

SECTION: C : TEXTBOOK

FLAMINGO (POETRY)

Poem. 1 MY MOTHER AT SIXTY SIX by KAMALA DAS

Summary:

- The poet is driving from her parents home to Cochin by car, her mother by her side—sleeping – open mouthed very pale, colorless and frail-like a dead body indicating that her end was near.

- The poet looks at her and feels intense pain and agony to realize that soon death will cast her mother from her.
- Tries to divert her mind, looks outside at the young trees and happy children bursting out of their homes in a playful mood (a contrasting image)
- After the security check at the airport looked again at her mother's face—pale and cold.
- "Familiar ache-My childhood fear" –the poet has always had a very intimate and close relationship with her mother and she has always felt the fear of being separated from her mother hence it is familiar.
- The poet reassures her mother that they will meet again

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS : Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow.

1. *"Driving from my parent's home to Cochin last Friday*

*Morning, I saw my mother, beside me, doze,
open mouthed, her face ashen like that
Of a corpse and realized with pain
That looked as old as she was
But soon put that thought far away."*

a) Where is the poet at present?

The poet is on her way from her ancestral home to Cochin Airport ,travelling by a car with her aged mother dozing off leaning against her body.

b) How does the poet describe her mother?

The poet describes her mother as old, pale, cold and senile. As she dozed off beside her, the mother looked almost like a corpse, for her face was colorless and seemed to have lost the colour and vitality of life.

c) Who does 'she' refer to in the last line? What thoughts had she driven away?

'She' here refers to the poet, Kamala Das. She wanted to put the haunting thought of parting with her mother away.

d). Explain the expression' Pain that looked as old as she was...'

Her pain about losing her mother is as old as she was. The poetess wants to express the idea that the pain / fear was haunting her since her childhood.

2. *"... but soon*

*put that thought far away, and looked out at young
trees sprinting, the merry children spilling
out of their homes..."*

a) What was the poet 'looking' at? What did she notice?

The poet was looking at her mother. She noticed the mother's ashen and almost lifeless face distraught with pain.

b) What thought did she try to drive away?

She tried to drive away the thought of her mother's approaching death.

c) Why did the poet start 'looking out'? What does her gesture suggest?

The poet started looking out of the window because she wanted to drive away the pain and agony she experienced on seeing her aged mother. She wanted to drive away her helplessness in the wake of her mother's ageing and approaching death.

d) What did the poet see from the window of the car?

The poet saw young trees running past her car and merry children sprinting out of their homes to play.

e) What did the images of 'young trees' and 'merry children' symbolize?

Trees and children symbolize the spring of life, its strength, vigour and happiness which contrasts with the lifelessness and helplessness that sets in with age.

3. *"but after the airport's
security check, standing a few yards
away, I looked again at her, wan, pale
as a late winter's moon"*

a) Who is 'I' and why is she at the airport?

'I' is the poet Kamala Das here and the poet was at the Cochin airport waiting to board the plane to Kolkata.

b) Who does 'her' here to? How did she look like?

'Her' here refers to the poet's aged mother. In her declining stage of health, the mother looked pale, cold like a corpse and like a colourless, dull late winter moon.

c) Why does the narrator 'look at her again'?

The narrator looked at her mother once again for the last time before she left to reassure herself about the well being of her mother. She had tried to drive away the pain she had felt on seeing her weak and aged mother. It was a look of reassurance to meet her again, of anxiety and fear that it would be her last meeting.

d) Explain: 'wan, pale as a late winter's moon'.

In this simile, the poet similarises the mother's pale and withered face to the late winter's moon. Winter symbolizes death and the waning moon symbolizes decay. Just like the winter loses its magnificence and brightness in winter covered and dimmed in fog and mist, the thick cover of the winter of old age has made the mother weak, pale, withered, inactive and spiritless.

4. *"and felt that old
familiar ache, my childhood's fear,
but all I said was, see you soon, Amma,
all I did was smile and smile and smile."*

a) What 'familiar ache' did the poet feel?

The 'familiar ache' refers to the poet's fear of losing her mother and the realization that she has not cared and cannot care for her ageing mother. It is an ache of helplessness. It is also a fear of separation from the mother or the mother's death.

b) What could have been the poet's childhood fears?

I think the poet's childhood fear was that she would lose her mother or be separated from her and that death would consume her mother.

c) Did the poet share her thoughts with her mother?

The poet did not share her fears and agony with her mother. She only bid good bye to her with the hope of seeing her soon.

d) Why do you think, the poet did not share her thoughts with her mother?

I think the poet did not share her thoughts with her mother because they were caused by her fear of the unknown. Sharing them with the mother would have worried the frail old woman to death.

e) Why did the poet only 'smile'?

The poet only smiled to hide her guilt, anxiety and fear of the unknown. Also, she wanted to bid a cheerful farewell to her mother before boarding the flight, giving a hollow promise wrapped in a meaningless smile..

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

1. What is the kind of pain and ache that the poet feels?

When the poet looks at her mother's face she found that it had become pale and withered. She realized that her mother was at the edge of her life and her end was near. The thought that her mother would be soon separated from her caused unbearable pain and ache in the poet's heart.

2 What does the poet do to shrug off the painful thought of her mother's approaching end?

To get rid of the painful thought her mother's nearing end, the poet shifts her attention from her mother's pale face to the sprinting trees and the happy children spilling out of their house.

3. Why does the poet draw the image of sprinting trees and merry children?

Sprinting trees and merry children bursting out from the doors suggest fresh life and warm energy, vitality, youthfulness, spirit etc.. The poet draws this image to strike a scene of contrast with the pale, dull and withered face of the mother at the declining stage of her health.

4. Why have the trees been described as sprinting?

The poet was driving in a car along with her mother. Her movement created the visionary, illusion of the trees outside appeared to be sprinting past.

5. Why has the mother been compared to the late winter's moon?

The late winter moon lacks luster. The mother's face was pale and withered. Moreover, the late winter moon suggests the end of season and mother too is nearing the end of her life, therefore the poet compares her with the late winter's moon.

6. What is the 'familiar ache'?

The fear of losing her mother has tortured the poet from her very childhood because she had been intimately bound up with her. Therefore this ache is familiar to her.

7. What do the parting words of the poet and her smile signify?

The parting words of the poet reflect the poet's pain, frustration, guilt and helplessness. But she wears a smile on her face to mask her pain and to give hope, happiness and reassurance to her mother.

AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM IN A SLUM -BY STEPHEN SPENDER

GIST OF THE POEM

- In this poem the poet focuses on the theme of social injustice and inequalities.
- He presents the pathetic and miserable picture of the elementary classroom in a slum.
- These children have pale and lifeless faces.
- They are like rootless weeds which are uncared and unwanted with their disorderly hair torn around their faces.
- They are depressed and oppressed with the burdens of life and keep their heads down. They have stunted growth.
- They inherit the diseases of their father.
- Some of them do have dreams. A sweet young boy is sitting at the back of the dim classroom. He is dreaming of a squirrel's game in the trees and probably other interesting things.
- The walls are dirty and creamy and on them are hung the donations given by the rich and also Shakespeare's portrait.
- A civilized dome found in the cities and Tyrolean valleys with beautiful flowers are also put up.
- The map on the wall shows the children, the beautiful world outside; but for these children of the slum it is meaningless.
- The children studying in these schools do not have the means to go and explore the world. For them what they see through their classroom windows, the narrow street and the lead sky is the world.
- Shakespeare is wicked for them as he has written only about the rich, beautiful world tempting them to steal.
- The map is of no interest to them because it does not reflect the world they live in - cramped and dark lanes.
- Their lives start in darkness and end in utter darkness.
- They are undernourished and their poverty has distorted their vision as they spend their whole time in foggy slums.
- The poet feels that the map which shows beautiful and exotic places should be replaced with slums as it is not the world they live in.
- Unless the governor, inspector and visitor play a vital role in bringing about a change, their lives will remain in dark.
- The slum children will be able to peep through the window only when the gap between the two worlds is bridged.
- They should break the barriers till they come out of the dirty surroundings and their world should be extended into the green fields, golden sands and bright world.
- They should have the freedom of expression and their outlook be broadened.

- For, only the educated and learned people can create history whose language has strength and power.

SOLVED QUESTIONS

1. *“Unless, governor, inspector, visitor,
This map becomes their window and these windows
That shut upon their lives like catacombs.”*

(a) Why does the poet invoke ‘governor’, ‘inspector’ and ‘visitor’?

The poet invokes the ‘governor’, ‘inspector’ and ‘visitor’ because they are the powerful people who can bring about a drastic change in the miserable lives of the slum children. They can remove the social injustice and class inequalities.

(b) What does ‘this map’ refer to? How can it become ‘their window’?

This map refers to the beautiful world of the rich. Their window refers to holes and the stinking slums of the unfortunate children of the slum. This can become their window only when the difference between the two worlds is abridged.

(c) What have ‘these windows’ done to their lives?

These windows have cramped their lives, stunted their physical and mental growth shutting them inside filthy and dingy holes, keeping them away from the vast world of development and opportunities .

(d) What do you understand by catacombs?

Catacombs are long underground graves. Here they stand for the dirty slums which block in which the slum children are confined.

(e) Which literary device has been used here ? Explain.

Simile has been used here to describe the oppressive effect of the surroundings on their pathetic lives. The slum walled in against the world of opportunities and development is similarised to catacombs.

Answer the following in 30-40 words.

1. What is the theme of the poem?

This poem deals with the theme of social injustice and class inequalities. The poet presents it by talking of the two different and incompatible worlds- the world of the rich and the civilized and the world of the poor and the deprived. This gap can be bridged by the administrative authorities and through education.

2. ‘So blot their maps with slums as big as doom’. What does the poet want to convey?

The poet is angry at the social inequalities in the world. There are two worlds – the dirty slums and the prosperous and the beautiful world of the rich. The poet wants the map of the world should also have blots of slums as big as the ‘doom’. In reality he wants the gap to be reduced.

3. ‘History is theirs whose language is the sun’. Explain.

This statement means that those who have the courage and conviction to break free from the constraints of life are the ones who create history. One can make a mark only if one can outshine others. Education only can give them power and strength like the sun which will bring about a change in the lives of the people.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

B. Read the stanza and answer the questions that follows:

*"Surely, Shakespeare is wicked, the map a bad example,
With ships and sun and love tempting them to steal-
For lives that turn in their cramped holes
From fog to endless nights."*

- i) Name the poem and the poet
- ii) Why has Shakespeare been described as wicked?
- iii) Why is the map a bad example?
- iv) What tempts them to steal?
- v) How do the children continue to live?
- vi) Explain: 'From fog to endless night.'

C. Read the stanza and answer the questions that follows:

*"The stunted, unlucky heir
Of twisted bones, reciting a father gnarled disease
His lesson from his desk. At the back of the dim class
One unnoted, sweet and young. His eyes live in a dream
Of squirrels game, in tree room, other than this."*

- a) Who is being referred to in the first two lines?
- b) Explain 'father's gnarled disease'.
- c) Who sit at the back of the class? How is he different from others?
- d) Explain his eyes live in a dream?
- e) What is the comparison drawn with squirrels game?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What is that these children inherit from their parents? What does it signify?
2. How has the poet described the colour of the wall and why?
3. The poet presents two different worlds. What are they?
4. What picture of the slum children does the poet draw?
5. Where does the poet see hope and relief?
6. What does the poet mean by saying, 'Let their tongue run naked into books'?
7. How does the poet bring to light the brutalities of slum life
8. Explain 'Open handed map, awarding the world its world'.

9. In what way are the slum children unsung fighters?
10. How does the poet see the children as victims of social injustice?

KEEPING QUIET - BY PABLO NERUDA

GIST OF THE POEM

- The poet talks about the need of silence and quiet introspection and the importance of quietude and calmness. He also talks about creating a feeling of mutual understanding among human beings.
- The poet asks us to keep still and count up to twelve. He also asks us to sit still. For a moment we should not speak any language. We should not move our arms so much.
- It will be a moment of complete silence without rush or worry. This would be an exotic moment.
- Then a sudden strangeness will prevail which we will all enjoy. It will be bliss.
- The fisherman would not harm the whales on the cold sea. Even the man gathering salt would stop working and look at his hurt hands and reflect at the pain and harm his strenuous task has caused him.
- All kinds of wars must be stopped at once. The green wars against the environment, wars with poisonous gases, firearms, must be stopped at once.
- People who are all the time preparing for wars leaving no survivors behind ought to find time to wear clothes and walk around with their brothers strengthening the message of peace and brotherhood.
- At the same time the poet cautions not to confuse stillness with total inactivity. Life is an ongoing process and should not be associated with death. It is to be lived with positive attitude.
- He does not want us to ruminate over death.
- But he feels that if for once we do not focus ourselves single-mindedly to keep our lives moving but do some introspection or spend some time in silence doing nothing, we can understand ourselves better and escape from the threatening calls of death.
- The earth can teach us a lesson how everything comes to a dead end and comes to life again.
- In the same manner a quiet introspection can bring all evil thoughts to an end and bring in a new life of peace and tranquility.
- Now the poet will count up to twelve and they should keep quiet and he will go.

SOLVED QUESTIONS

1. Read the stanza and answer the questions that follows:

*"Fishermen in the cold sea
Would not harm whales
And the man gathering salt
Would look at his hurt hands."*

- a) What is 'fisherman' symbolic of?

The fisherman symbolizes man's indiscriminate exploitation of nature for his vested interests.

- b) What will happen when fishermen do not harm whales?

The whales will be no longer on the verge of extinction. A sense of co-existence can go into the minds of people.

c) What has happened to the man gathering salt? What must he do?

The man gathering salt has injured his hands. He must take care of his hurt hands and should realize that his actions are self-destructive.

d) What would happen in this moment of silence?

He will become conscious of the harm causing to others and to themselves and will work towards a better tomorrow peace, co-existence, mutual understanding and harmony.

e) What image does the poet create in the last line?

He creates the image of incessant suffering. In his effort to add comforts to his life he has paid no heed to the pain that caused him.

2. Read the stanza and answer the questions that follows:

" Perhaps the earth can teach us

As when everything seems dead

And later prove to be alive

Now I'll count up to twelve

And you keep quiet and I will go."

a) Who can teach us and what?

The earth can teach us. The Earth can teach us how new life emerges from the ashes of the dead remains. Likewise quiet introspection will enable us to live a life of peace and harmony.

c) Why does the speaker count up to twelve?

It is a part of initiation in meditation. All distractions and digressions are washed away and man is in a moment of bliss.

d) Explain- 'you keep quiet and I will go'?

The poet wants us all to keep quiet and experience the moment of realization and peace. He will go and pass on the message to another group of people.

Short Answer Questions

1. Why does Pablo Neruda urge us to keep still?

Stillness is necessary for reflection and quiet introspection. We can hear the voice of our conscience and thus withdraw ourselves from undesirable actions and contribute to create a society of peace and mutual understanding.

2. 'Under the apparent stillness there is life'. Justify.

The poet does not want to equate stillness with total inactivity. Under the apparent stillness there is life. We can learn it from the earth when everything seems dead, the earth still remains alive. The life on earth goes on under the apparent stillness.

3. Why do men become sad? How can this sadness be overcome?

Men fail to understand themselves. They are always threatening themselves with death. When they do not understand themselves they become sad. A long silence might interrupt this sadness and make them good.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

C. *"What I want should not be confused*

With total inactivity

Life is what it is about

I want no truck with death."

1. What is the desire of the poet?

2. What does 'total inactivity' imply?

3. Why does the poet say that he does not want his wish to be confused with total inactivity?

4. Explain-‘I want no truck with death’.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Why shouldn't we speak any language and move our arms so much?
2. How does the poet distinguish 'stillness' from 'total inactivity'? Explain.
3. "I want no truck with death." Explain.
4. What are the various wars mentioned? What is the result of these wars?
5. What would be the result of quietude?
6. What is the 'exotic moment' mentioned in the poem and how can we achieve it?
7. According to the poet, why should not we speak in any language?
8. What has man single-mindedly focused on and to what effect?

A THING OF BEAUTY By JOHN KEATS

GIST OF THE LESSON

- The Poet, John Keats says that beautiful things will never become 'nothing' as they will continue to hold us in their spell and sooth our soul.
- Every beautiful thing is like a band that ties us to this earth as it makes us want to live and enjoy these things of beauty.
- And these things of beauty, according to the poet, are the things that give hope to human beings and make them want to live, in spite of all the sorrow, ill-health and unpleasant experiences that we face on earth.
- Some of the beautiful things on this earth that have such an effect on us are the sun, the moon, trees, streams, flowers, forests, beautiful monuments that we have erected for the dead, all the lovely tales that we have heard or read.
- Finally he compares all these beautiful things to the immortal drink (of perennality) or nectar given to us by gods or gifts of God. Thus he states his firm belief in the Divine.

Solved Questions

_"yes , in spite of all,

Some shape of beauty moves away the pall

From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon ,

Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon

For simple sheep: and such are daffodils"

a. What does 'in spite of all' refer to?

The expression refers to all the pessimistic and negative thoughts that obstruct our way to happiness. In spite of the sense of hopelessness and gloom that overshadow and darken our way, we are able to find our happiness in the beautiful objects on nature.

b. What , according to the poet , drives away the sadness from our life?

Beauty, in shape or form, helps in driving away the sadness and despair from the dark recesses of our spirit.

c. What does the reference 'simple sheep' symbolize?

Lambs and sheep are envisioned as the embodiments of innocent and serene beauty. Jesus Christ, as an apostle of peace, was a shepherd and was seen surrounded by his flock of sheep, his followers. The poet has made specific reference to the sheep as symbols of 'divine beauty'.

Short Answer Questions:

(a) What according to Keats are the things that cause suffering and pain?

The poet says that a scarcity of good-natured people or in other words the wicked people outnumber the good people. And the source of all our sorrows is either ill-health or another human being.

(b) What makes human beings love life in spite of all the suffering?

Answer: The poet says that the beautiful things on earth lift the pall off our spirits and make life worth living. Each beautiful thing is like a link that forms a chain or wreath that binds us to this earth.

(c) Why does the poet say 'mighty dead'?

Answer: Monuments are erected in memory of people who were mighty or great when they lived. Physically mighty as in mighty warriors or mentally might as in great poets, writers or philosophers. Their tombs provide inspiration for the living through their beauty just as their works continue to do.

Questions for practice:

1. *"A thing of beauty is a joy forever
Its loveliness increases, it will never
Pass into nothingness; but will keep
a bower quiet for us, and a sleep
full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth."*

- What is the special virtue of a beautiful thing?
- How does it bless us?
- Explain the expression "A bower quiet for us".
- What do we do everyday?

2. *"the mid forest brake,
rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;
and such too is the grandeur of the dooms
who have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read;*

*An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink."*

- What do you mean by 'brake'? Where does it grow? What makes it all the more beautiful?
- What do you mean by 'the grandeur of the dooms'?
- "All lovely tales that we have heard or read" Explain
- What is the source of the beauty of nature? What is its effect on us?

*3. "Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
from our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
for simple sheep; and such are daffodils
with green world they live in; and clear rills
that for themselves a cooling covert make
'against the hot season; the mid forest brake
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms"*

- What type of beauty and its effect are mentioned here ?
- What sprouts a shady boon for sheep and how?
- How do 'daffodils' and rills enrich the environment?
- What makes the mid-forest brake rich?

Short answer Questions

- How do we wreath a flowery band?
- Why do human beings suffer or what depresses the human soul?
- What does Keats mean by the 'grandeur of doom'?
- Mention 4 things of beauty listed in the poem?
- How do we bind ourselves to the earth every morning?
- Why and how is 'grandeur' associated with the mighty dead?
- What is the source of the 'endless fountain' and what is its effect?
- What is the message of the poem/what philosophy of life is highlighted in the poem?

A ROADSIDE STAND BY ROBERT FROST

Gist of the lesson

- Roadside stand by Robert Frost is concerned with human tragedies and fears. He focuses on the rural-urban divide and presents the lives of the poor deprived people with pitiless clarity and with the deepest sympathy and humanity.
- The dwellers of the little house by the roadside put up a little shed in front of their house as they wanted to earn a little extra-money but not for making their living.
- The rural people wish to feel some real money that supports the commerce of the cities.
- The shed was painted artlessly and stood out which made the passers-by irritated at having the beauty of the landscape spoilt.
- The traffic flowed ceaselessly or if ever they stopped, they felt out of sorts on seeing 'N' and 'S' written as their mirror images.
- The Stand sold wild berries and golden squash for sale.
- The owners of the shed felt cross when nobody wanted to buy anything
- The poet feels that the implications of the unstated facts are more pathetic.

- The government announces schemes to allure such people and house them in villages that are near to the theatre and the store, to reap benefits for their own selfish needs.
- And the social workers and politicians enforce their decisions by alluring them and destroy their ability to earn their living, thus stripping them of all dignity and their voice
- The poet is overcome with pain at the thought of the people waiting in vain for the vehicles. If ever any vehicle stops, it will be to ask for directions, take a u-turn, and enquire about the price or to ask if they sell gas.
- But the country people have never felt the extra-money in their hands and they complain about it.

The poet wonders if it wouldn't be better if they were put out of their agony at one stroke but then wonders if someone offers the same solution to his pain, how he would feel. Killing is not the solution to the problem.

Solved Questions:

1. *"It is in the news that all these pitiful kin
Are to be bought out and mercifully gathered in
To live in villages, next to the theatre and the stone,
Where greedy good-doers, beneficent beasts of prey
Swarm over their lives enforcing benefits
That are calculated to soothe them out of their wits,
And by teaching them to sleep all day,
Destroy their sleeping at night the ancient way".*
 - a) What is in the news?
It is in the news that the poor are to be relocated to better surroundings near the theatre and the shops.
 - b) Which word in the verse means the same as 'generous' in the above lines?
'Beneficent'
 - c) Who is going to exploit the rural people and how?
The politicians and the Government exploit the poor by offering them benefits that are supposed to solve their problems but in reality only add or pose problems of a different nature thereby making them feel cheated.
 - d) How will the greedy good-doers soothe the rural poor out of their wits?
By offering them free benefits like housing and other facilities, they rob the poor of their voice to protest and lull them into a feeling of false security.
 - e) Who is referred to as beasts of prey and why?
The politicians in power and in opposition and they make no difference in the conditions of the rural poor.

Questions for Practice

1. *"The little old house was out with a little new shed
in front at the edge of the road where the traffic sped
A roadside stand that too pathetically pled,
It would not be fair to say for a dole of bread,
But for some of the money, the cash, whose flow supports*

the flower of cities from sinking and withering faint,

*The polished traffic passed with a mind ahead,
Or if ever aside a moment, then out of sorts”.*

- Where was the shed made?
- Why did they put up the shed?
- Why is the cash import for the cities?
- Why didn't the polished traffic stop at the roadside stand?
- What does 'polished traffic' mean?

2. *“Of all the thousand selfish cars that pass,
just one to inquire what a farmer's prices are.
And one did stop, but only to plow up grass
in using the yard to back and turn around;
And another to ask the way to where it was bound;
And another to ask could they sell it a gallon of gas
They couldn't (this crossly); they had none, didn't it see?”*

- Explain 'Selfish Cars'.
- What did the car-owners generally do not bother about?
- Why do people generally stop there?
- What made the rural people feel 'cross'?

Short answer questions

- Why did the country folk put up the roadside stand?
They put out a stand to earn some extra money to improve their lives.
- Why are the good-doers said to be greedy?
The good-doers work not for the real welfare of the poor but to further their own greed. Offering false promises to the poor people, they are feeding on them.
- Why do cars stop at the roadside Stand?
The car-owners stop at the roadside stand to inquire about the prices, to turn the car around, ask for directions or ask for gas.
- What was the attitude of the city folk who passed by the 'Roadside Stand'?
The city folk were indifferent and callous towards the plight of the rural folk., never sympathized or helped them, but accused them of spoiling the beauty of the country side.

Questions for Practice

- How did the country folk react when they knew why the passers-by had stopped?
- What was the plea of the folk who had put up the roadside stand?
- Why does the poet call their longing as 'childish' and why?
- Why are the country folk always low in spirits?
- What kind of life do the rural folk lead?
- How and why do the good-doers soothe the poor out of their wits?
- What would give great relief to the poet?
- Is the poet serious about the suggestion he offers to put the people out of their suffering?
- How did the people feel when they knew they have been exploited? How and why?
- What is the 'childish longing' that the poet refers to? Why is it 'vain'?

11. What , according to the poet , contributes to the progress and affluence of the cities?

12. How does the poet criticize the city ways?

13. What is the complaint of the country fold against the party in power?

AUNT JENNIFER'S TIGERS By ADRIENNE RICH

SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

- The poet is a feminist and she addresses the difficulties of a married woman.
- She spends good amount of time in embroidering panel of tigers prancing across the screen.
- The tigers are fearless creatures pacing elegantly and majestically. They symbolize the spirit of freedom. Aunt is a victim of male chauvinism (male domination).
- Aunt Jennifer is so oppressed and terrified that she finds it hard to pull the needle.
- The “weight of Uncle’s wedding band “expresses how victimized and oppressed she is. It implies that aunt Jennifer has to work hard to meet his expectation.
- She spends her life in fear but she embroiders on the panel the fearless tigers to express her secret longing for a life of freedom and confidence.
- Even her death does not end the problem and torture which a married woman experiences..

SOLVED QUESTIONS

1. *“Aunt Jennifer’s tigers prance across a screen,
Bright topaz denizens of a world of green.
They do not fear the men beneath the tree:
They pace in sleek chivalric certainty.”*

a) What does the expression ‘Aunt Jennifer’s tigers’ imply?

Aunt Jennifer was embroidering a panel of prancing tigers. The poet refers to the tigers as Aunt Jennifer’s tigers because they are her creation, her work of art.

b) What does ‘prancing tigers’ symbolize?

Prancing tigers are a symbol of the spirit of freedom within Aunt Jennifer which remains subdued. They also symbolize her fear of her male counterpart.

c) Why are they referred to as ‘denizens of a world of green’?

The tigers are the dwellers of the green forest so they are referred to as denizens.

d) What qualities of the ‘tigers’ are highlighted here?

Fearlessness and ferocity of the tigers are highlighted here. Aunt Jennifer’s nervousness and timidity are in sharp contrast to wild ferocity of the tigers who are not afraid of hunting men. Unlike Aunt Jennifer, the tigers fear nothing.

e) Explain; “They pace in sleek chivalric certainty”.

The movement of the tigers is sleek, stealthy, sure, majestic and elegant. They are sure of their purpose. Gallant and confident, they move ahead fearlessly and undeterred

2. *“Aunt Jennifer’s fingers fluttering through her wool*

Find even the ivory needle hard to pull.

The massive weight of Uncle’s wedding band

Sits heavily upon Aunt Jennifer’s hand.”

a) Why do Aunt Jennifer’s fingers flutter through her wool?

Aunt Jennifer lives in constant fear of her chauvinist husband. She feels so nervous and terrified that her hands shake and flutter when she sits down to knit.

b) Why does she find it hard to pull the ivory needle?

Confronting constant fear and bearing the constraints of married life, she has become a nervous wreck. She finds it difficult to pull the ivory needle through the tapestry more because of mental suppression than because of physical weakness.

c) Explain: 'massive weight of Uncle's wedding band'.

The expression is symbolic of male authority and power. Matrimony binds the woman physically as well as mentally, clipping her of her freedom of expression and independence. Likewise Aunt Jennifer is trapped in gender oppression and feels herself burdened by the authority of her husband.

d) How is Aunt Jennifer affected by the 'weight of matrimony'?

Aunt Jennifer cannot do things freely, she tries to come up to the expectation of her husband, she seems to have lost her identity. The freedom that she dreams of through her art is itself symbolic of her oppressed self.

*3."When Aunt is dead, her terrified hands will lie
Still ringed with ordeals she was mastered by.
The tigers in the panel that she made
Will go on prancing, proud and unafraid."*

a) What is Aunt Jennifer's death symbolic of?

Aunt Jennifer's death is symbolic of her complete submission to her suppression.

b) Explain: "terrified hands".

Aunt Jennifer is terrified by her dominating husband and hence her hands are shivering.

c) What does 'ringed with ordeals' imply?

Aunt Jennifer has been so victimized in her life that even after death she remains trapped in the struggles of the spirit. Though we do not know what terrors Aunt Jennifer had to live with relatives did, we find her a victim of gender injustice and oppression.

d) Is the society in any way affected by Aunt Jennifer's death?

Since the society is male dominated, it shows no concern for Aunt's suffering, even her death. The loss of her freedom is her individual loss. The society is not affected by it and the state of women still remains the same.

e) Explain: "the tigers in the panel....will go on prancing, proud and unafraid".

The expression is symbolic of the dispassionate and unconcerned attitude of the male towards the desire for freedom among women. Even after her death, the social milieu remains unaffected, arrogant and ferocious.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How do Aunt Jennifer's tiger look like?

The tigers, made by Aunt Jennifer on the screen, are jumping and playing about without any fear of the men beneath the tree. They walk in elegance and style displaying the spirit of courage, fearlessness, strength and confidence.

2. What do the tigers made by the Aunt symbolize?

The tigers made by Aunt Jennifer symbolize the spirit of courage, strength and fearlessness. Aunt Jennifer, a victim of male oppression, expresses her crushed feelings in the form of art. So, the tigers are symbolic of the fear of male domination with which Aunt Jennifer suffers.

3. Why do you think Aunt Jennifer's hands are fluttering through her wool? Why is she finding the needle so hard to pull?

Aunt Jennifer is victimized by the overbearing and dominant nature of her husband. Her life has become a torture due to her suppression by her atrocious husband. The fear of her authoritative husband has gone so deep into her being that she seems to have lost all strength and energy. Thus her hands shake and flutter so much that she is not even able to pull the needle through the tapestry.

4. What do you understand by "massive weight of uncle's wedding band"?

Generally 'wedding band' is a symbol of joy and happiness. But in case of Aunt Jennifer, it has become a symbol of torture and oppression. Her relationship with her authoritative husband has become a painful burden to carry. Her 'wedding band' has brought her a world of pain, misery and torture. She has lost her freedom and entered a world of humiliation and oppression.

5. Explain 'her terrified hands will lie, still ringed with the ordeals she was mastered by'.

These lines convey Aunt's complete submission to the oppressive authority of her husband. The fear of her husband has gone so deep into her being that even death cannot liberate her from the chains of her mental suppression. Memories of her husband's tortures and atrocities which bent her into a humiliating slavery will continue to haunt her even after her death.

6. Explain 'The tigers in the panel-----proud and unafraid.'

Here the tigers symbolize the unquestioned authority of man enjoyed by him over his woman counterpart. The lines suggest the dispassionate and unconcerned attitude of the male towards the desire for freedom among women. Here, Aunt Jennifer tries to find an escape in her art but ends up portraying an image of her own suppression. While woman can never free herself from the oppressive authority of her male counterpart, the male, on the other hand will go on enjoying his authoritative arrogance and ferocity without any fear of regrets.

Questions for Practice:

1. What ideology does the poem propound?
2. How is the poem a forceful expression of the evil of patriarchy?
3. The tigers are contrasting symbols. Do you think so? How?
4. What ordeals do you think Aunt Jennifer is surrounded by?
5. Why do you think Aunt Jennifer created animals that are so different from her own character?
6. What impression do you form about the Uncle in the poem. Cite evidences.

FLAMINGO (PROSE)

THE LAST LESSON by Alphonse Daudet

GIST OF THE LESSON

- Franz is afraid of going to school as he has not learnt participles.
- He wants to enjoy beauty of nature. The bright sunshine, the birds chirruping in the woods, Prussian soldiers drilling but resisted.
- Bulletin board: all bad news, lost battles, the drafts and orders of the commanding officers: wondered what it could be now
- The changes he noticed in the school.
 - Instead of noisy classrooms everything was as quiet as Sunday morning
 - The teacher does not scold him and told him very kindly to go to his seat
 - The teacher dressed in his Sunday best.
 - Villagers occupying the last benches- To pay tribute to M. Hamel for his 40 yrs of sincere service and also to express their solidarity with France.
- M. Hamel making the announcement that that would be the last French lesson; realizes that, that was what was put up on the bulletin board.
- Franz realizes that he does not know his own mother tongue
- Regretted why he had not taken his lessons seriously.
- Also realizes the reason why teacher was dressed in his Sunday best and villagers sitting at the back.
- M. Hamel realizes that all three, the children, the parents and he himself are to be blamed for losing respect and regard for the mother tongue.
- Always keep the mother tongue close to your heart as it is the key to the prison of slavery.
- Atmosphere in class: teacher teaching sincerely and patiently, students and others studying with utmost sincerity.
- Franz wonders sarcastically if Prussians could force pigeons to coo in German.
- M. Hamel overcome with emotions could not speak and wrote on the black board "Long Live France".

SOLVED QUESTIONS:

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS:

1. What was the narrator's greatest fear as he moved towards the school?

Franz had started late for school and thus was afraid of being scolded. His fear gripped him further for he was also unprepared. He had not learnt his lesson regarding the rules of participles and thus dreaded the teacher's anger.

2. What was more tempting to Franz rather than going to school?

The weather was pleasant, warm and bright. The chirruping birds were inviting him, the soldiers drilling in the field were also outdoors and Franz was not prepared with participles.

3. What was the news which was put up on the bulletin board?

For the last two years all bad news – the lost battles, the orders of the commanding officer was displayed on the notice board. That day, the news that only German would be taught in school of Alsace and Lorraine was displayed on the notice-board which made the crowd gather there to read the news.

4. What was so unusual about the school on that day?

Usually there would be a great bustle of opening and closing of the desk, lesson repeated loudly and the teacher's ruler rapping on the table but that day was very calm and quiet like Sunday morning. The back benches which were usually empty were occupied by the village people and M. Hamel wore his special dress and was pacing up and down with a ruler under his arm.

5. Why were the villagers seated on the back benches?

All the village elders were seated on the back benches as a tribute to the teacher who had put in 40 years of sincere service. It was also their way of expressing regret for not learning their mother tongue when they had the chance. They were also expressing their patriotism and solidarity with France

6. Franz didn't learn French whom did M. Hamel blame?

M. Hamel didn't blame Franz for not learning but his parents who were not anxious to have him learn. Instead they wanted him to work on a farm or at the mill to earn money.

Even M. Hamel was also to be blamed for sending him to water the flowers instead of learning and when he wanted to go fishing he declared holiday.

7. What did M. Hamel say about French language?

He said that it is the most beautiful language in the world- the clearest, the most logical. He requested them to guard it so that they can be united and fight back for their freedom.

8. What happened when the church clock struck 12?

The moment the church clock struck 12 the Prussian army came to take over and M. Hamel stood up, wanted to tell something but his voice was choked. He gathered his strength and wrote on the black board as large as he could – 'Vive La France' and dismissed the school.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Justify the title of the story "The Last Lesson".

Value Points

People always feel there is plenty of time to learn—so also in Alsace—now no time—parents not keen—preferred children , work in farms, mill—Franz looked opportunity to escape school—never serious—receive orders from Berlin—people realize importance of their language—attend the last lesson by M. Hamel.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why was Franz unwilling to go to school?
2. Why didn't M. Hamel punish Franz, even though he was late?
3. Mention the three changes that Franz noticed in the school?
4. What announcement did M. Hamel make and what was its impact?
5. What do you think was written on the bulletin board?
6. Why did M. Hamel say about knowing one's language is a key to prison?

7. Whom did Mr. Hamel blame for not learning the French?

8. What changes have taken place in the school in the last forty years?

9. What did he mean by "Viva La France"?

10. Do you think that the story touches upon the brutalities of war? Explain

11. How does Hamel arouse patriotism in the people of Alsace?

12. What does Franz mean when he asks: "Will they make them sing in German, even the pigeons?"

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS 125 -150 words.

1. Write a note on the character of M. Hamel as a teacher?

2. Do you think the story touches upon the brutalities of war? Comment.

3. What thunderbolt did the narrator receive on reaching the school? How was it affect him ?

4. At the end of the last lesson M. Hamel wrote, 'Viva La France' on the board in bold letters. Why do you think he wrote that and how did he expect the people of Alsace –Lorraine to keep their identity intact?

5. What were Franz' feelings about M Hamel and his French lessons? How did they undergo a complete change?

Value Based Question: Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

M Hamel 'The Last Lesson' says to the people of Alsace about the necessity of their mother tongue- French: " We must guard it among us and never forget it because when a people are enslaved, as long as they hold fast to their language it is as if they had the key to their prison".

'Mother tongue is the language of one's thoughts and ideas. Rejecting one's mother tongue is denying one's own culture and identity.' Do you think so? Write your reflections on the above statement in the form of an article to be published in your school magazine, encouraging your friends to the need for learning and protecting their mother tongue.

LOST SPRING:STORIES OF STOLEN CHILDHOOD By Anees Jung

GIST OF THE LESSON

- The author examines and analyses the impoverished conditions and traditions that condemn children to a life of exploitation these children are denied an education and forced into hardships early in their lives.
- The writer encounters Saheb - a rag picker whose parents have left behind the life of poverty in Dhaka to earn a living in Delhi.
- His family like many other families of rag pickers lives in Seemapuri. They do not have other identification other than a ration card.
- The children do not go to school and they are excited at the prospect of finding a coin or even a ten rupee note for rummaging in the garbage.
 - It is the only way of earning the life they live in impoverished conditions but are resigned to their fate.
 - The writer is pained to see Saheb, a rag picker whose name means the ruler of earth, lose the spark of childhood and roams barefooted with his friends.

- From morning to noon the author encounters him in a tea stall and is paid Rs. 800 He sadly realizes that he is no longer his own master and this loss of identity weighs heavily on his tender shoulders.
- The author then tells about another victim, Mukesh who wants to be a motor mechanic.
- Hailing from Firozabad, the centre of India's bangle making and glass blowing industry, he has always worked in the glass making industry.
- His family like the others there do not know that it is illegal for children to work in such close proximity to furnaces, in such high temperatures.
- They are exposed to various health hazards like losing their eyesight as they work in abysmal conditions, in dark and dingy cells.
- Mukesh's father is blind as were his father and grandfather before him.
- They lead a hand to mouth existence as they are caught in the vicious web of the money lenders, middlemen, police and the traditions
- So burdened are the bangle makers of Firozabad that they have lost their ability to dream unlike Mukesh who dreams of driving a car.

SOLVED QUESTIONS

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What does Saheb do for living? Why?

Saheb is a rag picker. His family has left the life of poverty behind in Dhaka in to pursue their dream of finding a better life. The children like him have no access to Education and are forced into rag picking

2. "Saheb is no longer his own master", says the writer. What does she mean?

The writer means that having accepted the job with the tea-stall, Saheb has lost the independence that he enjoyed as a rag picker, even though he was poor. Although he will now be able to supplement the family income, it will be at the cost of his freedom, which is difficult, binding and unfair for someone so young.

3. Why did people migrate from the village in Dhaka to Delhi ?

Better education, job opportunities and living conditions.

4. What trade does the family of Mukesh follow? Why does the writer feel that it will be difficult for Mukesh to break away from this tradition?

Engaged in bangle making-difficult to break away from this trade. He belongs to the caste of bangle makers His family is caught in the web of sohuks, the middlemen, policemen, politicians and bureaucrats, from which there is no escape.

5. What does garbage symbolize for the adults and children?

6. Adults –means of earning a livelihood. Children –wrapped in wonder, magical

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

1. 'Lost Spring', is a sad commentary on the political system of our country that condemns thousands of people to a life of abject poverty. Comment.

Saheb, optimistic and enthusiastic—prospect of finding gold in garbage—likes going to school but no opportunity—freedom and joy of childhood to burdens of job at tea-stall.

Mukesh, born at Firozabad (bangle maker)—works under inhuman condition—dark room, hot furnaces—caught in web of poverty—vicious circle of sahu-kars, policemen, politicians, bureaucrats and moneylenders—resigned to fate—unaware of child labour act—stifled initiation and hope—lose eyesight before becoming adults.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

- a. What does the title of the story 'Lost Spring' imply?
- b. Where has Saheb come from and why?
- c. How is Saheb's name full of irony?
- d. "Promises made to poor children are never kept." Explain with examples from the lesson.
- e. Mention the hazards of working in the bangle industry.
- f. Do you think Mukesh will realize his dream of becoming a car mechanic?
- g. 'His dreams loom like a mirage'. Whose dreams are being referred to and why are they compared to a mirage?
- h. 'Together they have imposed the baggage on the child that he cannot put down.' Who do 'they' refer to? What is the 'baggage' and why can the child not get rid of it?
- i. How is Mukesh's attitude to his situation different from that of his family?
- j. Why does the author describe children of slums as partners in survival?
- k. How has being born in the caste of bangle makers become both a destiny and a curse?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Like all children of his age, Saheb also had many hopes and dreams. Do you think children like Saheb are able to fulfill their dreams?
2. Politicians exploit all people and situations to their own benefit. Comment, keeping in view the situation of refugees in Seemapuri.
3. Saheb wants to blossom and bloom but is nipped in the bud. Elaborate.
4. 'Saheb and Mukesh are brothers in penury and suffering.' Discuss.

5. **Value Based Question:** Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

Mukesh says "I will be a motor mechanic. I will learn to drive a car."

Not only setting a goal, but having a clear idea about the means to reach the goal and pursuing it with strong determination and commitment are essential to achieve success. Based on this realization, write an email to your younger brother, a boarding school student, making him aware of the need for setting realistic goal and planning ways to reach it with strong determination and commitment.

DEEP WATER BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS

THEME

In this essay William O. Douglas talks about his fear of water and how he finally overcomes it by his courage, determination, handwork, strong will power, perseverance and the desire to learn. If these are practiced we can definitely achieve success in all our endeavors.

GIST OF THE LESSON-

- William O. Douglas had a desire to learn swimming since childhood.
- At the age of three or four, he was knocked down and buried by a wave at a beach in California.
- He developed a great aversion to water.
- At the age of ten or eleven he decided to learn to swim with water wings at the Y.M.C.A pool since it was safe at the shallow end.
- A misadventure:- while sitting alone and waiting for others to come at the Y.M.C.A pool, a big boy came and threw Douglas into deep end of the pool.
- Douglas swallowed water and went straight down to the bottom of the pool.
- While going down he planned to make a big jump upwards but came up slowly.
- Stark terror seized him.
- Tried to shout but could not.....
- As he went down the pool second time, he tried to jump upwards but it was a waste of energy.
- Terror held him deeper and deeper.
- During the third trial he sucked water instead of air.
- Light was going out and there was no more panic.
- So he ceased all efforts and he became unconscious.
- He crossed to oblivion.
- When revived he found himself vomiting beside the pool.
- He was in grip of fear of water and it deprived him of the joys of canoeing, boating swimming and fishing.
- Hired an instructor to learn swimming.
- The instructor taught him swimming piece by piece.
- He went to different lakes to swim and found tiny vestiges of fear still gripped him.
- He challenged the fear and swam.
- Swimming up and down the Warm Lake he finally overcame his fear of water.
- He realized that in death there is peace and there is terror only in fear of death.
- Will to live is stronger than fear of death.

SOLVED QUESTIONS:

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why was the YMCA pool considered safer when compared to the Yakima River?
Yakima River was very deep, treacherous and there were many cases of drowning but the YMCA pool only two or three feet deep at the shallow end: and while it was nine feet at the deep end. So YMCA pool was considered safer when compared to the Yakima River.
2. When did his aversion to water begin?

His aversion to water began when he was 3 -4 years old when his father took him to California beach. There the waves knocked him down swept over him.

3. What was the misadventure that happened one day?

William Douglas had just learnt swimming. One day, an eighteen year old big bruiser picked him up and tossed him into the nine feet deep end of the YMCA pool. He hit the water surface in a sitting position. He swallowed water and went at once to the bottom. He nearly died in this misadventure.

4. What strategy did he remember as he went down the water?

To hit the bottom and spring/jump upwards, bob to the surface –like a cork and come out.

5. What effect did the drowning in the YMCA pool have on the Douglas?

-weak and trembling - haunting fear - deprived of the joy of canoeing, boating and swimming.

6. What method did he adopt to overcome terror?

- Rigorous training (breathing moving of legs ,etc)
- went to lake Wentworth and swam for two miles.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- How did the misadventure in YMCA pool affect Douglas? How did he overcome it?
-was ten or eleven decided-learn-swim -an older boy pushed –almost drowned
-haunting fear gripped him -could not enjoy any water sports -finally decided to hire an instructor -seven months –instructor –made a swimmer -released the instructor -vestiges remained -swam in Lake Wentworth -challenged the terror -swam across Warm lake
-shouted with joy-conquered the fear of water -there is terror only in the fear of death and peace in death. - the will to live became stronger.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

- Why did mother warn Douglas against River Yakima?
- What impact did the incident at California beach have on him?
- What made him decide that the instructor's role in teaching him swimming was over?
- Why did Douglas go to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire? How did he make his terror flee?
- What larger meaning did the experience have on him?
- How did he interpret Roosevelt's saying?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- What is the 'misadventure' that William Douglas speaks about? What were the series of emotions fears experienced when he was thrown into the pool? What plans did he make to come to the surface?
- How did the instructor build a swimmer out of Douglas?
- Why does Douglas as an adult recount a childhood experience of terror and his conquering of it? What larger meaning does he draw from his experience?
- Do you think the title Deep Water is appropriate to the story? Why/why not?

5. Value Based Question: Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

William Douglas writes about his frightening experience in the YMCA pool:... With that he picked me up and tossed me into the deep end, I landed in a sitting position, swallowed water..... I was frightened.”

Do you appreciate the behavior of the big, bully boy? Don't you think that bullying and ragging of students by students(as is seen in news several times) are barbarianism and have great damaging effect on the victim as well as to the society? Write down your thoughts about this in the form of a speech to be delivered in a meeting of the senior students of your school.

INDIGO by Louis Fischer

GIST OF THE LESSON

- Raj Kumar Shukla- A poor sharecropper from Champaran wishing to meet Gandhiji.
- Raj Kumar Shukla – illiterate but resolute, hence followed Gandhiji to Lucknow, Cawnpore, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, Patna, Muzzafarpur and then Camparan.
- Servants at Rajendra Prasad's residence thought Gandhiji to be an untouchable.
- Gandhiji considered as an untouchable because of simple living style and wearing, due to the company of Raj Kumar Shukla.
- Decided to go to Muzzafarpur first to get detailed information about Champaran sharecropper.
- Sent telegram to J B Kriplani & stayed in Prof Malkani's home –a government servant.
- Indians afraid of showing sympathy to the supporters of home rule.
- The news of Gandhiji's arrival spread –sharecroppers gathered in large number to meet their champion.
- Gandhiji chided the Muzzafarpur lawyer for taking high fee.
- Champaran district was divided into estate owned by English people, Indians only tenant farmers.
- Landlords compelled tenants to plant 15% of their land with indigo and surrender their entire harvest as rent.
- In the meantime Germany had developed synthetic indigo –British landlords freed the Indian farmers from the 15% arrangement but asked them to pay compensation.
- Many signed, some resisted engaged lawyers, landlords hired thugs.
- Gandhiji reached Champaran –visited the secretary of the British landlord association to get the facts but denied as he was an outsider.
- Gandhiji went to the British Official Commissioner who asked him to leave Tirhut , Gandhiji disobeyed, went to Motihari the capital of Champaran where a vast multitude greeted him, continued his investigations.
- Visited maltreated villagers, stopped by the police superintendent but disobeyed the order.
- Motihari black with peasants spontaneous demonstrations, Gandhiji released without bail Civil Disobedience triumphed.
- Gandhiji agreed to 25% refund by the landowners, it symbolised the surrender of the prestige.
- Gandhiji worked hard towards social economic reforms, elevated their distress aided by his wife, Mahadev Desai, Narhari Parikh.
- Gandhiji taught a lesson of self reliance by not seeking help of an English man Mr. Andrews.

SOLVED QUESTIONS

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1.. What strategy did Gandhiji follow in removing the problems of sharecroppers?

Gandhiji discussed the problems with lawyers. He disregarded British order of eviction. He insisted peasants to remove their fear.

2. Why did Gandhiji feel that it was useless for the peasants to go to law courts?

The peasants are crushed and fear stricken. The lawyers charged high fee.

3. Why did the British landlords free the sharecropper from growing Indigo? What did they want instead?

The British came to know that synthetic indigo was developed in Germany and the 15% of land was released and in return, the peasants were asked to pay compensation for release from the agreement.

4. Why did Gandhiji agree for the 25% refund by the British landlords?

Gandhiji agreed for 25% refund because the amount was not important but the landlord's prestige was surrendered.

5. What was the important lesson taught by Gandhiji to his disciples ?

Gandhiji taught rules of personal hygiene and cleanliness. He also taught the -Champarans to win freedom independently without any support of British.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

1. Why did Gandhiji consider freedom from fear more important than legal justice for the poor peasants of Champaran?

Value Points : British ruthless exploitation—farmers fight through lawyers—battles were inconclusive—terror-stricken—Gandhiji's declaration—no need of law court—overcome terror—be bold and courageous.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. What made Gandhiji urge the departure of the British?

2. How was Gandhiji received in Motihari?

3. What made Mahatma Gandhi declare 'the battle of Champaran is won'?

4. How did the Champaran episode change the plight of the peasants?

5. Why did Gandhi agree to a settlement of 25% refund to the farmers?

6. How do we know that ordinary people too contributed to the freedom movement?

7. What argument did Gandhiji give for not complying with the official orders to quit Champaran?

8. How were the Britishers shown that their dreaded and unquestioned authority could be challenged by the Indians?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why did Gandhiji's casual visit to Champaran get extended to over a year?

2. How did civil disobedience triumph?

3. What idea do you form about the Britishers from the chapter "Indigo"?

4. How did the peasants learn courage?

5. Are Gandhiji's socio, economic and political ideals relevant today? Discuss with reference to the Champaran episode.

6. **Value Based Question:** Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

‘Champaran episode’ was a turning point not only in Gandhiji’s life, but also in the history of Indian freedom struggle. Don’t you agree that Gandhiji’s practically proven ideals of truth, non violence, and empathy for the deprived are still relevant? Write your ideas on “Relevance of Gandhian ideals today” in the form of an article.

The Rat Trap by Selma Lagerlof

GIST OF THE LESSON

- The peddler was a vagabond who sold rattraps with a little thievery on the side to make both ends meet. Had no worldly possession to call his own, not even a name.
- It amused him to think of the world as a rattrap and all the material possessions as bait as the world, he felt was never kind to him. Moreover, he prided himself in the fact that he was out of it.
- Takes shelter at a crofter’s cottage. The crofter welcomed him, gave him dinner, shared his pipe, played mjolis with him also confided in him about his income and showed him where he put it.
- Next morning, the Peddler steals the money and takes the back roads to keep away from people and gets lost in the jungle at night. While he wanders in the forest he realizes that he has also got caught in the rattrap and that the money was the bait.
- Finally reaches Ramsjo ironworks, where he takes shelter for the night. The blacksmith and his assistant ignore him but the master mistakes him to be an old acquaintance and invites him home. Though the Peddler does not correct the ironmaster, hoping to get some money out of him, he declines his invitation.
- The ironmaster then sends his daughter who persuades him to go home with her. She notices his uncouth appearance and thinks that either he has stolen something or he has escaped from jail.
- The Peddler is scrubbed, bathed, given a haircut, a shave and a suit of old clothes of the ironmaster. In the morning light, the iron master realizes he is mistaken and that he is not the Captain. He wants to call the Sheriff. The peddler is agitated and breaks out that the world is rattrap and he too is sure to be caught in it. The ironmaster is amused but orders him out. The compassionate Edla convinces her father that he should spend the Christmas day with him.
- The Peddler spends the whole of Christmas Eve eating and sleeping. The next day at church, Edla and her father come to know that the Peddler is a thief who stole thirty kroners from the poor crofter.

- -Back home, they found a letter addressed to Edla, signed as Captain Von Stahl and a rattrap as a gift from the crofter. In the rattrap were the three ten kroner notes of the crofter.

SOLVED SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why did the Peddler choose to go through the forest?
2. After stealing the thirty kroners from the crofter, the Peddler knew that he would be caught and put in prison if he continued to walk by the main road. So he chose the back roads that went through the forest.
3. Why did not the Peddler reveal his true identity when the ironmaster mistakes him to be the Captain?

The Peddler thought that the ironmaster might take pity on him give him some money if he thought he was an old acquaintance. So he keeps quiet and allows the iron master to presume he was the captain.

4. Why did it please the tramp to compare the world to a rattrap?

The world was not very kind to the tramp and so it gave him great pleasure to think of it as a rattrap.

5. Why did the tramp sign the letter as Captain Von Stahle?
The tramp, though illiterate and a thief, found himself raised to a captain through Edla's kindness and compassion. He got a chance to redeem himself and hence he signs the letter as Captain Von Stahle.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Both the Crofter and Edla Willmanson were kind and hospitable to the Tramp. But he repays crofters kindness by stealing his money while Edla is able to transform him to a better human being. Why?

Value Points:

Crofter very hospitable. Welcomes him with a smile - gives him supper and shares his tobacco. Tells him about income-shows him the money - very trusting and friendly.

Stealing a way of life for the tramp-no twinge of conscience while stealing-But later he realizes that he who prided himself in not being caught in the rattrap was caught in it by stealing – feels depressed.

Edla's kindness and hospitality awakens his conscience-Realises that there is a way out of the trap- Returns the money through Edla- His redemption –gift to Edla.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE:

1. "The world was a rattrap and the peddler himself became a victim of it". Elucidate.
2. The rattrap exemplifies the truth that essential goodness of human can be awakened through understanding and love. Discuss
3. The story focuses on human loneliness and the need to bond with others. Explain.

4. Why was the crofter so talkative and friendly with peddler?
5. Why did the rattrap seller develop negative view of the world?
6. Why did the peddler decline the iron master's invitation?
7. Edla is a better judge than her father. Do you think so? Why/why not?

8. Why did the peddler defend himself against not having revealed his true identity?

LONG ANSWER QUESTION: PRACTICE

1. 'The essential virtue of human heart can be aroused through compassion and empathy.' How far has the meaning of this statement been exemplified in the story 'The Rattrap'?

2. **Value Based Question:** Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

It has been understood from the story 'The Rattrap' that the compassion, empathy and unconditional love and trust of Edla Wilmanson only could win the heart of the rattrap seller to reclaim him to be an honest and upright individual at last. 'An Eye for an Eye will make the whole world blind.'—It is through fellow-feeling, love, compassion and trust in others that we can change the society. Write your argument for the statement to participate in a debate competition.

POETS AND PANCAKES : ASOKAMITRAN.

GIST OF THE LESSON

- The Gemini studio owned by S.S.Vasan was one of the most influential film Producing Organizations of India in the early years of Indian film making industry.
- The make-up department of studios looked like a hair cutting salon.
- Had lights at all angles, half dozen mirrors, incandescent lights
- The artists were subjected to misery while application of make-up.
- The make-up department, consisting of people from different parts of the country, was a unique example of National Integration.
- A strict hierarchy was maintained in the make-up dept.
- Narrator worked in a cubicle tearing newspapers, thought he was free, people barged in always.
- Kothamangalam Subbu, no.2 at Gemini studios, was always cheerful, tailor made for films, endowed with great creativity, charitable yet had enemies
- He was loyal and faithful, very close to boss.
- He could offer various alternatives for how a scene could be invented. Subbu, in fact, gave direction to Gemini studios during its golden years.
- The story Department of the studios comprising of a lawyer, officially known as legal adviser but was treated the opposite. Once he brought a sad end to the career of a brilliant and promising young actress.
- Story dept wound up-lawyer lost job.
- A favorite haunt for poets
- Most people wore Khadi, worshipped Gandhi, knew nothing about politics.
- Against communism, believed that a communist was a godless man

- A warm welcome was accorded to moral Re Armament Army (MRA) by the Gemini studios. They presented two plays 'Jothan Valley' and "The forgotten Factor" which had a great influence on Tamil drama.
- THE MRA was a strong countermovement against communism.
- The Gemini studios again got an opportunity to welcome an English poet or an Editor. But the people of Gemini Studio could not comprehend the purpose as well as the language of the poet or editor, so his visit was a mystery.
- Later on, he came to know that the visitor was the editor of "The Encounter" and his name was Stephen Spender.
- "The God That Failed" was the collection of six essays by six men of letters including Spender. These essays described separately their journey into communism and their disillusioned return.
- Mystery was solved.

SOLVED QUESTIONS

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How does the writer describe the make-up room of the Gemini studios?

The makeup room of the Gemini studio had incandescent lights. It also had lights at all angles, large mirrors. Those subjected to makeup had to face bright light and a lot of heat there. It was on the upper floor of the old building that was believed to have been Robert Clive's stables.

2. How was the make-up room a fine example of national integration?

The makeup room was headed by a Bengali, succeeded by a Maharashtrian, assisted by a Dharwar Kannadiga, an Andhra, a Madras, Christian and an Anglo Burmese.

1. How did the legal advisor bring a sad end to the brief and brilliant acting career of an extremely talented in the studios?

The legal advisor (lawyer) quietly switched on the recording equipment when once she blew over on the sets against the producer. When the actress paused for breath, he played back the recording. She was struck dumb on hearing her own voice and never recovered from the shock. That was the end of the brief and brilliant career of the actress.

2. What does 'The God That Failed' refer to?

'The God That Failed' refers to a collection of essays by six eminent literary personalities, about their journey into communism and disillusionment. Stephen Spender was one of the authors.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. The author has used gentle humor to point out human foibles. Pick out instances of this to show how this serves to make the piece interesting. -author uses gentle and subtle humor -bring out human foibles-use of pancake -ostensibly to cover the pores -The actors look ugly. -Strict hierarchy. -people at the studio imagined to be poets yet no idea about contemporary -Poets-laughingly brings out their ignorance -wore khadi looked gandhian no idea about politics -no idea of communism-welcomed MRA, Stephen Spender -Description of office boy-Description of Subbu-wonderful insight into character. -pokes fun at the ignorance of all the people -at the same time projecting them as real people with human failings and eccentricities and foibles.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. How was Gemini studios a symbol of national integration ?

2. Why did the author want to know more about the periodical 'The Encounter'? What did he finally discover?
3. What was the strict hierarchy maintained in the makeup department?
4. Why was the narrator praying for crowd shooting all the time?
5. What do you know about the literary taste of the taste of Gemini as far English poetry is concerned?
6. Why did the author appear to do nothing in the studio?
7. What political affiliation did the member of the studio have?

8. What was the attitude of the member of the studio about communism and why?
9. What was the incongruity of the English poet addressing at Gemini studio?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Attempt a character sketch on Kothamangalam Subbu.
2. The 'Office-boy' in the make-up department of Gemini Studios has the shades of a typical universal character lured by glitter and glamour and doomed to frustration. Discuss.
3. The author is at great skill to use gentle humour to bring out the follies and foibles of people. How far is it evident in the story.
4. The staff at Gemini Studio enjoyed the visit of MRA while the visit of the English poet remained an unexplained mystery. Discuss.

5. Value Based Question: Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

The makeup boy was not at all satisfied with his job and always complained that he was kept back in such a mean job for long years, even though he had higher caliber, only because of the influential person Subbu. The office boy never liked or tried to like his job. Being a resentful employee, he fails to understand the glory and importance of every work, be it high or low. Unless we love our work, we cannot be productive, but a mere waste. Learning lessons from the office boy's behaviour, write a letter to your engineering graduate sister working as a clerk telling her about the 'Glory of Labour' and the need to be satisfied and committed to what one gets to be progressive in life.

THE INTERVIEW by Christopher Sylvester

GIST OF THE LESSON: PART I

- Interview has become a commonplace of journalism. Opinions on the functions, methods and merits of Interview vary considerably.
- Some claim it to be the highest form, a source of truth and in its practice an art.
- Some despise the interview as an unwarranted intrusion into lives, which diminishes their personality.
 - V.S. Naipaul feels that 'some people are wounded by interviews and lose a part of themselves'.
 - Lewis Carroll never consented to be interviewed for he believed it to be 'a just horror of the interviewer'.
 - Rudyard Kipling considered it 'immoral, a crime, an assault that merits punishment'.
 - H.G. Wells referred interviewing to be an 'ordeal'.
 - Saul Bellow describes it 'like thumbprints on his windpipe'.

- Despite the drawbacks interview is a supremely serviceable medium of communication. Interviews are the most vivid impression of our contemporaries and the interviewer holds a position of unprecedented power and influence.

PART II

- An extract from an interview of Umberto Eco interviewed by Mukund Padmanabhan.
- Umberto Eco was a professor with a formidable reputation as a scholar for his ideas on Semiotics, literary interpretation and medieval aesthetics before he turned into writing literary fiction. He attained intellectual superstardom with his publication “The Name of the Rose”.
- In the interview Eco shares his idea of empty spaces in our lives just as they exist in an atom, which he calls Interstices. He says that he makes use of these empty spaces to work.
- Eco’s essays were scholarly and narrative. He likes to be identified more as a university professor who writes novels.
- Eco’s ‘The Name of the Rose’, a serious novel, which delves into metaphysics, theology and medieval history, enjoyed a mass audience. It dealt with medieval past. He feels that the novel wouldn’t have been so well received had it been written ten years earlier or later.

SOLVED SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

a. Why do most celebrity writers despise being interviewed?

Most celebrity writers despise being interviewed as they consider it as an undesirable intrusion into their personal lives. Some viewed it an immoral and offensive activity. Some others feel it would ‘diminish’ them.

b. How is Umberto Eco’s non-fictional writing style different from academic writing style?

Umberto Eco’s non-fictional writing style has a certain playful, narrative and personal quality about it whereas his academic writing is depersonalized and often dry and boring.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

a. “Interviews an unwarranted intrusion in the lives of others”. Elucidate with reference to *The Interview*.

Value points:-

Interviews are common feature in Journalism – Most celebrities consider them as an unnecessary intrusion in their lives – “a horror of the interview”, “an ordeal”, “thumbprints on windpipe”- interview is a supremely serviceable medium of communication- the most vivid impression of our contemporaries -the interviewer holds a position of unprecedented power and influence.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. “Best interviews are considered as an art.” Mention four qualities of such an art.
2. Saul Bellow consented to be interviewed many a times. Did he like being interviewed? Substantiate.

3. Why does Brian say that interviewer holds a strong position of power and influence?
4. Why was 'Name of the Rose', a success?
5. What are the major two remarkable qualities of Umberto Eco's scholarly writings?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. The interview conducted by Mukund Padmanabhan reveals what a good interview should be like. Do you agree? Give reasons.
2. **Value Based Question:** Answer the following in about 100 words. 5
Rudyard Kipling says that 'interview' is 'an offence against a person, an assault.... It is cowardly and vile.'

Everyone likes to have his/her own individual space and freedom. It is seen quite often in your class that some of your fellow students are made victims of verbal assault, rumours and insults at the hands of your own friends. Write a note of advice 'How to conduct Yourself' to such bullying friends of yours teaching them about the need to respect others' self-esteem, dignity, individuality and freedom..

GOING PLACES by A.R.BARTON

GIST OF THE LESSON

- The lesson explores the theme of adolescent fantasies and hero worship.
- Sophie and Jansie are both in the last year of high school and both knew that they were destined to work in the biscuit factory as they belong to a working class family.
- Yet, Sophie, always dreams of big and beautiful things, glamour and glory.
- Her ambitions are not rooted in reality i.e., have no relation with the harsh realities of life.
- In contrast is Jansie, Sophie's friend, a realistic and practical girl.
- Sophie lives in male-dominated family where her mother was only a shadow. The men were football fans and the conversations around the dinner table were about Danny Casey, their Hero.
- Sophie wants some attention from her father and brother and telling them that she met Casey, was her way of drawing their attention towards her.
- But she carries her fantasies too far when she starts to live them.

SOLVED SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What does Sophie dream of doing after she passes out of school? Why do you call it a dream, and not a plan?

Sophie dreams of big and beautiful things, glamour and glory. She is not practical in her thinking and has no concrete plans to make her dreams real.

1. Do you think Sophie and Jansie are pole apart in their attitude to life?

Sophie was a dreamer unable to come in terms with the fact that she is year marked for the biscuit factory after her high school. But the tragedy was that she carries her fantasies too far when she started living in them, whereas her friend Jansie is practical and down-to-earth. She tries her level best to bring her friend down to the realities.

2. Sophie is a typical adolescent hero-worshiper who carries her fantasizing too far. Do you agree?.

Yes, Sophie is a typical adolescent who worships Danny Casey, the football star. She fantasizes about meeting him and taking his autograph which is quite normal for an adolescent. But she crosses the border of normalcy when she tells her family that she actually met him and that he wants to take her on a date. And then she actually goes to the place and literally waits for him to appear which is abnormal.

LONG ANSWER QUESTION

1. Sophie has no touch with reality; Janise's feet are, however, firmly planted on the ground. Discuss.

Value Points:

Both school going girls and intimate friends – both belong to lower middle class family – but different from each other. Different approach to life - one a romantic, habitual dreamer and an escapist. Sophie dreams of things beyond her reach – Jansie has a practical approach to life - discourages her friend's wild dreams – gossip.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. "Sophie's dreams and disappointments are all in her mind". Justify this statement.
2. Do you think that Sophie met Danny Casey? Give reasons.
3. What was Sophie's father's reaction when Geoff told him about Sophie meeting Casey?
4. When did Sophie actually see Danny Casey?
5. Why was Sophie jealous of Geoff's silence?
6. What are the adolescent issues discussed in the lesson 'Going places'?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Why did Sophie like her brother Geoff more than any other person? What did he symbolize for her?
2. Give a brief character sketch of Sophie's father. What kind of a relationship did they share?
3. The story "Going Places" draws a beautiful contrast between 'fact' and 'fiction'. Comment.
4. Do you think that Sophie is a representative of unguided adolescent? Discuss.

5. **Value Based Question:** Answer the following in about 100 words. 5

Sophie, in the story, 'Going Places' is a victim of adolescent fantasizing and hero worship and does not have any touch realistic and practical outlook. But her friend Jansie is very opposite to her and tries hard to bring her to the reality.

One of your friends studying in the city is also such a victim of adolescent fantasizing and hero worship. Write a letter to her making her realise the wrong path she is treading and guiding her through the right way, being true friend..