’ react to the verses that are written?

Ans : ‘Posterity’ means ‘coming generations’. Writing is a permanent record of memory. Since the poems written for the poet’s friend will live forever, so future generations will remember and revere them.

5. Explain – “You live in this, and dwell in lover’s eyes”

Ans : The poet’s friend will live forever for he is immortalised in the verses written by the poet. Everything else will perish on the Judgement Day. But the poet’s love for his friend will not perish, it will live in the eyes of the lovers forever.

6. How has the poet eternalised the subject of his attention in the poem, ‘Not Marble Nor the Gilded Monuments’?

Ans : In this poem, the poet has eternalised his subject i.e. love. The poem reveals poet’s extreme optimism and deep faith in the power of love. According to him, Love is beyond all barriers whether materialistic or physical. All other things are doomed for destruction but love will stand the test of time. Since there is no end to love, it will exist forever in the eyes of the lovers.

7. Explain in your words how his ‘poetry’ has been glorified by the poet, in the poem, ‘Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments.’

Ans : In the very beginning of the poem, the poet talks about how time will not destroy the poem, though it will destroy the world’s most powerful structures. He glorifies his poetry by saying that all the marble or gold plated monuments of the princes will get destroyed but the magnificence his poetry will live. The subject of poetry will remain bright and will shine forever in comparison to a neglected stone monument which is spoilt with time.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How is Time personified in the poem? What purpose does it serve?

Ans : Time is a great leveller. It destroys everything like the monuments or statues. All the magnificent structures of the world will be razed to the ground. Then ‘time is personified as a slut which is an unfavourable comparison. Just as a slut’s beauty changes with time, similarly, time also changes everything. A slut’s physical beauty does not last, nor does her attractions. Similarly time changes all relations or equations that one forges in life.

2. What is the poet’s message in sonnet 55?

Ans : The poet wishes to communicate that Love is beyond all barriers, whether materialistic or physical. All the other things are doomed for destruction but love will stand the test of time. Since there is no end to love, it will

exist forever. Time’s cruel knife cuts everything, changes all relations but not love. So the poet’s love for his friend will continue strongly even in the face of death and dispassionate enmity. It will live forever in the eyes of the lovers. So the theme is love and the power of love that outlives all.

3. Discuss the use of literary devices in the poem.

Ans : The poet has resorted to the excessive use of personification in this poem. Shakespeare personified gilded monuments by giving them life spans. ‘Posterity’ is bestowed with the human quality of ‘sight’, war is given the title of ‘Mars’ and time is also called a ‘slut’, who changes too often. The poet also indulges in hyperbole, when he claims that no amount of time or change can obliterate the words he writes, shall make his readers understand the awesome power he wields as a poet. Then

literary embellishments heighten the critical value of the poem and make it more effective.

- 4. You were extremely impressed to read the poem, 'Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments'. Write a letter to a friend telling her about the poem and your new found interest in poetry. Sign yourself as Amit / Amita of 39, D-Block, Model Town, Delhi.**

[C.B.S.E., 2011 (T-1)]

Ans : Dear Mamta,

Surprised to see one more letter in succession! Yes, but I could not resist myself from telling you something about my new-found love. Do not guess it wrong—It is poetry.

Mamta, you know I never liked to read poetry, as you do, although you always asked me to do so. It was only yesterday that I met a friend of mine who is a diehard fan of Shakespeare's poetry. There I got a chance to read

Shakespeare's poem, 'Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments.' At first it just went over my head but when my friend explained the poem and the theme i.e. love, in her own words, I was totally engrossed. The way the poet has eternalised love, stating that it is beyond all barriers, all other things are doomed, but love will stand the test of time, is simply marvellous. I couldn't restrain myself and read the poem on my own.

You will be surprised to know that I immediately went to her library and borrowed poetry books from her to read. I kept on reading the books till late at night. I am eagerly waiting for the day when you will come to my place and we both will sit together and read the poems from different poets. My regards to everyone at your end.

Waiting eagerly

Your friend,

Amita

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Prepare a project on SONNETS of Shakespeare which deal with the theme of Time.
2. Locate similar sonnets and list them out.
3. There is great suspense regarding the identity of the subject in Shakespeare's sonnet. Locate similar poems which are addressed to mysterious subjects.

By Percy Byssche Shelley

INTRODUCTION

This sonnet, composed in 1817, is one of most famous of Shelley's anthologised poems. This poem was composed in competition with Shelley's friend Horace Smith, who wrote another sonnet on the same topic of Ozymandias. In terms of theme imagery, this poem is notable for its virtuous diction. The theme is the decline of all leaders, of all the empires they build, however mighty they may have been in their own time.

Ozymandias was another name for Ramesses the Great, Pharaoh of the 19th century ancient Egypt. The sonnet paraphrases the inscription beneath the statue, "If anyone wants to know how great I am and where I lie, let him surpass any of my works".

PARAPHRASE

1 – 8 lines – (I met a traveller that fed)

The speaker recalls having met a traveller from an ancient land who told him a story about the ruins of a statue in the desert of his native country. The traveller said that two vast legs of stone stand without a body and near this, a massive crumbling and broken stone-head lies, which is half sunk in the sand. The statue has a bitter and cruel expression of 'sneer and cold command' and this indicates that the sculptor had understood the passions of his subject really well. It was obvious that the statue was of a man who sneered with contempt for those who were weaker than himself, yet fed his people because of something in his heart.

9 – 14 lines – (My name far away)

On the pedestal of the statue these words are inscribed, "My name is Ozymandias, I am the king of kings. If anyone wishes to know how great I am, then let him surpass any of my works." Around the decaying ruin of the statue, nothing remains, only the 'lone' and level sands' which stretch out around it, far away.

संरांश

1-8 Lines

वक्ता याद करता है कि वह पुरातन देश के इस यात्री से मिल चुका है जिसने उसे अपने देश के एक रेगिस्तान में एक राज्य के

खण्डहरों की कहानी सुनाई थी। यात्री ने कहा था कि पत्थर की बनी दो विशाल-मजबूत टांगें – जिनका कोई शरीर नहीं – खड़ी हैं और उनके पास पड़ा एक खंडित विशाल पत्थर का सिर जो आधा रेत में धंसा है। मूर्ति के चेहरे पर जो हाव भाव दिखाई देते हैं उनमें कठोरता और कड़वापन, तिरस्कार और निष्ठुर आदेश स्पष्ट दिखाई देते हैं। यह दर्शाता है कि मूर्तिकार अपने विषय के बारे में पूरी जानकारी रखता था। जाहिर है मूर्ति एक ऐसे व्यक्ति की थी जिसमें कमजोरों के लिए केवल तिरस्कार और अवहेलना थी। लेकिन फिर भी वह उन्हें भरपेट खाने को देता था शायद उसके दिल में उनके लिए कुछ था।

9-14 Lines

मूर्ति की मंचिका पर यह शब्द खुदे हैं :

मेरा नाम ओज़िमांडियास है मैं राजाओं का राजा हूँ। अगर कोई जानने को उत्सुक है कि मैं कितना महान हूँ तो मेरे कामों से बढ़-चढ़कर कुछ कर दिखाए। मूर्ति के गिरते-बिखरते खंडहरों के आसपास कुछ नहीं है, केवल दूर-दूर तक फैली रेत के अलावा।

WORD-MEANINGS

- antique : ancient ● vast : huge ● shattered : broken
- frown : expression of contempt ● cold command : cruel commands ● passions : feelings ● mocked : make fun
- despair : feeling of hopelessness ● colossal : great ● wreck : destruction ● boundless : without limit
- bare : deserted, empty

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

5. Answer the following questions briefly.

- (a) "The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed". Whose hand and heart has the poet referred to in this line?

Ans. The hand and heart refer to Ozymandias, the mighty king who ruled his kingdom with great cruelty. He looked after his people and fed them but hated them and felt that they were weak and helpless.

(b) *“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings.” Why does Ozymandias refer to himself as ‘king of kings’? What quality of the king is revealed through this statement?*

Ans. Ozymandias was very mighty, conceited, arrogant and was intoxicated with power. He was very boastful and proud and so considered himself to be even greater than other kings. He thought himself to be above all on this world. He was very confident of his might and extraordinary power.

(c) *“Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!” Who is Ozymandias referring to when he speaks of ye Mighty? Why should they despair?*

Ans. Ozymandias is referring to anyone who considers himself to be mighty and powerful. He throws a challenge to him that he should look at the work of Ozymandias first and then consider their might. Others will despair because none can ever equal Ozymandias’ achievements and power.

(d) *Bring out the Irony in the poem.*

[C.B.S.E., 2012 (T-2)]

Ans. Ozymandias was very boastful of his power. His arrogant and shattered face, broken statue, the waste and ruins around prove that the great king’s work and civilisation has crumbled to dust. Time has levelled his fame and work and the ruins, along with the shattered statue bear a testimony to the fact that nothing lasts for ever and all the boasts will be disproved ironically in the end.

(e) *“Nothing beside remains.” What does the narrator mean when he says these words?*

[C.B.S.E., 2012 (T-2)]

Ans. All power, might, civilisations, status crumble to dust. Man is insignificant before the power of Time and everything is reduced to nought. The statement “Dust

thou art to dust returnest” proves true in the end. This is the true destiny of man and the passage of Time proves to be a great leveller.

(f) *What is your impression of Ozymandias as a king?*

Ans. Ozymandias was a very boastful and arrogant king, who believed in his might to rule over his kingdom. He was egoistic, very conceited and he looked after and fed the citizens as a favour. He hankered after immortality and eternal fame. Ozymandias believed that none could ever equal his exploits.

(g) *What message is conveyed in the poem “Ozymandias”?*

Ans. The poet uses a shattered statue to highlight the ephemeral nature of fame, popularity and power. The great king’s proud, boast (I king of kings, look on my work, ye mighty and despair) has been ironically disproved. Ozymandias’ works and might have crumbled and disappeared, his civilization has disappeared, all has been razed to the ground by the impersonal, indiscriminate destructive power of history. The ruined statue is merely a monument of one man’s ‘hubris’ and a powerful statement about the insignificance of human beings to the passage of Time.

Ozymandias is first and foremost a metaphor for the ephemeral nature of political power. So this becomes Shelley’s most dominant sonnet with political overtones. Ozymandias not only symbolises political power but the statue is a metaphor for the pride and ‘hubris’ for all mankind. It is worth noting that all the remains of Ozymandias, his work of art and a group of words as Shakespeare has done in his sonnets, demonstrate the fact that art and language long outlive the other legacies of power.

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. **Discuss the poetic style of the poem, “Ozymandias”.**

Ans. Ozymandias written in 1817 is a very masterful sonnet by Shelley. It is written in iambic pentameter and was an unusual rhyme-scheme. The poem interlinks the octave by gradually replacing old rhymes with new ones in the form of ABABACDEFEF.

This sonnet is Shelly’s brilliant rendering of the story of a powerful king. Framing the sonnet as a story told to the speaker by “a traveller from an antique land”,

enables Shelley to add another level of obscurity to Ozymandias’s position with regard to the reader. Rather than seeing the statue with our own eyes, we hear it from someone who has heard from another source, so and so forth. Thus the ancient king is rendered less commanding. The distancing of the narrative serves to undermine his power over us, like the passage of time. Shelley gradually reconstructs the figure of the king. First we see the “vast trunkless legs,” then the ‘shattered visage’ and, then the inscription. The expression on the king’s face, then we are

introduced to the king's people of his time. The kingdom is now imaginatively complete and we are introduced to the proud boast of the king. With this the poet demolishes our imaginary picture of the king, with centuries of ruin

and bare sands between it and us. Basically the poet is devoted to a single metaphor throughout the poem – the shattered ruined statue in the desert waste land with its arrogant and passionate face.

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the following paragraphs and choose the correct option :

1. *I met a traveller from an antique land. Who said
"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
stand in the desert"?*

- (i) The poet had heard of the statue from
 - (a) another poet (b) books
 - (c) people of the city
 - (d) another traveller
- (ii) The condition of the statue was bad because
 - (a) it was eroding away
 - (b) its head was broken
 - (c) the sculptor had not done a good job
 - (d) it was not cleaned
- (iii) The statue was found near
 - (a) the valley
 - (b) on the banks of the ocean
 - (c) across the city
 - (d) in the desert

Answer : (i) (d) (ii) (b) (iii) (d)

2. *"Whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold commands*

- (i) The statue depicts that the king was
 - (a) weak (b) dominating
 - (c) powerful (d) cruel
- (ii) The above expression is visible because of
 - (a) the poet's interpretation
 - (b) the sculptor's skill

(c) the stories of the king

(d) word of mouth

(iii) The above expression shows that the king was

(a) full of anger (b) full of dislike

(c) without any expression

(d) too proud and conceited

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (b) (iii) (d)

3. *"Look upon my works, ye Mighty and despair."*

- (i) The above words were spoken by
 - (a) the poet (b) the traveller
 - (c) were inscribed on the statue
 - (d) the people

(ii) The mighty is a reference to

(a) the king Ozymandias

(b) other mighty people

(c) other kings

(d) onlookers

(iii) Despair suggests

(a) that none can equal the king's achievements

(b) other kings will feel small

(c) other kings will feel helpless

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (b) (iii) (a)

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – NON-MCQs

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow :

1. *The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, king of kings*

(a) **Whom does the hand and heart refer to?**

Ans : 'The hand and heart' refers to a king called Ozymandias, who ruled over a powerful kingdom.

(b) **How did the king look after his people?**

Ans : The king fed his people but was not bothered for their welfare or happiness.

(c) **What quality of Ozymandias is revealed in the last line?**

Ans : He was cruel and selfish and considered himself to be the mightiest. He was conceited and intoxicated with his power.

2. *Look upon my works, ye mighty and despair!*

(a) **Whom does the poet refer to as mighty?**

Ans : Any other person who considers himself as mighty.

(b) **How does he challenge the mighty?**

Ans : King Ozymandias throws a challenge to other people who consider themselves mighty to compare their exploits with his and then only consider themselves to be mighty.

(c) **What message is conveyed in the poem Ozymandias?**

Ans : All great achievements, vanity, pride, etc. crumble and get destroyed, Civilisations disappear with time, so man should not be conceited.

3. *Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,*

*And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read..*

(a) **What lies in the sand and how?**

Ans : Two vast legs of stone with a body, and massive, crumbling and broken stone-head lies half sunk, in the sand.

(b) **How does the shattered visage look?**

Ans : The shattered visage had a bitter and cruel expression of sneer and cold command.

(c) **What does the face tell us about the sculptor?**

Ans : The bitter and cruel expressions on the face of the statue tell us that the sculptor had understood the passions of his subject very well.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **How did the poet come to know about the broken statue of Ozymandias?**

Ans : The poet was told the story of Ozymandias by a speaker who had met a traveller from an ancient land. The story and the condition of Ozymandias' statue is conveyed by word of mouth. This adds a tinge of obscurity and mystery to the statue.

2. **In what condition was the statue found?**

[C.B.S.E., 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The statue of Ozymandias was found in a distant desert. The head of the statue was broken and nearby two vast legs of stone stand without a body. The head is half sunk in the sand. The statue has a bitter and cruel expression of command and power.

3. **Who had written the inscription on the pedestal below the statue ? What did it indicate?**

[C.B.S.E., 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : On the pedestal of the statue the words inscribed were, "My name is Ozymandias, I am the king of kings. If anyone wishes to know how great I am, then let him surpass my works." These words indicate the arrogance, conceit and arrogance of the king. The king appeared to sneer at people who were weak and helpless.

4. **Describe the surroundings of the statue of**

Ozymandias?

Ans : The broken statue of Ozymandias was surrounded by vast stretches of sand and loneliness of deserts. These ruins prove that the king's work and civilisation has crumbled to dust. Nothing lasts forever, and loneliness, desertion convey a feeling of crumbling under the cruel knife of time.

5. **Do you believe Ozymandias was justified in persisting in the belief of his supremacy? Why/Why not?**

Ans : Ozymandias was cruel, dominating and arrogant. He was too conceited and looked down upon the weak and helpless. He believed that he was the mightiest. But his challenge was ironically disproved by time itself. All his achievements, fame, empire were razed to the ground. Fate and time make a mockery of all this. So his boast could never be justified.

6. **What does the partially destroyed statue of Ozymandias symbolise? [C.B.S.E., 2012 (T-2)]**

Ans : Ozymandias was arrogant, conceited and was intoxicated with power. His partially destroyed statue, half buried in sand, bears a testimony to the fact that nothing lasts forever. This is the true destiny of man, and the passage of time proves to be a great leveller.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Give the character-sketch of king Ozymandias as depicted in the poem.

Ans : King Ozymandias considered himself to be the king of kings. He ruled over his empire with a firm hand. He fed his subjects but regarded them as inferior. He was boastful of his power and considered himself to be above all. He believed that no one will ever be able to equal his achievements. He considered himself to be blessed with extraordinary powers. The king was so intoxicated with power and passion that the welfare of his people was never his consideration. He believed himself to be above law and destiny. Ironically his statue and the surroundings proved just the opposite. He believed himself to be even greater than other kings — the Emperor of all.

2. Suppose by a miracle Ozymandias visits planet Earth and comes across his statue in that dilapidated state. He is dejected and awakens to the realisation of a life frittered away for materialistic and political gains. In a state of regret he pens down his thoughts in the form of a diary entry. Write the diary for him.

Ans : Dear Diary,

Traversing over the desert, I was dumbfounded with great shock when I discovered that my statue was lying broken, without head and body, in an eroded state. Imagine my reaction. I had considered myself above all, I was the greatest, the mightiest, and I believed that the coming generations would worship or pay respect to my statue. The condition of my statue pained me. All my achievements, my confidence in my power was razed to the ground. There were sands and loneliness around. No one seemed to remember my greatness. May be I was wrong. I should have devoted my life to the welfare, looked after my people with compassion and care, maybe then the fate of my statue would have been different.

Ozymandias.

3. After reading the poem, what is the lesson ingrained in it for the rest of mankind? Discuss.

Ans : Power, position, pelf should be used for the welfare of mankind. History may record one's territorial achievements but if one wins the hearts of people, then that is real victory. One must command respect and not demand it. Many times sages and saints are respected more than mighty kings. So one must never misuse power and might. Time is a great leveller. So glorious deeds should be committed to get respect from posterity. Shelley also demonstrates the fact that art and language long outlive the other legacies of power. Real power is in winning hearts and not in ruling the weak and the needy.

4. Describe the picture of Ozymandias that emerges in your mind after reading the poem. How was his dream of perpetuating his memory reduced to dust?

Or

The poem Ozymandias illustrates the vanity of human greatness. Comment.

[C.B.S.E., 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : King Ozymandias considered himself to be the king of kings. He ruled over his empire with a firm hand. He fed his subjects and regarded them as inferior. He was arrogant and highly conceited, and believed that no one will ever be able to equal his achievements. He was so intoxicated with power that the welfare of his people was never his consideration. He believed himself to be above law and destiny.

But now his shattered statue, half buried in sand, the waste and ruins around prove that the time has levelled his fame and work. The ruins around the statue bear the testimony to the fact that nothing lasts forever. This is the true destiny of man. He is insignificant before the power of time. The poem illustrates the vanity of human greatness. It depicts, that one must command respect and not demand it. One must never misuse power and might. Glorious deeds should be committed to get respect from posterity. Real power lies in winning the hearts and not in, ruling the weak and needy.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Your class went for a picnic at Humayun's tomb. You noticed the utter neglect surrounding the monument and felt deeply concerned by it. Write a letter to the Archaeological Survey of India to take adequate measures for the preservation of such monuments.
2. Make a project on 'THE MONUMENTS OF SOUTH INDIA' using pictures and illustration.
3. Suggest 6 measures for the protection of monuments.
- 4.



- | Identify this monument
- | Write 5 sentences regarding it.

5. Match the following :

Names of Monuments

1. Charminar, Hyderabad
2. Qutub Minar
3. Red Fort
4. Jantar Mantar
5. Brihadishwara Temple, Tamil Nadu
6. Victoria Memorial, Calcutta
7. Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu

Creators

- | Shah Jahan
- | Chola kings
- | Maharaja Jai Singh of Jaipur
- | Iltutmish
- | Mohammad Quli Qutub Shah
- | Pallava kings
- | Lord Curzon

By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

INTRODUCTION

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' is quite different from the works of other romantic poets. It is based on a dream of Coleridge's friend and was published in 1798. It is written in the style of a folk ballad and is divided into seven parts. The poem has a scattering of references to outdated beliefs and practices. It is surely not only the mariner, who is ancient, but even his rhyme is old. There are multiple and contradictory time elements and the poem itself hides its origins. Nevertheless the extravagant use of archaic words make it appear old.

Coleridge's deliberately archaic language, ominous tones and 'loony' narrator are a stunning contrast to the lighter, pastoral works of Wordsworth and others. Mariner's unkempt yet charismatic appearance suggests subtly to the reader, through the repeated focus on his 'glittering eye' and his 'long beard', that he has become a spokesman of nature. The mariner's timelessness, in direct contrast to the death of all crew members, suggests the eternity of nature of which he has become symbolic. Ultimately the mariner repents for his sins and this has the echoes of the Christian message, though his killing of the albatross is a crime against nature. The poem focusses on the power and nemesis of the natural world. However, the poem hinges around the line, "I killed an albatross." Nevertheless after repentance, the didactic content of the poem can be seen in its message, "He prayeth best, who loveth best."

सारांश

सैमुएल टेलर कोलेरिज की कविता 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' दूसरे रूमानी कवियों की रचनाओं से बहुत भिन्न है। यह Coleridge के मित्र के एक स्वप्न पर आधारित है। पहली बार यह सन् 1798 में छपी थी। यह लोकगाथा गीत की शैली में लिखी गई है और 7 भागों में विभाजित है। कविता में छुट-पुट तौर से विवरण आया है पुराने रीति रिवाजों का। केवल नाविक ही पुरातन नहीं हैं परन्तु उसकी तुकांत कविता भी पुरानी है। अनेक और सर्वथा एक दूसरे के विपरीत अनेक प्रसंग और समय तत्त्व भी छिपे हैं। कविता स्वयं अपना मूल स्रोत छिपाती है - लेकिन बहुत पुराने शब्दों का उपयोग इसे पुरातन काल का बनाता है।

कोलेरिज का जानबूझकर पुरातनकालीन शब्दों का उपयोग, अपशकुन झलकाता अंदाज़ और सनकी कथावाचक, "उसी की प्रार्थना सर्वश्रेष्ठ

है जो सब प्राणियों से प्रेम करता है," उनकी शैली और वड्सवर्थ की हल्की फुल्की साधारण ग्रामीण जीवन दर्शाती काव्य रचनाओं के बीच चकित कर देने वाला अंतर दिखता है।

नाविक का अव्यवस्थित परन्तु आकर्षक रंगरूप पाठक को दर्शाता है कि वह प्रकृति का प्रवक्ता है। उसकी चमकती आँख और लम्बी दाढ़ी का बार-बार वर्णन इसकी पुष्टि करता है। नाविक का हमेशा कायम रहने वाला व्यक्तित्व/अस्तित्व जहाज़ के दूसरे कर्मचारियों के मारे जाने की घटना, ध्यान ले जाती है कि प्रकृति अनंत और पारलौकिक है जिसका एक अटूट अंग बन गया है 'नाविक'।

अंत में नाविक अपने पापों का पश्चाताप करता है जो क्रिश्चियन संदेश की गूँज है। उनका एलबेट्राज़ चिड़िया को मार देना प्रकृति के विरुद्ध जुर्म है। कविता केंद्रित होती है इस विचार पर कि प्रकृति पतनशील है जिससे बचा नहीं जा सकता।

कविता अटक जाती है इस पंक्ति पर "I killed an albatross" परन्तु पश्चाताप के बाद कविता का नैतिक पक्ष इस संदेश में "He prayeth best, who loveth best." स्पष्ट दिखाई देता है,

WORDS-MEANINGS

• **stoppeth** : stops • **thy** : your • **thou** : you • **merry din** : happy noise of celebration • **unhand** : leave • **glittering** : shining • **hath** : has • **paced** : entered • **Nodding** : acknowledging good wishes • **fled** : moved fast • **wondrous** : surprisingly • **dismal** : dull and depressing • **plagued** : troubled • **drought** : parched and dry • **kirk** : is an archaic word for church. it lends a favour of a traditional ballad and creates an effect of distancing in time. • **Vesper's Nine** : Literal meaning of Vesper is Venus, which is visible in the evenings. Number nine is a magical number for Coleridge and he was fascinated by it. Basically Vesper's Nine refers to evening prayers in churches. • **yell and blow** (para 12) refers to the noise and convection of the sea storm. It could also be the commotion or the cries of the sailors.

LITERARY DEVICES

ALLITERATION

- By the long grey beard and glittering eye
- furrow followed free
- It would work' ear woe
- down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down
- The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew

METAPHORS

- Merry Minstrelsy
- Vespers Nine
- snowy clefts
- The Furrow

REPETITION

- glittering eye
- ice was here etc.
- bright-eyed Mariner
- water, water

PERSONIFICATION

- Sun – is personified as a Man
- Storm – is also personified as a Man

- Blast – also as a Bird (“overtaking wing”)

SIMILES

- Like a three year old child – wedding guest
- Red as a rose – the Bride
- As who pursued with yell and blow – the ship
- Like noises in a sound – Thundering and growling sounds
- As idle as a painted ship – ship as if it is painted
- Like witch’s oils – ingredients used by witches to make their broth

EXPLANATION OF SOME EXPRESSIONS

PART - I

1. It is an ancient *mariner*,

*And he stoppeth one of three.
‘By they long grey beard and
glittering eye, How wherefore
stopp’st thou me?
The Bridegroom’s doors are
opened wide And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May’st hear the merry din.’* (Lines 1-8)

Explanation ...

An ancient mariner stopped one of the three guests, who were going for a wedding. The guest was attracted by the long beard and glittering eyes of the mariner. However, he does not like being stopped and asked the Mariner why he was holding on to him. The wedding guest was in a hurry since the doors of the bridegroom’s house were open and the sound of merry-making and the festivities could be heard.

2. He holds him with his skinny hand,

*‘There was a ship,’ quoth he. ‘Hold
off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!’
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.
He holds him with his glittering eye–
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years child
The Mariner hath his will* (lines 9-16)

Explanation ...

The mariner held the wedding guest with his skinny hand and started relating his story abruptly, “There was a ship.” The wedding guest is reluctant to stay but he is mesmerised by the gaze of the mariner and listens to his story like a three-year-old child.

3. The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:

*He cannot choose but hear:
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner:
‘The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill
Below the lighthouse top.
(Lines 17-24)*

Explanation ...

The wedding guest sat down on the stone. The bright-eyed mariner started telling his story. When the mariner’s ship had to set sail, they were given a warm farewell and the ship started sailing, leaving behind the church, the lighthouse etc.

4. The Sun came up upon the left,

*Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Wend down into the sea
Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon -
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon
(Lines 25-32)*

Explanation ...

The ship was sailing towards the south, so the sun appeared to be rising from the sea. It shone brightly and sank the same way. Everyday the sun rose higher and higher, up to the height of the mast. At this point the mariner’s story is interrupted, since the loud music from the bridegroom’s house distracts the wedding-guest and he starts getting restless to leave.

5. *The bride hath paced into the hall.
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.
The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man.
The bright-eyed Mariner.* (Lines 33-40)

Explanation ...

The loud music is the indication of the arrival of the bride. She enters looking beautiful like a rose, and is followed by a band of musicians. The wedding-guest does not like missing all these festivities but the mariner succeeds in detaining him.

6. *And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking-wings,
And chased us south along.
With sloping masts and dipping prow
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe
And forward bends his head.
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled* (Lines 41-50)

Explanation ...

The mariner continues telling his story. A very fierce storm lashes the ship with force and drove the ship towards the south. The masts of the ship were bent and its prow dipped into the sea. The ship looked like a person with his head bent, escaping from an enemy.

7. *And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.
And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken
The ice was all between
The ice was here, the ice was there,* (Lines 51-58)

Explanation ...

Now the ship reached the region of mists and ice. It was intensely cold and icebergs and snow-capped cliffs could be seen. This place was totally deserted and only ice could be seen all around.

8. *It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!
At length did cross an Albatross,*

*Through the fog it came,
As if it had been a 'Christian soul'
We hailed it in God's name
It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.* (Lines 59-66)

Explanation ...

The mariner and other shipmates were only surrounded by ice on all sides, which made funny sounds like that of growling, cracking and howling. At last an albatross appeared through the fog. The entire crew welcomes it, as if it were a Christian soul.

9. *The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!
And a good south wind sprung up behind:
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!
In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud.* (Lines 67-74)

Explanation ...

The albatross ate the food the sailors gave and hovered around the ship. They were lucky because south wind started blowing which was favourable to them. The albatross followed the ship and would appear when food was offered to him.

10. *It perched for Vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white.
Glimmered the white Moon-shine.
'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! -
Why look'st thou so?' - With my cross-bow
I shot the ALBATROSS.
The sun now rose upon the right:* (Lines 75-82)

Explanation ...

The albatross would sit on the mast sails. The mariner and other sailors continued sailing for nine more days. At this juncture, the mariner looked fearful and guilty. The wedding-guest prayed that God have mercy on him but the mariner unravelled the mystery, saying, "I shot the albatross with my cross-bow."

PART - II

11. *Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.
And the good south wind still blew behind.
But no sweet bird did follow*

*Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!
And I had done a hellish thing.* (Lines 83-90)

Explanation ...

The sun rose on the right side of the ship, though it had been misty all the day. The sun set and the favourable south wind was still blowing, but there was no bird to keep them company or eat the food they offered.

12. And it would work 'em woe:

*For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay.
That made the breeze to blow!
Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,* (Lines 91-96)

Explanation ...

All the shipmates condemned the ancient mariner for killing the albatross. They felt that albatross was a bird of good omen and now they will be facing misfortune and disaster, for killing the bird for no reason.

13. The glorious Sun uprist:

*Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay.
That bring the fog and mist.
The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into the silent sea.
Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down.
(Lines 97-106)*

Explanation ...

To their surprise, bright sun arose, which looked glorious like the head of god. The sailors changed their opinion and now they praised the mariner for killing the bird, since the albatross had only brought fog and mist. The ship sailed gently and white foam was flying on the surface of the silent ocean.

14. 'Twas sad as sad could be;

*And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!
All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon
Day after day, day after day.* (Lines 107-114)

Explanation ...

But too much silence is ominous and the atmosphere looks frightening. There is no wind, the sails drop and the sky looked like heated copper. The sun looked red and very small like the moon.

15. We stuck, nor breath nor motion;

*As idle as a painted ship
Upon a pained ocean.
Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.
The very deep did rot: O Christ! (Lines 115-122)*

Explanation ...

The ship was stuck at the same place because there was no wind or tide. It was still like a painting. Although there was water everywhere, the boards of the ship started shrinking and the sailors had not even a drop of water to drink.

16. That ever this should be!

*Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.
About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.
And some in dreams assured were (Lines 123-130)*

Explanation ...

The water looked rotten and sticky and ugly sea creatures could be seen near the ship. The sailors pray to God to save them. Death-fires appeared to be dancing and hovering around them and the sea water looked like the oil burnt by witches.

17. Of the Spirit that plagued us so:

*Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.
And every tongue, through utter drought
Was withered at the root,
We could not speak, nor more than if
We had been choked with soot.
Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young! (Lines 131-138)*

Explanation ...

Some of the sailors had a nightmare that a spirit was trying to take revenge for killing the albatross. The

spirit was tracking them from the land of mist and snow and it was moving nine fathoms deep in the water.

18. *Instead of the cross, the Albatross*

About my neck was hung. (Lines 139-142)

Explanation ...

The sailors condemn the mariner for landing them into such a ghastly-situation. Their throats are absolutely choked with soot. They are full of contempt and in great anger they removed his cross and put the dead albatross round his neck.

19. *Long grey beard and glittering eye.....* (lines 3-4)

Explanation...

These physical features of the ancient mariner are very striking and charismatic and have a great effect on the wedding-guest. He is mesmerised by the appearance and the manner of the mariner and becomes subdued. The long beard of the mariner suggests subtly that he has become a spokesman for nature.

20. *grey-beard loon.....* (line 11)

Explanation...

Coleridge's use of archaic words makes the poem look timeless. These words are a part of old-fashioned vocabulary.

21. *For he heard the loud bassoon.....*(line 32)

Explanation...

The musical instruments suggest the festivities in the bridegroom's house, but the wedding-guest is still under the spell of the mariner. There is a deliberate contrast between the bright lights of the wedding ceremony and the dark tale of the mariner.

22. *And now the storm-blast came and he*

was tyrannous and strong..... (lines 41-42)

Explanation...

The storm-blast is personified as a person, who is very cruel and strong and the entire ship is tossed here and there because of the fury of the storm-blast. The storm-blast has great devastating power and it pushes the ship to the south.

23. *And ice, mast-high, came floating by*

As green as emerald..... (lines 53-54)

Explanation...

The ship has reached the region of snows and mist and icebergs as high as masts can be seen. The green colour of the sea can be seen reflected by the icebergs.

These kind of scenes add to the beauty and pictorial quality of the poem.

24. *It cracked and growled, and roared and howled.....*
(line 58)

Explanation...

The above words all are associated with sounds and they add to the musicality of the poem. These words indicate the breaking, sliding and falling of huge chunks of ice.

25. *As if it had been a 'Christian soul'*

We hailed it in God's name..... (line 64)

Explanation...

The albatross is seen as a symbol of God's favour, a blessing in disguise. The coming of the albatross lifts the spirits of the crew and his coming 'out of fog' signifies 'hope from despair'.

26. *With my cross-bow*

I shot the albatross..... (line 80)

Explanation...

The killing of the innocent creature of God is a sin and this act of the mariner signifies that he has lost connection with God and all good things.

27. *Then all averred, I had killed the bird*

that bring fog and mist..... (line 101)

Explanation...

The sailors are very fickle-minded. First they welcome the albatross and consider him a blessing. Later they think that albatross was responsible for the coming of fog and mist.

28. *Water, water, everywhere*

Nor a drop to drink.....(lines 120-121)

Explanation...

The crew realises the gravity of the mariner's action of killing the albatross. They are stranded without wind or water to drink. These signify that the crew has lost touch with the very elements of life. The crew also seem to share equally in the act of sin.

29. *Slimy creatures did crawl with legs.....* (line 124)

death-fires danced at night..... (line 127)

Explanation...

The poet uses these mystic elements dramatically

to create an atmosphere of horror and evil. The mariner, by destroying one of God's creatures, exposes himself to the darker aspects of the world. The poet suggests that sin and defiance of God bring the worst results.

30. *instead of the cross, the albatross*
About my neck was hung..... (line 140)

Explanation...

In retaliation for their increasingly miserable plight, the crew hangs the corpse of the dead albatross about the mariner's neck like a cross. The cross, a symbol of God's grace and blessing, is wrenched away from the mariner and the albatross is put instead, which is a grim reminder of his sin.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

4. Here are some of the archaic words used in the poem; can you match them with the words used in modern English language that mean the same? The first one has been done you as an example :

1	stoppeth	why	3
2	thy	entered	14
3	wherefore	stopped	1
4	stopp'st	you	5
5	thou	lunatic	8
6	may'st	at once	9
7	quoth	fainting fit	18
8	loon	has	11
9	eftsoons	can't you	6
10	dropt	stopping	4
11	hath	church	13
12	spake	enemy	15
13	kirk	yes	16
14	paced	see	17
15	foe	call	19
16	aye	trouble	20
17	ken	looking	21
18	swound	your	2
19	hollo	said	7
20	plague	dropped	10
21	look'st	spoke	12

6. Answer the following by choosing the right option from those given below :

(a) *The Ancient Mariner stopped one of the three wedding guests because*

- (i) he wanted to attend the wedding with him
 - (ii) he wanted him to sit with him
 - (iii) he wanted him to listen to his story
 - (iv) he wanted to stop him from going to the wedding
- (b) *The wedding guest remarked that he was 'next of kin' which means that*
- (i) he was a close relation of the bridegroom
 - (ii) he was a close relation of the bride
 - (iii) he was next in line to get married
 - (iv) he had to stand next to the bridegroom during the wedding
- (c) *'He cannot choose but hear' means*
- (i) the mariner was forced to hear the story of the wedding guest
 - (ii) the wedding guest was forced to hear the story of the mariner
 - (iii) the mariner had the choice of not listening to the story of the wedding guest
 - (iv) the wedding guest had the choice of not listening to the story of the mariner
- (d) *'The sun came up upon the left/Out of the sea came he. This line tells us that the ship.....'*
- (i) was moving in the northern direction
 - (ii) was moving eastwards
 - (iii) was moving in the western direction
 - (iv) was moving towards the south
- (e) *The Wedding-Guest beat his breast because.....'*
- (i) he could hear the sound of the bassoon
 - (ii) he was forced to listen to the Mariner's tale when he wanted to attend the wedding
 - (iii) the sound of the bassoon meant that the bride had arrived and the wedding ceremony was about to begin and he could not attend it.

- (iv) the sound of the bassoon announced the arrival of the bride and the start of the wedding ceremony.
- (f) *The storm blast has been described as being tyrannous because.....*
 - (i) it was so fierce that it frightened the sailors
 - (ii) it took complete control of the ship
 - (iii) the storm was very powerful
 - (iv) the sailors were at its mercy
- (g) *The sailors felt depressed on reaching the land of mist and snow because*
 - (i) there was no sign of any living creature
 - (ii) they felt they would die in that cold weather
 - (iii) they were surrounded by icebergs and there seemed to be no sign of life
 - (iv) everything was grey in colour and they felt very cold
- (h) *The sailors were happy to see the albatross because*
 - (i) it was the first sign of life and therefore gave them hope that they might survive
 - (ii) it split the icebergs around the ship and helped the ship move forward
 - (iii) it was a messenger from God and it lifted the fog and mist
 - (iv) it gave them hope of survival by splitting the icebergs
- (i) *The two things that happened after the arrival of the albatross were*
 - (i) the icebergs split and the albatross became friendly with the sailors
 - (ii) the icebergs split and a strong breeze started blowing
 - (iii) the ship was pushed out of the land of mist and the ice melted
 - (iv) the albatross started playing with the mariners and ate the food they offered
- (j) *'It perched for Vespers nine' means*
 - (i) the ship stopped sailing at nine o'clock every day
 - (ii) the albatross would appear at a fixed time everyday
 - (iii) the albatross would sit on the sail or the mast everyday
 - (iv) the albatross was a holy creature
- (k) *'God save thee, ancient Mariner/From the fiends that plague thee thus!-Why look'st thou so?' means*
 - (i) the mariner wanted to know why the Wedding Guest was looking so tormented

- (ii) the Wedding Guest wanted to know why the mariner was looking so tormented.
- (iii) the Wedding Guest wanted to know whether some creatures were troubling the ancient mariner.
- (iv) the ancient mariner wanted to know whether something was troubling the wedding guest

Answers : (a) (iii) (b) (i) (c) (ii)
 (d) (iv) (e) (iii) (f) (ii)
 (g) (iii) (h) (i) (i) (i)
 (j) (ii) (k) (ii)

7. Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) *How did the ancient mariner stop the wedding guest?*

Ans. The mariner caught hold of the wedding guest's hand, tried to mesmerise him with his gaze and did not allow the wedding guest to go.

(b) *Was the wedding guest happy to be stopped? Why not?*

Ans. The wedding guest had come to attend the wedding so he was not interested in listening to the mariner's story. The wedding festivities had begun and the guest was getting impatient to leave.

(c) *Describe the ancient mariner.*

Ans. The ancient mariner was shabby, had a grey-beard with glittering eyes, his hands were rough and skinny and he had a mesmerising gaze.

(d) *How does the mariner describe the movement of the ship as it sails away from the land?*

Ans. As the ship moved away, it was widely cheered. The ship moved away from a church, passed from under a hill and a light-house.

(e) *What kind of weather did the sailors enjoy at the beginning of their journey? How has it been expressed?*

Ans. The sun shone very brightly on the left side and everything looked cheerful. The sun has been personified as a man.

(f) *How did the sailors reach the land of mist and snow?*

Ans. After the clear sunshine there rose a violent sea-storm and the ship got trapped in it. The ship is tossed on the rough waves and the sailors have a difficult time controlling it. The ship is forcibly driven to the extreme south where the ship is full of mist and snow.

(g) *How does the mariner express the fact that the ship was completely surrounded by icebergs?*

Ans. The poet uses literary devices like Alliteration/ Assonance to convey this effect. "The ice was here, the

iceman was there, the ice was all around.” These lines reinforce the extent of ice around the ship and the sailor’s sense of being helpless and trapped.

(h) *How do we know that the albatross was not afraid of the humans?*

Ans. The albatross ate the food it was offered though it was not its natural food. To the trapped and forlorn

sailors, the bird appeared to be a Christian soul for it brought them new hope like Jesus had brought to the world.

(i) *What was the terrible deed done by the mariner? Why did he do it?*

Ans. The ancient mariner wantonly killed the innocent albatross which had brought new hope to the sailors. He just shot the albatross for no apparent reason.

8. There are a number of literary devices used in the poem. Some of them have been listed below. Choose the right ones and write them down in the table as shown in the example. In each of the cases explain what they mean.

simile, metaphor, alliteration, personification, hyperbole, repetition,

1. The Wedding Guest stood still, And listens like a three years’ child:	Simile; the wedding guest was completely under the control of the mariner
2. Below the kirk, below the hill, Below the lighthouse top	alliteration
3. The sun came up upon the left, Out of the sea came he	Personification
4. The bride hath paced into the hall, Red as a rose is she	Simile
5. And now the storm-blast came, and he was tyrannous and strong:	Personification
6. With sloping masts and dipping prow, As who pursued with yell and blow Still treads the shadow of his foe	Simile
7. The ice was here, the ice was there, The ice was all around	Repetition

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the significance of the title of the poem ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.’

Ans. ‘Rime’ means Rhyme, a poem or a song. ‘Ancient’ means old, strange pertaining to some far-off times. The poem has some references to outdated beliefs and practices. It is surely not only the mariner who is ancient, but even his rhyme is. Reading the poem at a stretch, one cannot guess the time-frame it belongs to. Coleridge has deliberately used some archaic words to make it appear ancient. The poem contains the story of the mariner’s sin, punishment and his redemption. The entire poem deals with the tale of the ancient mariner and all the actions, description relate to the ancient mariner’s tale. So the title is very suitable, direct and suggestive.

2. Under which circumstances is the Wedding-Guest detained and held by the ancient mariner. What is the reaction of the wedding guest?

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Or

Why did the Ancient Mariner not let the guest go and attend the wedding?

Ans. The ancient mariner is tortured and is emotionally wrecked. The burden of the sin and the guilt of killing the albatross is too heavy for the ancient mariner to carry. He has no rest or peace of mind. He is advised by a hermit to tell this story to someone, so that the torment he is suffering, the ache he is feeling, is reduced. The mariner

goes from village to village but no one is ready to listen to his story. He finds a wedding guest and narrates the story to him. Narrating the story soothes him, lifts the burden off his soul and restores him to normalcy. The Wedding guest is awed and mesmerised by the mariner but he is angry at having missed the wedding festivities. However, he learns a valuable lesson, “He prayeth best, who loveth best.”

3. What kind of farewell was given to the ship of the ancient mariner? Give an account of the ship’s journey before it reaches the land of snow.

Ans. The journey of the ancient mariner begins in favourable circumstances. The ship was accorded a very cheerful send-off, it crossed the harbour very quickly and entered the main seawaters. The ship sailed away from the coast, the church, the hill and the lighthouse. The sun shone bright and the ship appeared to be near the equator. But suddenly a violent seastorm engulfed the ship and the ship tossed on the merciless sea waves. The ship was forcibly driven towards the South Pole. The ship was bent with the force of the wind and it was unable to escape the fury of the gale. The South Pole was full of mist, snow and icebergs as high as the mast of the ship were floating here and there on the sea.

4. What message does Samuel Taylor Coleridge wish to convey through the poem ‘Rime of the Ancient Mariner’?

Ans. ‘Rime of the Ancient Mariner’ is an exploration of evil, both that of men and of nature, and of salvation. The poem is full of Christian symbolism, which is also a departure from the romantic poetry. The slaughtered albatross, emerging spirits from beneath the murky water,

slimy creatures of the sea, all are images of sin and evil, and its consequences. The whole poem is based on the Christian concept of sin, its punishment and redemption.

The albatross can be seen as a symbol of God’s favour, bringing good results. The mariner, mortal and fallible, succumbs to his paranoia and fear, when he kills the innocent creature, thereby tainting himself with sin and losing connection with God and all things good. Coleridge uses dramatically mystical elements to express the consequences of the mariner’s colossal mistake. By destroying one of God’s creatures, the mariner is exposed to the darker aspects of the world.

Defying God leads to worse results. The crew hang the dead albatross around the mariner’s neck. The mariner is symbolic of a Christ-like figure and the cross-like albatross, a symbol of sin, is borne only by the mariner. Though the crew also suffer, but punishment is borne only by the mariner.

In the end, the mariner is truly remorseful and is able to pray to God. As he prays, he is filled with God’s grace and albatross, a symbol of sin, falls from him. The moral of the poem is sublime, “he prayeth well, who loveth well.”

So Coleridge’s fascination with natural evil and salvation is clear in the poem. The slimy and ghastly creatures are fantastical, but they are a direct result of a very realistic moral failing on the part of the mariner connecting between the dark and mystical with ordinary, mundane life. Coleridge, like the other romantics, sees the beautiful and compelling in both the good and bad sides of nature, and wants the reader to accept them, rather than succumb to fear as the mariner did.

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the following and write the most appropriate option from the ones given to you.

1. *It is an ancient mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three
By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
How wherefore stopp’st thou me?*
- (i) **Whom does the ancient mariner stop?**
 (a) someone from the wedding band
 (b) a wedding-guest
 (c) some sailor
 (d) the bridegroom
- (ii) **Where were they going?**
 (a) To sail in the sea
 (b) To a friend’s house

- (c) To the wedding
 (d) For some party
- (iii) **What is the most striking feature of the mariner?**
 (a) his shabby clothes (b) thick beard
 (c) glittering eyes (d) weak hands
- (iv) **How do the looks of the mariner affect that person?**
 (a) intimidating (b) mesmerising
 (c) impressive (d) ineffective
- (v) **Point out the poetic device used in the third line of the above stanza.**
 (a) Simile (b) Alliteration
 (c) Metaphor (d) Pathetic Fallacy

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (b) (iii) (c) (iv) (b) (v) (b)

2. *He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he, hold
off! Unhand me, grey-beard loon!
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.*

(i) **Why does the mariner use physical force to hold on to that person?**

- (a) he is very strong
- (b) he likes the wedding-guest
- (c) the wedding-guest does not wish to be detained
- (d) He wants to impress him

(ii) **Explain the reaction of the other speaker. What is the reason of his anger?**

- (a) he hates the mariner
- (b) mariner is very dirty and shabby
- (c) he is desperate to attend the wedding
- (d) he is tired

(iii) **Point out an archaic word from the above stanza.**

- (a) unhand
- (b) eftsoons
- (c) loon
- (d) dropt

(iv) **Explain 'grey-beard loon'.**

- (a) dirty appearance
- (b) old and sick looking
- (c) crazy and mad
- (d) eccentric

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (c) (iii) (b) (iv) (c)

3. *The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she,
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.*

(i) **Point out the manner in which the bride makes her appearance.**

- (a) very slowly
- (b) delicately and gracefully
- (c) with quick speed
- (d) holding her head high

(ii) **Discuss the figure of speech in line 2.**

- (a) Metaphor
- (b) Imagery
- (c) Simile
- (d) Personification

(iii) **Who are the merry-minstrels that accompany the bride?**

- (a) the wedding guests
- (b) the bridegroom
- (c) the musicians, singers
- (d) the guests from the side of the bride.

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (c) (iii) (c)

4. *The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around.*

*It cracked and growled, and roared and howled
like noises in a swound!*

(i) **The above stanza is known for its musical sounds. Mention the words that create the sound effect.**

- (a) swound
- (b) cracked and growled
- (c) around
- (d) there

(ii) **What do the first two lines convey?**

- (a) feelings of happiness
- (b) feelings of wonder and surprise
- (c) helplessness of being trapped
- (d) feeling of coldness

(iii) **What is the poetic device used in the first line?**

- (a) Irony
- (b) Transferred epithet
- (c) Alliteration
- (d) Imagery

(iv) **Describe the atmosphere created by being trapped by ice**

- (a) strangeness
- (b) horror and loneliness
- (c) isolation and hope
- (d) defeat and hopelessness

(v) **Name the poetic device that helps create the effect of sound words.**

- (a) Alliteration
- (b) Onomatopoeia
- (c) Imagery
- (d) personification

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (c) (iii) (d) (iv) (d) (v) (b)

5. *At length did cross an Albatross,
Through the fog it came,
As if it had been a 'Christian soul'
We hailed it in God's name.*

(i) **How is the coming of the albatross favourable?**

- (a) It relieves the sailors of boredom
- (b) It is good-looking
- (c) They wish to pet him
- (d) It brings south wind to help the ship to move

(ii) **Why was the albatross called 'A Christian soul'?**

- (a) Christianity teaches charity
- (b) They wish to show compassion like true Christians
- (c) The bird brought new hope like Lord Jesus
- (d) The bird was very gentle

(iii) **What reception does the albatross receive?**

- (a) It angers the mariners
- (b) It is welcomed as a blessing
- (c) It is driven away
- (d) It is beaten up

Answer : (i) (d) (ii) (c) (iii) (b)

6. *Nor dim nor red, like God's own head*

*the glorious Sun uprist.
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and the mist.*

- (i) **The sun is compared to something. Identify it.**
(a) fog (b) mist
(c) head of God (d) bird
- (ii) **Why has the sun become 'glorious'?**
(a) It can be seen clearly
(b) It shines brilliantly
(c) Sun rays are reflected by the snow
(d) The mariners are facing the sun
- (iii) **Change of surroundings changed the attitude of the sailors. How?**
(a) They start feeling too cold
(b) The atmosphere grows dark and menacing
(c) They start hating the bird and think of killing him.
(d) They lose interest in the bird
- (iv) **How does the above stanza reflect the attitude of the sailors?**
(a) kind (b) have charitable spirit
(c) opportunistic and fickle-minded
(d) clever

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (a) (iii) (b) (iv) (c)

7. *Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.*

- (i) **Who are 'old' and 'young'?**
(a) Ancient mariner (b) the bird
(c) fellow-sailors (d) owners of the ship
- (ii) **Why are the people casting evil looks?**
(a) They dislike him
(b) They hold him responsible for their misery
(c) He is not hardworking
(d) His behaviour is bad
- (iii) **Why is the 'cross' removed from the mariner's neck? What does it indicate?**
(a) hatred
(b) appreciation
(c) disbelief in his capacity
(d) punishment
- (iv) **Why is the dead albatross hung around the sailor's neck? What does it indicate?**
(a) eternal damnation

- (b) cruelty
(c) a kind of joke
(d) mockery

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (b) (iii) (d) (iv) (a)

8. *Water, water everywhere
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water everywhere
Nor any drop to drink* [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

- (i) **The repetition of the word, 'water' in the above lines conveys**
(a) the ship was in water
(b) the water was saline
(c) the ship was sinking in the water
(d) there was a large volume of water surrounding them
- (ii) **At this point of time, the sailors yearned to**
(a) drink water (b) repent
(c) return home (d) move forward
- (iii) **The irony in the above line is that**
(a) there is water everywhere yet sailors can't swim ashore.
(b) there is water everywhere yet sailors can't drink it.
(c) there are slimy creatures all around.
(d) the sea had started rolling.

Answer : (i) (d) (ii) (a) (iii) (b)

9. *And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold,
And ice, mast high, came floating by
As green as emerald.* [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

- (i) **It grew wondrous cold because**
(a) of the change of weather
(b) of the floating ice
(c) the sun did not appear in the sky for days together
(d) the ship had reached the Polar region
- (ii) **The floating ice was**
(a) breaking into pieces
(b) producing a rumbling sound
(c) as high as the mast of the ship
(d) wondrously cold
- (iii) **The poetic device used in the last line is**
(a) Simile
(b) Metaphor
(c) Personification
(d) Alliteration

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (c) (iii) (a)

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – NON-MCQs

Read the following extracts and answer the questions.

(1) *“The bridegroom’s doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin
The guests are met, the feast is set :
May’st hear the merry din”.*

(a) **Who is next of kin?**

Ans : The wedding guest is next of kin.

(b) **Why is the wedding guest helpless and restless?**

Ans : He is eager to join the wedding party.

(c) **What does ‘merry din’ refer to?**

Ans : The noise of celebration and festivities.

(2) *“He holds him with his glittering eye
The wedding guest stood still
And listens like a three-year old child
The mariner hath his will”.*

(a) **Why does the mariner hold him?**

Ans : The wedding guest is reluctant to listen to the mariner.

(b) **Explain the figure of speech in line 3.**

Ans : Simile

(c) **What is the mariner’s will?**

Ans : The mariner wants to hold the guest and relate his tales of misery.

(3) *The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill
Below the light-house top.*

(a) **On what note does the journey begin?**

Ans : The journey begins with optimism and cheering.

(b) **What sights were seen on the way?**

Ans : They saw a hill, a lighthouse when the ship cleared from the harbour.

(c) **Discuss the use of ‘kirk’. What effect does it create?**

Ans : It is an archaic word for ‘church’. It gives the poem the flavour of a traditional ballad.

(4) *And now the storm-blast came and he
was tyrannous and strong
He struck with his o’ertaking wings
And chased us south along.*

(a) **Identify the figure of speech in line 1 and 3.**

Ans : The storm-blast is personified as a bird with powerful wings.

(b) **Explain “overtaking wings” and “tyrannous”.**

Ans : It means powerful wings that create a horrifying

effect.

(c) **How does the storm affect the ship?**

Ans : The ship was driven towards the south.

(5) *With sloping masts and dipping prow
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe.*

(a) **Identify the figure of speech and explain it.**

Ans : It is simile and the poet says that the masts of the ship were bent and its prow dipped into the sea.

(b) **Explain - the last line**

Ans : The ship looked like a person, whose head is bent, as if he is escaping an enemy.

(c) **What does the description of the ship sailing suggest about the state of mind of the sailors on it?**

Ans : The sailors were very confused and frightened.

(6) *At length did cross an Albatross,
Through the fog it come;
As if it had been a Christian soul
We hailed it in God’s name.*

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

(a) **Explain – ‘did cross an Albatross’.**

Ans : An Albatross appeared near the ship.

(b) **Why was the albatross hailed as a Christian soul?**

Ans : It was hailed as a Christian soul because it brought hope like Jesus.

(c) **What blessings did the albatross bring?**

Ans : It appeared to be like a good omen and ushered in hope.

(7) *“God save thee, ancient Mariner
From the friends, that plague thee thus !
Why look’st thou so?” with my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross”*

(a) **Identify the speaker of the first two lines.**

Ans : The wedding guest speaks these lines.

(b) **What has been the speaker compelled to do?**

Ans : The wedding guest has been forced to hear the mariner’s tale of sin and suffering.

(c) **What was the Mariner’s crime? Why did he do so?**

Ans : The mariner’s crime was killing of the albatross for no reason.

(8) *The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew
The furrow followed free
We were the first that ever burst
Into the silent sea*

(a) Discuss the poetic device in the first two lines. Discuss the effect created.

Ans : Alliteration and repetition enhances the poetic and musical effect.

(b) Explain – the furrow followed free.

Ans : 'Furrow' is used as a metaphor, it means a groove that is made while ploughing the fields. The waves make this kind of pattern in the water and ship moves smoothly.

(c) What happened when the sailors reached there?

Ans : They were trapped and stuck in a silent and lonely part of the sea.

(9) *Day after day, day after day
We struck, nor breath nor motion,
As idle as a painter ship
Upon a painted ocean.*

(a) Why are the words repeated in the first sentence? Discuss their effect.

Ans : The repetition conveys a sheer length of time that passed.

(b) Who were struck and where?

Ans : The ship and sailors of the ancient mariner's ship were struck in the middle of the silent sea.

(c) What effect does the literary device of the last line create?

Ans : The last line is a simile and it pictorially describes a becalmed ship on a still ocean.

(10) *About, about, in reel and rout
The death fires danced at night
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.*

(a) Explain – 'reel' and 'rout'.

Ans : 'Reel' and 'rout' are dance movements and here they describe the circulatory motion of the fires.

(b) What do the death fires represent

Ans : They represent the evil forces or death.

(c) Discuss the simile given in the last two lines.

Ans : The reference is to Shakespeare's three witches of *Macbeth*. The water seems to be sparkling with different colours. This is an element of supernaturalism.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why is the albatross greeted like a 'Christian soul'? What relationship is forged between the albatross and the crew of the ship?

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The albatross is welcomed as a good omen, like the grace of Lord Jesus. The sailors are very happy to welcome and feed him for he is the only sign of life that they have seen. Its arrival also coincides with the blowing of the south-wind, which makes the ship sail. The bird is great company for all the sailors. It fills the crew with luck and hope. That is why the bird is called 'a Christian soul'.

2. What situation did the mariners face in the land of snow and ice?

Ans : The ship is cheered and the journey begins on an optimistic note. But soon the ship is caught in a violent storm and trapped. It is tossed on high waves and the sailors have great difficulty in controlling it under the effect of the stormy blast, the ship is driven to the south, which is the land of snow and mist and wondrously cold. There are no men, no sign of life. All they see is ice and ice around them.

3. The crew of the ship demonstrate double standards and they have contradictory ethical values. Bring out the truth of this statement by giving examples from the poem.

Ans : Initially the albatross is welcomed and called a 'Christian soul'. It is loved and petted. The sailors believe that the bird has brought luck and south wind. When the mariner kills the albatross, the sailors condemn this killing. When the weather improves and no mishap follows, they start blaming the bird for the fog and the mist and justify its killing. They become party to the sin, so they also undergo great suffering like the ancient mariner.

4. Describe the encounter between the ancient mariner and the wedding guest. How does the wedding guest react?

Ans : The Wedding Guest is forcibly detained by the mariner, who is in no mood to listen to his tale of 'woe' and misery. The Wedding Guest calls the mariner crazy and mad but the mariner holds the guest's hand tightly. The wedding begins and the guest beats his breast but the glittering eyes of the mariner mesmerise him. Later the guest is also involved in this extraordinary story and by the strangeness of the mariner.

5. 'We struck, nor breath nor motion:

*As idle as a painted ship
upon a painted ocean;*

Discuss how the ship came to be stuck and the problems faced by the crew.

Or

What were the sufferings undergone by the mariners in the silent sea.

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The ancient mariner and his crew were stuck in the middle of the silent sea. For a long time the sailor's ship was stuck and there was no air or motion that could move the ship. The crew were in a state of sheer helplessness and the ship looked just like a painting. Initially south wind had driven the ship but suddenly the favourable wind stopped blowing and they were pushed towards a silent sea.

6. What happened when the ship sailed into the silent sea?

Ans : The ship was moving calmly and smoothly and they came across the silent sea. The wind stopped blowing, the sails dropped. There was an eerie silence broken only by the talk of the sailors. The sky looked like heated copper. The sun looked red hot like blood. The ship did not move at all and remained stuck like a picture of a ship.

7. 'Though the consequences of sin are equally borne by the crew, it is the ancient mariner alone, who has to face the brunt of punishment.' How?

OR

Why did the fellow mariners hang the albatross around the mariner's neck?

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The albatross was shot dead for no reason by the ancient mariner. The bird had been hailed, loved and welcomed. So to punish the mariner, the dead albatross is hung around his neck as a sign of eternal damnation. Later

due to problems, the bird is cursed. Basically the sailors are fickle-minded who are hasty in punishment, though they also become party to the sin and suffer evil consequences.

8. Justify the title of the poem 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner.'

Ans : 'Rime' means 'Rhyme', a poem or a song. Ancient means old, strange or something pertaining to far-off times. The poem has some references to outdated beliefs and practices. The poet has also used some archaic words to make the poem look ancient. The poem deals with the tale of the ancient mariner and all the actions, description relate to the ancient mariner's tale.

9. The sailors are fickle-minded. Justify the statement with reference to the poem.

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The sailors are very fickle-minded. First they welcomed the albatross and considered him as a blessing and a good omen, which had caused the ice to split and the breeze to blow. Later they think that the albatross was responsible for the coming of fog and mist.

10. What crime had the mariner committed and how did it prove hellish?

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The ancient mariner had wantonly killed the innocent Albatross who had brought new hopes for the mariners. Killing of the bird proved to be hellish for him because the bird has been described as a 'Christian soul' which was the harbinger of happiness for the mariners struck in the silent sea.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What is the dramatic significance of the role of the albatross in the poem 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'?

Ans : The albatross is the main pivot on which the whole poem hangs. The poem is an exploration of evil, both that of men and nature and of salvation. The whole poem is based on the christian concept of sin, its punishment and redemption. The albatross is seen as a friendly spirit, a symbol of God's favour, bringing good results. When the mariner kills the albatross, he taints himself with sin and loses connection with God. By destroying God's creature, the mariner is exposed to the darker aspects of God. The albatross also exposes the fickle-minded nature of the sailors. In the end, when the mariner prays, albatross, a symbol of sin falls from him. The mariner is full of God's grace. So the albatross is an instrument to expose the mariner's sin and its redemption.

2. Whom did the mariners hold responsible for their misery? Was it correct to do so?

Ans : When the ancient mariner kills the albatross, the sailors are frightened that great evil will befall them. Killing a bird who brought the south wind and was great company, hurts the sailors very badly. But when no punishment follows the sin, the weather improves and the ship makes great advancement, the sailors change their opinion. But soon punishment follows, nemesis strikes them. The ship gets stuck in the silent sea and cannot move at all for days altogether. Then they undergo spells of thirst and parched throats. They are plagued by the polar spirit for killing the albatross. So they blame the mariner because it is their nature. They are too fickle-minded and have 'herd-mentality'.

3. What is a ballad? Discuss 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' as a ballad. [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : The poem is written in the style of a lyrical ballad. It is a narrative poem that tells a story, like other ballads. This poem also relates a dramatic story like other ballads. The ballads are also a kind of literary form which are suitable for singing or rhythmic chanting. This poem has a very striking and dramatic beginning in which the Wedding Guest is forcibly detained by the ancient mariner and the dialogues between both of them are very impressive. The language is simple and the use of archaic words by Coleridge adds authenticity to it. So the poem has all the qualities of a ballad and it is very distinguished in all respects.

4. The wedding guest's meek and submissive nature prepares the ground for the ancient mariner's story. Discuss. [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : This contention is true because if the wedding had been very dominating, maybe he would have forced his way to the wedding. But the real truth is that the mesmerizing persona of the ancient mariner and his crazy and loony ways arrest the Wedding Guest. His glittering eyes paralyse the wedding guest. He beats his breast but is not able to get away. Later on the power of the mariner's narrative spellbinds the guest. He is also influenced by the sheer strangeness of the story, it grips him somehow and he does not resist the mariner's force later. So, though the guest is weak, it is the mariner's 'charisma' that holds him.

5. Bring out the theme of crime and punishment in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*?

Ans : The poem hinges on the nemesis of crime and punishment. Defying God leads to worse results and punishment. The poem is an exploration of evil and of salvation. The slaughtered albatross, emerging spirits from beneath the murky spirits, slimy creatures of the sea, all are images of sin and evil and its consequences. The whole poem is based on the Christian concept of sin, its punishment and redemption. The albatross can be seen as a symbol of God's favour, bringing good results. Killing of God's creature is a sin of the biggest order so the mariner and the crew undergo so many problems. When the

mariner prays, the albatross falls off and God's grace shines on them and they are cleansed of their sins.

6. 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' is a first-person narration of the story. Do you think this technique adds to its effectiveness?

Ans : The first-person narration is very effective in the poem. It not only creates more interest but also serves as an authentic narration. The story told by the mariner creates a personal interest, since it happened to him only. His direct involvement can be seen and how effectively the course of events effected him. The first person narration also gives a direct view of the character of the person, who is telling the story. So we get a clear view of the ancient mariner's character and also get to feel his sorrow, his regret and his repentance with the same intensity.

7. When the Albatross arrived on the ship, the Mariners experienced a sense of joy and were infused with new hope. Comment.

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : When the sailors set sail, everything was favourable. The crew was given a warm farewell. The ship was sailing towards south, so the sun appeared to be rising from the sea. It shone brightly and sank the same way. Several days out at the sea, a very fierce storm lashed the ship with force and drove it towards south. The masts of the ship were bent and its prow dipped in the sea. It looked like a person with his bent head before an enemy.

The ship reached the region of mists and ice with icebergs, snow clapped cliffs all around. The place was totally deserted. Then an albatross appeared through the fog. The mariners were greatly relieved at the sight of the bird because they had not seen any living being for many days. They called albatross, a Christian soul; because after the arrival of the bird the ice split and a good wind sprang up behind them. They were infused with a new hope and experienced a sense of joy as they were able to leave that polar region.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. Read the poem 'Kubla Khan' by S.T. Coleridge in the class.
2. What is a supernatural element? Search the Internet and make a Project on the poets adept at the use of supernatural elements in their poems.
3. Research other poems famous for the use of "Onomatopoeia" like "The Brook".
Read them in the class.
Make a list of the sound words used.
4. Coleridge's poem is rich in imagery and known for word-pictures.
Compare it with 'Lord Ullin's Daughter' for its pictorial effect.
Discuss in class. Write a brief description of the place where Mariner's ship was stuck.

INTRODUCTION

This poem by D.H. Lawrence gives rise to both horror and fascination at the sight of a snake. The poem presents a conflict between civilised social education and natural human instincts. D.H. Lawrence developed a personal philosophy that instincts are superior to the reasoning of the mind. He was essentially a moralist, who believed that man was becoming divorced from natural feelings. He points out in the poem how our feelings of affections are crushed by society and we are misled to the path of ignorance, cruelty and barbarity. But we have no right to deprive others of the right to live. Mexican mythology and Bible treat snakes as evil. So the poem represents the poet's desire to free himself from sinful behaviour. The poem arouses sympathy for all creations of God and respects their right to exist, on a symbolic level the snake could also represent the conflicts in our mind. There is a constant debate between what man wants and what society wants. So the poem represents the instability of man's mind but champions the fact that it is our instinctive behaviour that generally prompts us to do good.

PARAPHRASE

A snake stone bottom.

A snake visited the poet's water trough on a very hot afternoon to quench his thirst. The water trough was under the shade of a red flowery tree, which let out a strange kind of scent. The poet who had also gone to the trough to fill water in a pitcher waited for the snake to finish, since he had come to the trough earlier than the poet. The poet is very particular regarding protocol, so he believes that he must wait for his turn to take the water.

And ware waiting.

The snake had come from a crack in the wall made of earth and from the darkness, it comes out to the edge of the water trough. The snake is yellow brown in colour, with a soft belly, it must have come slowly to the water trough. The snake rested his throat upon the stone-bottom and sipped the water into his slack long body. The snake did this very silently. The poet waited for his turn, since he had come after the snake's arrival.

He lifted Etna smoking.

The snake relaxed in between and lifted his head after drinking water like cattle. He appeared to be looking in the poet's direction and the poet could see his forked tongue. The snake appeared to think for a few moments then again bent down and drank some more water. The snake was brown like the earth and he had come out from the burning bottom of the earth. It was a very very hot day in Sicily,

in the month of July, and Mount Etna, an active volcano, was also sending out fumes, making the day hotter.

The voice him off.

Education and social conventions make the poet think that the golden brown snakes were poisonous, so they must be killed. Black snakes were considered harmless but brown ones were dangerous. As a brave man, he must undertake the task of killing the snake.

But must this earth?

The poet makes a frank confession that he really liked the snake so he didn't feel like killing him. The snake had come like a guest to drink water from the poet's water trough and was going to depart in a peaceful and satisfied manner. The snake would eventually go back in the hot and scorching bowels of the earth.

Was it secret earth.

The voices of education in the poet told him that it was the fear of the snake that made him refrain from killing him. However the poet felt that though he was quite afraid of the snake, he did actually feel honoured that a snake had come to seek his hospitality from the deep recesses of the earth

He drank wall-face.

The snake drank enough water to his satisfaction and then raised his head dreamily and flickered his tongue. He seemed to lick his lips. He looked around like a God and

then slowly proceeded to curve round and move away from the water trough. The snake moved so slowly as if he was dreaming or was asleep and again went back to climb the wall with the crack, from where he had come.

And as he was turned.

The snake put his head inside the crack and then easing his shoulders, entered deep inside the hole. The poet disliked the retreat of the snake into the dark and deep horrible hole. A sort of protest rose in the poet's mind and he became quite agitated, the moment the snake turned his back.

I looked with fascination.

The poet put down his pitcher, picked up a log and hurled it at the snake. The snake twisted violently and with great agility vanished into the hole in the wall. The tail of the snake which had been left also vanished in great haste like lightning. The snake had entered the crack in the wall. All the poet could do was to stare with fascination at the manner in which the snake had disappeared.

And immediately education.

The poet was full of guilt and felt that he must atone for the meanness of his action of throwing a log at the snake. He really hated himself for such a mean act and cursed the voice of education that had always taught him to kill snakes, without any reason. Just as the Ancient Mariner had killed the albatross without any reason the poet had also tried to strike at the snake for no reason. He really prayed and wished for the snake to come back.

And I thought crowned again.

The poet felt that the snake had behaved in a dignified manner like a king and he was also the king of the underworld. The snake was inside the earth, like a king in exile. Now enough was enough and the poet wished to give due respect to the snake that was befitting of a king.

And so, a pettiness.

The poet deeply regretted his mean act of trying to kill the snake. He had really missed the chance of treating the snake well, of giving him respect that is due to a king. Now he would have to make amends for his petty and mean act.

सारांश

A snake - - - - - stone bottom.

एक तेज गरम दोपहर को एक साँप उसी नाँद पर प्यास बुझाने आया जहाँ से कवि पानी लेता था। वह नाँद एक लाल फूलों वाले पेड़ के नीचे था जिसमें से अजीब सी सुगंध आती थी। कवि जो पानी भरने गया था, रुक गया और साँप के पानी पीने का इंतजार करने लगा। कवि

सभ्य व्यवहार में विश्वास रखता है इसलिए उसने अपनी बारी का इन्तजार करने का निर्णय लिया।

And was - - - - - waiting.

साँप दीवार में बनी एक दरार में से बाहर आया था और अँधेरे में से निकलकर नाँद के किनारे तक पहुँचा। साँप का रंग पीला-भूरा और पेट नरम है, वह जरूर धीरे-धीरे नाँद तक आया होगा। साँप ने अपना गला पत्थर की शिला पर रखा और धीरे-धीरे पानी पीने लगा। साँप ने यह सब चुपचाप किया। कवि अपनी बारी का इन्तजार करता रहा क्योंकि वह साँप के बाद आया था।

He lifted - - - - - Etna smoking.

बीच-बीच में साँप आराम करता और गाय-बैलों की तरह पानी पीकर सिर उठाता। लग रहा था कवि की ओर देख रहा है। और कवि उसकी चिरी हुई जीभ देख सकता था। कुछ पल के लिए मानों वह विचारामग्न हो गया और फिर झुक कर पीने लगा। साँप धरती की तरह भूरे रंग का था। और वह जलती धरती के अन्दर से बाहर आया था। सिसिली द्वीप का एक बहुत गर्म दिन था - महीना जुलाई का और स्थान एटना ज्वालामुखी पर्वत जो चालू था। वह भी गरम फुँकार फेंक-फेंक कर दिन को और भी गरम बना रहा था।

The voice - - - - - him off.

शिक्षा और सामाजिक रीतिरिवाज कवि को मजबूर करते हैं यह मानने के लिए कि साँप जहरीला है - जैसे कि सुनहरे - भूरे साँप होते हैं। इसलिए उन्हें मार ही देना चाहिए। काले साँपों को खतरनाक नहीं समझा जाता था परन्तु भूरे साँप खतरनाक माने जाते थे। एक बहादुर व्यक्ति की तरह उसे साँप को मारने का काम करना ही चाहिए।

But must - - - - - this earth?

कवि एक निष्कपट पाप स्वीकार करता है कि वह वास्तव में साँप को पसन्द करता है और इसीलिए उसे मरने का उसका कोई इरादा नहीं है। एक मेहमान की तरह साँप उसकी नाँद पर पानी पीने आया था और इसलिए उसे वहाँ से सुरक्षित और संतोषपूर्ण वापिस लौटना चाहिए। साँप अंत में धरती के उबलते जलते पेट के अंदर चला जायेगा।

Was it - - - - - secret earth.

सामाजिक शिक्षा की आवाजें कवि से कह रही थीं कि वह साँप से डरता है इसलिए उसे मारने की हिम्मत न कर सका। कवि का विचार था कि यह सही है कि वह साँप से डरता है परन्तु साँप का पानी पीने के लिए उसी की नाँद पर आना और धरती की गहराइयों में से निकल कर उसका आतिथ्य स्वीकार करना उसके लिए गौरव की बात थी।

He drank - - - - - wall-face.

साँप ने अपनी संतुष्टि के अनुसार काफ़ी पानी पिया और फिर सिर उठाकर स्वप्निल अंदाज़ में जुबान फेरी। वह अपने आँठों को चाटता प्रतीत हो रहा था। परमात्मा की तरह उसने चारों ओर देखा और फिर धीरे-धीरे मुड़कर नाँद से दूर हटने लगा। साँप इतना धीरे चल रहा था मानो वह स्वप्न का आनंद ले रहा हो या फिर सो रहा हो और उस

दीवार पर चढ़ गया जिसमें दरार थी, जहाँ से वह बाहर आया था।

And as he ----- was turned.

साँप ने झिरी के अंदर सिर डाला और कंधों को ढीला करता हुआ छिद्र के अन्दर गहराई में घुस गया। कवि को उसका यूँ जाना, और एक अँधेरे, गहरे गड्ढे में गायब हो जाना बहुत बुरा लगा।

I looked ----- with fascination.

कवि ने पानी का जग नीचे रख दिया, लकड़ी का लट्ठा उठा लिया और साँप के ऊपर जोर से फेंका। साँप उग्रता से मुड़ा और फुर्ती के साथ दीवार के छिद्र में घुस कर गायब हो गया। साँप की दुम जो बाहर रह गई थी वह भी फुर्ती से लुप्त हो गई। बिजली की तड़प की तरह! साँप दीवार की झिरी में जा चुका था। कवि मंत्रमुग्ध होकर साँप के गायब होने के तरीके को देखता ही रह गया।

And immediately ----- education.

कवि दोष-भाव से दबा सोच रहा था – अपनी संकुचित मनोवृत्ति और किए हुए कर्म के बारे में; साँप के ऊपर लकड़ी का लट्ठा मारने का कर्म। उसे अपने से घृणा होने लगी अपने दुष्कर्म पर और वह उन सामान्य विश्वासों को जो सिखाते रहे कि साँप को मार देना चाहिए, कोसने लगा, बिल्कुल उस नाविक की तरह जिसने अकारण Albatross को मार दिया था। उसी तरह कवि ने भी बिना किसी कारण साँप पर हमला किया। उसने दिल से प्रार्थना की, कि किसी तरह साँप फिर से आ जाए।

And thought ----- crowned again.

कवि के विचार में साँप का व्यवहार प्रतिष्ठापूर्ण था; एक राजा की तरह। और वह तो पाताल का राजा भी था। साँप धरती के अंदर था एक निर्वासित राजा की तरह, अब काफ़ी कुछ हो गया था कवि साँप को एक राजा के तुल्य सम्मान देना चाहता था।

And so ----- a pettiness.

कवि वास्तव में अपने घटिया काम – साँप को मारने के प्रयास पर कुंठित था। साँप के साथ अच्छा व्यवहार करने का अवसर वह गंवा चुका था – वह व्यवहार जो एक राजा के साथ किया जाता है अब उसे अपने घटिया व्यवहार के लिए भुगतान करना होगा।

WORDS-MEANINGS

- **trough** : a tub • **gloom** : darkness • **slackness** : relaxed and lazy manner • **vaguely** : this suggests that although the snake was looking in the poet's direction, he did not notice the poet, • **cattle** : a subtle suggestion that the snake was harmless like the cattle. • **stooped** : bent down • **Sicily** : an island in the Mediterranean
- **Mount Etna** : is an active volcano in East Sicily
- **smoking** : sending out fumes • **voice of education** : General beliefs that we develop in the process of acquiring social education. • **venomous** : poisonous • **paci-**

fied : satisfied • **thankless** : water is a natural resources and it must be available to everyone. So there is no need to thank anyone for water. • **flickered** : moved • **God** : surveying the world around like a powerful God • **unseeing** : not seeing anything in particular • **proceeded** : continued • **dreadful** : horrible • **deliberating** : willfully • **log** : piece of wood • **clatter** : loud noise • **despised** : hated • **accursed** : cursed • **exile** : banishment • **crowned** : given respect due to a king • **pettiness** : mean act

LITERARY DEVICES

REPETITION

The poet has used Repetition liberally to highlight certain features and draw attention. Some expressions are constantly repeated for emphasis.

Examples : – hot day, hot day, – must wait, must stand and wait, – before me, – earth brown, earth golden, – to feel so honoured, I felt so honoured, – I was afraid, I was most afraid, – slowly, slowly, very slowly

ALLITERATION

There is a repetition of sounds in words, generally the first sound.

Example : – slackness, soft – bellied, – strange, scented shade, – sipped, straight mouth, – mused, moment, – softly, silently, – stone trough, stone bottom

SIMILES

Example : – “looked at me vaguely as cattle do”
“looked around as God”, “writhed like lightning”, “like a king”

ONOMATOPOEIA

Example : Sipped with his Straight mouth, Softly, Silently, Slackness, Soft-bellied

SYMBOLS

- The snake is a very important part of American mythology and what Lawrence learnt of snakes in Mexico is the opposite of what his education has told him. The poet has been told that snakes are evil and even Bible corroborates that. So snake becomes a symbol of evil.
- On another symbolic level the snake could also represent the conflicts in our mind. There is a perpetual debate in our mind about what we want and what society wants. So snake could be taken to represent the instability of our mind.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

6. Answer the following questions briefly.

- (a) *Why does the poet decide to stand and wait till the snake has finished drinking water?*

Ans. The poet is a stickler for protocol and since the snake has come to the water trough before the arrival of the poet, the snake must have his fill first.

- (b) *In stanza 2 and 3 the poet gives a vivid description of the snake by using suggestive expressions. What picture of the snake do you form on the basis of this description?*

Ans. The snake has a long body, he is earth brown in colour with slow movements. He is as harmless as cattle and drinks water in a very unhurried manner. He seems to enjoy drinking water, savouring each drop and licking his lips.

- (c) *How does the poet describe the day and the atmosphere when he saw the snake?*

Ans. It was a very hot day in Sicily, in the summer month of July. The earth was parched and dry and Mount Etna was sending out fumes, which made the day even more hot. But the water trough was under the scented Carob-tree.

- (d) *What does the poet want to convey by saying that the snake emerges from the 'burning bowels of the earth'?*

Ans. Since the snake emerges from the burning and scorching earth, it evokes the poet's sympathy. The poet feels that the snake is distressed due to extreme heat, so it should be peacefully allowed to drink water.

- (e) *Do you think the snake was conscious of the poet's presence? How do you know?*

Ans. No, the snake was not conscious of the poet's presence. He looked around vaguely but did not notice the poet. If he had been conscious, then the snake would not have mused in between drinking water nor would have taken so much time in drinking water. It would have vanished very quickly.

- (f) *How do we know that the snake's thirst was satiated. Pick out the expression that conveys this.* [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans. 'He stopped and drank a little more', 'He drank enough' 'flickered his tongue' tell us that the snake had his fill and his thirst was satiated.

- (g) *The poet had a dual attitude towards the snake? Why does he experience conflicting emotions on seeing the snake?*

Ans. The poet is both afraid of the snake and is also fascinated by it. Social education had taught the poet that all snakes are poisonous so they must be struck down, whereas the snake's dignified manner evokes the poet's admiration. These dual responses were like two voices that make the poet strike at the snake, much against his wishes.

- (h) *The poet is filled with horror and protest when the snake prepared to retreat and bury itself in the 'horrid black' and 'dreadful hole'. In the light of this statement, bring out the irony of his act of throwing a log at the snake.*

Ans. The poet had appeared most protective and concerned regarding the snake. He never disturbed the snake while drinking water. It is ironical that the poet is the one who tries to kill it and that too when the snake had turned its back.

- (i) *The poet seems to be full of admiration and respect for the snake. He almost regards him like a God. Pick out four expressions that reflect these emotions.*

Ans. 'And looked around like a god', "seemed to me like a king", "a king in exile," "due to be crowned again."

- (j) *What is the difference between the snake's movement at the beginning of the poem and later when the poet strikes it with a log of wood?*

Ans. The snake's movement at the beginning is 'slack' and relaxed. He takes a lot of time to drink water and sips and enjoys it by licking his lips. After drinking water, he moves as 'dreamily, as one who is drunk' and very slowly goes back to the crack in the wall. When the poet throws a log at his tail, he vanishes very quickly, with the speed of lightning, in an undignified manner.

- (k) *The poet experiences feelings of self-derision, guilt and regret after hitting the snake. Pick out expressions that suggest this. Why does he feel like this?* [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans. The poet deeply regrets hitting the snake. He calls his behaviour "mean, vulgar, paltry and petty." He curses his social education and feels that he must make amends for his wrong behaviour. The poet curses his behaviour because he had no reason to strike at the snake, when it had not tried to harm the poet and had only come to quench his thirst. The poet feels that the snake behaved in a dignified manner, whereas he behaved in a petty manner. Moreover, hitting someone from behind is an act of cowardice.

(l) Why does the poet make an allusion to the 'Ancient Mariner' and the 'albatross'?

Ans. The Ancient Mariner had also killed the albatross for no reason and here also the snake had proved to be harmless, yet the poet tried to kill it. Later on both the mariner and the poet regret their decision. The Mariner has to make amends by being punished and here also the poet is already thinking of compensating for the crime committed.

(m) "I have something to expiate." Explain.

Ans. The poet regrets his decision of striking at the snake. The snake had been harmless, dignified and was too thirsty. Trying to kill it was a mean act and the poet wishes to make amends for his violent approach. He wishes to give due honour to the snake, that it deserves.

Q.7. The encounter with the snake and the dual response of the poet to his presence at the water trough reflect a conflict between civilized social education and natural human instincts. The poet writes a diary entry highlighting how he was torn between the two voices. Write his diary.

Ans. Dear Diary,

Today's entry is based upon my incidental meeting with a snake, yellow-brown in colour, who had come to drink water at the water-trough outside my house. To my surprise, I felt no fear, no aversion but a strange kind of bonding and fascination took possession of me. The snake was drinking water in a very relaxed manner and his majestic movements cast a spell on me. I stood there, with an empty pitcher, with no desire to disturb him. Since it was a very very hot day, I wanted the snake to have his fill, since he had come from a dark and horrible crack in the wall.

The reasoning of my mind, my rational and social belief told me to kill the snake, but my natural instincts told me not to. I don't know why, but my social education prompted me to kill the snake. I picked up a log and tried to strike the snake. The snake vanished at once, but a guilt, a void remained in my heart. I don't know why we submit before our egoism, ignorance, barbarity. O God! how I curse myself. What reason do we have to deprive others of their right to live? We preach of love and sympathy, yet we get misguided by our social beliefs and not natural instincts. I know snakes are poisonous but that snake had not harmed me and yet I behaved like a coward. Yes, I will have to make amends somehow. How! I wonder!

D.H. Lawrence

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the following extracts and choose the best option :

1. "I come down the steps with my pitcher
And must wait, must stand and wait, for he was at
the trough before me."
- (i) The poet was there at the water trough
(a) to see the snake
(b) to fill his pitcher
(c) to sit under the carob tree
(d) to enjoy being outside
- (ii) The poet decides to wait because
(a) he liked to watch the snake
(b) he was afraid of it
(c) he wished to kill it from behind
(d) he had come there after the snake
- (iii) The words are repeated in the second line to
(a) remind the reader
(b) remind the snake
(c) to highlight the importance of coming first
(d) to look courteous

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (d) (iii) (c)

2. "He sipped with his straight mouth
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his
slack body"
- (i) The snake drank water "softly" as
(a) the water looked soft
(b) he drank slowly
(c) his manner of drinking water was unhurried
(d) he drank in a lazy manner
- (ii) The snake's body is 'slack' because
(a) he has come from inside the earth
(b) he is lazy
(c) the manner in which he stretches looks lazy
(d) he is very relaxed
- (iii) The poet's observation of the snake proves that
(a) he loves the snake
(b) he is protective about him
(c) he is a keen observer
(d) the snake sparks his interest

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (c) (iii) (d)

3. *“Being earth-brown, earth-golden
from the burning bowels of the earth”*
- (i) The snake is earth brown because
- (a) he has come from the inside depth of the earth
(b) the fallen dust on him makes him look earthy
(c) he is lying on the earth so he looks earth brown
(d) The shadow of the tree is falling on him
- (ii) The snake has come from
- (a) the fissure in the wall
(b) under the hole of the water trough
(c) near the Mount Etna
(d) behind the wall
- (iii) The bowels of the earth are burning because
- (a) the place is near Mount Etna
(b) It is the month of July
(c) It is in Sicily
(d) all the above

Answer : (i) (a) (ii) (a) (iii) (d)

4. *“The voice of my education said to me
He must be killed
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent,
the gold are venomous” [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]*
- (i) The voice of education means
- (a) knowledge after education
(b) confidence that one acquires after education
(c) social views
(d) voice of your interest
- (ii) Black snakes are innocent means
- (a) they do not bite
(b) they are not poisonous
(c) they are afraid of men
(d) They run away at sight
- (iii) The gold are venomous means
- (a) they are poisonous
(b) they attack
(c) they are golden in colour
(d) they are not brown in colour

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (b) (iii) (a)

5. *“How glad I was that he had come like a guest
quiet, to drink at my water trough
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless”*
- (i) The snake had come to the poet’s house as a
- (a) intruder (b) stranger
(c) danger (d) guest
- (ii) The poet wanted the snake to be ‘pacified’ that he should be
- (a) attacked (b) driven away
(c) satisfied after drinking water
(d) grateful

- (iii) Thankless means
- (a) the snake should be obliged
(b) the snake is bad-mannered
(c) the snake doesn’t know how to thank
(d) the snake has no need to thank for water, as it is natural resource

Answer : (i) (d) (ii) (c) (iii) (d)

6. *“And flickered his tongue like a forked night on
the air, so black
Seeming to lick his lips
And looked around like a god”*
- (i) The poetic device in the above stanza is (like a god)
- (a) Metaphor (b) Simile
(c) Personification (d) Alliteration
- (ii) The snake appeared to lick his lips because
- (a) he is still thirsty
(b) it is his habit
(c) he has enjoyed drinking water
(d) he does it after seeing the poet
- (iii) The snake looks like god because
- (a) he is huge
(b) his manner is very majestic and royal like god
(c) he looks powerful
(d) he considers life and death like a god

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (c) (iii) (b)

7. *But suddenly that part of him that was left behind
convulsed in undignified haste
Writhed like lightning, was gone*
- (i) The departure of the snake was
- (a) quick (b) noisy
(c) not majestic (d) clumsy
- (ii) “writhed like lightning” is a
- (a) Simile (b) Onomatopoeia
(c) Metaphor (d) Imagery
- (iii) The snake disappeared quickly because
- (a) it was afraid (b) it was hit
(c) it was sleepy (d) it wanted to go home

Answer : (i) (a) (ii) (a) (iii) (a)

8. *And I thought of the albatross
And I wished he would come back, my snake*
- (i) The reference to the albatross is because
- (a) both the snake and the albatross are black
(b) the poet is fond of Coleridge
(c) both the albatross and the snake were going to be killed for no reason
(d) the comparison is incidental

- (ii) The poet wants the snake to come back because
 (a) he liked him
 (b) he felt hurt that the snake vanished so quickly
 (c) he wanted to give him more water to drink
 (d) he felt guilty of hurting him
- (iii) The word which the poet uses to describe his action
 (a) cowardice (b) pettiness
 (c) meanness (d) guilty

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (d) (iii) (b)

9. "For he seemed to me again like a king,
 Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,
 Now due to be crowned again
 And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords
 of life. [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

- (i) Which literary device does the poet use in the first line?
 (a) Alliteration (b) Simile
 (c) Metaphor (d) Refrain
- (ii) The snake appears to the poet like
 (a) a king in exile
 (b) a king
 (c) a god
 (d) uncrowned in the world
- (iii) "One of the lords of life" refers to

- (a) The king (b) The poet
 (c) The God (d) The snake

Answer : (i) (c) (ii) (a) (iii) (d)

10. A snake came to my water trough
 On a hot, hot day, and I in Pyjamas for the heat,
 To drink there.
 In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great
 dark carob-tree.. [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

- (i) The poet came to the water trough to
 (a) bathe
 (b) take water
 (c) enjoy the scent of carob tree
 (d) to see the snake
- (ii) What made the snake come to the poet's water trough?
 (a) to cool itself
 (b) to quench the thirst
 (c) to chase the frog
 (d) to go to its hole
- (iii) The poet had to wait for his turn because
 (a) he was afraid of the snake
 (b) he was second and must wait
 (c) the snake was already there
 (d) he wanted to give priority to the snake

Answer : (i) (b) (ii) (b) (iii) (b)

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – NON-MCQs

Read the following extracts and answer the question that follow.

1. *To drink there*
In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great carob-tree

(a) Name the poet and the person.

Ans : The poet is D.H. Lawrence and the poem is the Snake.

(b) Who has come to drink and what has he come for?

Ans : The poet has come to collect water in the pitcher and the snake has come for drinking water.

(c) Describe the surroundings of the water-trough?

Ans : The water-trough is in the open, under the shade of the sweet-scented carob tree.

2. *He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the gloom*
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down, over the edge of the stone-trough

(a) From where had the snake appeared?

Ans : The snake had come from the inside portion of the earth-wall

(b) Identify the poetic device in 'slackness, soft-bellied'.

Ans : Alliteration

(c) Describe the path the snake took to reach the water.

Ans : The snake came out from the crack in the wall and came trailing on the ground to reach the edge of the water trough.

3. *and mused a moment*
And stooped and drank a little more

(a) Explain 'mused a moment'?

Ans : It means 'it appeared to be thinking for sometime'.

(b) What does the manner of the snake suggest?

Ans : The snake appears very relaxed and 'unhurried' and takes his time to drink water.

(c) **Why is the poet watching every action of the snake?**

Ans : The snake has fascinated the poet with his majestic behaviour.

4. *And voices in me said, if you were a man
You would take a stick and break him now and
finish him off*

(a) **What are ‘voices’?**

Ans : The voices refer to the beliefs that are ingrained in one’s mind due to society.

(b) **What do the voices suggest? Why?**

Ans : They suggest that the snake should be killed as he is poisonous.

(c) **Do you think it would be cowardice or manly for the poet to kill the snake? Why/Why not?**

Ans : It was cowardice because the snake had not harmed the poet — to strike the snake behind its back is not ethical.

5. *And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords
of life
And I have something to expiate
A pettiness*

(a) **Why is the poet’s action called ‘a pettiness’?**

Ans : It was a mean act to hit the snake behind his

back.

(b) **What is there for the poet to ‘expiate’?**

Ans : The poet wishes to compensate for his mean act.

(c) **Why is the snake called the lord of life? Which poetic device is used here?**

Ans : It is used as a metaphor for the reason is not given.

6. *But I must confess how I liked him,
How glad I was he had come like a guest,
To drink at the water-trough
And depart peaceful, pacified and thankless,
Into the burning bowels of this earth?*

(a) **Who had come as a guest?**

Ans : A snake had come as a guest to the poet's water trough to quench his thirst.

(b) **How do we know that the guest's thirst was quenched?**

Ans : The way the snake raised his head dreamily after drinking water and slowly moved away from the water trough shows that his thirst was quenched.

(c) **Where would it go?**

Ans : After taking water, the snake climbed the wall with the crack and entered deep inside the hole.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **Why does the poet repeat “hot”, “must wait” twice? What purpose does it serve?**

Ans : These words are used repeatedly because the poet wishes to emphasise on them. ‘Hot’ means very hot as there are many reasons like the month of July, Etna volcano etc. ‘Must wait’ means compulsion. The poet believes that anyone who comes first, must be served first.

2. **From where had the snake emerged? What do you think was the reason for the snake to come out in the open?**

Ans : The snake had come out from the crack in the wall. It was very hot and scorching inside due to July month, active volcano etc. The snake wanted to drink water and satisfy his thirst.

3. **Describe the relaxed manner in which the snake makes his way to the water trough and the manner in which he drinks water.**

Ans : The movement of the snake is described as

‘slack’ ‘soft-bellied’, most relaxed and unhurried. He appeared out of a crack in the wall and very languorously stretched himself and slow crawled to the edge of the water-trough. One reason could be that he had not seen the poet.

4. **Why is the snake compared to cattle?**

Ans : The relaxed manner in which the snake drinks water reminds the poet of cattle. Even the cattle drink water, then look up, muse a moment and continue. The snake also behaves similarly.

5. **How were the poet’s beliefs regarding snakes conditioned by society? [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]**

Ans : Society ingrains certain preconceived notions in our mind and due to that we don’t judge situations by instinct — The poet was fascinated by the snake. He appreciated the snake’s majestic and harmless nature but the earlier instincts drilled in him by society force him to strike at the snake. He had been taught to kill snakes.

6. Explain – ‘And depart peaceful, pacified and thankful’.

Ans : The snake appeared to be pacified and satisfied, for he had taken water generously. He was not the harmless kind, neither had the poet given him any reason, so there was no confrontation. The poet believes that the snake has no reason to thank the poet for a natural resource like water which is God’s gift for all.

7. Why does the poet feel honoured by the presence of the snake?

Ans : The poet feels obliged that the snake had come all the way from the inner depths of the earth to his water trough and this was a kind of honour. Moreover, the snake is so regal and majestic in his bearing that the poet feels honoured to have him as his guest.

8. The poet is too impressed with the majestic manner in which the snake conducts himself. What comparisons does the poet make to highlight this behaviour of the snake?

Ans : The manner in which the snake drinks water is

like the cattle. He appears to muse a bit, drink with intervals. The snake is called ‘lord of life’ because life and death is in his hands. He is also compared to ‘a king’ for his majestic style and when he quickly disappears he is compared to lightening.

9. Why did the poet have a sudden urge to hit the snake? Do you think he was justified in trying to hit the snake, when its back was turned?

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : When the snake’s back is turned, the ‘voices of education’ that were troubling the poet, overtake him. He hits the snake with a stick which was quite unjustified. The snake had not troubled the poet and one must behave with one’s instincts than preconceived notions.

10. Why did the poet despise himself? Mention the three words that he uses to describe his action.

Ans : The poet feels very guilty of trying to hit at the snake. He calls his act ‘mean’ ‘petty’ and feels like making amends. The poet believes that he must compensate for his unreasonable and undignified act. He uses the words ‘to expiate’, which express his feelings.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Describe the manner in which the snake arrived and departed.

Ans : The snake had come from the crack in the wall made of earth, from the darkness, from the scorching inside portion of the earth. The snake did not feel the threat of the poet’s presence, so its movement is very languid, very relaxed and unhurried. It stretched its long and slack body, drank water with great spells of flavour and enjoyment. It licked its lips, it mused and put his head on the edge of the water-trough. Its departure was exactly the opposite—quick, clumsy, abrupt like the speed of lightning.

2. You have read the poem ‘Snake’ and you understand the dilemma faced by the poet. Suppose you had been there instead of the poet, how would you have behaved? Write a letter to your friends Prateek, expressing this situation and how did you resolve it.

Ans : 92, G.P. Road

ABC City

12 July, 2010

Dear Prateek,

I wish to recount a strange experience that I

underwent recently. One day as I had come to fill my pitcher with water from a open water-trough, I saw a snake drinking water there. My first instinct was fright and then I felt like killing him, because that is what we do generally. Nevertheless, I hid behind the door and watched the snake. The snake was very relaxed, very slack and had great style of moving about. After drinking water, the snake went back into the hole. I felt happy that I had not hit him. I am happy I followed the voice of my instincts.

Mohan.

3. Write a short note on the literary devices used by the poet. Discuss their effectiveness in the context of the poem.

Ans : D.H. Lawrence has made use of many literary devices liberally. He begins the poem by using some words expressions repeatedly, to reinforce and highlight certain ideas. There is a great use of alliteration in words like ‘slackness’, ‘soft-bellied’ etc. Lot of similes have been used to describe the snake. The snake is compared to ‘cattle’, ‘like a king’, ‘lord’ etc. The snake disappears into the hole with the speed of lightening. Moreover, the snake is symbolic of some strange forces and it represents power and sophistication that impress the poet.

4. What ideas and thoughts come to the poet's mind when he finds a poisonous snake drinking water at his water trough?

Ans : After reaching his water trough on a very hot day, the poet finds a snake drinking water from his water trough. He waits for the snake to finish drinking water first since he is very particular regarding protocol. The snake was brown in colour. The poet makes a frank confession that he really liked the snake but educational and social conventions make the poet think that the golden brown snakes were poisonous, so they must be killed. The inner instinct of the poet makes him feel honoured that a snake

had come to seek his hospitality from the deep recesses of the earth.

When the snake started to retreat back into the dark hole, the poet disliked it and hurled a log at the snake. The snake vanished into the hole in great haste. The poet was full of guilt. He really hated himself for such a mean act and cursed the voice of education that had always taught him to kill snakes, without any reason.

The poem represents the instability of man's mind but champions the fact that it is our instinctive behaviour that prompts us to do good..

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- 1. A colourful butterfly has perched on a tree in your garden. Compose a poem on its activities and appearance.**
- 2. A cat stole into your house unawares. Conduct an imaginary dialogue with the cat. Give it a name.**
- 3. Ramu has managed to catch a very big fish after a long spell. He is poor and feels delighted at the prospect of earning a lot of money by selling such a big fish. He is taken by surprise when the fish relates her tragic tale and requests Ramu to free her. Write the fish's story. Also decide what Ramu's decision will be.**

