



Page No: 100

5. Read the poem silently and answer the following questions:

(a) List out the adjectives that have been used to describe the mirror. Add a few more adjectives to the list.

Answer:

Adjectives used in the poem to describe the mirror:

silver, exact, honest, faithful, unmisted, unbiased, four cornered

A few more adjectives for the same are listed below:

Deep, significant, reality, bitter, fair, honest

(b) In the second stanza why has the narrator replaced the mirror with a lake? What is he/she trying to focus on?

Answer:

In the second stanza, the poetess has replaced the mirror with a lake to add a new dimension to it which is depth. The lake has depth. Both the mirror and the lake have the quality of reflecting the image of what appears before them. Just as anything falls and drowns into the lake, the youth and beauty of the woman seems to have drowned in the mirror.

6. Find the various instances of personification used in this poem.

Answer:

The various instances of personification used in the poem are:

I am silver and exact.

I have no preconceptions

Whatever I see, I swallow immediately;

I am not cruel, only truthful;

Now, I am a lake;

The eye of a little god;

I am important to her.

7. Read the given lines and answer the questions that follow by ticking the correct choice:

A woman bends over me,

Searching my reaches for what she really is.

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

a. What is the woman bending over?

i. the mirror

ii. the lake

iii. the opposite wall

iv. the moon and the candles

Answer:

i. the mirror

b. Why have the candles and the moon been called 'liars'?

i. because they make people beautiful

ii. they hide the blemishes of people with their soft light

iii. they hide the blemishes and make people look beautiful in their soft glow

iv. they can't talk

Answer:

iii. they hide the blemishes and make people look beautiful in their soft glow

- c. Why does she turn to them in spite of calling them 'liars'?
- i. the reality is too harsh for her to bear
 - ii. she is desperately looking for someone to comfort her
 - iii. she wants to be told that she is still beautiful
 - iv. she can hide her signs of graying in their light

Answer:

- i. the reality is too harsh for her to bear

Page No: 101

8. Imagine you are the mirror. Write a speech that you would like to deliver to the humans who come to see their reflection in you. You could begin like this....

Good Morning dear humans.

I feel honoured to have been given the opportunity to express my feelings and share my thoughts with you. As you know, all my life is spent in faithfully reflecting all that comes before my eyes....

Answer:

Good Morning dear humans,

I feel honoured to have been given the opportunity to express my feelings and share my thoughts with you. As you know, all my life is spent in faithfully reflecting all that comes before my eyes faithfully. I have been a silent spectator of zillions of lives. My vision is very objective. I don't respond to people when they search for themselves, in me. My passivity usually agitates them. However, I am glad to be loyal and honest to the onlookers, cruel it might seem. I don't have the power to manipulate or distort reality. That is why images on me are so significant to you.

9. Here is another poem on mirror. The narrator calls the mirror a 'fibber'. How is this poem different from the poem by Sylvia Plath? Have a class discussion on the comparison in terms of the theme, the tone and the language used.

MIRROR

Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Can't you show me tall and slim?
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Must I look so bloody grim?
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
You're distorting my poor waist!
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
And why the heck am I defaced?
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Why have I a double chin?
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
And what's the stupid, goofy grin?
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Pointless asking 'Who's the fairest-?'
More bloody likely, 'Who's the queerest? '
Now look, I paid a big bucks for thee,
So why can't you be nice to me?
Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
Who's the fairest of them all?
Me, you say? Ah, that's better -
Mirror, mirror, bloody fibber!

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Answer:

In the poem 'Mirror' by Sylvia Plath, the mirror has been personified. The mirror gives an autobiographical account of itself. It narrates experience whereas in this poem, the poet himself is the narrator and addresses the mirror directly. Sylvia Plath has presented the mirror as exact, truthful, faithful, unbiased, honest and unmixed by love or dislike. It reflects or shows whatever it sees in all its

exactness. It does not hide, twist or distort whatever it sees. It gives the true picture of the woman who has grown old and is no longer beautiful and charming. But in the poem by Mark R Slaughter, the narrator calls the mirror 'fibber'- one who gives the untrue statement. Here the mirror shows a totally changed physical appearance of the narrator. It does not reflect the narrator's appearance exactly. It distorts his waist. It shows him as robust, grim, defaced and doubled chin.

***** END *****