

## CHAPTER 8 The Unseen Poems

In most literature examinations, there are sections on unseen poems. These are poems one may not have previously studied, the students or candidates will be expected to answer questions on these poems.

For one to make a good attempt on these questions on unseen poems, one must have a good knowledge of poetry and poetic devices. This section will expose us to unseen poems and how to answer the questions on them.

Read the following poems and answer the questions that follow.

### Poem 1

Who does the chicken think  
It is deceiving?  
It eats pebbles  
and swallows sands  
Ye complains of toothlessness  
the goat which has teeth  
the dog which fortifies its mouth  
with the strongest of ivory  
dare they eat pebbles in the morning  
and still walk about at noon?  
Let the ear sift  
what the mouth says  
the mills inside all men  
do not grind with equal force (*“Chicken story”*)

### Objective Questions

1. What is the subject matter of this poem?  
A. Deceit B. Complaint C. Mills in inside  
D. Equal grinding force
2. What kind of poem is this?  
A. A moral poem B. A dirge C. A sonnet  
D. A narrative poem
3. The poet’s mood is that of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. excitement B. sadness C. frustration D. complain
4. What poetic device is used in line one of the poem?  
A. Metaphor B. Rhetorical question C. Personification  
D. Irony
5. What is the dominant device in the poem?  
A. Images B. Metaphor C. Rhetorical question  
D. Paradox

### Poem 2

Answer questions 6-19 from the poem.

#### “AID”

AIDS! What a brutal friend!!  
Grabbing, engulfing,  
Snuffing the life out of his victims  
Vicious, callous, disregarding  
Age, sex and status

Your victim, once radiant  
 Now sunken eyed  
 Gawky spectre,  
 Dried to the bones like stockfish,  
 A fading, withered flower,  
 In the prime of youth.  
 The now crumbled body  
 Much like a dilapidated house  
 On which clothing is hung  
 Is nothing but a caricature  
 Of the real  
 A perfect specimen for the morgue

Thank you, mighty AIDS  
 For coming to put "PAID"  
 To man's venereal purchase  
 The precious price  
 Of indiscipline.

### Objective Questions

6. What is the poetic device used in the expression "AIDS! What a brutal friend!"?  
 A. Euphemism B. Personification C. Oxymoron  
 D. Paradox
7. The following is an example of grabbing, engulfing, snuffing  
 A. enjambment B. allusion C. synecdoche D. alliteration
8. What is the poetic device used in line four of stanza two?  
 A. Simile B. Metaphor C. Personification D. Paradox
9. The expression "A perfect specimen for the morgue" is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. personification B. metaphor C. allusion D. irony
10. Why is the body of an AIDS victim like a dilapidated house?  
 A. Because nobody lives in it.  
 B. It will soon collapse.  
 C. The blood is not flowing.  
 D. The victim's body is an image.

### Poem 3

Come Nigerians, build a Nation  
 Harness to the cause all passion  
 Let the raging sea come tranquil  
 Peace, with you we make a deal  
 Come and stay and never part;  
 The times are hard when you depart

Things are never what they seem  
 When you show your exit beam  
 The trumpets, sirens summon all  
 For the task ahead this call  
 It's time to fill the yawning gap  
 In the cracking walls avoid mishap

Come, come all, in one band

Raise the flag of unity, hand in hand  
Sing the song of amity round the land  
Come, come all hands on deck  
Come, save the ship of state from wreck  
From the jaws of sharks, save our neck.

*“Prologue – The Bugle”*

**Objective Questions**

11. Come, come all in one band, is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. repetition B. oxymoron C. metaphor D. irony
12. What does the poet mean by the expression “The times are hard when you depart”. It shows that:  
A. peace ran away.  
B. without peace the people will be in pieces.  
C. peace brings prosperity.  
D. peace is an enemy of progress.
13. Come, come all hands on deck is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. metonymy B. oxymoron C. images D. synecdoche
14. The image “ship” represents \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. the leaders B. the state C. economy D. power
15. The expression “save the ship of state ...” is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. synecdoche B. oxymoron C. paradox D. alliteration