

1. "Earth has not anything to show more fair" – describe the "show".

Introduction: The opening line of Wordsworth's *Composed upon Westminster Bridge* makes a powerful claim about the unmatched beauty of a particular moment. The "show" refers to the view of London at dawn, as seen from Westminster Bridge—an urban landscape momentarily transformed by the soft and serene touch of morning light.

Body: Wordsworth describes the city as "touching in its majesty," suggesting a quiet grandeur that moves the soul. The "beauty of the morning" acts like a "garment" draped over the city, softening its man-made outlines and lending it a natural grace. Structures that are usually associated with human activity—"ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples"—now appear harmonious with nature, lying "open unto the fields, and to the sky."

The poet is struck by the stillness: "All bright and glittering in the smokeless air." This phrase highlights the rare purity of the atmosphere before the bustle of the day begins. Even the houses seem "asleep," and the mighty city—usually throbbing with energy—is "lying still," evoking a sacred, almost dreamlike peace.

What elevates this "show" beyond other scenes of nature is its unexpected setting—a calm and majestic beauty found not in mountains or meadows but in a city. The blend of human creation and nature's calm creates an awe-inspiring spectacle.

Conclusion: The "show" in the poem is the rare, tranquil beauty of London at dawn—a moment where urban life and natural serenity converge, leaving even the most indifferent observer with a sense of wonder and reverence.

2. Comment on the imagery in the poem.

Introduction: Wordsworth's *Composed Upon Westminster Bridge* is rich in imagery that enhances the reader's experience of the poem. The poet employs vivid visual descriptions to paint a serene and almost spiritual picture of London in the early morning.

Body: From the very first line, "Earth has not anything to show more fair," Wordsworth sets a tone of reverence for the scene. He conjures images of a peaceful city bathed in the soft glow of the early morning light. The "smokeless air" and "clear" sky highlight the purity of the atmosphere, untouched by pollution or human interference. The poet's description of

London, "silent," almost personifies the city as if it is in a meditative state, allowing for a moment of reflection.

The imagery of the "majestic world" and "the beauty of the morning" invokes a sense of grandeur, with the landscape and the architecture coming together in perfect harmony. The "green fields" and "distant hills" seem to merge seamlessly with the structures of the city, creating a union between the natural and the urban. The description of the river Thames, "like a garment," flowing through the city, gives the impression of fluidity and grace, turning the river into a life-giving force that nourishes the city.

Conclusion: Through his powerful imagery, Wordsworth transforms the ordinary cityscape into a breathtaking vision. The contrast of natural and urban imagery reflects the poet's awe for the city's beauty, which transcends its usual association with noise and industrialization.

3. Comment on Wordsworth's idea of Nature as expressed in the backdrop of a cityscape like London in the poem.

Introduction: In *Composed upon Westminster Bridge*, Wordsworth, a celebrated poet of Nature, offers a surprising meditation on the beauty of the city of London. Though the poem appears to diverge from his usual rural settings, his deep reverence for natural stillness and harmony finds expression even within an urban landscape.

Body: At the heart of the poem is Wordsworth's belief that Nature's presence can manifest even in the heart of a man-made city. The "beauty of the morning" is not confined to countryside scenes but is seen "wearing" the city like a "garment." This suggests that Nature has the power to soften and sanctify even the most artificial constructs.

The poet marvels at the purity of the air—"smokeless," clear, and full of light. This rare moment, before the city awakens to its daily routine, allows Wordsworth to perceive London in a state of natural calm. The stillness is so profound that "the very houses seem asleep" and "all that mighty heart is lying still," likening the city to a living organism momentarily at rest.

Even the river is personified: "The river glideth at his own sweet will," emphasizing Nature's autonomy amidst the urban setting. It reflects Wordsworth's ideal—when not dominated by man, natural forces can reclaim serenity even in constructed spaces.

Conclusion: In this poem, Wordsworth expands his vision of Nature to include the city of London, suggesting that natural beauty and divine

tranquility are not exclusive to rural settings but can emerge wherever the world pauses and breathes in harmony.

1. Comment on the ending.

Introduction: The ending of *Ratan Babu and that Man* is a masterstroke of irony and narrative circularity. What begins as an introspective tale about loneliness and self-discovery concludes with a dramatic twist that challenges the protagonist's quest for individuality.

Body: Throughout the story, Ratan Babu seeks solace in his solitude, believing himself to be unique in habits, thoughts, and temperament. His brief encounter with Manilal Babu—a man almost identical in appearance and behaviour—shakes that belief. When the two grow eerily close in lifestyle and personality, Ratan Babu grows disturbed: "Whenever he spoke to Manilal Babu, it seemed as if he was carrying on a conversation with himself." This discomfort culminates in a shocking decision to murder Manilal by pushing him off the bridge, a moment that disturbs yet seems justified in Ratan's warped logic: "It was enough that he alone should continue to exist."

However, the twist in the final paragraph reverses the narrative arc. Just as Ratan leans in to watch the train, a pair of hands push him over the railing in a mirror act of violence. The story ends with poetic justice—Ratan dies the same way he murdered, and his "presence" is marked only by a tin box of betel nuts, echoing Manilal's earlier item.

Conclusion: The story's ending is chillingly ironic, reinforcing themes of duality and the inescapability of one's own conscience. It transforms a tale of mild suspense into a deeply unsettling parable of identity, isolation, and poetic retribution.

2. Do you read the story as a crime thriller or one with supernatural elements? Give reasons.

Introduction: While *Ratan Babu and that Man* employs elements of suspense and mystery typical of a crime thriller, the eerie similarities between the two central characters introduce a psychological and potentially supernatural dimension. The story defies easy classification, but a closer reading leans more toward the supernatural.

Body: The most striking aspect is the uncanny resemblance between Ratan Babu and Manilal Babu—not just in appearance, but in habits, voice, and even their date of birth. "There was no difference between that voice and the one that spoke now," the narrator observes. This extreme

mirroring surpasses coincidence, suggesting an unnatural duplication of identity. Even Ratan's thoughts seem echoed in Manilal's actions, creating a sense of an alter ego or a doppelgänger—an archetype often associated with supernatural fiction.

Moreover, the final twist, where Ratan Babu himself is pushed off the bridge in the same fashion he murdered Manilal, introduces a spectral justice. The detail that "a small shining object is stuck in a crack in the wooden railing" where Ratan once stood mirrors Manilal's fate and hints at a ghostly repetition of events. This recursive structure, where the murderer suffers the same end, feels more like karmic intervention than mere thriller logic.

Conclusion: Although the story contains a crime at its core, the surreal mirroring, atmospheric tension, and ironic ending suggest that *Ratan Babu and that Man* is better read as a supernatural tale—one that explores identity, conscience, and the ghostly consequences of trying to eliminate the self.

3. Comment on the peculiar traveling habits of Ratan Babu.

Introduction: Ratan Babu's traveling habits in *Ratan Babu and that Man* are unconventional and deeply revealing of his personality. His preference for solitude, obscure destinations, and unstructured itineraries sets him apart from typical tourists, making his travel choices both peculiar and symbolic.

Body: Unlike others who visit well-known places like Puri or Darjeeling, Ratan Babu seeks "a little town somewhere with a railway station not too far away." He deliberately avoids popular tourist spots, claiming, "You've heard them described so many times that you almost feel you've seen them yourself." This desire reflects a need for personal, unfiltered experiences rather than shared cultural ones.

Additionally, Ratan travels alone—"He never took anyone with him, nor would it have occurred to him to do so." This solitude is not accidental; it is by design, shaped by a long-standing sense of isolation and a belief that no one shares his tastes. His attempts at companionship, such as inviting Keshab Babu, are met with rejection, reinforcing his retreat into solitary travel.

The joy Ratan Babu finds in trivial discoveries—"the old fig tree in Rajabhatkhaoa" or "dal barfi in Moina"—shows his deep appreciation for the unnoticed and the ordinary. His travel becomes a form of quiet rebellion against the expected and mundane.

Conclusion: Ratan Babu's traveling habits are more than quirks; they serve as a reflection of his inner world—introverted, quietly curious, and yearning for a personal sense of wonder that resists the crowd's gaze. His journeys are escapes not from places but from people.

4. What were Ratan Babu's considerations about travel and friendship as expressed in the story?

Introduction: In *Ratan Babu and that Man*, Ratan Babu's views on travel and friendship are deeply intertwined. His journey reflects not just physical movement but emotional solitude, shaped by a longstanding disillusionment with companionship and a yearning for individuality.

Body: Ratan Babu sees travel as a deeply personal experience—"He went out of Calcutta whenever the opportunity came... all by himself." His meticulous planning and interest in obscure towns reflect an urge to escape conformity. He believes that common tourist destinations are overexposed and lack authenticity, saying, "You've heard them described so many times that you almost feel you've seen them yourself." This approach to travel mirrors his emotional distance from people. His attempts at friendship have been met with indifference. When he once invited Keshab Babu to travel with him, he was turned down with the remark, "You go to places no one has heard of." This rejection cements his belief that "there was virtually no one who saw eye to eye with him." Over time, he stops seeking companionship altogether.

Even when he meets Manilal, who seems like his perfect match, Ratan finds it suffocating rather than comforting. Their identical traits remove the spontaneity and tension that often shape real friendships. "He knew all the answers before he asked the questions," the narrative notes, underlining how predictable and tiresome such a friendship becomes.

Conclusion: Ratan Babu's reflections reveal a man who has replaced the need for human connection with solitary travel. To him, both friendship and travel must preserve personal uniqueness—once that boundary is crossed, even companionship becomes a burden.

5. How are Ratan Babu and Manilal Babu similar and dissimilar in their appearance, characters and habits?

Introduction: Ratan Babu and Manilal Babu are portrayed as nearly indistinguishable in *Ratan Babu and that Man*, both physically and psychologically. Yet, subtle differences between them offer a nuanced study of identity, doubling, and discomfort with self-reflection.

Body: Physically, the resemblance is uncanny. When Ratan Babu first sees Manilal, he's struck by the similarities: "The squarish jaw with the cleft chin, the carefully trimmed moustache, the shape of the ear lobes—they were all strikingly like his own." Even the voice is identical, as he recalls hearing a recording of himself that sounds the same as Manilal's voice. They also share the same date of birth—29th December 1916—and identical vision, "even the power of their glasses" matches.

In terms of habits, both men travel alone, have similar food preferences (e.g., lemon in dal, sweet curd), and the same bedtime routine. Even their internal thoughts echo each other: "I don't suppose you'd know, but I have seen you once before," says Manilal, mirroring Ratan's sense of *déjà vu* and solitude.

However, the differences lie in degrees. Manilal seems slightly more social—he initiates conversation, offers a token of friendship (a walking stick), and proposes dining out. Ratan, in contrast, is guarded, increasingly disturbed by the sameness. His discomfort grows into existential crisis and finally murder, something Manilal never hints at.

Conclusion: Though Ratan and Manilal appear nearly identical, it's the subtle psychological contrast—one embracing the mirrored self, the other rejecting it—that defines their divergence. Their eerie likeness becomes a terrifying exploration of selfhood and the unbearable burden of absolute similarity.

Poem- *Musée des Beaux Arts* by W. H. Auden

1. Describe the three paintings, of which the poem talks about, in detail. Name the three paintings and their respective artists while the description.

Introduction:

W. H. Auden's "*Musée des Beaux Arts*" contemplates how human suffering often goes unnoticed by the world at large, using vivid references to paintings by the Old Masters. Through these references, Auden illustrates the casual indifference surrounding moments of profound human agony. The three paintings alluded to in the poem are each emblematic of this theme and deserve detailed exploration.

Body:

The first general reference is to "**The Census at Bethlehem**" by **Pieter Bruegel the Elder**. Auden evokes scenes where everyday life persists despite significant events: "someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along." In Bruegel's painting, Mary and Joseph's arrival for the census goes almost unnoticed amid the mundane busyness of villagers skating, trading, and chatting, demonstrating society's obliviousness to monumental events.

The second is "**The Massacre of the Innocents**", again by **Bruegel**. Auden's lines about martyrdom occurring in "some untidy spot / Where the dogs go on with their doggy life" suggest this painting's chaotic depiction of suffering. Bruegel shows the brutal slaughter of infants in a Flemish village setting, but the horror blends into the mundane winter scenery, emphasizing how suffering often happens amidst daily routine.

Lastly, the poem explicitly mentions "**Landscape with the Fall of Icarus**", attributed to **Bruegel**. Auden describes how the "ploughman" continues his work, and a "delicate ship" sails away while "white legs" disappear into the "green water." This quiet dismissal of Icarus' tragic fall underscores the central theme: personal tragedy rarely interrupts the flow of ordinary life.

Conclusion:

Through these three paintings—**"The Census at Bethlehem,"** **"The Massacre of the Innocents,"** and **"Landscape with the Fall of Icarus"**—Auden deepens the poem's exploration of human indifference. Each artwork, rich in detail and layered meaning, mirrors the way profound events often unfold unnoticed amidst life's routine currents.

2. Describe the first painting, "*The Census at Bethlehem*" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

Introduction:

Pieter Bruegel the Elder's "*The Census at Bethlehem*" offers a remarkable vision where sacred significance blends seamlessly into the rhythm of daily life. Auden draws upon this imagery in "*Musée des Beaux Arts*" to emphasize how monumental events often unfold unnoticed by the indifferent crowd. Bruegel's depiction masterfully captures the quiet collision of the extraordinary with the ordinary.

Body:

In the poem, Auden references how suffering occurs while "someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along," aligning with Bruegel's bustling Flemish village. The painting portrays Mary and Joseph arriving to register for the census, but they are nearly lost in the sea of villagers engaged in mundane

activities: unloading goods, chatting, and skating. This distraction of the crowd mirrors Auden's portrayal of inattentiveness to human suffering.

The wintry setting, with its snow-covered ground and muted palette, enhances the painting's ordinariness. Even though the scene narrates the approach of a miraculous birth, children "skating on a pond at the edge of the wood" — as Auden notes — highlight the world's preoccupation with immediate pleasures rather than spiritual or historical significance.

Bruegel's genius lies in embedding the sacred event subtly, demanding careful observation, just as Auden stresses that profound moments of human experience often occur "anyhow in a corner."

Conclusion:

"*The Census at Bethlehem*" stands as a visual testament to humanity's habitual blindness to the extraordinary within the everyday, reinforcing Auden's meditation on the unnoticed course of suffering and miracle alike.

3. Describe the second painting, "*The Massacre of the Innocents*" by Bruegel.

Introduction:

Bruegel's "*The Massacre of the Innocents*" starkly presents a harrowing episode from the biblical narrative, yet frames it within a familiar, contemporary Flemish setting. In "*Musée des Beaux Arts*," Auden captures the chilling ordinariness of suffering, finding in Bruegel's painting a perfect symbol of how cruelty becomes background noise to everyday existence.

Body:

Auden's line about martyrdom running "anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot" resonates deeply with Bruegel's composition. In the painting, brutal acts—infants wrenched from mothers, soldiers barging into homes—unfold almost matter-of-factly among snowy streets, where villagers continue with partial attention to their own survival. The barbarity is absorbed into the fabric of normal village life, much like Auden's depiction of dogs that "go on with their doggy life."

Bruegel's use of a Flemish village instead of an ancient Bethlehem setting intensifies the proximity of horror, suggesting that atrocity is not distant but domestic. His decision to emphasize everyday architecture and costumes blurs the line between historical suffering and contemporary reality, mirroring Auden's point that tragedy happens amidst the unremarkable.

The soldiers' brutal efficiency and the townspeople's helplessness illustrate the passivity and self-preservation that often greet even the most grievous injustices—a visual corollary to Auden's meditation on unnoticed pain.

Conclusion:

"*The Massacre of the Innocents*" underlines how human cruelty often becomes an indistinct background to ordinary life, embodying the indifference to suffering that Auden masterfully laments in his poem.

4. Describe the third painting, "*Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*" by Bruegel.

Introduction:

Bruegel's "*Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*" poignantly portrays the myth of Icarus not through grand

tragedy but through its quiet dismissal by the world. In "Musée des Beaux Arts," Auden seizes upon this depiction to reinforce his theme that personal catastrophes are often met with collective indifference.

Body:

In Auden's description, the "ploughman may / Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry," but continues working regardless. Bruegel's painting shows exactly that: a sturdy figure ploughing a field in the foreground, oblivious to Icarus' fate as he plunges into the sea. The white legs flailing in the green water are almost imperceptible, symbolizing how individual disasters often go unseen or ignored.

Further, Auden's reference to the "expensive delicate ship that must have seen / Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky" yet "sailed calmly on" finds direct visual echo. In the painting, a grand ship continues its course without disruption, suggesting that commerce, ambition, and survival outweigh sympathy for isolated tragedies.

The landscape itself is vast, sunlit, and beautiful — a stark contrast to the unseen demise of Icarus. Bruegel's sweeping view reinforces the insignificance of one individual's fall against the backdrop of life's continuity, a sentiment Auden perfectly articulates.

Conclusion:

"Landscape with the Fall of Icarus" subtly reveals the human tendency to prioritize personal routine over distant suffering, echoing Auden's portrayal of life's indifference to private anguish.

5. Discuss the theme of human indifference to suffering in the poem.

Introduction:

W. H. Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" powerfully explores the theme of human indifference to suffering. Drawing upon classical art, Auden reflects on how suffering, even of monumental scale, rarely interrupts the steady flow of daily life. His nuanced portrayal captures the quiet cruelty of inattention and the way society instinctively shields itself from the pain of others.

Body:

From the opening lines, Auden acknowledges that the "Old Masters" understood suffering's "human position"—how it occurs not in grand, isolated moments but alongside ordinary activities like "eating or opening a window or just walking dully along." This highlights the natural human tendency to prioritize personal routines over empathy.

The poet's reference to "the aged" passionately awaiting a miracle, while "children... skating on a pond," reinforces how life's smaller pleasures often distract from deeper realities. Auden shows that even in the presence of extraordinary events, the majority remain unmoved, absorbed in their immediate experiences.

The vivid image of "dogs go[ing] on with their doggy life" and the "torturer's horse" scratching itself while martyrdom unfolds accentuates the brutal normalcy that surrounds human agony. Life's continuation in the face of tragedy is not portrayed as evil, but as a fact of existence.

Finally, in the case of Icarus, "the ploughman" and the "delicate ship" ignore the boy's fall, symbolizing that even the most dramatic individual sufferings are swallowed by the indifference of the collective world.

Conclusion:

Through ordinary imagery and references to classical paintings, Auden masterfully unveils the persistent

human tendency to remain detached from others' suffering, presenting it not as malice, but as an inevitable, almost mechanical, feature of human life.

Prose- *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe

1. State the significance of the title of the story "The Tell-Tale Heart".

Introduction:

The title "The Tell-Tale Heart" encapsulates the essence of Edgar Allan Poe's story, emphasizing how the human heart becomes an involuntary confessor of guilt. It signifies not just the old man's heartbeat but also the narrator's internal psychological unraveling, making the heart the central symbol of truth and revelation.

Body:

Firstly, the "heart" in the title refers to the physical heart of the old man, whose imagined continued beating ("It was a quick, low, soft sound, like the sound of a clock heard through a wall") torments the narrator. Even after the old man's death, the narrator believes he hears the heart, suggesting that the crime cannot remain hidden.

Secondly, the heart functions metaphorically to expose the narrator's guilt. Although he meticulously hides the old man's body under the floorboards, it is his conscience — symbolized by the incessant beating — that forces him to confess: "I pointed at the boards and cried, 'Yes! Yes, I killed him!'".

Furthermore, the "tell-tale" aspect suggests the heart's role as a betrayer. Despite the narrator's efforts to seem sane and calculated, the heart 'tells the tale' of his crime, thus undermining his initial claims of rationality: "Listen! Listen, and I will tell you how it happened. You will see, you will hear how healthy my mind is".

Conclusion:

Thus, the title "The Tell-Tale Heart" effectively symbolizes the inevitable triumph of truth over deception. It suggests that no crime, however cleverly concealed, can silence the innate moral consciousness that ultimately reveals the perpetrator.

2. Comment on the theme 'Unreliable narrator' with respect to the story.

Introduction:

In *The Tell-Tale Heart*, Edgar Allan Poe masterfully constructs an unreliable narrator whose distorted perception of reality heightens the story's tension. The narrator's insistence on sanity, contrasted with his irrational actions and self-contradictory confessions, marks him as deeply unreliable, making the audience question the truth behind his narrative.

Body:

From the very beginning, the narrator protests his sanity: "You will see, you will hear how healthy my mind is". This obsessive insistence immediately sows doubt, a classic sign of an unreliable narrator. His extreme sensitivity to sound, claiming he "could hear sounds from heaven; and...from hell", suggests hallucinations rather than heightened senses.

Moreover, his justification for murder is irrational. He claims love for the old man but wishes to kill him solely because of his "vulture eye". This disproportionate reaction exposes a warped sense of morality, revealing that he is driven more by delusion than logic.

Finally, the narrator's downfall — the auditory hallucination of the dead man's heart — highlights the ultimate collapse of his reliability. Despite asserting control, he is overwhelmed by an imaginary sound, confessing, "Yes! Yes, I killed him. Pull up the boards and you shall see!". His inability to distinguish internal guilt from external reality confirms that the reader cannot trust his version of events.

Conclusion:

Through the portrayal of an unreliable narrator, Poe blurs the lines between reality and madness, forcing readers to navigate the story critically. The narrator's unstable mind not only drives the plot but also creates profound psychological suspense, making the story enduringly haunting.

3. Comment on the themes of 'guilt' and 'paranoia' with respect to the story. Show their function in the story.

Introduction:

In *The Tell-Tale Heart*, Edgar Allan Poe intricately weaves the themes of guilt and paranoia to drive the narrator's descent into madness. These forces function as both the psychological motivators and destroyers of the narrator, showcasing the inevitable consequences of committing an immoral act.

Body:

Guilt first manifests subtly but grows insidiously. After the murder, the narrator initially feels triumphant: "I smiled as I felt that success was near". However, this false sense of victory crumbles when he begins to hear the old man's heart beating under the floorboards. The narrator's hallucination of the sound — "It was a quick, low, soft sound, like the sound of a clock heard through a wall" — demonstrates guilt materializing into a sensory experience.

Paranoia amplifies the effects of guilt. Although the policemen show no suspicion, the narrator believes they are mocking him: "Was it possible that they did not hear?". His internal paranoia projects hostility onto the external world, illustrating how guilt distorts his perception.

Moreover, guilt and paranoia work together to break the narrator's composure. As the imagined heartbeat grows louder ("Louder! Louder! Louder!"), he is compelled to confess in a fit of psychological agony: "I killed him. But why does his heart not stop beating?!".

Conclusion:

Thus, guilt and paranoia serve as the true antagonists in Poe's story. They relentlessly haunt the narrator, transforming his mind into his worst enemy, and ultimately ensure that his crime is exposed — not through external investigation, but through internal collapse.
