

# UPDAAN



## 2025

### **The Ball Poem** (First Flight) ✓

**English – B**

**Lecture – 09**

**By – Anurag Tyagi Sir**



# Topics

*to be covered*



- 1 Warm-up Game ✓
- 2 Poetry: The Ball Poem ✓
- 3 NCERT Exercise and Quiz ✓





# Recap *of previous Lecture*



1

Warm-up Game

2

Poetry: How to Tell Wild Animals ✓

3

NCERT Exercise and Quiz





Game  
time!

# Guess the sports!



1



+



→ Basketball

2



+



→ Boxing

3



+



→ Table Tennis



# These are the sports!



1



basket

+



ball

=

basketball

2



box

+



sing

=

boxing

3



table

+



ten eyes

=

table  
tennis





# The Ball Poem





## Topic : The Ball Poem



**By – 'John Berryman'**



- *This poem vividly captures a young boy's state of mind whose joyful activities are suddenly interrupted when he loses a ball.*
- *The poem is about how small and insignificant events of life give significant lessons and prepare one to gradually to face harsh realities of life.*





*Before you read-*

- *A boy loses a ball. He is very upset. A ball doesn't cost much, nor is it difficult to buy another ball. Why then is the boy so upset? Read the poem to see what the poet thinks has been lost, and what the boy has to learn from the experience of losing something.*

lose

What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,

See; देखना।

What, what is he to do? I saw it go

happily

Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then

Merrily over — there it is in the water!





No use to say 'O there are other balls':

*extreme*  
An ultimate shaking *Sadness* grief *grips* the boy  
*stiff: सख्त*  
As he stands rigid, trembling, staring down  
*काँपना* *gazing; घूरना*  
(All his young days into the harbour) where  
*बंदरगाह*

His ball went.



Ball → memories of childhood;  
childhood innocence  
; a thing that we hold dear



interfere (439e)

I would not intrude on him;

10 cents of no value

A dime, another ball, is worthless. Now

realises जिम्मेदारी  
He senses first responsibility

materialistic world  
In a world of possessions. (People will take

Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.)

Ball  
↓

valuable assets,  
things you hold dear







बाहरी

Epistemology



And no one buys a ball back. Money is external.

hopeless; 3रसुत

He is learning, well behind his desperate eyes,

the understand/philosophy

The epistemology of loss, how to stand up

→ to understand what it means to  
lose something

Knowing what every man must one day know

men

how to cope up with a loss

And most know many days, how to stand up.



## Topic : Message



- ① Loss is inevitable. Accept the loss and move on to face life in its stride. - Have a positive outlook.
- ② Take care of things/people you love.
- ③ Do not get too attached to materialistic things.





## Topic : Message



- The poem also conveys a message that one must not be emotionally attached to materialistic things.
- A loss must not leave a person sorrow-stricken. One must know how to bear the loss bravely and move on.



# Poll Quiz



#Q. Why does the poet say "a dime, another ball, is worthless"?

- ☐ A Because the boy doesn't like playing with balls
- ☐ B Because the ball has sentimental value
- ☒ C Because money can't replace the lost ball's emotional value
- ☐ D Because the boy is too rich to care

#Q. Why does the poet decide not to intrude on the boy?

- ☐ A He wants the boy to find the ball himself
- ☒ B He feels the boy needs to learn the lesson on his own
- ☐ C He doesn't like the boy
- ☐ D He doesn't care about the boy's feelings



#Q. What important lesson is the boy learning according to the poem?

- ☐ A The value of money
- ☐ B The importance of sharing
- ☐ C The fun of playing with others
- ☒ D The concept of loss and responsibility

#Q. How does the poet describe the boy's feelings about the lost ball?

- ☐ A He is mildly upset
- ☒ B He is filled with ultimate shaking grief
- ☐ C He is indifferent
- ☐ D He is happy to get a new ball



#Q. What does the poet mean by "Money is external"?

- ☐ A Money can buy everything one wants and make them happy
- ☐ B Money is more important than emotions
- ☒ C Money cannot replace lost possessions with sentimental value
- ☐ D Money is irrelevant in the modern world

#Q. What does the boy realize for the first time?

☒ **A** The first sense of responsibility in a world of possessions

☐ **B** The joy of playing

☐ **C** The value of friendship

☐ **D** The fun of buying new things





#Q. What does the poet mean by "the epistemology of loss"?

- ☐ A The study of losing things
- ☒ B Understanding the nature of loss and how to cope with it
- ☐ C The science of understanding the reason for hidden items and finding them
- ☐ D The knowledge of playing games

#Q. What is the boy ultimately learning by the end of the poem?

- ☐ A How to save money and become rich
- ☐ B The value of new toys and happiness
- ☒ C How to stand up after experiencing loss
- ☐ D How to find lost things





## Poetic Devices



What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,

What, what is he to do? I saw it go

Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then

Merrily over — there it is in the water!

*Transferred Epithet*

No use to say 'O there are other balls':

An ultimate shaking grief fixes the boy

As he stands rigid, trembling, staring down

All his young days into the harbour where

His ball went.

I would not intrude on him;

A dime, another ball, is worthless. Now

He senses first responsibility

In a world of possessions. People will take

Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.

*Alliteration*

And no one buys a ball back. Money is external.

He is learning, well behind his desperate eyes,

The epistemology of loss, how to stand up

Knowing what every man must one day know

And most know many days, how to stand up.



Transferred Epithet  
↓  
Quality

John had a sleepless night.



## Topic : Literary Device



### **Alliteration**

Alliteration is the occurrence of the same sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. It creates a musical effect and enhances the pleasure of reading a literary work.



## Examples:

- *Balls, balls will be lost always...*

Here the poet has repeated 'b' sound.

- And no one buys a ball back.

Here the poet has used 'b' sound repeatedly which makes the expression musical.



## Transferred Epithet

Transferred Epithet is a poetic device in which an adjective is used not with the noun which it normally qualifies but with some other noun.

### Example:

- *shaking grief*

Here, it is not the grief that shakes but the boy.





Enjambment

What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,

→ Repetition

What, what is he to do? I saw it go

Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then

Merrily over — there it is in the water!

Anaphora

No use to say 'O there are other balls':

An ultimate shaking grief fixes the boy

As he stands rigid, trembling, staring down

All his young days into the harbour where

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In a world of possessions. People will take

Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.

Repetition

And no one buys a ball back. Money is external.

He is learning, well behind his desperate eyes,

The epistemology of loss, how to stand up

Knowing what every man must one day know

And most know many days, how to stand up.



## Repetition

Repetition is using a word, phrase, or clause a number of times with the purpose of emphasis or to provide unity to the poem.

### Examples:

- *What, what is he to do?*

Here the repetition of the word 'what' emphasizes the helplessness of the boy who cannot retrieve the lost ball.





- *Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.*

Here the word 'balls' has been repeated to emphasize the idea that 'balls' stand for the possessions of a person.

- *Knowing what every man must one day know  
And most know many days, how to stand up.*

Here 'know' is repeatedly used to emphasize that the incident has given a lesson to the boy about the hard fact of life that one has to suffer losses from time to time and one should know how to accept the losses bravely without being shaken by them.



- *The epistemology of loss, how to stand up*  
*Knowing what every man must one day know*  
*And most know many days, how to stand up.*

The poet repeats the expression 'how to stand up' to bring home the idea that one must accept a loss bravely and move on in life.





## Anaphora

Anaphora is a literary device in which the writer repeats the same beginning of a clause or a sentence, chiefly with the purpose of emphasis on the repeated element, but also to bring rhythm in the Writing.

### Examples:

- *What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,*

*What, what is he to do? I saw it go*

Here the poet starts the first and the second line with 'What' to arouse the curiosity of the reader about the reaction of the boy to the loss of the ball.



- *Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then  
Merrily over – there it is in the water!*

Here each of these two lines begins with 'Merrily' to present the ball moving away happily, which is contrasted with the sad mood of the boy.

## Enjambment

It is a poetic device in which a line runs on to the next line or lines carrying on the idea without a punctuation mark (a comma, or a full stop) at the end of a line.

### Examples:

- *What, what is he to do? I saw it go*  
*Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then*  
*Merrily over – there it is in the water!*



- *An ultimate shaking grief fixes the boy*

*As he stands rigid, trembling, staring down*

*All his young days into the harbour where*

*His ball went.*

In both these examples, lines run on to the next without a punctuation mark at the end to show a pause.

## Metaphor / Symbolism



What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,

I would not intrude on him;

What, what is he to do? I saw it go

A dime, another ball, is worthless. Now

'Merrily' bouncing, down the street, and then

He senses first responsibility

Merrily over — there it is in the water!

In a world of possessions. People will take

Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.

No use to say 'O there are other balls':

An ultimate shaking grief fixes the boy

And no one buys a ball back. Money is external.

As he stands rigid, trembling, staring down

He is learning, well behind his desperate eyes,

All his young days into the harbour where

The epistemology of loss, how to stand up

His ball went.

Knowing what every man must one day know

And most know many days, how to stand up.

Personification





## **Symbolism**

Symbolism is the use of symbols to signify the ideas and qualities, by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal meaning. Generally, it is an object representing another, to give an entirely different meaning that is much deeper and more significant.

In this poem, 'ball' has been used as a symbol of the possessions a person may have. It is also symbolic of the childhood innocence of the boy.





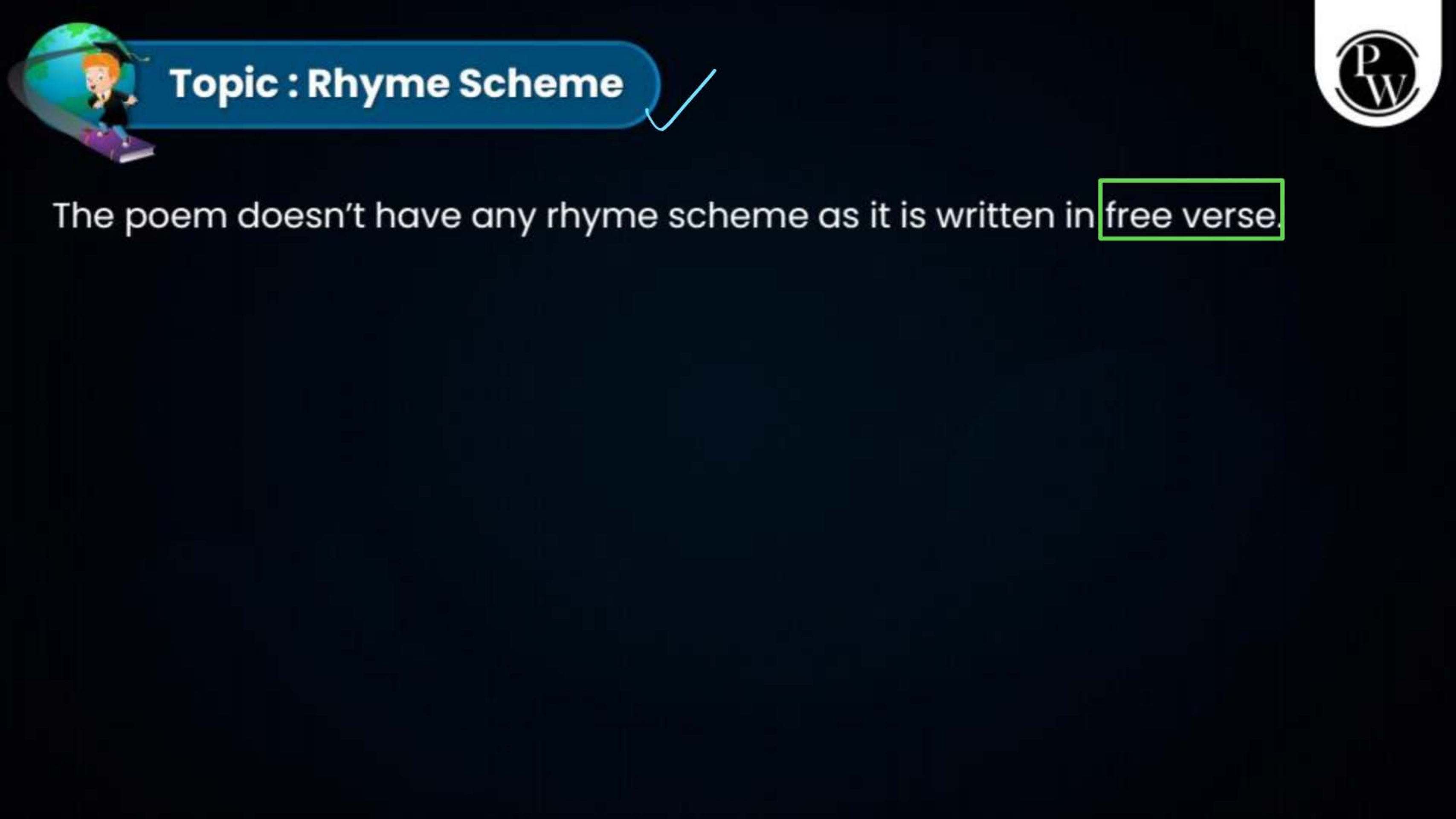
## Personification

Personification is a literary device in which the poet associates human attributes with some abstract idea or an inanimate object or a natural phenomenon.

### Example:

- *merrily bouncing down the street*

Here the ball has been personified, as the expression “merrily bouncing” presents the inanimate ball jumping happily like a human being.



## Topic : Rhyme Scheme

The poem doesn't have any rhyme scheme as it is written in free verse.



✓ #Q. Why does the poet say, "I would not intrude on him"? Why doesn't he offer him money to buy another ball?  
(CBSE 2020)

☆☆ #Q. Not from weeping nor from grieving will anyone obtain peace of mind".  
If you had to use the message of the given quote from the Buddha's sermon (The Sermon at Benares) to help the boy cope with the loss of his ball and what it signifies (The Ball Poem), what would you include in your advice?  
(CBSE SQP 2023)

✓ #Q. Why is it important for everyone to experience loss and to stand up after it?  
(CBSE 2014)



✓ #Q. What does John Berryman want to convey through this poem?

(CBSE 2011, 2016)

✓ #Q. "Money is external". What does the poet mean by this expression?

(CBSE 2014)

✓ #Q. Why was the boy upset on losing the ball?

(CBSE 2019)

**#Q.** Why is it important for everyone to experience loss and to stand up after it?

(CBSE 2014)

**Ans.** It is important for everyone to experience loss and to stand up after it in order to be strong and to get on with life. One needs to stay strong no matter how much it hurts inside. Staying strong is the only way to survive. Moreover, one needs to learn to accept and let go and not cling to something that they can never have. One should understand that the past is gone and it will never come back. Experiencing loss sometimes helps us to grow up and face hardships.



This helps us in breaking all the boundaries into freedom. The poem teaches us a philosophy of life through the loss of ball i.e. "Loss is a universal truth in our life." We have to lose something at one point of time. Through the loss of ball, the boy learns real knowledge of the world. If he is able to bear the loss, he will be able to face the difficulties of life courageously. The boy must know how to stand up after a loss. It is very essential for every human being to be able to move on or stand up after being knocked down. Here, the ball signifies losing something valuable that can not be bought or replaced. The poet wants us to understand that loss is inevitable and everyone must learn to cope up with the loss with patience and courage.



**#Q.** Not from weeping nor from grieving will anyone obtain peace of mind".

If you had to use the message of the given quote from the Buddha's sermon (The Sermon at Benares) to help the boy cope with the loss of his ball and what it signifies (The Ball Poem), what would you include in your advice? (CBSE SQP 2023)

**Ans.** The Buddha's words teach us to cope with the loss of irreplaceable things. They tell us that the loss of irreparable things brings griefs and sorrow but as wise people we must learn to stay calm and accept the loss, understanding that we might lose things we love, even people we once loved. The existence of some things in our lives is ephemeral. This acceptance helps us in living normally and forgetting about loss.



These words can help the boy in 'The Ball Poem' cope with the loss of the ball by making him understand that loss is a constant and important part of life. Only by learning to accept and adapt to it can we live a normal life.

This notion might be too difficult for the boy to understand because he is too young. He is all alone in his loss. There is no one beside him to explain everything about the loss. So, he must learn from his experience painstakingly. For the same he requires time to cope for he can easily feel disheartened at such a young age.



# CBSE

## Question & Concept Bank Chapter-wise & Topic-wise

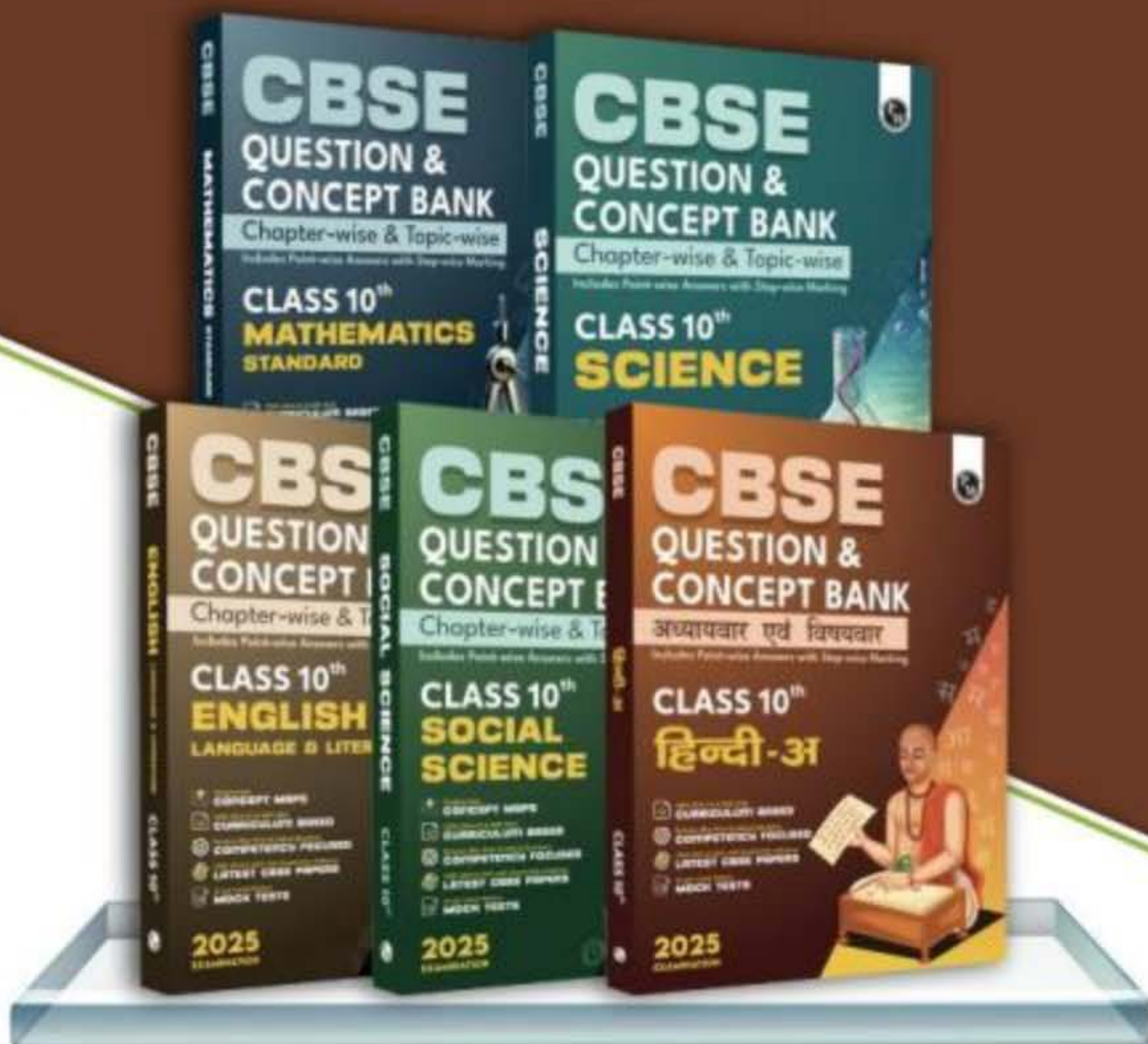
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