

## 1. Start of Kali Yuga

a. What is the moral of the story of two farmers?

The moral of the story of the two farmers suggests that with the start of Kali Yuga, humans have lost their noble qualities such as generosity, compassion, honesty, altruism, etc. Previously, both the farmers were ready to offer the possession to the other one, but with Kali Yuga, they started claiming to be their own. The story makes us think about our selfish activities and make changes so that we will be like the people before the start of Kali Yuga.

b. What does the mongoose story suggest?

When Yudhishtira's Ashwamedha Yagna was over and all the Rishis were about to leave, a mongoose, half of whose body was covered with gold, came and rubbed its normal part of the body on the charred remains of the rituals, and left the place with a disappointed look. The mongoose looked sad because its normal body did not change to gold, unlike in the previous ceremony. This story suggests that in the modern age, whatever altruistic work we may do, they will not bring positive results because the materialistic and selfish activities have polluted the world so much that no ideal action seems to wash out the pollution.

c. What, according to Krishna, would happen in Kali Yuga?

As Krishna predicted, many things would change in Kali Yuga. Man would live for pleasures, children would abandon responsibility, women would be like men and men would be like women. Humans would copulate like beasts. Power would be respected, justice would be abandoned, sacrifice would be forgotten and love would be ridiculed. The wise would argue for the laws of the jungle. Every victim, if given the opportunity, would turn victimizer.

## 2. The Mirror of Matsuyama

a. Describe the nature of the step-mother of the child.

The step-mother was not at all kind to the child. She often charged the girl with hard words and cross looks. Moreover, when the child was marred by her behavior and looked into the mirror given by her mother, she suspected the child of practicing witchcraft to kill her. In this way the step-mother never behaved kindly to the child.

b. Why was the step-mother ashamed? What did she do then?

The step-mother never behaved the child kindly. She often charred the child with hard words and cross looks. She also suspected that the child was practicing a magical art to kill her. But after knowing the reality that the child merely looked into the mirror to see her mother's kind face, she was ashamed of her. So she asked for the child's forgiveness.

## 6. The Three Dancing Goats

a. Why did Shindhu's mother want to get rid to their cows?

Because of the drought, Sindhu and his mother were in a great trouble. Their entire wealth consisted of a couple of cows. In order to survive they had no other option than to sell the cows. Therefore, his mother wanted to get rid of the cows.

b. Why did Sindhu accept the bargain after seeing the goat's dance?

Sindhu was fascinated by the goats' dance. The old woman had already told him that the goats would bring him a luck. Looking at the beautiful dance of the goats, he thought that he would earn few pennies every day by entertaining the village folk. Therefore, he accepted the bargain offered by the old woman.

c. What were the colours of the three strands of hair? What did these colours stand for?

There were three strands of hair hidden among the black silken tresses of the landlord's daughter. One was pure white; one was dark red; and one was bright green. They were the colours of diamond, ruby and emerald respectively. They represented the three stones with similar colours in her ring.

## 7. The Necklace

a. Why did Matilda refuse to go to the party?

Matilda was not happy with her married life. She was very beautiful but did not have beautiful clothes and ornaments to decorate herself. When her husband showed her the invitation card to the minister's residence, she was unhappy, as she did not have new clothes and ornaments to show to the attendants of the party.

b. How did they replace the necklace?

When they lost the necklace borrowed from Mme Forestier, they bought a new necklace having the same design. As they were poor, they did not have enough money to buy the necklace. Mr. Loisel possessed eighteen thousand francs which his father had left for him. The rest of the money was borrowed from many people to make thirty-six thousand francs needed to buy the necklace.

## 8. The Gift of the Magi

a. Why does Della want to sell her hair?

Della wanted to buy her husband a beautiful gift for Christmas. However, she does not have enough money. She has only saved \$1.87, and she needs more money to buy the gift. Therefore, she wants to sell her hair.

b. Who are the Magi and why?

The Magi were the wonderfully wise men who brought gifts to the newborn Christ Child. They were the first to give Christmas gifts. In the story, Della and her husband are the Magi because they have sacrificed their most precious things they possess in order to buy gifts for each other.

## 9. The Library

a. Describe briefly the physical features of Donald.

Donald was a short, dumpy man whose coat was too big for him. This coat had belonged to his father. He often wore a cap.

b. Describe Donald's ancestry.

Donald had come to Britain from Ceylon (Now Sri Lanka) with his parents long before World War II. After the death of his parents, he drifted down to London from Luton. As he grew older, he became more and more obsessed with information about anyone who could be regarded as a predecessor from Ceylon. He often liked reading about his forebears.

## **10 The Open Window**

a. When did Mrs. Sappleton tragedy happen and why?

The so called tragedy happened three years ago when Mrs Sappleton and her two brother went off for their day's shooting. However, in their snipe shooting ground, which was rather treacherous, they were engulfed, and never came back. However, this whole event was invented by Mrs Sappleton's niece and far from reality.

b. What has the window got to do with the tragedy?

The open window has close connection with the tragedy. Three years before, Mrs Sappleton's husband and and her two brothers had left the house through the window, and they never came back. Mrs Sappleton still thought that they would come back. Therefore the window was still kept open.

## **15. Decayed Teeth**

a. Who are the diseased teeth in the mouth of society? And who are dentists?

The diseased teeth in the mouth of society are:

- The schools where the sons and daughters of today are preparing to become men and women of tomorrow
- The courts where justice is denied
- Homes of the rich where conceit, falsehood and hypocrisy reign.

The dentists are the supplier of justice in the decayed society.

## **16. Women's Empowerment and Identity**

a. Why does the writer charge the women leaders of Bangladesh for being elected for some respectable positions?

The writer charges the women leaders of Bangladesh because they are not the true representatives of the women in the country. They have come to power from their fathers and husbands. They are not going to change the condition of women who are the victims of countless problems of the women who are bought and sold in the price of vegetables, raped, murdered, disfigured with acid, and just taken as the objects of consumption.

## 23. Non-Violence

a. Which problems have been solved by non-violent means?

Non-violence has been used effectively to overcome evil and to turn aside anger and hatred. Particularly, the social and economic problems, which were considered insolvable in the past have been effectively solved through non-violent means. For example, up to nineteenth century the insane people were treated only with violence, but now they are treated without using violence.

b. Describe the condition of nineteenth century hospital in England.

Before nineteenth century, mental hospitals in England were a place of filth and squalor. There were dungeons, chains and torture chambers for patients. They were treated as criminals, and given severe punishment. In the latter half of this century they began to be treated with kindness and intelligent sympathy.

c. What was the effect of non-violent movement in India?

We can consider the mass movements of the Indian people against British Empire. The discriminatory law against the Hindus was repealed as a result of non-violent resistance. In addition, many other successes were recorded.

d. How should an individual respond to a violent action?

An individual should react to a violent action through non-violent resistance. It includes organizing mass demonstrations, forming associations, and giving pressure to the authority.

## 24. The Happy Man

a. According to Russell, what kind of man (or woman) is considered happy?

As Russell describes, a happy man is loved both by his father and mother in childhood. He is more likely to get affection from his parents than he is at present, because their affections will be freer and their anxieties will be less, and they will regard parenthood as a partnership in bringing up the child. In other word the happy man gets freedom in childhood.

b. what are the two things that a child needs above all?

Above all a child needs two things – freedom to grow and security. Freedom to grow means that all parents should create such an environment in which they rarely say ‘don’t. Security comes to children from affection and routine.

c. In what situations is the teacher wrong? Discuss?

If a child feels that what is being taught is important, the teacher is considered to be right. However, if the child thinks that what he is learning is valueless, the teacher is considered to be wrong. Therefore, the teacher should attempt to make the child enjoy the lesson being taught.

## 28 Nelson Mandela

a. Why did Mandela choose the path of reconciliation?

When Mandela achieved freedom after many years of persecution and imprisonment, it was thought that he developed revenge in his heart. However, he chose the path of reconciliation because he believed that people respond in the way we behave them. Moreover, he believed in peace and stability as the greatest force.

b. How did stories in Reader's Digest help Mandela?

Mandela said that Reader's Digest had very inspiring stories. They encourage people. They taught people that even if they had terminal disease, they didn't have to sit in the corner and mop. Such stories had a positive impact in Mandela's life.

c. What are Mandela's views on inter-religion dynamics?

Mandela is against the competition that is taking place among various religious groups. He holds a strong opinion that everyone should believe in the power of a superior being and respect other religious groups. The relation between god and a person is a personal matter, so we cannot challenge the belief of people.

d. What is multilateralism? Why does Mandela have so much faith in it?

Multilateralism is the system by which nations in the world make policies and practices together. Mandela was strongly committed to multilateralism. He thought that power should not be exercised by a single country by an institution that represents all the countries in the world.

## 30. Passer-By

a. What is the gist of the play?

The gist of the play is that everywhere there is tyranny in the society. There are celebrities and landlords. There is luxury and wealth for them, there are expulsions and cages of all sorts for the poor. The play reflects the fate of the poor during pre-revolution China.

## 32. Stealing and Atonement

a. Why did the author start smoking?

The author's uncle used to smoke. He did not see any good in smoking, nor did he was attracted to it. Yet he felt a kind of pleasure in emitting the cloud of smoking from his mouth.

b. Why did the author write a letter to his father? What was in the letter?

Once, the author had stolen a bit of gold from his brother's armlet. However, felt guilty and decided to make a confession to his father. But he did not dare to speak. So he wrote a letter to make atonement. He

wrote a letter making an apology and asking for a suitable punishment. He also made a promise not to steal again in his life.

### **39. Feminist Criticism**

a. Where can we find the root of feminist criticism?

We can find the root of feminist criticism in the ancient Greece, especially in the works of Sappho and Aristotle's play *Lysistrata*, in which women are depicted as taking over the treasury in Acropolis.

b. Trace out the course of feminist criticism from ancient Greece to modern time.

- We can find the root of feminist criticism in the ancient Greece, especially in the works of Sappho and Aristotle's play *Lysistrata*, in which women are depicted as taking over the treasury in Acropolis.
- Feminism also surfaces in Chaucer's *Wife of Bath* in which a woman is granted authority with her five husbands.

In the Middle Age Christian de Pisan had the courage to enter into debate with the male critics of her day.

- In Renaissance a number of poets emerged in France and England.
- In the seventeenth century, a number of female writers were able to enter into the literary profession.
- In the nineteenth century, a number of female writers became popular in Europe and America.

### **40. Postmodernism is everywhere**

a. Give a substantial definition of postmodernism.

Postmodernism is a multidisciplinary concept (especially in art, literature, philosophy, architecture and politics) which holds the belief that there is no ultimate truth or absolute reality and that old styles of analysis are no longer useful, so new approaches need to be created to understand the present.

### **45. A Smile**

a. The poem suggests that smile is like a communicable disease. How? Elaborate.

When a person suffers from a communicable disease, it is easily transmitted to other people. In the same way if a person smiles at others, they are likely to smile back to him. In this way it is transmitted to many people very fast. Therefore, it is compared to a communicable disease.

### **46. Ode to Tomatoes**

a. What is the theme of the poem? Elaborate.

This poem is about the beauty of tomatoes in many situations and extends to show how the simplest things have a beautiful essence, especially people. He takes things that we might view as common and describes how extraordinary they can be. The theme of this poem is that we must learn to embrace the usual things in life that are often seen as dull, and find the beauty within them.

b. Find the examples of personification in the poem and then explain what they mean.

In the poem tomatoes are personified and glorified. The examples of personification in the poem are listed below.

- “Tomato invades kitchen” is a personification. A tomato cannot physically invade and seize a kitchen; it is meant to show just how abundant the tomatoes are throughout the kitchen.
- “It is wed to the clear onion” is a personification that shows how well the taste of tomatoes and onions complement each other.

## **47. Do Not Say**

a. How does the speaker attack political philosophy?

The speaker attacks political philosophy bitterly by saying that the so called political philosophy has no contribution in the advancement of society. Organizations and associations were formed before political philosophy came into existence. His society was an entity before political philosophy emerged.

b. The poet feels proud of the humble people. How do you prove their simplicity?

The poet feels proud of the humble people in his country. We can prove that they are simple, as they have some plain qualities: they live in a kampong; they wear hand-woven songket; they dance the ronggeng and sing dondang sayang; and they read the epic shairs.

## **48. The Ballad of a Dead Friend**

a. The theme of the poem is the unavoidable march of time and the inevitability of death. Losing a best friend is one of the most painful experiences a person can have. When death takes us we cannot have the same life as we had when we were alive. After we die no one listens to our cries. Therefore, we have to do something when we are live.

## **49. The Buddha’s Wife**

a. Make a list of the people who are mentioned in the poem.

The people who are mentioned in the poem are as follows:

- The Buddha
- Mahatma Gandhi
- St. Paul
- Lord Krishna

b. Do you think that Buddha and Gandhi mistreated their wives? Give reasons in support of your answer.

I don't think Buddha and Gandhi mistreated their wives. The fact that they left their homes does not mean that they hated their wives. Buddha left his palace to get enlightened and Gandhi left home for peace. If they had mistreated their wives, we would have heard about their wives' complaints.

## **50. Life is Fine**

a. What is the poem about?

Life is fine presents an overall theme of sorrow that can ultimately lead to the constant pursuit of a higher meaning to life and happiness. The poem basically presents the complete transformation of the speaker and his view on life over time. Initially, the speaker is fed up with the dark aspects of life and attempts suicide, but later he understands that life is to be appreciated even if despair sets in. Ultimately, he gains a renewed desire to live.

b. 'Life is wine!' How would you like to explain this line?

In this line the poet compares the desire to live with the desire to drink alcohol. A drunkard is aware of the harmful effects of drinking alcohol, but he has a unquenchable thirst to drink it. In the same way, we are aware of sufferings in life but are imposed to get pleasure in living.

## **51. Punishment in Kindergarten**

**a. Show the relevance of the title to the theme of the poem.**

In this poem the poet recalls her childhood experience of being scolded by her teacher and mocked by her classmates. This was a kind of punishment to an innocent and shy child. The main theme of the poem has two parts, the first of which being the description of the painful experience of the kindergarten days and the second, the adult's attitude to the incident at present when she is no more a child. Thus, the title is relevant to the theme of the poem.

## **52. Night of the Scorpion**

**a. Describe the situation in which the narrator's mother was stung by the scorpion.**

One night the narrator's mother was stung by a scorpion. Ten hours of steady rain had driven the scorpion to hide beneath a sack of rice. After inflicting unbearable pain upon the mother with a flash of its diabolic tail, the scorpion risked the rain again.

b. How do people console themselves when the scorpion bite takes the life of a mother?

To console the mother they open the bundle of their superstitions. They tell mother that the suffering and pain will burn away the sins of her previous birth. They also say that the pain will also wash the sin she is likely to make in her next life.