**Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)**

**Notes: A Poison Tree**

1. What is the contrast shown by the poet in his reaction to the anger which he has developed?

Ans When the poet was angry with his friend, he expressed his anger openly and his anger disappeared. On the other hand when his enemy hurt him, he did not vent his anger. He bottled up his feelings. As a result the anger kept growing within him.

1. How did the poet nurture his anger?

Ans: The poet nurtured his anger by feeding it with his fears and his tears. As all his negative emotions were pent up within it they fanned his anger. Outwardly he smiled and hid his true feelings. He also played deceitful tricks on his enemy.

1. What is the poet’s anger compared to? Bring out the comparison. What figure of speech is used here?

Ans: The poet’s anger is compared to a poison tree. Initially the anger was like a seed. As he did not express it , the anger was sowed deep in his heart. He nurtured it with all negative emotions which were like water and nutrition for the plant. He also gave it the sunshine through his fake smiles and deceitful tricks. This helped the seed of anger to grow into a full-fledged tree but with poisonous fruit. This is a metaphor as the anger of the poet is indirectly compared to a poison tree.

1. What was the attitude of the speaker’s friend towards him? Was it any different from the speaker?

Ans: The speaker was carried away by the outward behaviour of the poet. He saw his fake smiles as a friendly gesture. Finally when he saw the fruit in the poet’s garden he was again fooled by the outward shine and went quietly into the poet’s garden to pluck it from the tree. But the tree had turned poisonous and the apple too was poisonous and the poet’s friend died as soon as he ate the poisonous fruit. Once again the forbidden fruit ‘apple’ caused destruction.

1. What universal truth does the poem show ? / What is the message of the poem?

Ans: This poem is a learning that if anger is expressed it dies, leaving the person free of negative emotions but if the anger is suppressed, it keeps growing finally destroying the person on whom the anger is.

1. If anger was the seed for the poison tree, what served as water and sunlight for it?

Ans: If anger was the seed for the poison tree, the fears and tears of the poet (the person who was angry) served as the water and his fake and conceited smiles and deceitful wiles served as sunlight for it.

1. Does this poem remind you of the story of Adam and Eve? In what way?

Ans: Yes. This poem does remind one of the story of Adam and Eve. It is the reference of the apple that is similar to the forbidden apple which both had eaten and were therefore taken away from paradise. Here the poet’s enemy saw the apple which was shining (the anger of the poet which was camouflaged with his smiles and deceitful wiles) and was carried away by its outward appearance and when he went to get it he is destroyed.

1. Did the death of the enemy change the attitude of the speaker? What was his reaction at that time?

Ans: No. the death of the enemy does not change the attitude of the speaker. When he sees the enemy outstretched in his garden he is glad to see his enemy destroyed. This shows that even after the death of the enemy, the poet’s anger does not end.

1. Explain the figures of speech of the following lines:
2. Night and morning with my tears:

Ans: Antithesis : the opposite ideas ‘night’ and ‘morning’ are used in the same line

1. I told my wrath , my wrath did end

Ans: Repetition: the words ‘my wrath’ are repeated