

Poem  
**11**

**Leisure**  
(W. H. Davies)

**Words and Expressions**

care	–	worry; anxiety
glance	–	look; see
enrich	–	enhance; develop; deepen

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**Multiple Choice Questions**

Choose the correct synonym.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. What is this life if full of <b>care</b>...</p> <p>A) caution                      B) hate</p> <p>C) worry                         D) attentiveness</p> <p>2. We have no time to stand and <b>stare</b>.</p> <p>A) think                         B) pause</p> <p>C) wink                         D) watch</p> <p>3. No time to stand <b>beneath</b> the boughs.</p> <p>A) over                         B) under</p> <p>C) near                         D) far</p> <p>4. No time to stand beneath the <b>boughs</b>.</p> <p>A) branches                      B) trees</p> <p>C) leaves                         D) bushes</p> | <p>5. No time to see, in <b>broad</b> daylight...</p> <p>A) hazy                         B) natural</p> <p>C) wide                         D) clear</p> <p>6. No time to turn at Beauty's <b>glance</b>...</p> <p>A) meaning                      B) grandeur</p> <p>C) grace                         D) look</p> <p>7. ...<b>Enrich</b> that smile, her eyes began?</p> <p>A) explore                         B) confine</p> <p>C) enhance                         D) purify</p> |
|---|---|

**Answers**

1. C    2. D    3. B    4. A    5. D    6. D    7. C

**Questions and Answers**

**Q.1** What is the significance of the title "Leisure"?

**Ans.** The title is appropriate as the poem brings home the idea that life becomes mechanical without leisure. Leisure makes man's existence healthy and bearable. Absence of leisure makes human existence miserable.

**Q.2** Why does the poet call this life poor? OR Why is life full of care?

OR

**When does the life of a man become poor?**

(Board 2015)

**Ans.** A life full of cares and worries where a man has no time to enjoy the beauty of nature is a poor existence. The mad race for material gains and worldly objectives has deprived modern man of all noble attributes of heart and soul and made his life miserable.

**Q.3** What personification has been used in "Leisure"?

**Ans.** "Beauty" has been used as a personification in the poem. Beauty is an abstraction but it has been personified as a beautiful dancing girl in the poem. It stands for beauty at large.

**Q.4 What do you understand by the image “streams full of stars”?**

**Ans.** Literally the expression means the shining water of flowing lakes. It also portrays life in its most fascinating form and colour – life as an object of contemplation. Nature is present all around us with its beautiful manifestations. We don't have time to appreciate them.

**Q.5 Bring out the main idea of “Leisure”?**

(Board 2010)

**OR**

**What is the theme of the poem “Leisure”?**

**Ans.** Today, man has no time to “stand and stare”. The poem emphasizes the idea that leisure in life is necessary in order to live a happy and blissful life. Preoccupation with materialism makes life full of cares and worries.

**Q.6 Who is the author of “Leisure”?**

**Ans.** W. H. Davies wrote “Leisure”.

## Explanation with Reference to the Context

**Stanza 1:**

What is this life if, full of care  
We have no time to stand and stare?  
No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows;  
No time to see, in broad daylight  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

**Reference:**

These lines have been taken from the poem 'Leisure' by W. H. Davies.

**Context:**

The poem revolves around the idea that leisure in life is necessary in order to live a happy and blissful life. Preoccupation with materialism makes life full of cares and worries.

**Explanation:**

Man is unable to appreciate the beautiful objects of nature. He has no time to stand beneath the boughs of trees, and enjoy the beauty of nature. A man with an eye for beauty can see the bubbles in the stream of water. These bubbles in the sunshine may remind one of a star-lit sky at night. These charms of nature can only be enjoyed if one has time to appreciate and admire nature. This state of the modern man forces the poet to say:

*A poor life this if, full of care,*

*We have no time to stand and stare.*

The imagery is from nature. The rhyming pairs – boughs-cows and light-night add to the melody of the poem.



**Stanza 2:**

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance:  
No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile, her eyes began?  
A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

(Board 2013)

**Reference:**

These lines have been taken from the poem 'Leisure' by W. H. Davies.

**Context:**

The poem revolves around the idea that leisure in life is necessary in order to live a happy and blissful life. Preoccupation with materialism makes life full of cares and worries.

**Explanation:**

The poem criticizes man for not being able to appreciate the simple joys of nature. The poet personifies beauty as a dancing girl with a charming smile. She stands for the charm and beauty of nature at large. The suggestion is that beauty is always around us to fascinate us. But sadly enough, man is so much obsessed with work that he is unable to respond to the inviting beauty of nature. His aesthetic sense has been numbed by the cares and worries of life. This sad situation forces the poet to reject this kind of life as poor and full of worries.



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