**Symbiosis School, Nashik.**

**Std : X Term I (2020-21)**

**Subject : English Language & Literature - Worksheet - 18**

**Poem 5 : The Ball Poem By John Berryman**

**About the Poet**

John Berryman was an American poet and scholar. He is best known for the Dream Songs (1969) which was a sequence of 385 poems. He won Pulitzer Prize for the dream songs. He also won National book award.

**Introduction to the lesson**

The poet John Berryman through his poem, ‘The ball poem’ has described the reality of life which everyone has to face one day. He has touched the topic of how to stand up against the miseries and sorrows of life.

The Ball Poem is written by John Berryman who tells us that a boy loses his ball as it falls in the water. The poet emphasizes on the feelings of boy after losing his ball. An ultimate shaking grief fixes the boy as he stands stiff staring down. He is troubled at this loss.

The Poet tells us that how the boy is understanding the nature of loss and the boy must feel his responsibility. However, the Poet can buy him another ball and it won't cost much, but he won't do it since he wants the boy to learn the epistemology of loss and how to stand up when something is lost.

The boy is little and he must know the importance of loss and should be able to cope up with the loss and move on. He is experiencing grief and learning to grow up in this world of possessions.

The Poet also wants the boy to control his emotions and to tell himself that there are many things in life which get lost and cannot be brought back and in such situations, instead of being in grief how moving on in life is important. The loss of ball is just a small thing that the boy experiences and there's still more in life that is to come.

**Word Meanings**

Possessions: ownership  
External: Here, things with which feelings are not attached  
Desperate: hopeless  
Epistemology: The Greek word episteme means ‘knowledge’

**Literary devices:**  
Repetition: use of word ‘ball’  
Asyndeton: no use of conjunction in a sentence (A dime, another ball, is worthless)

Alliteration: use of sound ‘b’ at the start of two consecutive words (buys a ball back)  
Assonance: use of vowel sound ‘e’ (He is learning, well behind his desperate eyes)  
Repetition: ‘ball’ word is repeated

Rhyme scheme: There is no rhyme scheme followed in the poem.

**Concept based Questions**

**Question 1.**

What does John Berryman want to convey through this poem?

**Question 2.**  
How does the boy feel at the loss of his ball?

**Question 3.**  
Write the sum and substance of the poem **“The Ball Poem”**

**Question 4.**  
“Money is external”. What does the poet mean by this expression?

**Question 5.**  
Why does the poet think that it is useless to give the following suggestion to the boy? ‘No use to say- ‘O there are other balls’:  
**Question 6.**  
Why did the poet not offer the boy money to buy another ball? 

**Question 7.**

Why did the boy feel so sad at the loss of his ball?