

DON BOSCO SCHOOL, KOKAR

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LITERATURE

Class IX

Treasure Trove (Poetry notes)

Chapter-1 The Heart of the Tree

Henry Cuyler Bunner (1855-1896)

INTRODUCTION

The Heart of the Tree is a poem written by American novelist and poet, Henry Cuyler Bunner. By asking the question in the first line of every stanza in the poem "What does he plant who plants a tree?" he wants the readers to think about the answer and then he himself gives the answer. Bunner appreciates trees not only for their aesthetic value but also for their role in human welfare. For him, a tree proves to be a friend of the sun and the sky and contributes positively for the growth of a nation. The poet talks about benefits of tree.

THE POEM

Signposts

- The title 'The Heart of the Tree' suggests the most important quality of the tree.
- The poet asks a simple question at the beginning of every stanza and suggests the answer to the question.
- The poet in a simple way describes the importance of planting trees.
- Plants are our true friends: they provide us with cool breeze.
- Plants are the embodiment of beauty.
- The man who plants trees provides joy to all -- to birds, to animals and to human beings.
- Plants cause rain and thus are a source of regeneration.
- They enrich our forests and provide food to man and animals.
- The man who plants a tree serves his neighbourhood in many ways.
- He helps the country in its progress.
- His heart is overjoyed because by planting a tree he helps his country to grow from sea to sea.

NOTES

1. *breezes*: soft cold winds.

2. *shaft of beauty*: beam of beauty.

3. *towering high*: growing as tall as a tower.

4. *home to heaven*: home of God - the sky.

5. *anigh*: near to.

6. *mother-croon of bird*: the soft song that mother bird is singing to her young ones.

7. *hushed*: silenced and calmed.

8. *twilight*: the faint light at the end of the day after the sun has gone down.

9. *treble*: high tone in music.

10. *harmony*: the way in which different musical notes are played or sung together and combine to make a pleasant sound.

11. *tender rain*: gentle or caring rain.

12. *fade*: wither.

13. *flush*: grow.

14. *years that fade and flush again*: (here) with each passing year, the trees will grow and one day they will die and will be replaced by new trees, i.e., they will “flush again” in the entire forest.

15. *heritage*: the features belonging to the culture of a particular society like traditions, languages, beliefs that are passed down from one generation to the other.

16. *harvest of a coming age*: reference to the forest that has been created and is now an accumulated wealth of future generations.

17. *unborn eyes*: reference to the future generation, who is yet to be born.

18. *sap*: the liquid in a plant that carries food to all its parts.

19. *loyalty*: faithfulness

20. *far-cast*: foresee

21. *civic good*: well-being of the city or its citizens.

22. *hollow*: empty space

23. *stirs*: excites.

Chapter-2 The Cold Within

James Patrick Kinney (1923-1974)

INTRODUCTION

The Cold Within is a poem written by the American poet James Patrick Kinney in the 1960's. The poem is a pointed comment on lack of warmth and compassion in human relations. None of the six people, who by chance are trapped together in bitter cold, agree to put in use their stick of wood. The poem through the discriminatory acts of six humans, tries to depict attitudes of the human beings in general.

THE POEM

Signposts

- Six humans, each possessing a stick of wood, are trapped by chance in biting cold.
- The fire is sinking and is in need of logs to be kept alive.
- Out of a group of six people, a woman on seeing a black man does not give her log.
- The second man on finding that one of them does not belong to his church (religious community) holds back his log.
- The poor man does not put his log to use to prevent the rich man from getting warm.
- The rich man's concern is his wealth and how to keep it safe from the lazy poor man.
- The black man's face is filled with revenge and thus to harm the white does not use his stick of wood.
- The last man is ruled by selfishness and gives only to those who give him in return.
- Their logs held tight in their hands invite death.
- These six people die not of the cold outside but of the cold within.

NOTES

1. *trapped*: something by which one is caught against his wish.

2. *happenstance*: something that happens by chance.

3. *bleak*: unpleasant

4. *logs*: thick pieces of wood.

5. *black*: belonging to a race of people who have dark skin. In the U.S., people from this race are referred to as African-Americans.

6. *birch*: a type of tree that has outer bark which can be pulled off easily.

7.hitch: pull up; or fasten tightly.

8.*idle rich*: people believe that the rich people make the workers toil and enjoy the fruits of their labour. So the rich remain idle.

9.*shiftless*: lacking ambition and energy.

10.*bespoke*: showed signs of.

11.*revenge*: to inflict injury in return.

12.*spite*: a desire to harm another person especially because you feel that you have been treated wrongly.

13.*forlorn*: sad and lonely.

14.*nought*: nothing

15.*still*: rigid, not moving.

16.*human sin*: disobedience to God's Commandment—"love thy neighbour as thyself."

Chapter-3 The Bangle Sellers

Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949)

INTRODUCTION

The poem The Bangle Sellers by Sarojini Naidu is a folk song that celebrates the values and virtues of Indian womanhood with the help of a string of images associated with different colours of bangles. The bangles are not just any ornament to be worn but a symbolic representation of the various stages in the life of typical Indian woman. The poem belongs to the third section of Indian Folk Songs of her second book The Bird of Time.

THE POEM

Signposts

- The bangle seller's carry the bangles to the temple fair to sell them.
- A vivid description of different coloured bangles, suitable for woman of every age is given.
- Maidens adorn their wrists with colourful bangles; such as silver and blue like the mountain mist, and shades of pink like glowing buds and flowers.
- The young girls also wear bangles having the colour of dew drops on new born leaves.
- The tinkling, luminous, yellow and reddish yellow coloured bangles are perfect for a bride on her bridal morning.
- Purple and gold flecked grey bangles are suitable for a middle-aged woman who has cherished, loved and blessed her sons.

- This middle-aged woman, now takes care of her household with pride and sits at her husband's side while worshipping.

NOTES

1. *shining loads*: reference to the bangles that are being carried to the temple fair.

2. *Rainbow-tinted*: multicoloured, like the rainbow.

3. *Lustrous*: bright.

4. *tokens*: symbols.

5. *radiant*: bright and happy.

6. *flushed*: glowing

7. *tranquil*: quiet and peaceful.

8. *woodland*: land covered with trees and bushes.

9. *bloom*: flower

10. *limpid*: clear

11. *new born leaves*: reference to the freshness of unmarried girls.

12. *fields of sunlit corn*: refers to the golden yellow colour of the bangles.

13. *flame of her marriage*: not only connotes the reddish yellow bangles but also the sacredness of marriage.

14. *Tinkling*: the sound produced by a small bell or a similar send.

15. *luminous*: shining.

16. *bridal laughter*: reference to the happiness and blissfulness a bride experience while getting married.

17. *bridal tear*: suggestive of the sadness that accompanies a bride while leaving her parental abode.

18. *gold flecked grey*: sprinkling of gold colour on grey colour, here grey is symbolic of maturity that comes with age.

19. *cradled*: brought up.

Treasure trove (poetry)- workbook solutions

NOTE: Kindly also refer to your English Treasure Trove textbook and chapter notes in the workbook.

Chapter-1 The Heart of the Tree

- Henry Cuyler Bunner

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow each.

1. *What does he plant who plants a tree?*

He plants a friend of sun and sky;

He plants the flag of breezes free;

The shaft of beauty, towering high;

He plants a home to heaven anigh;

(a) Identify the poet and the poem. What is the theme of the poem?

Ans. The poet is Henry Cuyler Bunner and the poem is 'The Heart of the Tree'. The theme of the poem is the benefits of planting trees - how when one plants a tree one plants a host of benefits to the humankind, present and future generations.

(b) What does the person gain who plants a tree?

Ans. The person who plants a tree plants a friend to sun and sky as plants add more beauty to nature. A tree is a monument of beauty and is similar to heaven.

(c) Enumerate any three advantages of planting trees that the poet talks about?

Ans. The three advantages of planting trees according to the poet are-

(i) Nature is made more beautiful by the trees.

(ii) Trees bring in soft winds.

(iii) Trees are home to many birds.

(d) How does someone who plant a tree plant 'the flag of breezes free'?

Ans. Trees bring in soft breezes. As more plants one plants one creates the environment for more breezes. Therefore, the poet refers to a tree as "the flag of breezes." It is free to plant a tree and bring a breeze, it needs no money.

(e) What does the poet mean by 'the shaft of beauty, towering high'?

Ans. A tree is a thing of beauty in itself. Therefore, a tree is referred to as "the shaft (ray) of beauty" and as the tree grows very tall, therefore, it is referred to as "towering high."

(f) Why does the poet say that "He plants a home to heaven anigh"? Do you agree with the poet? Give reasons.

Ans. A tree is as comfortable as a home because it provides a host of benefits as a home. Therefore, the poet feels that a tree is a heavenly home; and he is right in comparing a tree to a heaven like home.

2. *For song and mother-croon of bird*

In hushed and happy twilight heard-

The treble of heaven's harmony-

These things he plants who plants a tree.

(a) What does the poet mean by 'hushed and happy twilight'?

Ans. "Hushed and happy twilight" refers to the quiet and joyous evening when the mother bird sings to its young ones.

(b) What "heaven's harmony" does the poet refer to?

Ans. By "Heaven's harmony" the poet refers to the harmony of the mother bird's song for its young ones.

(c) Mention any three advantages of planting trees that the poet is speaking about.

Ans. The three advantages of planting trees, according to the poet, Henry Cuyler Bunner, are-

(i) It brings more and more breeze,

(ii) It provides a place for the birds to stay,

(iii) It brings cool shade and tender rain.

(d) Do you agree with the poet as he enumerates things in the given four lines?

Ans. Yes, I agree with the poet as the person who plants a tree creates a space for the birds to have their nests where they can sing to their young ones.

3. *He plants cool shade and tender rain.*

And seed and bud of days to be,

And years that fade and flush again:

He plants the glory of the plain:

He plants the forest's heritage;

The harvest of a coming age:

The joy that unborn eyes shall see-

These things he plants who plants a free.

(a) What is the context of the above quoted lines?

Ans. The context of the above-quoted lines is Henry Cuyler Bunner's poem "The Heart of the Tree" where the poet enumerates the good things one initiates when one plants a tree.

(b) How is the poet making the connection between planting trees and "seed and bud of days to be"?

Ans. The connection that the poet establishes between planting trees and "seed and bud of days to be" is that planting trees can lead to future happiness and joy.

(c) How does one plant "tender rain" when one plants a tree?

Ans. It is a scientifically proven fact that more trees bring in more rains. Therefore, the poet says that the person who plants a tree enhances the scope for more and more rainfall.

Rain is termed as "tender" as the world gets tender by rainfall.

(d) What does the poet mean by 'years that fade and flush again'?

Ans. By 'years that fade and flush again', the poet refers to the seasonal cycle. A season goes to come back again. Trees similarly die but only to be planted again by the kind souls who plant trees.

(e) Explain the phrases - (i) the forest's heritage (ii) the harvest of a coming age.

Ans. The forest's heritage - heritage means what we have received from the past and what we need to preserve to pass on to future generations. Forests are our natural heritage and whosoever plants a tree therefore helps in maintaining the natural heritage of the forest.

The harvest of a coming age — whosoever plants a tree invests for the future. As we invest money for good returns, similarly planting a tree brings in good returns.

(f) What does the poet mean by 'unborn eyes'?

Ans. "Unborn eyes" are the eyes of future children. The poet means that the trees which are planted now are the source of joy for future generations.

(g) What 'joy' the unborn eyes shall see?

Ans. The "unborn eyes" shall see the full-grown trees and will take all the benefits from them. The joy of being close to nature and other benefits will be the source of joy to future generations.

4. His blessings on the neighbourhood,

Who in the hollow of His hand

Holds all the growth of all our land.

A nation's growth from sea to sea

Stirs in his heart who plants a tree.

(a) What is the context of the given passage?

Ans. The context of the given passage is Henry Cuyler Bunner's poem "The Heart of the Tree" where the poet enumerates the host of benefits that a person who plants a tree initiates.

(b) What 'blessings' does the poet refer to?

Ans. A person who plants a tree chooses to bless the humankind as his planting of a tree can be seen as a means by which he is initiating numerous benefits for the humankind.

(c) What does the poet mean by "the hollow of His hand"?

Ans. By "the hollow of his hand" the poet brings in the imagery of a person holding the gift of a tree to the world.

(d) How does one hold "all the growth of all our land"?

Ans. The poet Henry Cuyler Bunner in "The Heart of the Tree" mentions a host of benefits that a person plants who plants a tree. Such a person holds the key to the growth of a land as with trees many kinds of growths are associated as being enumerated by the poet. So, when the poet mentions those benefits, he also mentions that a person who plants a tree holds the key to the future growth of our land.

(e) How is a nation's growth related to the planting of trees?

Ans. A nation's growth is related to the planting of trees because a nation's growth depends on the bounty of nature which is only possible when a person plants a tree.

(f) What according to the poet 'stirs' in his heart who plants a tree? Do you agree with the poet?

Ans. According to the poet Henry Cuyler Bunner, a person who plants a tree has a heart in which stirs a feeling of doing good to humankind as a person who plants a tree initiates a host of good things for future generations.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING

1. The poem "The Heart of the Tree" is about development. Do you agree?

Ans. Yes. the poem "The Heart of the Tree" by Henry Cuyler Bunner is a poem about development as the poet enumerates the reasons of why one should plant a tree. Apart from the other benefits of planting trees, the poet shows how planting trees is the root of development of a nation because the person who plants a tree plants something not only thinking about his own good, but for the public good, as if he is blessing the neighbourhood by planting the tree. The trees are key to the growth of a particular place and therefore the poet thinks that whosoever plants a tree is ensuring the growth and development of a nation.

2. Enumerate in your own language the benefits of planting trees as done by the poet in the poem "The Heart of the Tree." Do you agree with all the things that the poet enlists in the poem? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. Each stanza of the poem "The Heart of the Tree" by Henry Cuyler Bunner starts with a rhetorical question – 'What does he plant who plants a tree?' which is answered to suggest the benefits of planting trees. The benefits of planting trees are -

- It is a friend of sun and sky

- It brings flag of breezes free
- Trees are a thing of beauty in itself
- A tree is similar to a home which is almost like heaven.
- A tree provides the space for the birds to build up their nests where the mother birds take care of the baby birds and sing songs or lullaby to them.
- In the twilight one can hear the harmonious songs of the birds from the trees.
- When the tree grows up, it provides shade to the people and also welcomes rain as it is scientifically proven that more trees bring more showers.
- The trees are the cause of happiness of the coming days.
- The trees are the most glorious things of the plain land as trees provide beauty to the land.

Forests are our natural heritage and whoever plants a tree therefore helps in maintaining the natural heritage. The person who plants a tree plants happiness and joy for the children who are to be born in future.

- The person who plants a tree plants something not only thinking about his own good, but for the public good, as if he is blessing the neighbourhood by planting the tree.
- The trees are key to the growth of a particular place and therefore the poet thinks that whosoever plants a tree is ensuring the growth of a nation.

3. Do you agree that by planting a tree one actually looks forward to a nation's growth? Write a short critical note on the significance of planting trees.

Ans. The trees are key to the growth of a particular place and therefore the poet thinks that whosoever plants a tree is ensuring the growth of a nation.

The poet makes a list of rewards that the planting of a tree provides us and then says that the person who plants a tree actually plants all these rewards for mankind. Such a person has a heart and in his heart stirs the emotion of making the world a better place to live in. Environmental protection and sustainable development are words that we come across in our everyday life across many disciplines; but the poet in the poem "The Heart of the Tree" presents these notions in a pleasing way through his poetry as he is able to point out

how we can make this planet a better habitat for the future generations if we plant trees. In that sense, it is a poem which talks about environmental protection and development without showing us the negative aspects of inhuman use of nature.

4. Do you agree that the title of the poem "The Heart of the Tree" is apt?

Ans. The title of the poem "The Heart of the Tree" by Henry Cuyler Bunner is apt as the poet enlists the advantages of planting trees. When one plants a tree, he does not merely plant a tree but makes an addition to nature which one day the people of this world are going to enjoy. In the heart of the person who plants a tree stirs an emotion of planting the growth of a nation. Thus the poet celebrates the plants, the nature and the person who plants a tree. The poet presents how a plant is the heart of the developmental process, how planting trees is the sure way to progress and how planting trees is core to the existence of future generations. Therefore the title of the poem is justified. "The Heart of the Tree" does not merely talk about the significance of trees in our lives: but also celebrates the heart (greatness) of the person who plants a tree.

Chapter 2- The Cold Within

- James Patrick Kinney

ASSIGNMENTS:

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow each.

1. *Six humans trapped by happenstance*

In bleak and bitter cold.

Each one possessed a stick of wood

Or so the story's told.

(a) Identify the poet and the poem.

Ans. The poet is James Patrick Kinney and the poem is "The Cold Within."

(b) What is happenstance"? What does the phrase "bleak and bitter cold" mean?

Ans. "Happenstance" means accident.

"Bleak and bitter cold" refers to the situation of extreme cold weather.

(C) Enumerate the characters of the six people who are trapped?

Ans. The six characters trapped accidentally in extreme cold weather are-

(i) A White woman

(ii) A man who believes in a particular Church

(iii) A poor man who holds grudge against the rich

(iv) A rich man

(v) A black man

(vi) A selfish man.

(d) What do the characters do with the stick of wood that they possess?

Ans. The six characters in the poem "The Cold Within" keep to themselves the stick that each one of them possesses.

(e) What does the poet mean by "Or so the story's told"?

Ans. By saying "Or so the story's told" the poet means that it is a traditional story which have been passed on from one generation to another orally.

(f) What is the element of suspense that is being built up in these four lines?

Ans. The element of suspense that is being built up in these four lines is that what these six characters are going to do with their sticks when they are faced with extremely cold weather conditions.

2. Their dying fire in need of logs

But the first one held hers back

For of the faces round the fire

She noticed one was black.

(a) What is the need of 'fire'? What does the phrase "in need of logs" mean?

Ans. Fire is needed by the six people to save themselves from the extreme cold weather conditions.

The phrase "in need of logs" refers to the dying fire in need of more wood.

(b) Why are the faces round the fire?

Ans. The faces are around the fire as in the extremely cold weather condition fire is the only means of survival for these six people.

(c) Who was the first one? What do you conclude about her mentality from the above four lines?

Ans. The first one is a white woman. This white woman hates the blacks and seeing one black person in the group, decides to hold back her stick, so that her stick is not used to save the black man from the cold weather

(d) What kind of discriminatory social practice does the poet, talk about in these four lines? Is this kind of discrimination

justified? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. The poet talks about the discriminatory practice based on the skin colour - black and white. This discrimination, like all other discriminations, is not justified as for no rhyme or reason blacks are thought to be inferior to whites which it should not be.

3. The next man looking 'cross the way

Saw one not of his church

And couldn't bring himself to give

The fire his stick of birch.

(a) Briefly explain the context of the above lines.

Ans. The context of these lines is when six people from different backgrounds are accidentally caught up in a cold weather condition in the poem "The Cold Within" by James Patrick Kinney.

(b) What does the poet mean by "one not of his church"?

Ans. The poet means that the man saw in the group one who did not belong to his religious sect.

(c) What does "birch" mean? Why is he holding the birch? Is he justified in holding the birch?

Ans. "Birch" is a thin-leaved hardwood tree. He is holding to his birch as he sees in the group one who did not belong to his religious sect.

He is not justified in holding to the birch as that only proves that he has a cold heart and that he cannot feel for others.

(d) What do you think about the man from the above four lines?

Ans. The man who only wants to help people of his own church is very narrow-minded and deeply irreligious as all religions

usually insist on loving the whole humankind.

(e) Who was the earlier one? Is she any way different from this man?

Ans. The earlier one was a white woman. As she hated the blacks she did not give her stick to the dying fire; similarly this man who sees no one from his church did not give the stick in the dying fire. Therefore they are not much different.

4. The third one sat in tattered clothes.

He gave his coat a hitch.

Why should his log be put to use

To warm the idle rich?

(a) What does 'tattered clothes' signify?

Ans. "Tattered clothes" means torn clothes and signify poverty. It means that the person is from the poorer section of society and that he cannot afford new clothes.

(b) What does the poet mean by "He gave his coat a hitch"?

Ans. The poet means that he just shook his coat as a sign of his indifference to a group where a rich man is also there.

(c) What was going on in the mind of the third man?

Ans. The third man thinks that he should not utilize his resources (his stick) to provide heat to the rich man as rich men are all exploiters of the poor.

(d) Why does he think that the rich are 'idle'? Do you agree with him? Give reasons.

Ans. The poor man thinks that the rich are 'idle' as he feels that the rich men do nothing but live on the labour/money of the poor.

It is not true, as a rich man becomes rich by his hard work

and determination to succeed. Therefore the hard work of becoming rich should not be underrated.

(e) Is the third man any different from the earlier two?

Ans. The third man is no different from the earlier two as he also holds grudges against some people in the society and therefore does not part with his stick to put it in the dying fire.

5. The rich man just sat back and thought

Of the wealth he had in store

And how to keep what he had earned

From the lazy shiftless poor.

(a) What does the first two of the above quoted lines tell you?

Ans. The first two of the above quoted lines tell us that the rich man started thinking about all the money and wealth he has with him and decided that he should not use any of his resources to help the poorer sections of society.

(b) Why does he think that the poor are "lazy shiftless"? Do you agree with him?

Ans. Poor people are not always "lazy shiftless." People can be poor for different reasons but that does not mean that they are work-shy and avoid doing any work.

(c) What happens to the rich man in the process of saving the wealth he had in store'?

Ans. The rich man, thinking that he should not use his resources (here the stick) to warm up the poor man, holds back his stick to himself and in the process, the dying fire dies leading to the death of all the six people in the group.

(d) What difference of opinion do you find between the rich and

the poor man? Do you agree to their perspectives? Who seems more convincing to you and why?

Ans. The rich man and the poor man - both hate each other thinking that they are work-shy. The rich man thinks that the poor man is eyeing for his wealth and is shy of work and therefore poor; and the poor man thinks that the rich man lives on the labour of the poorer sections of the society.

No. I do not agree to their perspectives. None of them seems convincing as they are only providing partial perspectives of looking at things and are not ready to give up their prejudices for each other.

6. The black man's face bespoke revenge

As the fire passed from his sight.

For all he saw in his stick of wood

Was a chance to spite the white.

(a) Why is the black man 'revengeful'? Is he justified in being so?

Ans. The black man is revengeful as the blacks in America have suffered hundreds of years of injustices (slavery) by the whites.

He is not justified in being revengeful as with this kind of mentality the enmity between whites and blacks will carry on forever.

(b) What does the 'dying fire' ignite in him?

Ans. The 'dying fire' ignites in him the passion to take revenge against the white civilization.

(c) What does the poet mean by "a chance to spite the white"?

Ans. The poet means that as the six people are accidentally

trapped in the cold weather conditions, the black man thinks that by not giving his stick to the dying fire and by making the white person suffer the cold, the black man has got a chance to take revenge against the whites.

(d) How is the black man similar or different to the white woman?

Ans. The black man is similar to the white woman as he has a similar hatred as the white person. He decides not to give his stick to the 'dying fire' which could have saved them from death and desolation.

(e) If you were in the black man's position, what would be your reaction and why?

Ans. No, my reaction would not be the same as the black man as by being revengeful, no one is able to achieve anything positive but only death and desolation. So the black man's position of taking revenge against the whites is not at all justified.

7. The last man of this forlorn group.

Did nought except for gain.

Giving only to those who gave

Was how he played the game.

(a) Who do you think is the 'last man'?

Ans. The last man is a selfish man who only thinks about himself and no one else.

(b) What does the term 'forlorn group' mean in the given lines?

Ans. The poet refers to the group of six people as the "forlorn group" because each of the six people in the group is sad and miserable; and with their miserable state of mind and heart (the cold within) they bring more misery to themselves

(death).

(c) What game does the poet refer to?

Ans. The poet refers to the game of gaining profit in the sense that the last man of the group does nothing if it does not bring any profit. He is a selfish man.

(d) Is the last man any different from the earlier five?

Ans. No, the last man is no different from the earlier five as similar to the earlier five people, he holds grudges against mankind (the cold within) and in the process holds back his stick from the dying fire and consequently faces death.

(e) What does the last two of the quoted lines mean?

Ans. The last two quoted lines mean that the man believes that if someone is profitable or beneficial for him, then only he should be helpful.

8. Their logs held tight in death's still hands

Was proof of human sin.

They didn't die from the cold without

They died from the cold within.

(a) What does the poet signify by death's still hands'?

Ans. The poet means that death brings in stillness to them. Before death they did not take the steps to give up their sticks for the 'dying fire' and now their inaction has led them to complete inactivity that is, death.

(b) Do you think they have committed a sin? Why do you think so?

Ans. Yes, they committed a sin because in the process of holding back their sticks from the dying fire, they have shown their grudges and hatred for each other. That they could not get

over their prejudices to save themselves is the 'sin' that they have committed.

(c) What is the proof of 'human sin'? What sin have the people committed?

Ans. The proof of their 'human sin' is that they are all dead. They have committed the sin of lacking warmth for the humankind as a whole. They are all prejudiced against each other which led to their doom - death.

(d) What does the poet mean by 'the cold within'?

Ans. By the cold within the poet means that these six people lack warmth of affection, love and care that should be the characteristic of humankind. It is not the cold weather conditions outside; but the lack of warmth for each other that led to their death.

(e) Do you feel that the six people have 'cold within'? Why do you think so?

Ans. Yes, the six people have cold within as they lack the warmth of human affection and are filled with prejudices.

(f) Do you feel that the last phrase of the poem is apt as a title of the poem? If not, then try to suggest another title for the poem.

Ans. Yes, the last phrase of the poem is apt to be the title of the poem because the last phrase sums up the condition of the six people of the forlorn group who died not because of the cold weather conditions but because of the lack of warmth in their hearts for each other.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING

1. Comment on the significance of the title "The Cold Within."

Ans. The title "The Cold Within" is justified as the title sums up

the essence of the poem. The poem deals with the "coldness of the hearts" of people who are accidentally trapped in a situation of "bleak and bitter cold"; but none of the six could get above their discriminatory sensibilities to keep the fire alive with their respective sticks to fight the cold outside. Each of these six people was fighting with two kinds of coldness - one that is outside, the cold weather and second, that's within them, the lack of warmth for people belonging to a different community. It is this lack of warmth, this lack of fondness, the lack of trust in fellow human beings which is the cause of death of these six people. Therefore the title "The Cold Within" is apt.

2. Do you think it is the warmth of our hearts which makes us human? Discuss with reference to the poem "The Cold Within."

Ans. James Patrick Kinney's poem "The Cold Within" deals with man-made discriminations that has engulfed the psyche of the humankind to such an extent that people are not able to love and care for each other. In the poem, six people accidentally are trapped in a place in extreme cold weather where there is a dying fire. Each of them has a stick with them with which they could have kept the fire burning but they decided otherwise because they did not want their stick to warm someone else. The White Woman thought that there was a black man in the group and so she did not give her stick. The black man thought of taking revenge for the injustices of slavery that the black people have encountered for ages and therefore did not part with his stick. The rich man thought that the poor people are lazy and work shy

and his stick should not be used for firing up the dying fire as it would help the poor man. The poor man thought that he should not use his resource (the stick) to warm the rich man. Another man found no one from his church and did not part with his stick and the last man was too selfish and thought giving up the stick would not fetch him profit from the gathered people and therefore he held on to his stick.

Thus all the six people held on to their sticks and eventually all of them perished as extreme cold weather did not spare them and they all died. If they would have had human hearts then they would have got over the discriminations and would have felt for each other and consequently all of them would have survived. It is their inhuman sin which is the cause of their death and not the cold weather. The poet James Patrick Kinney through the portrayal of these six people and their selfish and self-centered concerns brings to the fore the inhuman qualities with which modern people live and how that is the cause of the doom of the humankind.

3. What according to James Patrick Kinney is the proof of "human sin"? What are the sins that the poet talks about in the poem?

Ans. "The Cold Within" is a poem which presents the cold hearts of mankind which lead us to our doom and destruction.

Mankind is thought to be better than the animal world as we have created civilizations and we have progressed with science and technology but at the same time we have created discriminations amongst ourselves at different levels which have led to our doom. Some of the discriminatory

cultural practices that we have established over the ages are based on gender, religion, colour of the skin, etc. In the third last line of the poem, the poet, James Patrick Kinney, describes these discriminatory practices as proof of "human sin" which leads to death.

The six people who are trapped by chance and attacked by a cold-wave could have saved themselves if they would have cooperated with each other and would have shared their sticks to keep the fire alive. But each one of them with his own biases against the others, guarded their own sticks more than their lives and in the process all of them perished. It is the coldness of heart towards other people, the people belonging to other communities, which is the reason for the death of these six people rather than the cold wave outside

4. The poem "The Cold Within" is a reflection of the inhuman aspect of mankind. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. Yes, the poem "The Cold Within" is a reflection of the inhuman aspect of humankind because all six people show their inhumanity in holding back their sticks from the dying fire and consequently die. "The Cold Within" is a poem which presents the cold hearts of mankind which lead us to our doom and destruction. Mankind is thought to be better than the animal world as we have created civilizations and we have progressed with science and technology; but at the same time we have created discriminations amongst ourselves at different levels which have led to our doom. Some of the discriminatory cultural practices that we have established over the ages are based on gender, religion,

colour of the skin. etc. In the third last line of the poem, the poet, James Patrick Kinney, describes these discriminatory practices as proof of "human sin" which leads to death.

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Chapter 3- The Bangle Sellers

- Sarojini Naidu

ASSIGNMENTS

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow each.

1. *Bangle sellers are we who bear*

Our shining loads to the temple fair....

Who will buy these delicate, bright

Rainbow-tinted circles of light?

Lustrous tokens of radiant lives.

For happy daughters and happy wives.

(a) Identify the poem and the poet.

Ans. The poem is "The Bangle Sellers" and the poet is Sarojini Naidu.

(b) What 'shining loads' does the poet refer to? Why are they

called loads?

Ans. The poet refers to the bangles that the bangle seller is carrying as the "shinning loads."

They are called "loads" in a light manner as they are bundle of joys for women of different age groups.

(c) What are 'circles of light'? Why they are called so?

Ans. The bangles are termed as the "circles of light." They are termed so (as from these circular glass bangles) as when light pass through them, they shine like circles of light.

d) What does the poet mean by 'lustrous token'? What are they tokens of?

Ans. 'Lustrous' means gleaming or shining; and token means symbol. Therefore, lustrous token means shining symbols. The bangles are referred to as "lustrous token" as they are symbols radiant lives of happy and joyful daughters and wives.

(e) What is the image formed in your mind after reading the above quoted lines?

Ans. The image formed in my mind is that of a bangle seller with his load of bangles in a village fair or market. These bangles are tokens of women's happiness and pride. They represent the radiant colours of Indian women's lives.

*2. Some are meant for a maiden's wrist,
Silver and blue as the mountain mist,
Some are flushed like the buds that dream
On the tranquil brow of a woodland stream.
Some are aglow with the bloom that cleaves
To the limpid glory of new born leaves.*

a) Describe the context of the above quoted lines.

Ans. The context of the quoted lines is Sarojini Naidu's poem "The Bangle Sellers" where the poet enumerates the

different bangles for women of different age groups.

(b) What are 'some' in the first of the quoted lines? Describe in your own words the way 'some' are being talked about by the poet.

Ans. 'Some' refers to some of the bangles that the bangle seller is carrying. The bangles are being talked about by the poet Sarojini Naidu as shining circles of light meant for women of different age groups. In the present stanza, the poet enumerates how silver and blue bangles are meant for young maidens, with their playful and joyous moods.

(c) What image is formed in your mind by the way the poet makes these lines descriptive?

Ans. In these descriptive lines, Sarojini Naidu describes the bangles to be 'blue' and 'silver' in colour as they are like the colour of the mountain mist or the buds and new leaves of trees.

(d) Comment on the simile in the third and fourth lines.

Ans. In the third and fourth lines, Sarojini Naidu compares the bangles with the glowing flower buds that grow on the top of the plants near the forest rivers.

(e) What does the poet mean by "limpid glory"? Whose glory is it referring to? What is the glory compared to? Critically comment on the comparison.

Ans. By "limpid glory" the poet means the transparent shining glory of the new born leaves as the sunlight passes through them.

The glory of the bangles are being referred to.

The glory of the bangles are compared to the new born leaves as sunlight passes through them.

The comparison is innovative and natural as the poet Sarojini

Naidu compares the colour of the bangles with that of the transparent green coloured leaves of the plants.

*3. Some are like fields of sunlit corn,
Meant for a bride on her bridal morn,
Some, like the flame of her marriage fire.
Or, rich with the hue of her heart's desire.
Tinkling, luminous, tender, and clear,
Like her bridal laughter and bridal tear.*

(a) Identify the poet and the poem.

Ans. The poet is Sarojini Naidu and the poem is 'The Bangle Sellers.'

b) Comment on the simile in the first and second lines.

Ans. In the simile on the first and second lines, the poet Sarojini Naidu is comparing the bangles with the golden colour of the ripe corn when the sunlight falls on them.

(c) What does the poet mean by "the hue of her heart's desire"?

Ans. 'Hue' means colour, thus the poet Sarojini Naidu compares some of the bangles meant for the bride as the colour of the heart, that is, 'red' as that of the heart.

(d) Comment on her bridal laughter and bridal tear.

Ans. A bride is both happy and sad as according to the tradition, she has to leave her parents' household and go to her husband's house. Leaving her parents makes her tearful and the prospect of a happy life in her husband's home brings laughter to her face.

(e) What images related to marriage are evoked by the poet in the above quoted passage? What is the purpose of the poet in evoking such images?

Ans. The images related to marriage evoked by the poet Sarojini

Naidu are-

- (i) The golden hue of the bride's dress on the marriage morning,
- (ii) The colour of bride's heart's desire - represented in red colour,
- (iii) The bridal tear as she has to leave her parents' house,
- (iv) The bridal laughter because of the prospect of joy and happiness in her husband's home.

The purpose of evoking such images is to present the joy and happiness of the bride and the relationship related to it with that of the radiant bangles.

(f) Critically comment on the poet's use of these images in the Stanza.

Ans. The poet, Sarojini Naidu, presents the images related to bride and marriage carefully to comment on the joy of bride's heart and how that joy is manifested in her life through the colours of the bangles that she wears.

*4. Some are purple and gold necked grey
For she who has journeyed through life midway
Whose hands have cherished, whose love has
blest.
And cradled fair sons on her faithful breast,
And serves her household in fruitful pride,
And worships the gods at her husband's side.*

a) Explain the context of these lines.

Ans. The context of the above lines is Sarojini Naidu's poem 'The Bangle Sellers' where the poet is describing the

colours of the bangles worn by middle aged women.

(b) What does the poet mean by 'she who has journeyed through life midway'?

Ans. The phrase "she who has journeyed through life midway" means middle-aged women who have lived half of their lives and the other half remains.

(c) What does the term 'fruitful pride signify?

Ans. The term 'fruitful pride' signifies the pride of the middle aged women who have successfully run / managed their husbands' household and taken care of the children. Their success is referred to in the term 'fruitful.'

(d) Comment critically on the last line of the stanza.

Ans. The Indian women consider their husbands to be similar to gods and therefore worship them along with their household deities. The poet, Sarojini Naidu, is mentioning the beauty of the devotion towards their husbands in the last line of the stanza.

(e) What difference of colour do you see in the bangles from the earlier stanzas of the poem? Is the difference of any consequence?

Ans. Whereas the young maiden wear blue and silver bangles, brides wear golden and red bangles; and the middle-aged women wear purple and gold-flecked bangles. Each of these bangles has its own beauty and represents a phase of one's life - blue and silver represent playfulness and joy; red and golden - the lustrous joy of a bride; and grey and purple represent the pride of the middle aged women.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING

1. Critically comment on the colour of the bangles as

presented by Sarojini Naidu in the poem "The Bangle Seller." What associations does the poet evoke through the colours and why does she do so?

Ans. The poet, Sarojini Naidu, in the poem "The Bangle Sellers" first describes the bangles which are meant for young maidens - the young girls who are playful and joyous.

These bangles are primarily silver and blue and they are being compared to the mists of mountains and to the buds of flowers that grow on the top of the plants near the forest rivers. Some bangles are compared to the glowing colour of new leaves when the light passes through them. In the next stanza, the poet describes the bangles meant for brides - the golden bangles which are compared to ripe corn fields when sunlight falls on them, the fiery bangles which are compared to the holy fire around which the couple takes a vow according to the Hindu marriage ritual; the red bangles which are compared to the heart's desire - love.

These bangles are then compared to bridal laughter and tear - the laughter representing the hopes, the dreams and the wishes of a new bride as she enters into a new phase of life with her life partner and the tear representing the sadness on having to leave her parents' household to join her husband's family. In the fourth stanza the poet talks about the purple and the gold-flecked grey bangles which are meant for the middle aged women as these bangles present the pride and joy of the women who have spent their lives successfully in bringing up their children, in maintaining and rearing their husband's household and in worshipping gods alongwith their husbands.

2. Do you find "The Bangle Sellers" to be a poem which has any consequence in terms of our understanding of culture or is it merely a description of bangles available in the market? Give reasons to justify your answer.

Ans. The poem "The Bangle Sellers" was written in the pre-independence era when India was under colonial rule.

Colonialism is not only a political and economic subjugation of a nation by another, but it has its worst effects on the minds of the colonized as the colonized are made to feel as second grade citizens who lose all self-respect. They start feeling that the colonial culture is superior and they look down upon everything that is native. The self-esteem is hampered to such an extent that it becomes difficult for them to feel that they have a culture of their own.

If colonialism or colonizing power is to be fought, then the fight needs to begin not merely with the zeal of ousting the colonial power (British in case of India), but moreover to make the native people feel that they have a culture of their own which is a matter of pride; that they are in no way inferior to the colonial culture and power, that they have a civilization which is as ancient and treasured as the colonial regime, and they are knowledgeable and self-respecting people who can stand in their own right.

Sarojini Naidu was not only a conscious poet, but also a freedom fighter whose role as a leader of the masses was not just to enthuse within them the zeal to drive out the British from India, but also to build up their self-esteem, to make them fall in love with things and culture which were their own. An Indian fair and selling of bangles in the fair is common sight in India and all Indians are familiar with it.

But Sarojini Naidu thought that it was essential to make the Indians take a mental tour of the colourful bangles that are

sold so that they can not only find the colourful beauty of it but also with the bangles can think about the joy and the pride with which the Indian women wear these bangles. The amalgamation of different colours of the shining glass bangles not only makes it a sight of beauty, but also is a representation of what India truly is – diverse, yet one. Indians need to find that unity in their diversity to be strong enough; to be self-respectful enough to make the British power to quit India. Writing, thus, for Sarojini Naidu served more than one purpose - one, of art; second, a political purpose of uniting India, of providing the necessary impetus to the Indian masses about the vibrancy of the Indian culture which is presented through the colourful bangles: and third of the Indian women and their dreams, wishes, pride and successes as they pass through their joyous youthfulness to become a bride and then as a mother and caregiver to the whole household. Thus, the poem celebrates the Indian culture through the presentation of its women in vivid colours and roles.

3. Critically comment on the imageries used by the poet in 'The Bangle Sellers'?

Ans. The poem starts with a description of the bangle seller carrying loads of multi-coloured bangles to a temple fair to sell them to women. The bangle-seller is presented in the poem as a seller of happiness as the bangles provide women certain joy and are symbols of their age and achievements. The poet presents how the colour of the bangles varies along with age and occasion. The colourful description of the bangles in the later part of the poem not only provides the readers with the variety of the bangles that the bangle seller

is carrying; but also talks about the roles and the responsibilities, the anguish and the happiness, the joy and the cheerfulness of Indian women.

The poet first describes the bangles which are meant for young maidens - the young girls who are playful and joyous. These bangles are primarily silver and blue and they are being compared to the mists of mountains and to the buds of flowers that grow on the top of the plants near the forest rivers. Some bangles are compared to the glowing colour of the new leaves when the light passes through them. In the next stanza, the poet describes the bangles meant for brides — the golden bangles which are compared to ripe corn fields when sunlight falls on them, the fiery bangles which are compared to the holy fire around which the couple takes a vow according to the Hindu marriage ritual; the red bangles which are compared to the heart's desire - love.

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Treasure Trove (Short stories notes)

Class IX

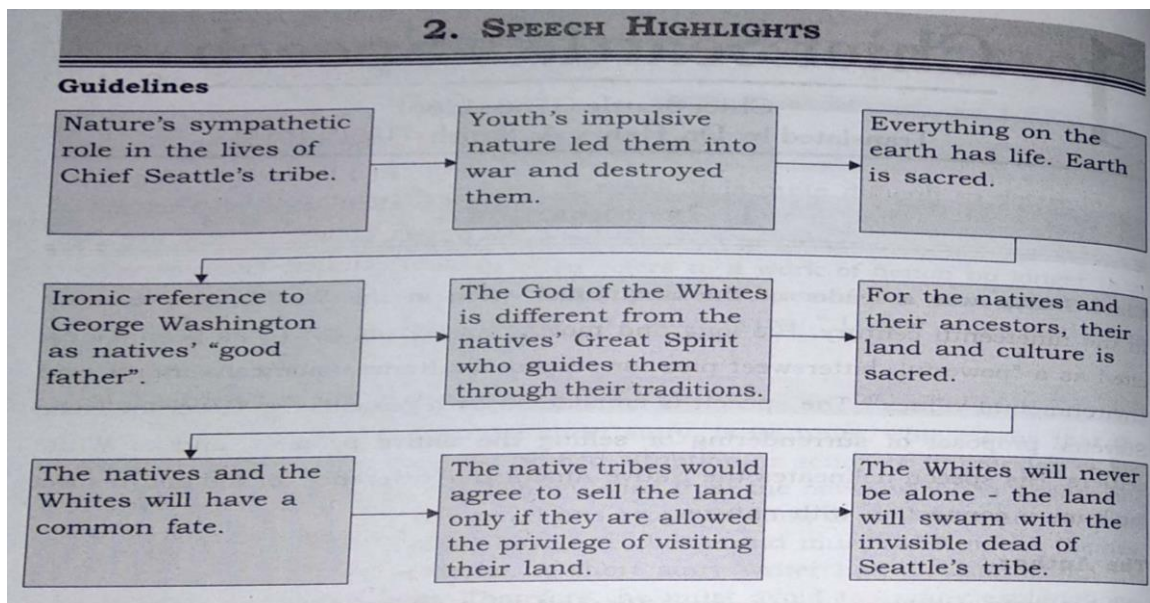
Chapter-1 Chief Seattle's Speech

Chief Seattle (1786-1866)

Translated by Dr. Henry A. Smith (1830-1915)

1. INTRODUCTION

Chief Seattle was a leader of the Suquamish tribe in the Washington territory in the nineteenth century. His long and moving speech in 1854 has been widely cited as a "powerful, bittersweet plea for respect for Native Americans' rights and environmental values". The speech is considered as a response to Governor Isaac Stevens' proposal of surrendering or selling the native people's land to White settlers. His speech delineates the Native Americans' reverence for life and respect for human connection with nature.



3. SPEECH IN DETAIL

Highlights of the Speech

- Chief Seattle begins his speech by saying that nature has sympathised with his people for many centuries. Today it is fair, but tomorrow may not be the same, as the Great Chief in Washington wishes to buy their land. The Great Chief also sends them word of goodwill and friendship, but he is in little need of their friendship as his people are strong and powerful as compared to the natives.

- Chief Seattle says there was a time when his people were large in number but now they are nothing more than a mournful memory. He will not mourn over their untimely decay. Youth is impulsive and young men often indulge in revengeful acts considering them to be gainful. In times of war, they even lose their own lives, but the family that waits for them at home bears the loss. So the natives and the White settlers should never turn hostile to each other.

- Chief Seattle, then refer to George Washington as their "good father" who promises the natives that if they do as he desires, he will protect them. Seattle says that the White people's brave men will provide them strength and will protect them from ancient enemies.

- Natives' God is different from the colonisers' God. The God of the Whites protects only the paleface children and forsakes the Red Indian children. God of the natives the Great Spirit has also forsaken them. If they have a common God then he is partial to his European children. They are two distinct races having separate origins and separate destinies. There is a great difference between them.

- He extols that there is a sacredness associated not only with the ashes of their ancestors but also with this land which is their resting place, but the Whites wander far away from their ancestors' graves. The natives have close associations with the dreams of their men.

- The ancestors of the Europeans (after their death) cease to love them; but the Native Americans never forget the world that gave them their being and identity. They keep on loving its valleys, its rivers, its magnificent mountains and its lakes

- Not a single star of hope hovers above the natives' horizon. The winds moan and grim fate follows them. Their situation is similar to a wounded doe that is being hunted down. In a few more years, their race will disappear. White settlers too will have their decay, which, though distant, awaits them. However sharing the common destiny, will help both the races.

- Seattle says that they will accept the Governor's proposal for surrendering their lands only on one condition: that they will never be denied the privilege of visiting the tombs of their ancestors. The land is sacred and pure. Every hill, every valley, every plain and even the rocks (which seem to be (lifeless) are holy.

- Chief Seattle ends his speech by saying that the White man will never be alone. Even when the last native would have perished, "these shores will swarm with the invisible dead" of his tribe. He requests White men to deal kindly with his people as the "dead are not powerless". Seattle by the end states that there is no death, but only a change of worlds

3. Tribal Belief System	4. Western Belief System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land is a natural resource. It cannot be possessed by man because all life depends on it (one cannot buy land any more than one can buy sky or air.) • Every part of the Earth — be it a valley, a mountain, a rock is sacred. • We are part of the Earth. The Earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the Earth. • All living and non-living things are our brothers and sisters — we must show the kindness we would show to any brother/sister. • We must preserve the Earth for subsequent generations. • All things are connected — man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. • Do not destroy the forests or pollute the rivers — they are life-givers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Universe was made for Man. Every square foot of the planet belongs to man. • Man was made to rule the World. Man must have mastery over the World and he must conquer the Universe. • There are no bounds to man's right to compete with other species. • The resources in the World are inexhaustible. We can consume as much as we want. • Man was born flawed. Man can get rid of his sins only by strict adherence to institutionalised Christianity. • There is a technological remedy for every problem. • Man has the right to unlimited expansion. • There is no such thing as: global warming, overpopulation, non-renewable resources or pollution.

NOTES

1. *Yonder*: distant

2. *tears of compassion*: tears of sympathy

3. *untold*: countless.

4. *overcast*: cloudy.

5. *The Great Chief at Washington*: George

Washington, the first President of the USA. Washington state is in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. It is named after George Washington.

Note: Since Chief Seattle was an illiterate man, he referred to George Washington as the President of the USA though during Chief Seattle's time, the US President, was Franklin Pierce. 'Big Chief' refers to the US President while *White Chief* refers to Governor Isaac Stevens.

7. *Red Man*: Native American.

9. *shell paved*: covered with hard shells of tortoise, turtles or other shelled sea creatures like crab and oyster.

11. *reproach*: disappointment.

13. *relentless*: hatch

15. *westward*: towards the west.

17. *King George*: George III of the United Kingdom (1738-1820).

19. *Haidas*: Indigenous people of North America.

21. *Wax stronger*: spread from one to another area like melting wax when heated.

6. *vast prairies*: a large open area of grassland specially found in North America.

8. *ruffled*: disturbed.

10. *untimely decay*: destroyed before time.

12. *paleface*: a name used by the North-American Indians for a White person.

14. *restrain*: control

16. *hostilities*: enmity, animosities.

18. *bristling*: vigorous and energetic

20. *Tsimshians*: North American Indians of the North-west Coast.

22. *ebbing*: receding

23.*receding*: retreating

25.*firmament*: the sky.

27.*iron finger*: Biblical Phrase which means Finger of God. It refers to the words written onto stone tablets that later were brought down from Mount Sinai by Moses.

The tablets were also known as the Ten Commandments Literarily the expression means immortal fingers.

29.*traditions*: the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation.

31.*portals*: gateways.

33.*sequestered*: secluded.

35.*yearn*: dream of, long for something that one has lost.

37.*flees*: makes a quick exit

39.*dense*: thick.

41.*Indian's*: native American Indians of the North

43.*horizon*: the line at which the earth's surface and the sky appears to meet, range of vision.

45.*trail*: track, path

47.*stolidly*: without being upset.

49.*untimely fate*: prematured destiny.

24.*teeming multitudes*: a large number of people.

26.*hallowed*: holy, sacred.

28.*comprehend*: understand

30.*sachems*: the chiefs of American Indian people.

32.*verdant*: flourishing

34.*vales*: the poetic terminology used for valley

36.*fond*: having affection or liking for.

38.*retire*: give up

40.*remnant*: remaining

42.*hovers*: hangs, remains in one place in air.

44.*moan*: lament

46.*fell*: deadly, terrible.

48.*doom*: destruction.

50.*decay*: perish, wither.

51. *ponder*: think about carefully

52. *molestation*: to annoy, disturb, or persecute especially with hostile intent or injurious effect.

54. *grove*: a small wood.

56. *thrill*: to be excited.

58. *braves*: American Indian warriors.

60. *sombre solitudes*: dark lonely places.

62. *myth*: folktale, traditional story involving supernatural beings or events.

64. *throng*: multitude

53. *estimation*: opinion

55. *Swelter*: become exceedingly hot.

57. *stirring*: exciting

59. *brief season*: short period of time.

61. *eventide*: evening.

63. *solitude*: the state or situation of being alone.

65. *hosts*: reference to the spirits of the dead natives.

Chapter-2 Old Man at the Bridge

Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961)

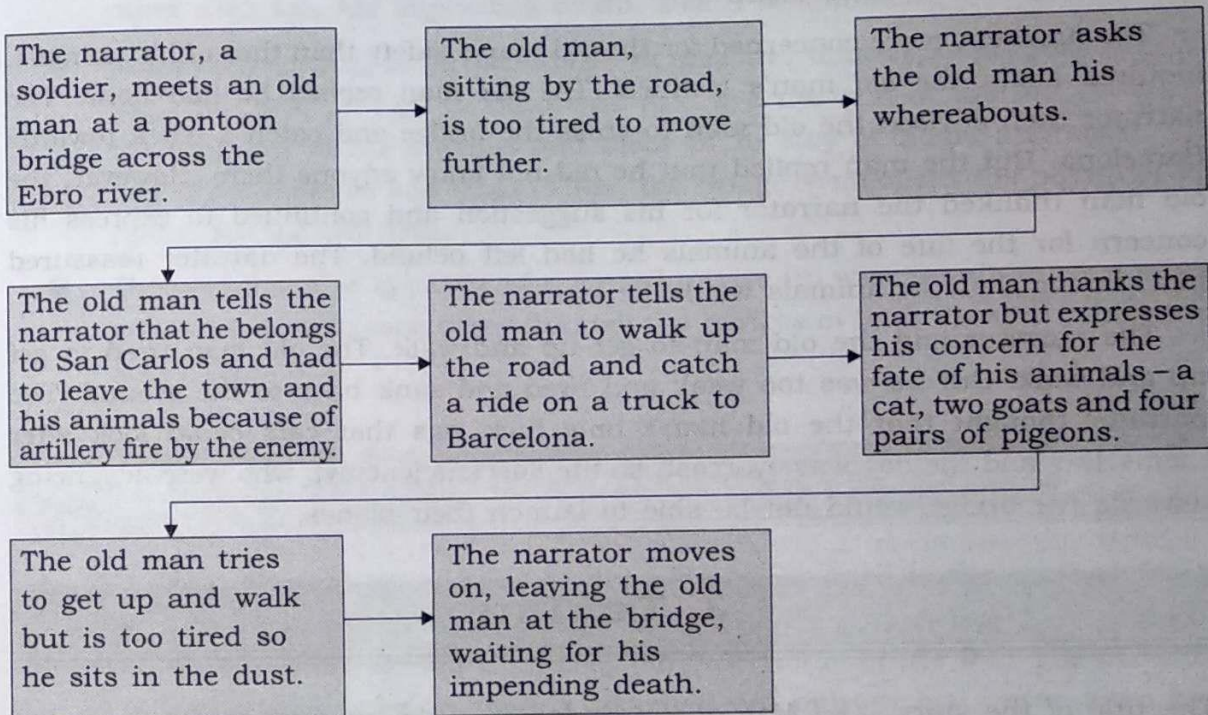
1. INTRODUCTION

Old Man at the Bridge is one of Hemingway's shortest tales. It is based on the Easter Sunday stopover at the Ebro river during his coverage of the Spanish War in April 1938 as a newspaper correspondent. The story, which was originally composed as a news dispatch from the Amposta Bridge over the Ebro river, was later on submitted by Hemingway to the *Ken Magazine* as a short story later on published in the book, *The Fifth Column and the first Forty-Nine Stories* published in 1938.

In the story, Old Man of the Bridge, the author reflects on the horrors of war and the physical, mental and psychological effects of it on countless civilian victims - those 'without politics'.

2. PLOT

Storyline



NOTES

1. *steel rimmed*: having frames of steel.

3. *staggered*: moved unsteadily.

5. *artillery*: the section of the army that uses guns.

7. *forks*: divided into two parts.

9. *Barcelona*: a city in Spain.

11. *Easter Sunday*: Sunday when Christ rose from the dead three days after his crucifixion.

12. *Fascists*: political leaders who support

2. *pontoon bridge*: a bridge that is made of large hollow containers filled with air.

4. *plodded*: walked slowly with heavy steps.

6. *politics*: a person's political views.

8. *Tortosa*: a city in Spain, located at 12 metres above sea level by the Ebro river.

10. *blankly*: without any expression.

Fascism (an extreme political system which favours a strong central government and which does not allow any opposition.)

Chapter-3 A Horse And Two Goats

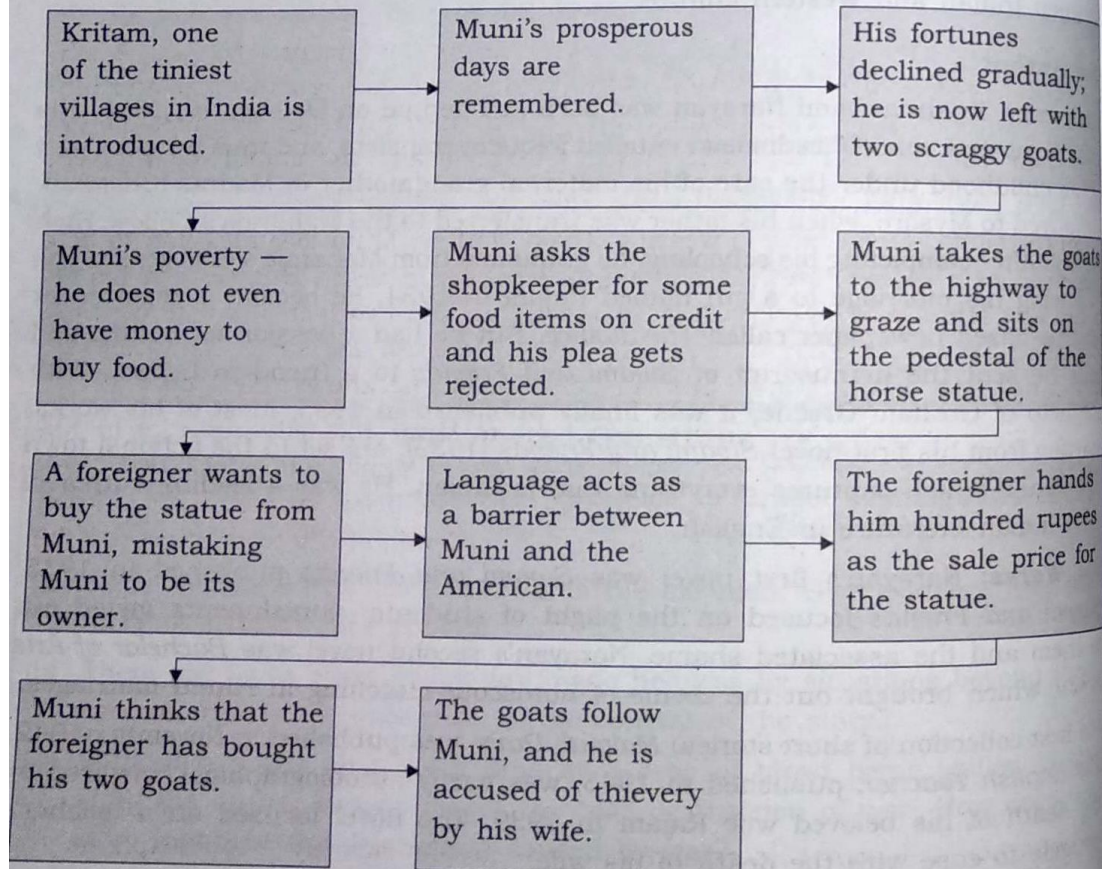
R.K. Narayan (1906-2001)

1. INTRODUCTION

A Horse and Two Goats is a short story by RK Narayan, set in one of the tiniest villages in India, Kritam. The main part of the story is presented to the readers in the form of a comic and humorous dialogue between Muni, a Tamil speaking poor Villager and an English speaking businessman from New York. The two men try to communicate but cannot understand each other because of the lack of knowledge of each other's language and culture. It is with their troubled communication that RK Narayan has tried to explore the conflicts between rich and poor as well as between Indian and Western culture.

2. PLOT

Storyline



NOTES

1. *dotting*: spread out.

3. *grandiose*: impressive.

5. *gargoyles*: a comically carved human or animal face or figure.

7. *sallied*: marched out.

9. *snapped*: broke suddenly.

11. *nourishment*: the food necessary for growth

13. *craving*: strong desire.

2. *microscopic*: very small.

4. *gorgeous*: very attractive.

6. *balustrade*: a railing.

8. *crook*: a bent or curved implement, sickle.

10. *faggots*: a bundle of sticks bound together as fuel.

12. *tethered*: fastened.

14. *sauce*: a semi-liquid substance

15. *upturned*: upward directed.

17. *parapet*: a low protective wall.

19. *scoundrel*: rogue

21. *recoup*: recover

23. *accosted*: detained

25. *lounging*: standing in a relaxed way

27. *progeny*: offspring

29. *meandered*: curved

31. *crouch*: bend down.

33. *reared*: used

35. *scythe*: a tool with curved blade especially for cutting long grass.

37. *bulging*: swelling eyes, when the eye balls look large.

39. *brocade*: a rich fabric woven with a raised pattern, typically with gold or silver thread.

40. *sash*: waistband

42. *gashed*: cut using a knife or sword.

44. *inscribed*: written or carved words or symbols on something, especially as a formal or permanent record.

46. *cactus*: desert plants with sharp spines and thick stems.

served with food to add flavour.

16. *sneered*: gave a mocking smile.

18. *unobtrusively*: unnoticeably.

20. *flung*: hurled forcefully

22. *conjure up*: to create or achieve something difficult or unexpected

24. *cronies*: friends

26. *summoned*: called

28. *bullied*: forced

30. *pedestal*: base on which a statue is mounted

32. *moulded*: shaped

34. *prancing*: moving with high springy steps.

36. *mustachios*: long moustaches.

38. *aquiline*: curved

41. *vandals*: persons who deliberately destroy or damage property

43. *to topple off*: to make something (here milestones) unsteady and fall down.

45. *arid*: dry

47. *lantana*: an evergreen shrub

48.*tilted*: slanted

50.*intrigued*: lured

51.*novelty*: something unfamiliar or new.

53.*assortment*: a varied mixture

55.*sputtered*: produced explosive sound

57.*nodding*: lowering head in approval

59.*fidgeted*: made small movements through nervousness

61.*gainsay*: deny

63.*undaunted*: not afraid

65.*took stock*: assessed

67.*potent*: powerful

69.*shrank away*: drew back in fear

71.*speculation*: guesswork

73.*ingratiatingly*: intending to gain approval

75.*scruples*: doubts

77.*oration*: discourse

79.*gestured*: indicated.

81.*churned up*: moved something violently.

83.*stimulating*: arousing interest.

85.*assuming*: accepting something to be true

87.*parangi*: foreign language.

89.*adversaries*: enemies

49.*scrounge*: borrow or beg

52.*spectacles*: shows that are exciting to watch.

54.*casually*: in an informal way.

56.*dashboard*: the panel facing the driver of a vehicle

58.*paced*: walked up and down

60.*edge away*: move cautiously away

62.*slanderers*: the people who spread rumours

64.*racking*: distressing

66.*wary*: suspicious

68.*reeling*: tottering

70.*mutilated*: disfigured.

72.*courteously*: respectfully.

74.*implored*: pleaded with

76.*reflective*: deeply thoughtful

78.*camphor*: a substance with an aromatic smell and bitter taste.

80.*driftwood*: pieces of wood floating on the sea and washed ashore.

82.*pinioned*: held down.

84.*fascination*: interest.

86.*get a kick out*: to enjoy something very much

88.*running his finger along*: touching smoothly.

90. *Kali Yuga*: the last of the four stages
the world goes through as part of
the cycle of the ages.

91. *Kalki*: According to the Puranas, Kalki
refers to the tenth avatar of Vishnu,
who will appear at the end of
Yuga, the current epoch. He will be
atop white horse with a drawn
blazing sword and would destroy
all the enemies.

93. *bonus volumes*: freely gifted books.

95. *discoursed*: preached.

97. *pad*: cover with soft material

99. *famished*: became very hungry

100. *wayfarers*: travellers

102. *clump*: cluster.

104. *splendour*: glory.

106. *tucked away*: hidden or difficult to find

108. *glared*: stared angrily.

92. *Redeemer*: the ultimate saviour

94. *disapprove*: object to

96. *hugging*: tightly embracing

98. *bearish*: falling price in the market.

101. *Yama Loka*: Hell

103. *thicket*: a dense group of bushes

105. *siphoned off*: drew liquid off from
something using a siphon (tube)

107. *wriggled*: turned and twisted the body

Treasure trove (Short stories)- workbook solutions

NOTE: Kindly also refer to your English Treasure Trove textbook and chapter notes in the workbook.

Chapter 1- Speech by Chief Seattle 1854

- Chief Seattle

ASSIGNMENTS

Read the extracts give below and answer the questions that follow:

1. *Yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion upon my people for centuries untold, and which to us appears changeless and eternal, may change. Today is fair. Tomorrow it may be overcast with clouds. My words are like stars that never change.*

(a) Identify and provide the context to the passage.

Ans. The passage is from Chief Seattle's Speech delivered in 1854.

(b) Explain: (i) "yonder sky" (ii) "centuries untold"

Ans. "yonder sky" — Distant sky

"centuries untold" — countless centuries.

(c) What does the speaker mean by "Today is fair. Tomorrow it may be overcast with clouds"?

Ans. The speaker Chief Seattle means that the present may seem to be good; but in future, things may turn out to be bad.

(d) What does the speaker mean by his words will never change?

Ans. The speaker Chief Seattle says that his words will never change because he is very certain about his words. The Great Chief of Washington can rely upon his words as much as the return of the sun or the seasons.

e) What do you find out about his character from
from which the passage is taken?

Ans. From the given passage, it can be found out that Chief Seattle is a man of worth whose words are of high value as he himself proclaims. He feels deeply for his tribe and understands his tribe as well as nature very well.

(f) Do you agree with the author? Give reasons.

Ans. Yes, I agree with Chief Seattle as -

(i) Nature is always compassionate to people who care for nature;

(ii) Days are not always the same and there can be some changes; and

(iii) Chief Seattle's words are of high value.

2. This is kind of him for we know he has little need of our friendship in return. His people are many. They are like grass that covers the vast prairies. My people are few. They resemble the scattering trees of a storm-swept plain.

(a) Provide the context of the given passage.

Ans. The context of the given passage is Chief Seattle's Speech delivered in 1854.

(b) Explain (i) prairies (ii) storm-swept plain

Ans. Prairies - open areas of grass land found in North America

(ii) Storm-swept plain — a plain land which is being swept by the storm and everything is deserted.

(c) What is kind of "him"?

Ans. The Great Chief of Washington's proposal to acquire land of the Red Indians is being referred here. Chief

Seattle says that it is kind of Great Chief of Washington as he had little need of Red Indian's friendship. Chief Seattle is ironical.

(d) Why does he need little of the speaker's friendship?

Ans. The Great Chief of Washington is a great man who needs little friendship of Chief Seattle as the powerful man does not need the friendship of the weak.

(e) Comment on the comparison made in the passage.

Ans. The white men are referred to as grass which grows all over prairies. Similar to grass in prairies, the white man has taken over the whole of the land of America.

(f) Do you agree with the author?

Ans. Yes, I agree with the author, Chief Seattle, because the white man came as a colonizer to America and colonized the whole of the land of the Red Indians.

3. Youth is impulsive. When our young men grow angry at some real or imaginary wrong, and disfigure their faces with black paint, it denotes their hearts are black, and that they are often cruel and relentless, and our old men and old women are unable to restrain them.

(a) Who is the speaker?

Ans. The speaker is Chief Seattle in his speech delivered in 1854.

(b) Why is the speaker referring to the youth?

Ans. The speaker, Chief Seattle, refers to the youth of the Red Indians to say how with their impulsiveness the youth becomes an irreconcilable force and how it becomes difficult to restrain them.

(c) What does he speak about the youth of his tribe?

Ans. Chief Seattle says that when the youth of the Suquamish tribe gets enraged against any wrong doing, they paint their faces in black paint which is nothing but a sign of their black hearts.

(d) What is his view about the white man?

Ans. Chief Seattle's views about the white man not as enemy but as people who has come and destroyed the nature of America by their cruel ways and means. In his speech, he mentions some of the ways by which the white men are bringing doom to the world.

(e) Comment on the significance of "our old men and old women are unable to restrain them."

Ans. The significance of "our old men and old women are unable to restrain them" lies in the fact that if youth of the Suquamish tribe are aroused then no one will be able to restrain them from their hostility to the white men. A civil war will ensue and nature will be destroyed.

4. So, we will consider your offer to buy our land. But it will not be easy. For this land is sacred to us.

(a) Who is the speaker?

Ans. The speaker is Chief Seattle in his speech delivered in 1854.

(b) What offer is being referred to in the given lines? Who made the offer to whom?

Ans. The offer of acquiring the Red Indians' land is being referred to in the given lines.

Governor Stevens, the White Chief of Washington, made this offer to Chief Seattle, the leader of the Suquamish tribe.

(c) What does the speaker have to say about the offer?

Ans. Chief Seattle has no other way but to accept the offer because the white men are more powerful; but Chief Seattle does not accept the offer without any conditions. He puts forward the condition that the Red Indians will not be barred from visiting the tombs of their forefathers as the land is sacred to them.

(d) Why does the speaker think that the land is sacred to them?

Ans. The speaker, Chief Seattle, says that the land is sacred to them because in those lands lie the remains of their forefathers which they worship with high reverence. Land is sacred to them because, unlike the white men, the Red Indians consider land to be their source of sustenance.

(e) What aspect of the speaker's worldview is reflected through these lines and in the text in which these lines occur?

Ans. The speaker, Chief Seattle's worldview is very simple and yet very high - he considers, alongwith his tribe, the land to be sacred as their ancestors' tombs are there. Moreover, they have a high regard for nature as nature sustains human beings. He therefore considers nature in very high regard, unlike the white men who merely exploits nature.

5. Our good father in Washington - for I presume he is now our father as well as yours, since king George has moved his boundaries further north our great and good father, I say, sends us words that if we do as he desires he

will protect us.

(a) Identify the speaker.

Ans. The speaker is Chief Seattle in his speech delivered in 1854.

(b) Who is the "good father"? Why is he referred to as "good father"?

Ans. The 'good father' is Chief of Washington, George Washington. He is considered as the 'good father' as a father protects his sons and leads them to places holding their hands; similarly, he expects the Chief of Washington to lead them (the people of Suquamish Tribe) and to be protected.

(c) Who is King George?

Ans. King George is king George III of United Kingdom (England) who ruled England from 1738 to 1820.

(d) What words are being sent to them?

Ans. The 'words that are sent to the people of Suquamish tribe is that the white men want to acquire their land.

(e) Who will protect whom? Why?

Ans. The Chief of Washington, George Washington, will protect them because Chief Seattle considers him as a good father and the role of a father is to protect his sons.

(f) What does the speaker really intend to say?

Ans. The speaker intends to say that if the Suquamish tribe agrees to the proposal of land acquisition of the white men; then it would be the duty of the white men to protect the interests of the people of the Suquamish tribe as a father protects his sons.

6. *"Your God is not our God! Your God loves your people and hates mine! He folds his strong protecting arms*

*lovingly about the paleface and leads him by the hand as
a father leads an infant son.*

(a) Who is the speaker?

Ans. The speaker is Chief Seattle in his speech delivered in 1854.

(b) Why is the speaker hated by "Your God"?

Ans. The speaker, Chief Seattle, makes an ironic comment by saying that the white man's God hates the Red Indians; otherwise why would God let them suffer the way they did.

(c) What does the author mean by "paleface"?

Ans. The white man's face is being termed by Chief Seattle as "pale face".

(d) What similarity between God and father is being talked about in the passage?

Ans. Chief Seattle mentions that as a father protects his sons and leads them everywhere holding their hands, similarly God is holding the hands of the white men.

(e) Do you agree with the speaker about "Your God"?

Ans. No, I do not quite agree with the speaker about "Your God". God is kind to all, it is human beings who are unjust to others and suppress and oppress them as did the white men to the Red Indians.

(f) How does the speaker view his God?

Ans. The speaker Chief Seattle views his God as the spirits of his ancestors who never leave the land and guide them to the right path of action– to respect, preserve and love nature so as to sustain mankind in a happy world.

7. To us the ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their

resting place hallowed ground. You wander far from the graves of your ancestors and seemingly without regret. Your religion was written upon tablets of stone by iron finger of your God so that you could not forget.

(a) Who is the speaker?

Ans. The speaker is Chief Seattle in his speech delivered in 1854.

(b) Explain: (i) Hallowed ground, (ii) Tablets of stone, and (iii) Iron finger.

Ans. (i) "Hallowed ground" refers to the holy or sacred land as Red Indians believed that land is sacred to them because it has ashes of their ancestors.

(ii) "Tablets of stone" are the Ten Commandments of Christianity which are written on Stone; and (iii) "Iron fingers" refer to the fingers of God with which the Ten Commandments are written.

(c) What difference of worldviews is presented in the passage?

Ans. There are many differences of worldviews -

(i) The white man considers land to be a natural resource to be exploited; the Red Indian considers it sacred.

(ii) The whites want to rule over the earth; the Red Indian believes that Earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth.

(ii) The white man uses natural resources without thinking about the future generations; the Red Indian thinks about sustainability.

(iv) The whites leave the tomb of their forefathers and move on; the Red Indians hold on to the tombs of their ancestors which are dear to them.

(d) Why does the speaker refer to the differences of worldviews?

Ans. The speaker Chief Seattle refers to the differences of worldviews of the Whites as well as the Red Indians to point out how the white man's ways are detrimental to earth and how they need to take an approach which is more ecologically sustainable.

(e) What are the speaker's views about their God and religion?

Ans. Chief Seattle views the white man's religion as Christianity, the Ten Commandments written on stone tablets but Red Indians religion is their ancestors' spirits which make them follow the right path. The white man's God only thinks about the welfare of the white men and the Red Indians' God (their ancestors) believe in maintaining a sustainable world.

8. We will ponder your proposition and when we decide we will let you know.

But should we accept it, I here and

now make this condition that we will not be denied the privilege without molestation of visiting at any time the

tombs of our ancestors, friends and children.

(a) Provide the context of the above passage.

Ans. The context of the above passage is Chief Seattle's Speech delivered in 1854 in response to the Great Chief of Washington's proposal of acquiring Red Indian's lands.

(b) Which proposition is being referred to?

Ans. The proposition is the White man's offer (Great Chief

of Washington's) of acquiring the land of the Red Indians.

(c) What is the condition of accepting the proposal that the speaker mentions?

Ans. Chief Seattle mentions that they can agree to the white man's proposal of acquiring the land only on the condition that the Red Indians have the visiting rights to the tombs of their ancestors.

(d) How does the speaker view his ancestors? Why?

Ans. The speaker Chief Seattle considers his ancestors to be his guiding spirit who shows him the right path to follow.

(e) What 'privilege' is the speaker asking for? Why?

Ans. The privilege that the speaker Chief Seattle is asking for is to have visiting rights to their ancestors' tombs after the white man had acquired the land. He asks for visiting rights to the land because the Red Indians consider their land to be sacred on which their ancestors' tombs are.

(f) What aspect of the speaker's character is evident from the passage?

Ans. Chief Seattle is a simple man who considers his ancestors with great respect and pride. Therefore, he does not have any problem in giving the white man their land but he wants visiting rights to the land where their ancestors lie in their tombs because he considers them sacred.

9. And when the last Red Man shall have perished, and the memory of my tribe shall become a myth among the White Men, these shores will swarm with the invisible dead of

my tribe, and when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway or in the silence of the pathless woods they will not be alone.

(a) Who is the speaker? What is he speaking about?

Ans. The speaker is Chief Seattle. He is speaking that even when the Red Indians tribes will vanish from this world because of white man's encroachment, their spirits will be there hovering over the land to protect everyone.

(b) What is a myth? What does he mean by his tribe becoming a myth?

Ans. 'Myth' here signifies a traditional story. Chief Seattle is fearful of the way the White men are encroaching upon their land and civilization and afraid that soon a time will come when the Red Indians would be no more in reality and they will only be in their stories.

(c) What is "invisible dead"?

Ans. The dead people are no more visible; but their spirits hover over the land according to the worldview of Chief Seattle; therefore he refers to the dead Red Indians as 'invisible dead.'

(d) What does the speaker mean by "they will not be alone"?

Ans. By "they will not be alone", the speaker Chief Seattle means that the people will not be alone because the spirits of the dead Red Indians will hover over the land to protect the people.

(e) What do you think about the speaker from the given passage?

Ans. From the passage, it can be gathered that even though?"

the whites are taking over the lands of the Red Indians and pushing them to their extinction, the Red Indians will always think good about the whites.

(f) What worldview of the speaker is evident in the passage?

Ans. Chief Seattle's worldview is very simple and straightforward as it looks forward to a sustainable growth where they highly value their land and hold it sacred. His worldview aims at achieving good for the whole of human kind.

(g) How is the speaker's worldview different from that of the white man?

Ans. The speaker's worldview is different from the white men in many ways —

(i) The white man considers land to be a natural resource to be exploited; the Red Indian considers it sacred.

(ii) The whites want to rule over the earth: the Red Indian believes that Earth does not belong to man, man belongs to earth.

(iii) The white man uses natural resources without thinking about the future generations; the Red Indian thinks about sustainability.

(iv) The whites leave the tomb of their forefathers and move on; the Red Indians hold on to the tombs of their ancestors which are dear to them.

(h) Which of the worldviews is more appealing to you?

Why?

Ans. Chief Seattle's worldview is more appealing as it talks about sustainable growth and it looks forward to the good of everyone living in this world.

ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Chief Seattle's Speech is a documentation of the ways in which the white men have brought us to the days of doom. Do you agree? Give a reasoned answer by referring to the Speech.

Ans. Yes, Chief Seattle's Speech is a documentation of the ways in which the white men have brought us to the days of doom.

The white men in their process of setting up civilization in America have forgotten that nature is not a thing which can be destroyed at will to serve one's own immediate purpose. Natural resources are limited and if they are not used or utilized judiciously, then it can be the primary reason for the doom of mankind. Realization and related actions of mankind related to the significance of the ecological resources is one of the themes of Chief Seattle's Speech where he emphasizes how we need to think differently. It is true that man with his supposed superior intelligence than any other animals in this earth has tried to rule over this world. It's a man-centric world where he has made use of all the natural resources for his own development. In the process of pursuing this progress, though it is often just materialistic, mankind has lost touch with nature and started feeling that they rule over nature. Chief Seattle reminds in his Speech that it is not that we can rule over nature, moreover, it is important to realize that we are part of nature and we need to respect every aspect of nature.

Therefore, Chief Seattle makes a critique of the white man's ways as he thinks that the white men in their attempt to dominate all over the world, have forgotten that they need to respect nature and need to feel that all other things in nature

are as equally important as man. Animals are treated by the white man as inferior beings and they kill animals for sport. Chief Seattle does not understand how this cruelty to nature makes the white man a superior creature. Therefore, as the Governor of Washington sends a missive to Chief Seattle to buy the land of the Red Indians, Chief Seattle tells the white men that till they learn how to respect nature as with youthful ecstasy when we try to fight amongst ourselves, we not only destroy ourselves, but also nature which is "holy" to the Red Indians.

2. Ecological imbalance is the reason of mankind's doom.

Chief Seattle warned us about it long time ago. Discuss Chief Seattle's Speech in the light of the above.

Ans. What the world is getting conscious about today was part of the culture of the Red Indians and many other tribes of the world who thought that they need to respect and love nature as their own for the sake of their own survival. But in the historical past, in the overdrive for possessing the world, the white men forgot that their civilization's progress is at loggerheads with natural order and with their development, they are writing an era of doom for mankind. Chief Seattle's Speech can be seen as one of the early attempts of making the white people aware of their mistakes, of making the white people understand that if they do not mend their ways, then it is not far that they will face a major ecological crisis.

Chief Seattle's Speech thus is very significant in our life today so as to make us learn how we need to view our lives as part of nature, how we need to respect nature, how we need to rethink about our goals so as to make them harmonious with

nature. In the last few decades, UNESCO and many other national and international organizations have taken different initiatives to make people aware of the ways by which they can maintain ecological balance and not carry on further polluting the world. We need to follow those initiatives so as to make human beings survive and we need to remind ourselves what Chief Seattle said more than one hundred and fifty years earlier — that we need to preserve nature, to love and respect nature as our sacred mother and all creatures living on earth as our brothers.

3. Red Indian's life was not at discord with nature as against the white man who thought nature to be his enemy.

Discuss the differences of the worldviews of the Red Indians and that of the white man and make a comparative critical note on both.

Ans. The white men came to America and took over the land of the Red Indians, the original inhabitants of America and established a white civilization. The Red Indians, in Chief Seattle's Speech, are presented to be people who with their youthful ecstasy do not want to fight the white men but moreover want to cohabit with them in a peaceful way so as to enjoy the bounty of nature and not to destroy it.

The Chief of Washington "wishes" to buy the Red Indians' land and has sent them a proposal. This proposal is nothing but an order; but Chief Seattle thanks the Chief as they are thought to be worthy enough with whom the Chief of Washington wants to negotiate the price of the land. Whites are so powerful martially that the Red Indians will not be able to stop them; but still Chief Seattle does not stop from

criticising the ways of the white men in his Speech to tell them what he really thinks.

In this context the difference of worldviews of the two peoples - the whites and the Red Indians, needs to be understood-

- Whereas the white man considers land to be a natural resource which they must own so as to reap benefits out of it, the Red Indians consider their land to be sacred or holy.
- The Red Indians believe that the Earth does not belong to man, rather, man belongs to the earth, whereas the whites want to rule over the Earth.
- Whereas the white man utilizes natural resources without thinking about the future generations, the Red Indians present a consciousness which talks about sustainability.
- The Red Indians view land as a place where their ancestors have lived and where the ashes of their ancestors are and therefore values land as a sacred thing; the whites usually leave the tombstones of their ancestors and move ahead.

The Red Indians are emotional beings who value their ancestors, whereas the whites are practical and think of moving ahead.

Chapter 2-The Old Man at the Bridge

- Ernest Hemmingway

ASSIGNMENTS

Read the extracts give below and answer the questions that follow:

1. *It was my business to cross the bridge, explore the bridgehead beyond and find out to what point the enemy had advanced. I did this and returned over the bridge.*

There were not so many carts now and very few people on foot, but the old man was still there.

(a) Identify the author and the text.

Ans. The author is Ernest Hemmingway and the text is "The Old Man at the Bridge."

(b) Who says "my" in the passage? Describe his business in your own words.

Ans. "My" in the passage is said by the narrator of the story "The Old Man at the Bridge."

The narrator is a soldier whose business is to look at the bridge and figure out the advancement of the enemy forces.

(c) Where are the carts and people going? Why?

Ans. The carts and the people are fleeing from the city of San Carlos as the enemy forces are approaching towards city of San Carlos.

(d) Which old man is being referred to? What was the old man doing?

Ans. The old man referred to in the passage is a man who has left the city of San Carlos leaving behind a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons.

The old man was sitting near the pontoon bridge as he can go no further.

(e) How old was the old man and what he used to do?

Ans. The old man was seventy six years old and back in San Carlos he used to take care of animals which consisted of a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons.

(f) What does the speaker of these lines do after this?

Ans. The speaker of these lines, the narrator (a soldier) starts

conversing with the old man to find out who he is and why he is waiting there.

2. *"Where do you come from?" I asked him.*

"From San Carlos," he said, and smiled.

That was his native town and so it gave him pleasure to mention it and he smiled.

"I was taking care of animals," he explained.

"Oh," I said, not quite understanding.

(a) Between whom is this conversation taking place?

Ans. This conversation is taking place between the seventy six year old man who is from San Carlos and the narrator of the story, a soldier whose duty is to keep a watch on the approaching enemy.

(b) Who is from San Carlos? Why did the person have pleasure in mentioning his native town?

Ans. The seventy six year old man is from San Carlos. He has pleasure in mentioning his native town as anyone is proud of the place where one is born and brought up.

(c) What does the speaker mean by 'I was taking care of animals'? What animals were they?

Ans. The speaker, a seventy six year old man, used to take care of a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons as they were his family.

(d) What did the other speaker not understand? Why?

Ans. The other speaker (a soldier and the narrator) did not quite understand what the old man meant by his taking care of animals. It is strange that a person's job is just to take care of animals as the soldier (the narrator) does

not understand that the animals are his family.

(e) What does the conversation say about the speaker who is from San Carlos?

Ans. The conversation says that the speaker from San Carlos the old man of seventy six years, is very connected to his town as he feels pride in uttering its name. He and his family consisting of a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons used to live happily there and the man feels very sad for leaving behind his family.

3. He did not look like a shepherd nor a herdsman and I looked at his black dusty clothes and his gray dusty face and his steel rimmed spectacles and said, "What animals were they?"

(a) Who speaks these lines about whom?

Ans. The narrator of the short story "The Old Man at the Bridge", a soldier, speaks these lines about the seventy six years old man from San Carlos.

(b) Who did not look like a shepherd?

Ans. The seventy six old man from San Carlos did not look like a shepherd.

(c) What animals are being talked about in the passage?

What happened to the animals?

Ans. The animals talked about in the passage are the animals that the Old Man had – one cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons.

The old man has left them back at San Carlos as he had to vacate the city in fear of the approaching fascist army.

(d) What is the relationship between the animals and the

person referred to? What does the relationship talk about?

Ans. The relationship between the animals and the old man is that of being part of a family. They all belong to a family. The relationship speaks a lot about the old man and his love for the animals.

(e) Comment on the relationship.

Ans. The relationship between the old man and his animals (a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons) speaks volumes about the warmth and affection the old man has for his animals.

The old man is sad and can move no more than the pontoon bridge as he is too worried about the well being of his animals.

4. I was watching the bridge and the African looking country of the Ebro Delta and wondering how long now it would be before we would see the enemy, and listening all the while for the first noises that would signal that ever mysterious event called contact, and the old man still sat there.

(a) Who was watching the bridge? Why?

Ans. The narrator of the story "The Old Man at the Bridge" is a soldier and he is watching the bridge. He is watching because it is his duty to keep a watch on the approaching enemy artillery forces.

(b) Which enemy is being referred to?

Ans. The enemy - the fascist artillery forces – is approaching the city of San Carlos. It is being referred to in the passage.

(c) Why was the old man sitting there?

Ans. The old man is sitting there as he is unable to move further. He has left the city of San Carlos where he used to take care of his animals - a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons. The thought of their well being, nostalgia for the hometown as well as his physical state make him sit there.

(d) Why is the speaker worried about the old man sitting there?

Ans. Yes, the speaker (the narrator, a soldier) is worried about the old man sitting there as he may be killed by the approaching enemy forces.

(e) Narrate the conversation that happens between the old man and the speaker after this passage.

Ans. The old man and the speaker converse about the old man's family where the old man states that his family consists of a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons and then the old man states that the cat can look after itself in adverse times but he is worried about the other animals.

The speaker also enquires about the old man's politics to which the old man says that he has no politics.

5. *"And you have no family?" I asked, watching the far end of the bridge where a few last carts were hurrying down the slope of the bank.*

"No," he said, "only the animals I stated. The cat, of course, will be all right. A cat can look out for itself, but I cannot think what will become of the others."

"What politics have you?" I asked.

(a) Who has no family? Do you really think so?

Ans. The old man in the short story "The Old Man at the Bridge" supposedly has no family. It is not true though as his family consists of his animals - a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons.

(b) Who was watching the far end of the bridge? Why?

Ans. The narrator of the story, a soldier, was watching the far end of the bridge to watch the advancement of the enemy artillery forces.

(c) Who are the others'? What does the speaker mean 'what will become of the others'?

Ans. The others are two goats and four pairs of pigeons. The old man has left the animals to fend for themselves at the city of San Carlos because of the approaching enemy forces and is now very worried for the animals. He knows that the cat will be able to look after itself: but he is worried about the other animals.

(d) What politics does the speaker has?

Ans. The speaker, that is, the old man has no politics.

(e) What is the significance of the passage in the story?

Ans. The significance of the passage lies in defining a family as a family consists of people whom you care for. The old man cares for his animals and therefore they are his family about whom he is worried as the fascist artillery forces are about to invade the city of San Carlos.

6. He looked at me very blankly and tiredly, and then said, having to share his worry with someone, "The cat will be all right, I am sure. There is no need to be unquiet about the cat. But the others. Now what do you think about the others?"

(a) Who looked at whom blankly and tiredly? Why?

Ans. The seventy six year old man looked at the soldier and the narrator of the story blankly and tiredly because he is physically tired of walking for twelve kilometers and because he is in anguish about the animals that he has left behind in the city of San Carlos because of the approaching fascist artillery forces.

(b) Which cat is being referred to? Why is there no need to be unquiet about the cat'?

Ans. The cat of the Old man from San Carlos is being referred to. There is no need to be unquiet about the cat" because a cat can look after itself even in adverse circumstances.

(c) Who are the others?

Ans. The others are two goats and four pairs of pigeons.

(d) Why is the speaker worried about the others?

Ans. The speaker, the old man from San Carlos is worried about the other animals - two goats and four pairs of pigeons - as the enemy forces are approaching the town of San Carlos where the old man has left these animals.

(e) What aspect of the speaker is evident from his concern about 'others'?

Ans. The old man is a caring person and considers the animals to be part of his family. He loves the animals dearly and even though he has left them behind, he cannot but think about their well being.

7. There was nothing to do about him. It was Easter Sunday and the Fascists were advancing toward the Ebro. It was a gray overcast day with a low ceiling so their planes were not up, That and the fact that cats know how to look after themselves

was all the good luck that old man would ever have.

(a) Who is 'him' referred to in the beginning of the passage?

Describe him.

Ans. The person referred to as "him" in the beginning of the passage is the Old man from San Carlos.

The old man lived in the city of San Carlos with his animals - a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons and used to love them dearly as if they are a part of his family.

(b) What happened on the Easter Sunday?

Ans. On the Easter Sunday, the fascist artillery forces invaded the city of San Carlos and people were fleeing from the city.

(c) What image is formed in your mind while reading passage?

Ans. Easter is a time of celebration and on such a day people of San Carlos are fleeing from the town because of the approaching enemy forces. The ironical situation of the city of San Carlos is that makes the readers feel pathetic about the situation.

(d) What 'good luck did the old man have?

Ans. The only "good luck" that the old man has is that a cat can look after itself even in adverse circumstances.

Besides, the sky was overcast by clouds and the enemy planes were not flying.

(e) Why is it referred to as good luck'?

Ans. It is referred to as a "good luck" because one needs luck to survive during an artillery attack and a cat is clever enough to survive in adverse circumstances. This thought of the cat surviving the attack is referred to as "good

luck."

(f) Is it really good luck? What is the author trying to say by referring to 'good luck'?

Ans. No, it is no "good luck" at all. The author, Ernest Hemingway, uses the term "good luck" only to ironically comment on the circumstances caused by the approaching enemy forces. The arrival of the artillery force would mean destruction of the whole town of San Carlos and it is no "good luck" for the city at all.

ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS.

1. The short story "The Old Man at the Bridge" is about relationship. Do you agree? Give reasons.

Ans. Yes. Ernest Hemingway's short story "The Old Man at a Bridge" is about relationship because it presents the story of an old man who is leaving behind his animals in the town of San Carlos as the enemy forces are approaching the town. He walks for twelve miles but is not able to go on any further as he is worried about the well being of his animals whom he loves like his family.

Wars not only make us suffer but also make us lose our near and dear ones, our family. It is not that the soldier's family loses a son, who dies in the war; but there are also many casualties in the civilian population and they are the worst victims of war. In the story, we see that people of the town San Carlos are all leaving their native town to reach a safe place as the Fascist forces are approaching the town. The suffering of the people is narrated in the beginning of the story and then the story of the old man is being told to us

through the old man's conversation with the unnamed narrator. We come to know that he was taking care of his pet animals in the town of San Carlos and those animals were his family. He has left his family and walked for twelve kilometres, but now he finds it difficult to carry on any further as he is too anguished about the well being of his family which consists of a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons. It is the love for the family which makes him the last person to leave the town; it is the love for the family that makes him unable to carry on any further beyond the bridge.

2. Common people are the victims of war. The short story "The Old Man at the Bridge" deals with common people and their victimization during war. Critically comment.

Ans. Wars are usually represented in bright light by the winners and stories of injustices by the losers. These stories are fabricated without paying attention to the fact that there are many people who are not direct participants of the war and they are the worst victims. Their stories never find any mention in any narratives. Hemingway, through the portrayal of the old man and his anguish for his animals which he has left behind in the town of San Carlos, makes us realise how people like the seventy six year old man suffer for no reason during wars. It is important to realize here that wars are the most dangerous creations of mankind and often innocent people are the victims of wars. Thus Hemingway makes a strong critique of war in his short story "The Old Man at the Bridge."

Wars not only make us suffer but also make us lose our near and dear ones, our family. It is not that the soldier's family

loses a son, who dies in the war, but there are also many casualties in the civilian population and they are the worst victims of the war. In the story, we see that people of the town of San Carlos are all leaving their native town to reach a safer place as the Fascist forces are approaching the town. The suffering of the people is narrated in the beginning of the story and then the story of the old man is being told to us through the old man's conversation with the unnamed narrator. We come to know that he was taking care of his pet animals in the town of San Carlos and those animals were his family. He has left his family and walked for twelve kilometres, but now he finds it difficult to carry on any further as he is too anguished about the well being of his family which consists of a cat, two goats and four pairs of pigeons. It is the love for the family which makes him the last person to leave the town; it is the love for the family that makes him unable to carry on any further beyond the bridge.

3. "Do you think the title of the short story "The Old Man at the Bridge" is apt? Why do you think so?"

Ans. Hemingway's short story "The Old Man at the Bridge" deals with an old man sitting near the bridge for a long time, being lost in his thoughts about the animals that he has left behind at his native place as the enemy artillery were advancing. In spite of the best efforts by the narrator to make the old man to go away to a safer place, the old man carries on sitting there. As the story deals with the love of the old man for his animals (his family) and his inability to move farther than the bridge, the title is apt.

Chapter 3- A Horse and Two Goats

- R. K. Narayan

ASSIGNMENTS

Read the extracts give below and answer the questions that follow:

1. *of the seven hundred thousand villages dotting the map of India, in which the majority of India's five hundred million live, flourish and die. Kritam was probably the tiniest. It was indicated on the district survey map by a microscopic dot, the map being meant more for the revenue official out to collect tax than for the guidance of the motorist, who in any case could not hope to reach it since it sprawled far from the highway at the end of a rough track furrowed up by the iron-hooped wheels of bullock carts.*

(a) Identify the author and the text.

Ans. The author is R. K. Narayan and the text is "A Horse and Two Goats."

(b) What does "Kritam" mean according to the author?

Ans. Kritam, according to the author, means "the crown."

(c) Is there any discrepancy between what Kritam means and what it is in reality?

Ans. Yes, there is a discrepancy between what Kritam means and what it is. Kritam means "the crown" while in reality it is one of the tiniest villages of India.

(d) What kind of a portrayal of the village Kritam is done by the author? For what purpose?

Ans. Kritam is portrayed in the short story "A Horse and Two Goats" as one of the tiniest villages of India consisting

of thirty mud houses, signifying that people living there are mostly poor. To such a village, the arrival of an American is unusual. To strike this strangeness, the author portrays the village in detail.

(e) Briefly discuss any one character who belongs to the village of Kritam.

Ans. Muni, is an old man who is the protagonist of the story "A Horse and Two Goats". Every day he goes with his goats to the outskirts of the village where there is a large horse statue. He sits under the shade of the statue and spends his day while his goats carry on grazing nearby. He is not only poor but also a man who finds it difficult to manage his own self as people cast aspersions on him.

2. Muni's was the last house in the fourth street, beyond which stretched the fields. In his prosperous days Muni had owned a flock of forty sheep and goats and sallied forth every morning driving the flock to the highway a couple of miles away. There he would sit on the pedestal of a clay statue of a horse while his cattle grazed around.

(a) Provide the context of the given passage.

Ans. The context of the given passage is R. K. Narayan's story "A Horse and Two Goats." In the village of Kritam the story is set.

(b) Who is Muni? Make a note on the present financial state of Muni.

Ans. Muni is the protagonist of the short story "A Horse and Two Goats" by R. K. Narayan. Financially, Muni lives in extreme poverty where he does not have enough to

have his two meals properly. Once upon a time he had a flock of forty sheep and goats, but presently they are reduced to two goats.

(c) What does Muni do throughout the day?

Ans. Muni goes to the outskirts of the village where there is a horse statue. While he spends the day doing nothing under the statue, his two goats graze nearby.

(d) Make a brief note about the character of Muni.

Ans. Muni, is an old man who is the protagonist of the story "A Horse and Two Goats." Every day he goes with his goats to the outskirts of the village where there is a large horse statue. He sits under the shade of the statue and spends his day while his goats carry on grazing nearby. He is not only poor but also a man who finds it difficult to manage his own self as people cast aspersions on him.

(e) Briefly explain the significance of the horse statue in the story.

Ans. The horse statue is of extreme significance in the story as one of the reasons why the American stops near the statue is that he is attracted to the statue and wanted to buy the statue to exhibit it in his drawing room. The American thinks Muni is the owner of the statue and gives money to him to buy it.

3. And so the two goats were tethered to the trunk of a drumstick tree which grew in front of his hut and from which occasionally Muni could shake down drumsticks. This morning he got six. He carried them in with a sense of triumph. Although no one could say precisely who owned the tree, it was his because he lived in its shadow.

(a) Identify the author and the text.

Ans. The author is R. K. Narayan and the text is "A Horse and Two Goats."

(b) Which two goats are referred to in the passage? Whose goats are they?

Ans. Two goats of Muni are being referred to in the passage. They are Muni's goats.

(c) Discuss how drumsticks are significant in the story?

Ans. The drumsticks are significant as Muni craves to chew drumsticks with sauce which makes him visit the village shop to ask for one or two food items on credit which he is refused and moreover humiliated.

(d) What did Muni carry with a sense of triumph? Why?

Ans. The six drumsticks that Muni got by shaking the tree; he carried with a sense of triumph.

He carried them with a sense of triumph because he is poor and with six drumsticks he wishes to get a nice meal.

(e) What are the possessions of Muni as presented in the story?

Ans. The possessions of Muni as presented in the story are his two goats.

4. It completely won the shopman over; he liked his sense of humour to be appreciated. Muni engaged his attention in local gossip for a few minutes, which always ended with a reference to the postman's wife, who had eloped to the city some months before.

(a) What completely won over the shop man? Why?

Ans. The appropriate response (laugh and appreciation) of Muni at shop man's joke completely won the shop man over; as shop man liked his sense of humour to be appreciated.

(b) Who liked his sense of humour to be appreciated?

Ans. The shop man liked his sense of humour to be appreciated.

(c) Why did Muni engage in local gossip?

Ans. Muni engaged in local gossip with the shop man so as to please him and then ask for few things from the shop on credit.

(d) What was Muni's real intention?

Ans. The real intention of Muni is to please the shop man with the local gossip and appreciate his sense of humour as he wanted a few food items for his sauce on credit from the shop.

(e) What do you infer about Muni's character from the above passage?

Ans. Muni is a poor man who finds it difficult to make two ends meet and therefore uses every trick possible. With the shopkeeper he plays the trick of engaging in local gossip to please him and also would respond appropriately at the shop man's joke so that he can ask for things on credit.

5. He flung himself down in a corner to recoup from the fatigue of his visit to the shop. His wife said, 'You are getting no sauce today, nor anything else. I can't find anything to give you to eat. Fast till evening, it'll do you good. Take the goats and be gone now.' and added, 'Don't come back before the sun is down.' He knew that if he obeyed her she would somehow conjure up some food for him in the evening. Only he must be careful not to argue and irritate her.

(a) Who flung himself down in a corner?

Ans. Muni flung himself down in a corner.

(b) Why was he fatigued of his visit to the shop?

Ans. Muni was fatigued of his visit to the shop because in spite of his best efforts he could not convince the shop man to give him things on credit.

(e) What "sauce" is being referred to in the passage?

Ans. The "sauce" with drumsticks is being referred to in the passage.

(d) Why did Muni's wife offer him no food?

Ans. Muni's wife did not offer him any food as there were no provisions in the house to make food and Muni could not bring anything from the village shop.

(e) Why should not Muni argue with his wife?

Ans. Muni should not argue with his wife because he knows she will do something to conjure up some food for him by evening. Arguing with her will make her not to do it.

(f) What does Muni do after this?

Ans. Muni takes his two goats and walks towards the outskirts of the village near the horse statue where he will sit and rest while his goats will graze nearby.

6. But all this seemed like the memories of a previous birth.

Some pestilence afflicted his cattle (he could of course guess who had laid his animals under a curse) and even the friendly butcher would not touch on at all the price.... and now here he was left with the two scraggy creatures. He wished someone would rid him of their company too.

(a) What seemed like the memories of a previous birth?

Ans. That Muni was once prosperous with a flock of forty

goats and sheep seem to him as the memory of a previous birth because for long Muni has nothing else but two goats as his only possession.

(b) What does "pestilence" mean?

Ans. The word "pestilence" means epidemic.

(c) Who is left with two scraggy creatures? What are these scraggy creatures?

Ans. Muni is left with two scraggy creatures and they are his two goats.

(d) Why does he want to get rid of their company?

Ans. He wants to get rid of their company because Muni is exhausted of his financially poor life.

(e) What aspect of the character of the person is presented in this part of the story?

Ans. Muni is a poor man who has given up all his hopes for betterment. He just merely carries on with life. Therefore, his daily routine consists of spending time under the horse statue doing nothing while his two goats graze nearby. He seemed to be a man who has given up on life.

7. Only on the outskirts did he lift his head and look up. He urged and bullied the goats until they meandered along to the foot of the horse statue on the edge of the village. He sat on its pedestal for the rest of the day. The advantage of this was that he could watch the highway and see the lorries and buses pass through to the hills, and it gave him a sense of belonging to a larger world.

(a) Who is "he"? What is his age? Where does he live?

Ans . "He" is Muni from R. K. Narayan's short story "A Horse and Two Goats."

He is an old man.

He lives in a small village called Kritam on the southern part of India.

(b) Why did he lift his head only on the outskirts of the village?

Ans. He lifted his head only on the outskirts of the village as the thought that meeting someone's eyes will lead to further humiliation pestered his mind.

(c) What did he do sitting on the pedestal of the statue throughout the day?

Ans. Muni did nothing sitting on the pedestal of the statue throughout the day. He watched the vehicles on the highway as they give him a sense of belongingness to a larger world.

(d) What does the phrase "a sense of belonging to a larger world" mean?

Ans. The phrase "a sense of belongingness to a larger world" means that one feels connected to the world. When Muni sees the buses and trucks in the highways coming from far off distances he feels that he is connected to all those places.

(e) What happens in the story after this?

Ans. Immediately after this, an American man comes by the highway and stops near the horse statue and a humorous conversation between Muni and the American continues where they do not have a common language to communicate.

8. He noticed now a new sort of vehicle coming down at full

speed. It looked both like a motor car and a bus. He used to be intrigued by the novelty of such spectacles, but of late work was going on at the source of the river on the mountain and an assortment of people and traffic went past him, and he took it all casually and described to his wife, later in the day, not everything as he once did, but only some things, if he noticed anything special.

(a) Who noticed a new sort of vehicle?

Ans. Muni noticed a new sort of vehicle - a band wagon coming down at full speed.

(b) Which vehicle did he notice? Who was driving the vehicle?

Ans. A bandwagon driven by an American was noticed by Muni.

(c) What does the author mean by "the novelty of such spectacles"?

Ans. Being from the small village of Kritam, Muni does not have exposure to the larger world and therefore whatever new things he sees in the highway seems to be 'novelty' to him.

(d) What did he describe to his wife and why?

Ans. Muni described whatever he saw in the highway to his wife as he himself is amused by the variety of people and traffic that went past him and thought that they would amuse his wife too.

(e) What were his thoughts when he saw a motor car which is between a car and a bus?

Ans. Muni's thoughts when he saw a motor car which is between a car and a bus — a band wagon - is how he

would later describe it to his wife.

9. Muni felt he should get up and run away, and cursed his age. He could not really put his limbs into action; some years ago he could outrun a cheetah, as happened once when he went to the forest to cut fuel and it was then that two of his sheep were mauled-a sign that bad times were coming. Though he tried, he could not extricate himself easily from his seat, besides which there was also the problem of the goats.

(a) Who is Muni? Why did he feel like running away?

Ans. Muni is the protagonist of R. K. Narayan's short story

"A Horse and Two Goats." Muni felt like running away because the American wearing a khaki clothes stopped in front of the horse statue for inquiring about "gas" and started admiring the horse statue. He after seeing the American in that dress thought of him to be a policeman who came to inquire about the murder that happened in the village.

(b) Why did he not put his limbs into action?

Ans. Muni could not put his limbs into action as he felt that he is too old and he did not have the ability to run.

(c) Which "bad times" is being referred to?

Ans. The "bad times" referred to is his financial condition. Once he had a flock of forty sheep and goats which is now reduced to two scraggy goats.

(d) Which seat is being referred to?

Ans. The seat referred to is the place under the horse statue where Muni usually sits and passes his days.

(e) What is the problem with goats?

Ans. The problem with the goats is that if he runs away after seeing the American there would be no one to look after the two goats who are his only possessions.

10. *Having exhausted his English vocabulary, he started in Tamil: 'My name is Muni. These two goats are mine and no one can gainsay it-though our village is full of slanderers these days who will not hesitate to say that what belongs to a man doesn't belong to him.' He rolled his eyes and shuddered at the thought of the evil minded men and women peopling his village.*

(a) Why was there a need of an English vocabulary?

Ans. There was a need of an English vocabulary because an American has stopped his car near the horse statue and wanted to converse with him.

(b) With what did Muni exhaust his vocabulary?

Ans. With two words - "Yes and No" Muni exhausted his English vocabulary.

(c) What is Muni's intention behind introducing himself?

Ans. Muni's intention behind introducing himself is that he wanted to prove that he is innocent of any crime and that the two goats belonged to him.

(d) Why did Muni shudder?

Ans. Muni shuddered in fear because he thought the American in the khakhi dress to be a policeman.

(e) What aspect of Muni's character can you figure out from the passage?

Ans. Muni is a fearful man who as soon as he meets the American in Khakhi dress tries to run away from the site. He moreover introduces himself to the American with the intention of informing him that the two goats belonged to him and he did not commit any crime.

11. *No need to run away from a man who gave such a potent smoke. His head was reeling from the effect of the strong American cigarette made with roasted tobacco. The man said 'I come from New York,' took out a wallet from his hip pocket and presented his card.*

(a) Who was thinking of running away? Why?

Ans. Muni was thinking of running away because he was nervous when he met the American in the khakhi dress.

(b) Where did the man find an American cigarette?

Ans. The American offered Muni a cigarette.

(c) Who said "I am from New York"? What do you get to know about him from the story?

Ans. The Red man, the American, in R. K. Narayan's short story "A Horse and Two Goats" said "I am from New York."

The American is a materialistic man who wanted to possess the horse statue to display it as a possession in his drawing room. But at the same time he is a bit idiotic to think that Muni is the owner of the horse statue.

(d) What does the other man take the card to be? Why?

Ans. Muni takes the visiting card of the American to be an arrest warrant.

Muni thinks so because the American was wearing a khakhi dress - khaki which is usually worn by a policeman or a soldier.

(e) What is the intention of the author in making these two people meet?

Ans. The intention of R. K. Narayan in making Muni and the

American meet is to make the situation funny as they do not have a common language to communicate between themselves. Therefore their interaction is bound to be funny and full of misunderstandings.

12. The foreigner nodded his head and listened courteously though he understood nothing.

'I am sure you know when this horse was made,' said the red man and smiled ingratiatingly.

Muni reacted to the relaxed atmosphere by smiling himself and pleaded, 'Please go away sir. I know nothing. I promise we will hold him for you if we see any bad character around and we will bury him up to his neck in a coconut pit if he tries to escape but our village has always had a clean record. Must definitely be the other village.'

(a) Who is the foreigner? What is his intention of coming here?

Ans. The foreigner is an American who is passing by Kritam in his leisure trip through India. His intention was to buy the horse statue at the outskirts of the village Kritam as he liked the statue and wanted to display it in his American drawing room.

(b) What does the red man take the villager to be?

Ans. The red man, an American, takes the villager Muni to be the owner of the horse statue.

(c) Why did Muni plead to the foreigner? What was the plea all about?

Ans. Muni pleaded to the foreigner as he mistook him to be a policeman. The plea was that neither has he committed

any crime nor has any crime taken place in Kritam and therefore he (the American) should leave.

(d) What makes the communication between them humorous?

Ans. The communication between them is humorous because Muni and the American do not have a common language to communicate and consequently their communication is full of misunderstandings.

(e) What is the intention of the author behind the humorous conversation?

Ans. The intention of R. K. Narayan behind the humorous conversation between Muni and the American is to present how lack of a common language leads to miscommunication.

13. 'We will visit India this winter, it's time to look at other civilizations. Next day she called the travel agent first thing and told him to fix it and so here I am. Ruth came with me but is staying back at Srinagar, and I am the one doing the rounds and joining her later.'

(a) Who is the speaker? To whom is it spoken to?

Ans. The American in the short story "A Horse and Two Goats" is the speaker. These words are spoken to Muni.

(b) Who are 'we'?

Ans. "We" are the American and his wife.

(c) Why do they plan to come to India?

Ans. They plan to come to India to have a look at the poor abysmal conditions in which people in India are living,

(d) What incident makes them plan to come to India?

Ans. One day in his office on the fortieth floor of the Empire State Building in a hot August Summer month there was no electricity for four hours. The suffering because of the lack of air-conditioning and elevator made him decide to have a look at the other civilizations and come to India and see the miserable way in which people live here.

(e) What does the man do when he meets Muni?

Ans. The American when he meets Muni, introduces himself and then goes on to tell his own story. His intention was to somehow convince Muni to sell him the horse statue which he intends to take back to America and display in his drawing room.

14. The old man now understood the reference to the horse, though for a second and said in his own language, 'I was an urchin this high when I heard my grandfather explain the story of this horse and warrior, and my grandfather himself was this high when he heard his grandfather, whose grandfather...'

(a) Who referred to the horse for what purpose?

Ans. The American referred to the horse statue. His purpose in referring to the horse is that he has liked the statue and wants to possess it. He wants to take it away to America and display it in his drawing room.

(b) Which horse is being referred to?

Ans. The horse statue at the outskirts of the village of Kritam beside the highway is referred to here.

(c) What does "urchin" mean?

Ans. Urchin means a young child who is poorly dressed.

(d) What does the speaker try to say by referring to grandfather and his grandfather and so on?

Ans. The speaker, Muni, says that he has heard of the story of the horse statue from his grandfather and his grandfather from his grandfather and so on. Thus the story of the horse statue is being passed on from one generation to another.

(e) Explain the significance of the horse in the story?

Ans. The horse statue is at the outskirts of the village of Kritam where Muni goes everyday and sits under the horse statue while his two goats graze nearby. One day when the American arrives, he looks at the horse statue and plans to possess it by buying it from Muni as he takes Muni to be its owner.

(f) What does the author try to present through the horse?

Ans. Through the story of the horse (that at the end of the Kaliyuga, the redeemer will come as a horse), R. K. Narayan wanted to show that Muni, though uneducated, has a great knowledge of the Indian customs and traditions and that he associates much significance to the traditions.

15. Muni, now assured that the subject was still the horse and not the dead body, said. "This is our guardian, it means death to our adversaries. At the end of Kali Yuga, this world and all other worlds will be destroyed and the Redeemer will come in the shape of a horse called Kalki then this horse will come to life and gallop and trample down all bad men.

(a) Who is Muni? What horse is being referred to?

Ans. Muni is the protagonist of R. K. Narayan's "A Horse and Two Goats." The horse statue at the outskirts of the village of Kritam under which Muni sits everyday is being referred to

(b) Who does Muni refer to as "our guardian"? Why?

Ans. Muni refers to the "horse" as "our guardian" as according to the Indian mythology, the Redeemer is going to come in the shape of a horse at the end of Kaliyuga.

(c) What story does Muni tell about the guardian?

Ans. Muni tells the story that at the end of the Kaliyuga when the world will be destroyed, the Redeemer will come in the shape of a horse to save the people and trample down all bad men.

(d) Is the story of any consequence to the person to whom it is told?

Ans. No, the story is of no consequence to the American man as he takes the horse statue to be a "marvelous" piece and wanted to possess it and display it in his drawing room.

(e) What aspects do you figure out of the characters who spoke these lines and to whom it is spoken to?

Ans. Whereas Muni is uneducated but attaches much significance to the Indian traditions as he is knowledgeable about it; the American on the other hand is supposedly educated but a deeply materialistic man who wants to merely possess the horse statue as he found it marvelous.

16. *'I repeat I am not a millionaire. Ours is a modest business;*

after all, we can't afford to buy more than sixty minutes' TV time in a month, which works out to two minutes a day that's all although in the course of time we'll maybe sponsor a one hour show regularly if our sales graph continues to go up...

(a) Who says this to whom?

Ans. The American says this to Muni in the short story "A Horse and Two Goats" by R. K. Narayan.

(b) What modest business does the speaker refer to?

Ans. The American refers to his modest business of coffee in America.

(c) What sales graph does the speaker refer to?

Ans. The American states that if the sales graph of his coffee business goes up, then they will be able to sponsor a show on television.

(d) What does the speaker understand from what the speaker says?

Ans. Muni understands nothing from what the American tells him because he does not understand English.

(e) Comment on the character of the speaker.

Ans. The speaker, the American, is a deeply materialistic man who merely wants to possess the horse statue and therefore converses with Muni thinking idiotically that he is the owner of the statue. The American is a money-minded man and merely wants to show off things possessions.

17. At this stage the mutual mystification was complete and there was no need even to carry on a guessing game al

the meaning of words. The old man chattered away in a spirit of balancing off the credits and debits of conversational exchange and said in order to be on the credit side, 'O honourable one, I hope god has blessed you with numerous progeny. I say this because you seem to be a good man, willing to stay beside an old man and talk to him, while all day I have none to talk to except when somebody stops by to ask for a piece of tobacco. But I seldom have it, tobacco is not what it used to be at one time and I have given up chewing. I cannot afford it nowadays.'

(a) Which stage is being referred to?

Ans. The stage is when the conversation between Muni and the American has reached a state where they do not understand a single word of each other.

(b) What 'mutual mystification' is being talked about here?

Ans. The term 'mutual mystification' is used by R. K. Narayan to mean "mutual misunderstanding" at the highest level.

(c) Comment on the humour of the conversational exchange.

Ans. The humour of the conversational exchange between Muni and the American is that they do not have a common language to communicate between themselves and therefore each goes on telling his own story without the other understanding a bit about what the other person meant.

(d) Who is referred to as a "good man"? Why?

Ans. The American is referred to as the "good man" by Muni as no one speaks to Muni in the whole village of Kritam. Muni spends his days in solitude under the horse statue.

As the American spoke to him for long and offered him cigarette, therefore Muni thinks about the American to be a "good man."

(e) What he cannot afford nowadays? Why?

Ans. Muni cannot afford tobacco these days as he is financially in a bad shape. He is so poor that he does not get two full meals a day, so the luxury of having tobacco does not come into question.

18. His dream of a lifetime was about to be realized. He understood that the red man was actually making an offer for the goats. He had reared them in the hope of selling them some day and with the capital opening a small shop on this very spot.

(a) Whose dream of a lifetime is getting realized? How?

Ans. Muni's dream of a lifetime is getting realized. It is getting realized by the offer of the American who is giving him a hundred rupee note for the horse statue while Muni thought it is for his goats.

(b) Which offer is being referred to?

Ans. The offer that the American made to Muni to give hundred rupees to Muni for the horse statue is referred to. Muni thought it was for his two goats.

(c) What was the red man actually making an offer for?

Ans. The red man (the American) actually was making an offer for the horse statue that is by the road at the outskirts of the village of Kritam.

(d) Who has reared what in the hope of selling them?

Ans. Muni has reared his two goats with the hope of selling

them.

(e) What aspect of the character of the red man can you figure out from the passage ?

Ans. The red man, the American in R. K. Narayan's story, is a very materialistic man who likes the horse statue as soon as he sees it and thinks of displaying it in his drawing room as a possession. He is, at the same time, idiotic because he took Muni to be the owner of the statue.

19. Muni hurried homeward with the cash securely tucked away at his waist in his dhoti. He shut the street door and stole up softly to his wife as she squatted before the lit oven wondering if by a miracle food would drop from the sky. Muni displayed his fortune for the day.

(a) Why did Muni hurry homeward?

Ans. Muni hurried homeward as he has got the cash from the American which he thought he got by selling his goats and the American thought he paid for the horse statue.

(b) What was his fortune for the day?

Ans. Muni's fortune of the day is his meeting with the American which fetched him hundred rupees.

(c) Why is there a reference to "a miracle food"?

Ans. As the American coming to him as a miracle which fetched him hundred rupees, similarly he thought some food will be falling from the sky and therefore he terms it as "miracle food."

(d) How did Muni's wife react to the fortune for the day"?

Ans. Muni's wife reacts negatively to "the fortune for the day" as she thinks he has committed some crime by which he

has gained the money.

(e) Was Muni really fortunate?

Ans. Yes, Muni was really fortunate because his economic condition was very poor and hundred rupees meant a lot to him.

(f) Discuss the role that Muni's wife plays in his life.

Ans. Muni's wife plays a very significant role in Muni's life. At times she is rough with him; but most times she takes care of Muni and does odd jobs to conjure up some food for Muni. In other words, she loves Muni a lot.

ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Critically comment on the central character of the story

"A Horse and Two Goats."

Ans. Muni, is an old man who is the central character of the story

"A Horse and Two Goats" by R. K. Narayan. Once he was a prosperous man as he had a flock of forty sheep and goats but now the flock is reduced to just two goats. He and his wife live in the village of Kritam where they barely survive without anyone to take care of them and without any income. His wife does odd jobs here and there to somehow manage the evening meal.

Every day he goes with his goats to the outskirts of the village where there is a large horse statue. He sits under the shade of the statue and spends his day while his goats carry on grazing nearby. Sitting here he reminisces about his younger days, when he was in a financially stable state and had enough to eat. He also reminisces how he could not go to school as he was not from the right caste.

He is not only poor but also a man who finds it difficult to

manage his own self as people cast aspersions on him. As he goes to the village shopkeeper to ask for things in debt, the shopkeeper not only mocks him, but also returns him empty handed. He is even tiraded by his wife, though he knows that his wife loves him and somehow will manage to get some food for him. He is also someone who fears authority as is represented in the story when the American comes in Khaki dress, he is fearful of his presence assuming him to be a police man.

With the American he carries on speaking in Tamil even if the man does not understand a single word of it. He carries on communicating but misunderstands him altogether. The American mistook him to be the owner of the statue and given him a hundred rupee note in exchange of the statue. Muni thinks that he has sold his goats and comes back home happy only to be questioned and tiraded by his wife for thieving.

2. Do you agree that the story "A Horse and Two Goats" is about the horse statue which the American finds to be marvellous and the villagers have been neglecting for ages?

Ans. Yes, to some extent the story "A Horse and Two Goats" by R. K. Narayan is about the horse statue because of two reasons-

- First, Muni, the main protagonist of the story, spends his whole day under the horse statue while his goats graze near by.
- Secondly, as soon as the American sees the horse statue, he finds it marvellous and plans to acquire it from Muni so that he can take it to America and display it in his drawing room.

From the story we come to know that the horse statue is of immense significance to the village people as according to the Indian Mythology, at the end of the Kaliyuga the Redeemer is supposed to arrive in the shape of a horse to save the good men and to trample the bad men.

Even though traditionally horse statue has much significance to the people, but it has been neglected by the villagers as it remains in the outskirts of the village of Kritam near the highway. The American is easily attracted to it and therefore the story revolves around the horse statue.

3. What role does language play in our communicative needs? Discuss the role of language as presented by R K Narayan in the story "A Horse and Two Goats."

Ans. Language is one of the significant means of our communication, though there are other means of communication such as postures, gestures, facial expressions, etc. In the short story "A Horse and Two Goats", Muni and the American communicate to each other and share each other's life even though they do not have a common language to communicate. Whereas Muni uses Tamil as he only knows the Tamil language, the American can only speak in English. They try to communicate, but in most times, they are not understood by each other. Their communication starts from the point when Muni takes the American to be a police man because of his Khaki dress to the American thinking about Muni to be the owner of the horse statue and gives him a hundred rupees note to buy the statue.

4. Critically analyze the discussion between the American

and Muni.

Ans. R. K. Narayan is known for his humour - for his ability to make readers fall in love with his characters who are unique in their own ways and still typify their own class. Muni is a typical Indian old village man who spends his day doing nothing and is so poor so as not to have money to have proper meals. As against that, the American is a typical materialistic man who has come to India to have a look at the hardships in which people live and as he sees the horse statue, he thinks about possessing the statue and keeping it as a show piece in his drawing room.

With these two typical characters, R. K. Narayan is able to create a fantastic tale of miscommunication where Muni thinks of the American as a police man as he is dressed in khaki and the American thinks about Muni as the owner of the statue. The misconceptions that these characters have about each other because of the language barrier make the story interesting and humorous to read.

If the short story is fantastic in its humour, it is also very realistic in portraying the village Kritam as the small village with thirty households and four streets are presented in the story in such detail that the readers can draw a mental map of the context where the story is set. R. K. Narayan with his craft is able to finely portray the background within which the character of Muni is blended to manifest to us the picture of rural life. Narayan then makes the character of the American come to this village and make himself a fool in front of Muni when he mistakenly thinks about Muni as the owner of the horse statue and buys it for hundred rupees.

5. How far do you think the rural setting of the story "A Horse and Two Goats" is significant in building the story?

Ans. The setting of the story "A Horse and Two Goats" by R. K. Narayan is a small village called Kritam, somewhere in the southern part of India, which the author describes to be the tiniest village of India, having only thirty houses. It is one of the unknown villages of India though the name itself is significant as "Kritam" meaning "the crown". In this village, most of the houses are mud houses, signifying that the people are mostly poor. When we meet Muni we get to know the state of the poverty of the people.

On the outskirts of the village, there is a horse statue which is beside the road. Muni goes and sits under the shade of the statue and spends his day while his two goats graze nearby. When the American is going through the road, he stops near the horse statue and finds it very interesting and plans to buy the statue to make it a decorative piece in his drawing room.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE (STUDY MATERIAL)

Class IX

The Merchant of Venice

Detailed Study : Act-1

ACT 1, SCENE 1

Plot Development

The opening scene is set in a street of Venice. Antonio, a wealthy merchant of Venice and his two friends. Salarino and Salanio are in conversation. Antonio confesses to them that he has been suffering from a strange melancholy. His friends suggest that it may be because he is worried about the safety of his ships at sea or because he has fallen in love. Antonio denies both the causes saying that he is quite confident of his business enterprises, which are neither dependent on single ship nor on a single business transactions of a particular year. As far as love is concerned, the mere idea sounds ridiculous to him.

As Salarino and Salanio leave, Bassanio and Gratiano arrive with Lorenzo.

Gratiano is a talkative young man, lacking in civilised manners. In his view. Antonio is sad because he attaches too great an importance to the world's opinion about him or he wants to gain the reputation of being wise under the garb of appearing sad. Antonio rejects it saying:

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano:

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

Gratiano and Lorenzo go away leaving Bassanio with Antonio. Antonio asks Bassanio about the lady to whom he has sworn 'a secret pilgrimage'. This gives Bassanio an opportunity to tell Antonio about his financial problem, which is largely due to his own extravagant lifestyle. He requests Antonio for help. Bassanio assures Antonio that if he succeeds in marrying the lady he loves, he would pay of all his debts. Antonio explains that he has no ready cash at present as his

ships are still at sea, but he suggests that Bassanio could borrow the money using his (Antonio's) name for credit.

NOTES

1.*Argosies*: According to a Greek legend, Argo was a ship built by Argus for Jason. Jason reached Colchos after a long adventurous voyage. At Colchos, Medea who had fallen in love with Jason, used her powers to get him the golden fleece. She managed to get it after putting to sleep the dragon who had been guarding the fleece. **In the scene, Argosies refer to big merchant ships.**

2.*Wealthy Andrew*: In 1596 the English captured in Spanish ship in Cardiz. The ship was named Andrea. It ran aground when it was being brought to England. Since then Andrew refers to a big cargo ship.

3.*Janus*: A Roman god usually depicted with two heads looking in opposite directions--one frowning, the other smiling. According to a legend, Janus had received from the god Saturn the gift to see both the future and the past. He was worshipped at the beginning of harvest and planting times, marriages, births and other such beginnings. The month of January is named after him.

Janus is mentioned in the text to show that there are two types of people one happy, and the other, sad.

4.*Nestor*: In Greek mythology, Nestor was the king of Pylos. He was one of the greatest generals in the Trojan war. He was famous for his wisdom. He was so grave that if he laughed at a joke, it meant that the joke was actually funny.

5.*Sir Oracle*: The Greek Oracle was believed to be the voice of gods, uttered through the mouth of priests and priestesses. It made predictions about the future.

Here, the expression is used contemptuously for the self-proclaimed wise.

6.*Golden Fleece*: In Greek mythology, Golden Fleece is referred to as the fleece of the winged ram, Chrysomallos. Phryxus and his twin sister Helle, escaped on the ram over the sea to save themselves from being sacrificed to Zeus. But Helle fell off and drowned in the strait. Hellesport. Phryxus reached safely to Colchos and sacrificed the ram to god Poseidon. The precious Golden Fleece

was given to King Aectes who hung it on an Oak tree in the grove sacred to god, Ares, where it was guarded by a dragon. There it remained until it was taken by Jason with the help of Medea. The ram became the constellation, Aries.

7.Colchos: (Also known as Colchis). According to the Greek mythology, Colchos was a fabulously wealthy land. It was situated in a country in Asia bordering the Black Sea. In Colchos, in the sacred grove of the god Ares, King Aectes kept safely the golden fleece until it was seized by Jason with the help of Medea.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

Plot Development

In this scene, we are taken from the commercial world of Venice to the romantic world of Belmont. Here, Portia is introduced to the audience, having a conversation with her maid, Nerissa. Portia is tired of the stream of suitors coming to woo her. Moreover, she is worried because the choice of her husband is not in her hand but depends on 'the lottery of caskets' devised according to her father's will. According to the lottery, each suitor has to choose from amongst the three caskets of gold, silver and lead. The one who makes the right choice would marry her. Nerissa consoles her mistress saying that her father must have had her well-being at heart. The right casket will be chosen by someone who will truly love her.

Portia comments on the different suitors who have come to try their luck. The Neapolitan prince, she says, can talk only of his horses and the Count Palatine frowns so much that marrying him would be like marrying a death's head: "with a bone in his mouth". Monsieur Le Bon also does not appeal to Portia as she thinks he has everybody else's characteristics but no personality of his own. Baron Falconbridge from England is strangely and unmannerly dressed. He speaks such languages that are not known to Portia. The Scottish Lord is not pleasant either. The Duke of Saxony's nephew is a drunkard and therefore, Portia devises a plan to prevent him from winning the lottery. She tells Nerissa to place glass of Rhenish-wine in a wrong casket as a temptation, which he wouldn't be able to resist. However, these suitors do not take part in the contest for fear of choosing a wrong casket.

Nerissa reminds Portia of a handsome Venetian gallant, Bassanio. Portia's reaction reveals her love for him, yet she is determined to follow her father's will and marry according to the terms given in it.

A servant arrives to inform them that the Prince of Morocco, another suitor has arrived. Portia says, "*Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.*" This confirms Bassano's comment that suitors flock to her from the four corners of the world. Her name and fame have spread throughout the world and suitors come to woo her like, "*many Jasons in quest of the golden fleece.*"

NOTES

1.*Colt*: A young horse. It also refers to a foolish or an inexperienced person.

2.*County Palatine*: It is an area ruled by a Count (a local ruler or a nobleman) with special authority. In feudal times, Counts exercised royal authority and ruled independently of the King, though they owed allegiance to him.

Here, County Palatine, refers to the Count from the Palatinate, the region on the west bank of the Rhine.

3.*Heraclitus*: Heraclitus of Ephesus (Ancient Greece) was a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, who lived around 513 BC. He had poor opinion of human offers. He was so depressed of human follies that he secluded himself on the mountains. He suffered from melancholy and later, he was referred to as the 'weeping philosopher' as opposed to Democritus, who was known as the 'laughing philosopher.'

4.*Sibylla*: It is a Greek word which means 'prophetess'. According to the story recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Sibyl of Cumae was granted a wish by goddess Apollo that she would live for as many years as the grains of sand she held in her hand. She was the ageless old woman. As she failed to age for eternal youth, goddess Apollo allowed her body to wither. Her body grew smaller with age and eventually was kept in a jar.

5.*Diana*: Diana means the 'Bright Goddess'. Diana was the goddess of the moon and of hunting. She was associated with wild animals and woodlands. She was an emblem of chastity. She is also known as the Virgin Goddess.

6. *Shrive me*: Listen to my offences like a priest and grant forgiveness from God.

ACT 1, SCENE 3

Plot Development

This scene takes place at a public place in Venice. Bassanio approaches Shylock for a loan of three thousand ducats for three months on Antonio's credit. Shylock is hesitant as he is aware of the risks involved in the business of merchandise. However, he agrees to consider Bassanio's request for the loan. He dislikes Christians and refuses Bassanio's invitation for dinner because he says that it is against his principles to eat with a Christian. He would rather have only business relations with them.

On seeing Antonio approaching, Shylock (in an aside) expresses his dislike for Antonio and lends money without taking interest. Shylock looks for an opportunity to take revenge on him. Antonio points out to him that though he himself neither lends nor borrows money on interest, he is prepared to make an exception to help Bassanio. In an argument about taking interest on loans, Shylock quotes in its favour from the Old Testament:

And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

On this Antonio replies that, "*The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.*"

Shylock is enraged and accuses Antonio of having spat on him and insulted him by calling him a dog. He demands to know, why, in spite of hating him so much, Antonio has approached him for the money. He asks:

"Hath a dog money? is it possible

A cur can lend three thousand ducats?"

Antonio arrogantly asserts that he would most likely insult Shylock again in future and asks him to lend the money not as to a friend, but as to an enemy.

Seeing the opportunity to take revenge, Shylock puts forward an idea of strange bond instead of the usual interest that he charges. He asks Antonio to sign a bond, according to which if fails to repay the amount in time, Shylock would be entitled to take an exact pound of flesh from any part of Antonio's body

that he may wish. Antonio agrees in spite of Bassanio's warning against taking the loan under such conditions. However, Antonio confident of repaying the loan before the bond expires. Shylock asks him to meet at the notary to sign the 'merry bond'. Antonio misjudges Shylock's intentions and says:

The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

NOTES

1. *Nazarite*: A native of Nazareth. Jesus Christ lived in the town of Nazareth and was called the Nazarene. Nazarite is the name given by the Hebrews to a person set apart and especially consecrated to the Lord.

2. *Devil*: Devil is the supernatural being believed to be a powerful evil entity and tempter of humankind. Reference is to the Gospel of Mathew Ch 8 vs 28-34. Christ commands the devil possessing the two men to come out of them and enter a herd of swine. The herd later drowned into a lake. Hence, Jews consider pork to be unholy.

3. *Fawning Publican*: The word 'publican' is clearly derived from the Gospels. Fawning means pleasing somebody by praising them. The expression 'fawning publican' however, seems contradictory, as publicans were anything but fawning. Publicans were tax collectors for the Romans and were generally oppressive. They were hated by the Jews because they were agents of Rome, who collected taxes also from the Jews. Publican is a natural term of contempt and loathing used by a Jew. **"Fawning publican" is Shylock's view of the man (Antonio), who used to spit on him but now needs his help.**

4. *Jacob*: (i) In Genesis, Jacob was the son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham. Legally, Jacob's elder brother. Esau was the inheritor of Abraham's property. But Jacob's mother played a trick to make Jacob, Isaac's heir. Once when Isaac was aged and blind, he decided to bless his eldest son before he died. He sent Esau out in the fields to hunt down some meat and prepare him a meal, after which he would receive his blessings.

Jacob's mother overheard this exchange. As Esau went out for the hunt, she

instructed Jacob to fetch her two goats so that she would prepare a tasty meal for his father and commanded Jacob to take the meal to Isaac and receive father's blessings in place of Esau.

Thus disguised, Jacob went to his blind father, Isaac and introduced himself as Esau to him. Isaac grew suspicious as the voice was unlike Esau's. Nevertheless Isaac blessed him.

(ii) Another reference from the Bible is the story that Jacob served his uncle Laban. Jacob and Laban entered into an agreement that Jacob would receive as his wages the lambs which were born with spots or stripes. During the breeding season, Jacob arranged the wooden rods in such a way that the shadows of the rods should fall on the sheep. Consequently, most of the lambs were born spotted or striped, and thus, they became Jacob's property.

The Merchant of Venice- Workbook solution

NOTE: Kindly also refer to your The Merchant of Venice textbook and chapter notes in the workbook .

Act I Scene 1

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS GIVEN IN THE MERCHANT OF VENICE WORKBOOK

Question 1

(i). Who speaks these words? To whom are the words spoken to? What has the person just narrated that makes the speaker say that his mind is tossing on the ocean?

Ans. Antonio speaks the first two lines and they are spoken to Salarino and Salanio. These words come at the very beginning of the play when Antonio along with Salarino and Salanio are discussing the reason of Antonio's sadness. Antonio says that he does not know why he is sad and to that Salarino says that he must be sad as his ships are tossing on the ocean.

(ii) Give the meaning of

(a) *a want-wit sadness*: Sadness of a dull fellow

(b) *That I have much to do to know myself*: that I have much trouble in recognizing myself

(c) *tossing on the ocean*: Sailing on the ocean

(d) *argosies with portly sail*: large merchant ships with stately sail

(e) *do overpower the petty traffickers*: to look over the heads of small commercial boats

(h) *woven wings*: canvas sails

(iii) What are the probable reasons Salarino provide for Antonio's melancholic mindset?

Ans. Salarino thinks that any merchant whose commercial ships are all on the mercy of the ocean would naturally be much tensed.

(iv) Describe in your own words Salarino's narration of Antonio's ships sailing on the ocean.

Ans. Salarino compares Antonio's ships sailing on the ocean with great lords and wealthy citizens, who look down upon the lesser men as they walk along the street. He further states that Antonio's ships are moving swiftly on the ocean with their canvas sails and look like grand spectacles or pageants of the ocean.

(v) What are Antonio's ships compared to? How do his ships move?

How are the petty traffickers compared to Antonio's argosies?

Ans. Antonio's ships are compared to wealthy citizens in the streets of Venice. The ships move swiftly on the ocean with their canvas sails.

The petty traffickers, that is, the small boats are like lesser men and Antonio's argosies (ships) like wealthy men look down upon them and the small boats are as if showing respect to the great commercial ships.

(vi) How would the speaker have behaved if he had ships at sea like those of Antonio? What would have made him sad?

Ans. If the speaker had his ships tossing on the ocean like that of Antonio then he would have been in deep thought concerning the fate of the ships as there are many perils in sea, such as, strong winds, dangerous shallow waters, sand banks, dangerous rocks, pirates, etc. Thinking about the fate of the ships would make him sad.

(vii) What light does the extract throw on the financial status of Antonio?

What is the impact of his financial status in the play?

Ans. The extract shows that Antonio is financially very sound. But as he has risked all his money at the same time therefore he is not financially very secure at the beginning of the play for which he had to sign a bond with Shylock, his arch enemy, a Jew and later being a defaulter had to go through immense emotional and psychological turmoil.

Question 2

(i) Where does the scene take place? State the names of the people present there. Describe the mood of Salarino in this scene.

Ans. The scene takes place in a street in Venice. The characters present during this extract in Act I, Scene 1 of the play are Antonio, Salarino and Salanio.

Salarino is concerned about his friend Antonio and is trying to judge the reason of Antonio's sadness and thinks that if he is in Antonio's position he will be very anguished because all his fortunes are at the mercy of the ocean.

(ii) What is the "holy edifice of stone" referred to in the extract? What is its spiritual significance? What does the holy edifice of stone make the speaker imagine?

Ans. "Holy edifice of stone" means holy building made of stone.

Usually churches are made of stone and they are holy, and have great spiritual significance.

The holy edifice of stone reminds Salarino of the dangerous rocks on the ocean against which his ships can get hit and be drowned.

(iii) Before this extract Salanio says

Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind

Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads.

Explain the lines.

Ans. If Salanio had business ventures abroad, his thoughts would be fixed on the dangers to his ventures and methods of securing them.

He would be plucking the blades of grass and casting them in the air to see which way the wind blew, to figure out if it was blowing in a favourable direction. Further, he would look into maps for harbours, channels and open roadsteads near to the shore where his ships could anchor if need arises.

(iv) Give the meaning of the following

(a) *my gentle vessel's side*: my nice ship's side

(b) *Enrobe the roaring waters*: cover the big waves of the ocean

(c) *Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs to kiss her burial*: if a ship is aground and has rolled over, its mast would be lower than its sides (ribs) and it would be like kissing the sand, in the sense, would be in burial.

(v) Explain in brief what according to the speaker, would make a person in Antonio's position sad.

Ans. Salarino thinks that a person of Antonio's position can only be sad when all his money is invested in the ships tossing on the ocean and are prone to the perils of the ocean.

(vi) What is the sandy hourglass referred to by Salarino earlier? What would the 'hourglass' make him imagine? Why?

Ans. Before watches were popular, "sandy hour glass" was an apparatus to keep a tab on time.

The sand of this apparatus reminds Salarino of the dangers of sand banks of sea, where ships can get buried or stuck.

As Antonio's ships are all in ocean therefore Salarino thinks that he must be sad thinking about them and says that a sandy- hour glass probably reminds him that his ships also can run aground.

(vii) What would the 'wind', cooling his broth do to the speaker of the extract? How would the 'wind' affect his mood?

Ans. Salarino says that one's breath makes one's soup get cold. It reminds Salarino of the great winds on the ocean which makes him tremble thinking what the great winds on the ocean can do to ships.

(viii) How does Antonio reply to the remark made by Salarino that the former is sad thinking of his merchandise?

Ans. Antonio replies by saying that he is not sad thinking about his merchandise as (a) his fortune is not dependent on a single ship (b) neither in one place (c) nor is dependent on the earning of a single year.

(ix) Do you think that Antonio is a wise merchant? Give reasons for your answer.

Ans. Antonio is not very wise or prudent merchant as he has risked all his fortunes in different business ventures across many parts of the world. His ships are all tossing on the ocean and are at the mercy of the ocean. Therefore it cannot be concluded that he is a wise merchant.

Question 3

(i) Who speaks these lines to whom? Where are the characters situated?

Ans. These lines are spoken by Antonio to Salarino and Salanio. The characters are in the city of Venice.

(ii) What fortune is the speaker talking about? Explain in your own words the fortune of the speaker.

Ans. As Antonio's ships depend on the mercy of the ocean, therefore his business ventures of Antonio is referred to as his fortune.

In the course of the play we see Antonio's fortune taking a bad turn as it was

reported that his ships are lost though at the end of the play we are informed that three of his ships have returned back safely.

(iii) Later Antonio says he is not sad because of love. What reasons do Salarino provide for Antonio's melancholic state of mind?

Ans. Salarino thinks that Antonio is sad as being a merchant his ships are at the mercy of the ocean and its perils. Any merchant will be tensed when all his fortunes are risked in different business ventures.

(iv) What is the mental state of the speaker? Can you figure out any reason for such a mental state?

Ans. The mental state of the speaker, Antonio, is melancholic and we cannot figure out the reason of it as he is neither tensed about his business ventures, nor is he in love. The reason of his melancholy remained shrouded in mystery till the end of the play. Probably the only justifiable reason can be that he is tensed. Or it may be that being lonely (without any life partner) makes him sad.

(v) Explain

(a) "one bottom trusted" : dependent on one single slip

(b) "upon the fortune of the present year": upon the income of the present financial year

(vi) What happens to the fortune of the speaker in the course of the Play? Comment on the character of the speaker as you figure out from this extract.

Ans. The fortune of the speaker, Antonio, takes a bad turn as he had to sign a bond to take a loan of three thousand ducats from Shylock for his dearest friend Bassanio. As he is not able to return the money on time therefore Shylock drags him to the court to get his due of a pound of Antonio's flesh according to the conditions of the bond.

Antonio is a wealthy merchant who has risked all his money in a large number of ships which carry his goods all over the world. He is not too wise to risk all his money on different business ventures at the same time.

Question 4

(i) Contextualize the extract. Who is Janus? Why is he referred to as 'two-headed'? To what is Janus compared to in the extract? What are the terms of comparison?

Ans. These lines are spoken by Salarino in Act I, Scene 1 of The Merchant of Venice.

Janus is a Roman god having two faces: one frowning, the other smiling; one head looking inwards and the other looking out. Janus is referred here to indicate that Nature creates two different types of men with different outlooks.

Antonio's mood is compared to Janus. Antonio is both sad and content. Therefore Salarino compares him to two headed Janus.

(ii) What conclusion does Salarino come to when Antonio remarked that he was not sad because of love?

Ans. Salarino says that if Antonio is not sad because of love, then he is sad as he is not merry or happy.

(iii) Describe in your own words the two types of strange fellows that nature has framed.

Ans. Nature creates two different types of men with different outlooks - one sad, another merry.

(iv) Give the meaning of:

(a) *framed strange fellows*: created opposite outlooks

(b) *Peep through their eyes*: wrinkle their faces when they laugh, so that their eyes appear to be peeping through the folds.

(a) *of such vinegar aspect*: of such sour expression.

(v) Why are some people compared to parrots in the extract?

Ans. Some people are compared to parrots in the extract because:

(1) some people laugh foolishly as a parrot does at a bagpiper

(2) some people laugh at anything foolishly

(3) Bagpipes' sound can make only brainless laugh.

(vi) Who is Nestor? Who is he referred to in the extract?

Ans. Nestor is an old and wise Greek general who fought in the Trojan War.

If Nestor laughed at something, it must be extremely funny.

The people with sad nature would laugh only when things are very funny.

(vii) What excuse does Salarino give for leaving Antonio on the animal of Bassanio, Gratiano and Lorenzo?

Ans. Salarino says that he has to leave as there are some worthy friends waiting for him.

Question 5

(i) Who is the speaker? Why does the speaker say "Let me play the fool"? What are the "old wrinkles" referred to in the extract? What is the role of a fool in the Elizabethan era?

Ans. Gratiano, the speaker of the extract, says "Let me play the fool" in the sense that if Antonio has chosen to play a tragic part, then Gratiano prefers to play a comic role.

Old wrinkles refer to the wrinkles that appear on one's face when one laughs.

An official fool in the court wears motley (multi-coloured) dress and lightens the otherwise tense atmosphere of the court and also makes wise commentary on the proceedings.

(ii) What did the speaker say earlier on Antonio's sadness? What did Antonio say in reply to Gratiano's remarks?

Ans. Gratiano said earlier that Antonio must be sad because he worries too much about the worldly matters.

Antonio said in reply that he thinks about the world as a world and that he is just playing the role that he is supposed to play and it is a sad role.

(iii) Give the meaning and the significance of:

And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

Ans. The lines refer to an Elizabethan belief that wine drinking warms the liver.

A liver enriched by wine produces rich blood and thus a lively personality. Therefore Gratiano says that let his liver be heated up with wine so that he can be lively rather than sighing and groaning which is believed to take blood from the heart and cause death.

(iv) What is a 'grandsire cut in alabaster'? Why is the grandsire said to "sleep when he wakes"?

Ans. "Grandsire cut in alabaster" means as motionless as the stone statue on the grandfather's tomb.

Grandsire or grandfather is said to sleep when he wakes as he is motionless during the working hours (day) as if he was asleep.

(v) Against the background of the Elizabethan era, explain the meaning of "creep into the jaundice by being peevish."

Ans. Elizabethans believed that jaundice (a disease that turns skin yellow) was caused by jealousy and bad temper (peevishness). It suggests how our mind affects our body.

(vi) What opinion does Gratiano have about men whose faces "cream and mantle like a standing pool"? Why are some people "reputed wise" according to Gratiano?

Ans. Gratiano says that there are some people, whose faces stand still like the scum that forms on the surface of still waters in a pool, signifying that they are expressionless and therefore feelingless.

Antonio is still better as he has some expression on his face.

Some people are "reputed wise" as they do not open their mouth to say anything as they know that if they do so then their reputation of being wise will vanish.

Question 6

(i) Why is a young man being compared to 'his grandsire cut in

Alabaster'? What will make him be infected by jaundice?

Ans. A young man is compared to his grandsire cut in alabaster if the young man sits motionless throughout the day like the statue of his grandfather in the tomb.

The peevishness or jealousy will make him infected by Jaundice as the Elizabethans believed that jealousy leads to jaundice.

(ii) Explain:

(a) *Whose blood is warm within*: whose blood is warmed with wine

(b) *Do cream and mantle like a standing pool*: stand still like the scum that forms on the surface of still waters in a pool.

(c) *Do a willful stillness entertain*: deliberately put on an air of solemnity

(iii) State in your own words, what is Gratiano's opinion on those people, Who try to earn a reputation for wisdom.

Ans. Gratiano says that some people earn the reputation of wise men as they never open their mouth to say anything as they know that the moment they say something their reputation will wither away.

(iv) Explain:

(a) *I am Sir Oracle*: I speak with the authority of the Greek oracle (the oracles were supposed to be the voices of gods uttered through the mouths of priests)

(b) *Let no dog bark*: a proverbial phrase meaning "let no sound be heard."

(v) What was Gratiano's advice to Antonio at the end of the speech?

Ans. Gratiano advises Antonio not to be silent in melancholy to gain popularity.

Question 7

(i) Who is the speaker? Where is he situated? Who is Gratiano? What is his relationship with the speaker?

Ans. Bassanio is the speaker. Gratiano and Bassanio are in Venice.

Gratiano is a friend of Antonio and Bassanio. He is a friend of Bassanio.

(ii) Explain:

(a) *an infinite deal of nothing*: a great deal of nonsense

(b) *two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff*: a proverb which means something which should not be given importance as it is not worth it.

(iii) What is the speaker's notion of Gratiano?

Ans. Bassanio says that Gratiano is a good person but speaks nonsense continuously and one should not try to find sense in what he talks about.

(iv) Do you agree with the speaker about Gratiano? Why?

Ans. Gratiano speaks a lot and sometimes nonsense; but there is also some sense in it.

When he says that people should be happy and should not care about what other people think of him or should not be jealous of others and should not think of being "reputed wise" he has some logic to his ideas.

(v) What are not worth the search? Why?

Ans. To figure out sense in all the nonsense that Gratiano speaks is not worth the search.

Gratiano is a talkative man and therefore he speaks a lot.

Bassanio feels that one should not try to search for some sense in his nonsense.

Question 8

(i) Where are Bassanio and Antonio? What has Antonio just said which makes Bassanio speak the words given in the extract?!

Ans. Bassanio and Antonio are in a street in Venice.

Antonio has asked Bassanio whether it is the same lady to whom Bassanio promised to visit secretly. It is in this context that Bassanio speaks these lines in the extract.

(ii) Give the meaning of the following:

(a) *disabled mine estate*: squandered by means

(b) *swelling sport*: a grand style

(c) *make moan to be abridged*: complain to be curtailed

(it) Why does Bassanio speak about his debts? What can you conclude about the character of Bassano from this extract? Do you approve of his way of living? Give a reason to justify your opinion.

Ans. Bassanio is speaking about his debts as he is indebted to Antonio and wishes to get more loans for visiting Belmont.

Bassanio is a spendthrift who lives on borrowed money as many noble men did during the Elizabethan times. No, his way of living cannot be approved as one should try to live within what he or she possesses. To live on borrowed money may often lead to living dangerously.

(iv) What is the meaning and the significance of the word 'prodigal' in the extract? Can we say Bassanio is "prodigal"? Why?

Ans. Prodigal in the extract means "extravagant."

Yes, Bassanio is "prodigal" as he lives splendidly/extravagantly on borrowed money.

(v) Is Bassanio justified in his demand for fresh loans? How? How does he back the previous loans?

Ans. Bassanio is not justified in asking for a fresh loan as he is already under financial debts.

But as he wants to pursue his love in Belmont, therefore he had to ask for fresh loan.

Bassanio proposes to pay back his previous loans as soon as his present scheme is successful, probably referring to the lottery of caskets and marriage with Portia.

(vi) What experience of his school days does Bassanio narrate to justify his plan for repaying the loan?

Ans. Bassanio says that when he was a school boy if he would lose one of his arrows while shooting, then he would shoot another arrow in the same direction and by risking the second, he would regain

both the arrows. Bassanio is therefore asking for another loan so that by this loan he will earn enough to repay both the loans.

(vii) Why is Antonio unable to help Bassanio directly? Referring to two incidents or statements in this scene, bring out the relationship between Antonio and Bassanio.

Ans. Antonio is not able to help Bassanio directly as all his money is invested in his commercial ventures across the world.

Antonio and Bassanio are very good friends who love each other.

The incidents which show this are - (a) Antonio is willing to provide Bassanio a fresh loan even when he hasn't returned the first one

(b) Antonio is concerned about his friend.

Question 9

(i). To whom are these words addressed? What has the person said to which the speaker replies in such a manner?

Ans. These words are addressed by Bassanio to Antonio. Antonio says that all of Antonio's money, his resources and all he has are at the disposal of Bassanio, to which Bassanio speaks these words.

(i) Give meaning:

Or bring your latter hazard back again,

And thankfully rest debtor for the first

Ans. Bassanio says that he ensures that the second loan (latter hazard),

Will be returned though he may still be indebted for the first loan.

(iii) What did Bassanio confess about his financial status to Antonio earlier in the scene? Can you term Bassanio a spendthrift?

Ans. Bassanio has earlier said that he is in a financially difficult position as being a spendthrift he has spent all his money in living splendidly. Yes, he is a spendthrift as he has been living splendidly even on borrowed money.

(iv) What school day experience is Bassanio narrating to justify his plans for repaying the loan?

Ans. Bassanio says that when he was a school boy if he would lose one of his arrows while shooting, then he would shoot another arrow in the same direction and by risking the second, he would regain both the arrows. Bassanio is therefore asking for another loan so that by this loan he will earn enough to repay both the loans.

(c) What are Bassanio's plan for paying back his previous and present loans?

Ans. Bassanio says that this time when he borrows money he will be careful in his schemes and ensure that he returns the present and the previous loans. He is planning to go to Belmont to participate in the lottery of caskets to win rich, beautiful and intelligent Portia's hands.

Question 10

(i) To whom is Portia of the play, The Merchant of Venice, compared to in the extract? Who are Cato and Brutus? What do you figure out about Portia from such comparisons?

Ans. Portia of the play, The Merchant of Venice, is compared to Brutus' Portia.

Portia was daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus (a brave Roman general), the leader of the conspiracy against Julius Caesar. In the civil war between Pompey and Caesar he supported Pompey and was defeated by Caesar. Brutus, husband of Portia, was the chief of the conspirators against Caesar and caused his assassination.

From such comparisons it can be figured out that Portia of 'The Merchant of Venice' is as precious as Brutus's Portia.

(ii) What makes Bassanio think that Portia loves him? How has Bassanio described Portia just before this extract?

Ans. Bassanio thinks that Portia loves him as he has received speechless messages from her eyes.

Bassanio had described Portia as a lady who is better than just

being fair, that is beautiful and having wondrous virtues and at the same time inherited a great wealth, therefore wealthy.

(in) Explain:

(a) fair speechless messages: fathomed or understood messages which are not spoken but which seemed favourable.

(b) nothing under valued: in no way inferior to

(iv) How does Bassanio prove that the wide world is not ignorant of her worth? What is the evidence that Portia's fame has spread throughout the world?

Ans. Bassanio says that the world is not ignorant of Portia's worth and fame as suitors from all over the world are coming to try their luck in lottery of caskets to win her hands.

(v) Who is superior – Brutus' Portia or Bassanio's Portia? With close reference to the extract, give a reason to justify your answer.

Ans. Bassanio says that Portia is in no way inferior to Brutus' Portia, suggesting that she is worthier than Brutus' Portia.

She is worthier as she is beautiful, richly inherited and have wonderful virtues which is a rare combination.

(vi) Why is Belmont compared to Colchos' strand? Who are Jasons? Why are they called so? Explain the significance of the 'Golden fleece' which Jason sought in Colchos.

Ans. Belmont is compared to Colchos' strand as people from far off places are undertaking difficult journey to win Portia's hands.

The suitors of Portia are called Jasons.

They are called so as they are undertaking the difficult journey to come to Belmont to participate in the lottery of caskets so that they can win Portia, similar to that of Jason who went to Colches strand for golden fleece.

Golden fleece is the crop of wool of a sheep or ram which is highly valuable. Jason went to Colchos' to get it with much difficulty. Here Bassanio refers to Portia's hairs as Golden Fleece. The lottery of caskets is compared

to the golden fleece and the suitors to Jasons.

(vii) Give the meaning and the significance of:

and her sunny locks

Hang on her temples like a golden fleece.

Ans. And her bright hairs hanging on both sides of her forehead are like golden fleece that was fastened to an oak tree and guarded by demon which Greek hero Jason won with help of his wife Medea after undertaking much difficulty.

(viii) Explain why Portia is highly praised by Bassanio. Is Portia worthy of such praise? Why do you think so?

Ans. Bassanio highly praises Portia as she is beautiful having wondrous virtues and richly inherited which is a rare combination and moreover so as he is in love with her.

Yes, Portia is worthy of such praise as people from far off places are coming to participate in the lottery of caskets to win her hands which prove that she is worthy of the praise.

Question 11

(i) Who is the speaker? Where is he situated? What is he speaking about?

Ans. Bassanio speaks these lines to Antonio. He is in Venice. He is speaking about his intention to go to Belmont to participate in the lottery of caskets so that he can win Portia's hand in marriage.

(ii) What "means" is the speaker referring to in the extract?

Ans. Bassanio is a spendthrift and lives on borrowed money. He has earlier borrowed from Antonio, his friend and now he has no money to go to Belmont. "Means" in this context signifies the resources or funds or financial situation of Bassanio which is very poor.

(iii) Explain:

(a) Rival place: a competitor

(b) Question less be fortunate: fortunate without doubt.

(iv) Why does Bassanio speak about his debts? What can you conclude about the character of Bassanio from this extract? Is his way of living justified according to the Elizabethan standards?

Ans. Bassanio is speaking about his debts to Antonio as he has earlier borrowed from him and intends to borrow again. We come to know that he is a spendthrift who has no control over his expenses and therefore is compared to live on borrowed money. This way of living is not justified according to any standard, but many noble men of Elizabethan times used to have the habit of living an elegant life with borrowed money.

(v) What is the intention of the speaker? Is his intention fulfilled?

In what terms?

Ans. The intention of the speaker is to borrow some money again from his friend Antonio. Yes, he is successful as Antonio tells Bassanio to borrow the money from any person in Venice using Antonio's creditworthiness.

Question 12

(i). Why cannot Antonio help his friend Bassanio at once?

Ans. Antonio cannot help Bassanio at once as he has no ready money to help him. All of Antonio's money is risked on various business ventures across the world in the commercial ships that are having stately sail.

(ii) What is "a present sum"? How much is the amount? Why does Bassanio require it urgently?

Ans. "A present sum" refers to the sum that is presently required which is three thousand ducats. Bassanio requires that amount urgently to go to Belmont to participate in the lottery of caskets so that he can win Portia's hand in marriage.

(iii) What does Antonio tell Bassanio to do to get the necessary amount of money?

Ans. Bassanio asks Antonio to go to any person willing to lend money and use his creditworthiness to borrow the required sum, that is,

three thousand ducats.

(iv) Give meaning:

(a) That shall be rack'd even to the uttermost: that am stretched to the utter most.

What Antonio means is that Bassanio can use his creditworthiness to borrow from anyone in Venice.

(b) To have it of my trust or for my sake.

To borrow money either because of my business credit or on account of my personal friendship.

(v) In the first scene both the significant themes are introduced by Shakespeare - Love theme and Bond theme. How are they interwoven?

Ans. Love theme is introduced as we see Bassanio is in love with Portia and intends to go to Belmont to win her hands. Bond theme is introduced by showing that Antonio has no ready money and he needs to borrow the money to sponsor Bassanio's trip to Belmont. Thus the twin themes are interwoven. Later in the play Bassanio's wife Portia saves Antonio from the forfeit of the cruel bond of Shylock.

(vi) Comment briefly on the characters of

(a) Bassanio

Ans. Bassanio is a central figure in the romantic plot as he and Portia are the love birds who gets united at the end of the play in wedlock. He is a spendthrift and is very laid back about his obligations and lives splendidly on borrowed money.

(b) Antonio

Ans. Antonio is a wealthy merchant and has a large number of ships which carry his goods all over the world. Yet, he appears to be enveloped by a mysterious sense of melancholy. His melancholy is a contrast to the gaiety of his friends. Antonio's generosity is highlighted by the fact that he lends his credit-standing to Bassanio,

in spite of not having any cash at hand.

Act I Scene2

Question 1

(i). Who is the speaker? How is the speaker related to Portia? From where are they speaking? What is the special significance of that place?

Ans. Nerissa speaks these lines to Portia. Nerissa is the lady-in-waiting for Portia. The characters - Portia and Nerissa, are situated in Belmont, a romantic imaginative creation of Shakespeare, which literally means "a hill beautiful." Belmont and its romantic palace of Portia stands in contrast to the cruel business centre Venice.

(ii) In what terms does the speaker explain Portia's body is "awearied of this great world"? Where does the happiness lie according to Nerissa?

Ans. Nerissa explains that Portia is "awearied of this great world" as her miseries are as plentiful as her good fortunes.

She moreover points out that with abundance of good fortunes, one becomes old faster. As her misfortunes are similar to her fortunes, therefore she should be happy as her competency in dealing with them will make her live longer.

(iii) Give the meaning of: (a) they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing (b) superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Ans. (a) Those who are overfed are sick than those who starve for food.

(b) Those who have too much of anything will age sooner, but those who have just enough, live longer.

(iv) Briefly explain the reasons of Portia's sadness.

Ans. Portia's melancholy has a reason - that is, her sadness is caused by world-weariness and boredom; a pose typical of the 'poor little rich girl.' Portia is melancholic due to the casket obstacle laid down by her father and is anxious to have a befitting man.

(v) Is there any difference between Antonio's sadness and that of Portia?

Ans. The difference between Antonio's sadness and that of Portia is that Antonio is not aware why he is sad; whereas Portia knows the reasons of her sadness.

(vi) Why does Shakespeare introduce some of the important characters in a sad mood? What effect does it have on the audience?

Ans. The two main characters introduced in the first two scenes of the play - Antonio and Portia, are melancholic. The reason of Antonio's melancholy could not be ascertained but Portia's melancholy is caused by world-weariness and boredom; a pose typical of the 'poor little rich girl.'

It is unusual of a comedy to begin with the major characters in sad or melancholic mood. But Shakespeare always experimented with the form of the play and therefore he introduced the major characters of the play in melancholic mood, and could still with his craftsmanship make 'The Merchant of Venice' one of the finest comedies ever written.

Question 2

(i) Who is the speaker? What is the context in which these words are spoken?

Ans. Portia is the speaker. Portia and Nerissa are discussing about the Casket device that Portia's father has devised according to which her suitors have to choose from the three caskets the one which contains Portia's portrait to win her hand in marriage. Therefore, Portia has no say in choosing her husband.

(ii) What is the living daughter's will? What is the will of the father?

Do you think that the will of the daughter and that of the father clash against each other? Why do you think so?

Ans. The living daughter is Portia and like any other girl she intends to choose her own soul mate, but cannot as she is obedient to her father's will according to which she will marry only the person who

chooses the right casket containing her portrait.

Yes, the will of the father and that of the daughter clashes as Portia wants to choose her own husband but cannot override her father's will which does not give her any freedom.

(iii) What has Portia commented earlier about laws and law-makers?

Ans. When Nerissa earlier said that superfluity comes with old age and those overfed are sicker, Portia said "Good sentences, and well pronounced."

Portia is making a reference to judges as they 'pronounce' sentences. And As judge's sentences are rational, similarly Nerissa too is rational about what She said.

(iv) What anxiety is Portia expressing in the extract? Give two remarks made by Nerissa on this occasion to console Portia?

Ans. The anxiety is who would be Portia's future husband as her suitors need to participate in the lottery of casket and whosoever chooses the casket containing Portia's portrait will be her husband.

Nerissa makes two significant remarks to console Portia-

(a). Portia's father was a virtuous man and if he has devised the casket device for the marriage of his daughter then it must be a noble device to test the character of the suitor, and (b) the right casket will only be chosen by one who rightly loves Portia.

(v) What was the Elizabethan popular belief about holy men about to die? What do you think about such a belief?

Ans. It was a popular belief during the Elizabethan times that holy men, when they are about to die, have divine guidance.

Apparently it seems to be an irrational belief, but with old age and experience comes wisdom and old people with their wisdom often devise right things and offer right guidance

(vi) Is Portia's father's will acceptable in the twenty first century? Justify your answer by giving reasons.

Ans. Probably the casket device that Portia's father has devised for her

is not acceptable in today's society as people do not want her future decided through lottery. But if we look at the Casket device closely we will understand that when the suitors come and choose the right casket based on the quality of the metal and the inscriptions written on them, then more than it being a lottery, it becomes a test of his character. In that sense, it is a very nice device to understand the character of a person.

(vii) Describe the lottery of caskets in our own words.

Ans. Portia's father had laid down conditions for her marriage in his will according to which the suitor had to choose one of three caskets amongst gold, silver and lead. If the suitor opened the casket containing Portia's portrait, then he could win Portia's hand in marriage, else he should promise never to marry any other woman, never reveal the casket he chose and leave Belmont immediately. The suitor had to decide on the right casket based on the quality of the metal and the inscriptions on the caskets.

(viii) What are Portia and Nerissa's reactions to the lottery of caskets? State their reactions.

Ans. Portia and Nerissa's initial reactions to the lottery of caskets vary as Portia being the subject of the lottery of caskets is worried about her future and Nerissa thinks that if Portia's father, who is a virtuous man, has devised a plan for Portia's marriage then it must be something very noble and good.

Question 3

(1) Name the two people referred to by the speaker in the last line of the extract. What is a "death's head"? Why is it referred to in the extract?

Ans. The two people referred to by Portia are Neapolitan Prince and County Palatine.

A death's head is skull, or the emblem of a skull with two bones crossed underneath. It was often carved on tombstones as an emblem

of man's mortality.

Portia speaks here of a grinning skull with a bone in its mouth

(ii) Who is the County Palatine? Why has he come to Belmont?

Ans. County Palatine was the Count of Palatinate, the region on the west bank of the Rhine in Germany. He was a powerful lord who came to Belmont to win Portia's hand.

(iii) Who is "He" who frowns? Why is he present here? Why does "He" go back without attaining the purpose for which he came?

Ans. County Palatine is the person who frowns. He is described as a gloomy and self-conceited man whom Portia would not like to marry if she has her choice. County Palatine is there in Belmont to win Portia's hand.

He goes back without attaining his purpose as he was fearful of the penalty of choosing the wrong casket, that is, not to talk to any lady in terms of marriage.

(iv) Who is the weeping philosopher? Why is he called so? Why is "He" in the extract compared to the philosopher?

Ans. The weeping philosopher referred to in the extract is Heraclitus of Esphesus. He was a Greek philosopher who lamented the stupidity and folly of mankind and wept at everything in the world.

Portia refers to him to describe him to County Palatine as she feels that County Palatine is similarly a gloomy person.

(v) Give the meaning of:

(a) as who should say: as if he were to say

(b) unmannerly sadness: unpleasant gloom

(c) a death's-head with a bone in his mouth: a skull with a bone its mouth. The emblem of a skull with two bones crossed underneath was usually known as "death's head".

(vi) State in your own words remarks made by Portia on the first visitor.

What do you find humorous in the remarks?

Ans. The first prince described by Portia is the Neapolitan prince from

Naples, Italy. Portia describes him as a dashing youngster and a wild young horse who does nothing but talks about horses. Moreover, he considers his ability to shoe a horse as a great accomplishment

(vii) Which aspect of Portia's character is highlighted to the in the extract above?

Ans. Portia is a highly intelligent and opinionated lady who at the same time is an obedient daughter. Instead of deciding to have her own sweet will on choosing her future soul mate, she has decided to follow her father's will of letting her suitors choose the casket carrying her portrait to win her hand. But as she is a good judge of characters therefore she could figure out the characters of her suitors and wishes that God saves her from such men who are not suited for her.

Question 4

(i). Who is the speaker? Comment on the context of the extract. Who is "He" referred to in the extract? What is meant by "He is every man in no man"? Why is he so described?

Ans. Portia speaks these lines in Act I, Scene 2 where she is discussing the suitors who have come to Belmont to participate in the lottery of caskets.

French Lord, Monsieur Le Bon is referred to in the extract. 'He is every man in no man' is used in the sense that he has everybody else's characteristics and no personality of his own. He is being described so as he does not have a personality of his own.

(ii) What is Portia's attitude towards the man? Why is he accepted as a man? How does Portia compare him to the Neapolitan prince and the County Palatine?

Ans. Portia says that if she has to marry him then it would be like marrying twenty husbands as he has characteristics of all but none of his own. And even if he loves Portia madly, she will not be able to return his love.

Monsieur Le Bon is mocked at when he is being called a man as he is passed on as a man though having no personality of his own. Portia says that he talks more than Neapolitan about horses and a worse habit of frowning than County Palatine.

(ii) Give the meaning of:

(a) everyman in no man: he has every man's characteristics but no personality of his own

(b) he falls straight a-capering: he starts to jump about. Monsieur Le Bon is so fickle-minded that if he hears a thrush song, he starts to jump about.

(c) never requite him: never return his love.

(iv) What does Portia mean when she says, "If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands"?

Ans. Portia means that if she is married to him, it would be like marrying twenty husbands as he is never one man but twenty men by turns.

(v) State and explain the way in which the theme of appearance and reality is presented in the extract.

Ans. The theme of appearance and reality is presented in the extract in the description of Monsieur Le Bon and how he is not actually a man but every man, as he has no personality of his own, but shadow of personality of others.

Question 5

(i). Who is "He" referred to in these lines? What is Portia's opinion about His appearance? Why is he termed "a dumb-show"?

Ans. "He" is Falconbridge, the young baron of England. Portia says that he is the very picture of a handsome man. He is called a "dumb-show" as he cannot speak any other language apart from English (he does know Latin, French or Italian).

(ii) Why could not Portia communicate with him? What is informed earlier about his Competence of languages?

Ans. Portia could not communicate with him as he knows only English and Portia being from Italy does not know English. It is being said, does not know any other language apart from English, neither Latin, nor French, nor Italian.

(iii) What is referred to as 'a dumb show'? Why is the baron said to be a dumb show?

Ans. Falconbridge is called a dumb show as he is good looking but does not know any other language apart from English to communicate with Portia (Portia is Italian and does not know English).

(iv) Give possible meanings of the following: (a) He is properman's picture

(b) "How oddly he is suited!"

Ans. (a) He is the very picture of a handsome man

(b) How strangely is he dressed!

(v) What are Shakespeare's indirect comments in this context on an English man's language and dress habits?

Ans. English men are too proud of their language and never want to learn any other language. Portia makes fun of English baron, Falconbridge, by saying that he may be handsome, but he does not know any other language apart from English to communicate with Portia. More over Portia also comments on his dressing by saying that he is strangely dressed.

(vi) Why is the Scottish lord called 'his neighbour'? What is the neighbourly charity referred to in the context? What do you find humorous in the narration Of the neighbourly charity?

Ans. Scotland and England are two neighbouring countries and therefore the Scottish lord is called the neighbour of Falconbridge who is an English baron. Neighbourly charity refers to the relationship between England and Scotland. The Scots were given consistent assistance by French in their quarrels with the English. The humorous element is that it is not neighbourly charity, but neighbourly enmity which is being referred to between the English and the Scottish men.

(vii) What contemporary incident is referred to in the narration of the "neighbourly charity"?

Ans. The incident of the quarrels between the English and the Scottish people is referred to by "neighbourly charity" where the French gave the Scottish constant support.

Question 6

(i) Who is the speaker? What is the context? What is the "fear of the worst" referred to in the extract?

Ans. Portia is the speaker of these lines in Act I, Scene 2 when Portia and Nerissa are discussing different suitors and at this point they are discussing the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew.

The "fear of the worst" is if the young German is able to choose the right casket as he is a drunkard.

(ii) Explain clearly the precaution taken by the speaker to overcome this fear.

Ans. Portia tells Nerissa to place a deep glass of Rhenish wine beside the caskets and the German would choose the glass of wine as he is a drunkard. That is the precaution that Portia suggests to Nerissa.

(iii) Give the meaning of: (a) Rhenish wine; (b) contrary casket;

(c) married to a sponge.

Ans. (a) White wine made from grapes grown in the Rhine valley

(b) Wrong casket

(c) Married to one who soaks up, that is, a drunkard.

(iv) State in your own words what Portia intends to say in the expression

"if the devil...choose it."

Ans. If the devil is there within the German and the wine outside (beside the caskets) then he would definitely choose the glass of wine.

(v) Who is referred to as a sponge? Why is he so called? What has Portia said earlier about a point in his character because of which she dislikes him?

Ans. The German is referred to as a sponge. He is called so as he is a drunkard

who soaks all the wine. Portia has earlier mentioned that he is never sober, as he is always drunk.

(vi) What does Nerissa tell Portia to the effect that the latter need not fear?

Ans. Nerissa tells that Portia need not fear as all the suitors have gone back from Belmont as they came to know that if they are unsuccessful in choosing the right casket then three things they have to follow-

(a) not to woo any other lady (b) not to talk about their choice (c) to leave Belmont immediately.

(vii) Comment on any one quality in Nerissa which makes her a good companion to Portia.

Ans. Nerissa is a good companion to Portia for many reasons, but the most significant among them is that Nerissa never tries to be a sycophant to Portia, but praises, critiques, inspires, and reproaches her as and when it's fit.

Question 7

(i) To whom is the extract addressed? Why are the 'strangers' so called? How many of them had come? Why, do you think, they referred to as four in number by the speaker?

Ans. The extract is addressed to Portia in Act 1 Scene 2. The strangers are called so as they are the suitors of Portia and did not get introduced to Portia properly. Six of them had come.

When Shakespeare said four, he has probably forgotten that he mentioned six earlier. Or it may be that the servant just mentions a number without taking a real count of the people who are waiting to take their leave.

(ii) Did the 'strangers' achieve the purpose for which they had come? Why? Give one word or a phrase to describe any three of the strangers.

Ans. Strangers or the suitors of Portia did not achieve the purpose that is to participate in the lottery of caskets to win Portia's hands.

They did not participate as the consequences of being unsuccessful are (a) not to woo any other lady; (b) not to talk about their choice; (c) to leave Belmont immediately.

Falconbridge, the English Baron: Handsome, but a dumb-show.

The young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew: Sponge or Drunkard.

French Lord, Monsieur Le Bon: "every man in no man."

(iii) Why is Sibylla and Diana referred to before this extract? Who are they? What does Portia try to say through the reference of Sibylla and Diana?

Ans. Sibylla and Diana are referred by Portia to talk about her intention of remaining unmarried till someone comes and choose her according to the casket device.

Sibylla or the Sibyl of Cumae is a prophetess in Roman mythology. Apollo granted her as many years of life as there were sand grains held in her hand. Diana is the Roman mythological Goddess of virginity of hunting and the moon.

Sibylla and Dianna are mentioned by Portia to signify that even if she grows old and still remains virgin, she will only marry according to her father's will, that is, the casket device.

(iv) What is meant by "a forerunner"? Is Portia joyous on the arrival of the Prince of Morocco? Give a reason to justify your answer.

Ans. Forerunner is a messenger who comes ahead of his master. No Portia is not happy about the arrival of the Prince of Morocco. Portia says that if he has a saintly nature and a devilish complexion, it would be great if he hears of her sins and forgives her than marry her. Her dislike is evident from this.

(c) What remark made by Portia, at the end of the scene, shows that She has many wooers? What does it portray about Portia?

Ans. At the end of Act I Scene 2, Portia says that before one wooer

takes leave, another knocks at the door. It suggests that Portia is well known throughout the world for her beauty and intelligence.

Therefore suitors from all parts of the world are coming to participate in the lottery of caskets to win Portia's hands.

(vi) Do you agree that the opening two scenes of Act I provide the plot of the play? Why do you think so? Give reasons.

Ans. The opening two scenes provide the plot of the play as - (a) Act I Scene 1 introduces the major characters in Venice and that Antonio for the sake of Bassanio needs to borrow three thousand ducats for which he will go to Shylock and sign the Bond. (b) Act II, Scene 2 introduces us to Belmont, and Portia and the Casket Device.

Act I Scene 3

Question 1

(i). Where does Shylock live? What do you figure out about his mood from the given extract? Is there any specific reason for such a mood?

Ans. Shylock lives in the city of Venice. He is in a revengeful mood.

The reason of such a mood is that Antonio and other Christians hate Jews and Antonio has often abused him for money lending business. Though one must remember here that the Jews are not allowed to participate in any other profession apart from money lending as money lending business was banned by the medieval Christian norms.

(ii) What is signified by "yet his means are in supposition? Why are his means in supposition? What has Shylock just said which makes him say 'yet'?

ans. The significance of "yet his means are in supposition" is that though his (Antonio's) means are subject to the risks of business (the ships tossing on the sea).

Antonio's means are in supposition as Antonio has risked all his

money in ships which are tossing on the ocean across the world.

Shylock uses the word "yet" as Antonio is credit worthy, but at present present he has nothing, as all his money are invested in ships across the world.

(iii) Earlier Shylock said, "Antonio is a good man." What do Bassanio And Shylock mean by 'good man'? Why this difference of opinion between the two?

Ans. When Shylock says Antonio is a "good man", he means that he is good enough to be a surety for a loan of three thousand ducats, whereas Bassanio means that he is a noble man.

The difference of opinion is there as Bassanio is a good friend of Antonio and Shylock being a Jew victimized and tiraded in the Christian society hates and abhors Christians and specially Antonio who has been an impediment to his profession as he lends out money without interest.

(iv) What is hinted at in Shylock's remark, "But ships are but boards, sailors are but men"? Which are the sea perils referred to by Shylock in the extract?

Ans. When Shylock says "But ships are but boards, sailors are but men", he means that as ships are made of woods therefore there is every chance that it can get destroyed by the rough winds and waves.

The dangers that Shylock talks about to the ships tossing on the ocean are (i) pirates, (ii) rough winds, (iii) rough waves (storm) and shallow waters and (iv) rocks (on which ships can be hit and drown).

(v) Can you conclude from the extract that Antonio is a prudent businessman? Do you think Shylock is hesitant in lending Bassanio money with Antonio as surety? Why so?

Ans. Antonio seems to be a rich merchant but not very prudent as he has risked all his money in different business ventures at the same time. A prudent business man never takes such a risk when

everything depends on the mercy of the ocean.

Yes, Shylock is hesitant as he knows that return of Antonio's ships depend on the mercy of the ocean.

(vi) What is meant by, "The man is notwithstanding, sufficient"?

Sufficient for what? Why does he think that the man is sufficient?

Ans. The man is Antonio who is financially adequate to be given a loan of three thousand ducats.

Even though he has risked all his money in different business ventures yet his creditworthiness is sufficient for a loan of three thousand ducats.

The man is sufficient can mean that he can be a "surety" for the loan and also can suggest that Shylock had already planned the bond.

Question 2

(i). Why was Shylock invited to dinner? What made him decline the invitation? Do you think Shylock is justified in declining the invitation?

Ans. Bassanio invited Shylock to dine with them.

Shylock declines the offer saying that he cannot eat pork which is forbidden to the Jews.

If one thinks from a religious point of view then Shylock is justified in declining the offer, but if one thinks that it is due to Christians that Shylock has declined to dine with others, then it is completely unjustified.

(ii) Give the meaning of the following:

(a) Nazarite: Jesus Christ

(b) habitation: dwelling place

(e) conjured: ordered

(d) Rialto: the Venetian Stock Exchange where the merchants meet for business transactions.

(iii) What is alluded in the words, "the Nazarite conjured the devil into"?

Ans. Jesus Christ (the Nazarene) healed a madman by ordering the devils that possessed him to leave the man and enter a herd of pigs.

(iv) "Who is he comes here"? Name the person who comes. What is said about his appearance?

Ans. Antonio is the person who arrives when Bassanio and Shylock are talking.

Shylock says that Antonio looks like a "fawning publican" and foolish.

(v) Which are the things Shylock declines to do with Christians? Do you figure out the theme of racial discrimination evident in the extract? How?

Ans. Shylock can do business or commercial transactions with the Christians; but chooses not to dine with them.

Yes, the theme of racial discrimination is evident from the extract as it shows that Shylock hates the Christians. The Christians too hate Shylock and abuse him for being a Jew, a money lender and a cruel man who loves his money. Thus the hatred for the two communities against each other is evident not only in the extract, but throughout the play.

Question 3

(i) Contextualize the extract. Give the meaning of the expression, "If I catch him once upon the hip."

Ans. The extract is from Act I Scene 3, where Shylock talks about the grudges that he holds against the Christians in general and Antonio in particular. The expression "If I can catch him once upon his hip" literally means to get hold of him at a disadvantage.

(ii) What is meant by "feed fat"? What is the ancient grudge which Shylock nurses against Antonio?

Ans. "Feed fat" is used here in the sense of fully gratify, as though the grudge is an animal to be fed.

The grudges that Shylock holds against Antonio are - (a) Antonio

hates and abuses the Jews and (b) Antonio has been a problem for Shylock's money lending business as he gives loans to people without any interest, (c) Antonio moreover tirades Shylock for his money lending business while the Jews are not allowed to participate in any other profession in a Christian society.

(iii) State briefly in your own words what Shylock intends to do if he catches Antonio "once upon the hip." Is Shylock justified in thinking in such a fashion? Give a reason to justify your answer.

Ans. Shylock intends to fully gratify his hatred and wrath against Antonio and the Christians if he can catch Antonio "once upon the hip."

Shylock is not justified as such revengeful attitude is inhuman and cruel. Though at the same time this is also true that the abuses and injustices that Shylock has suffered in a Christian society are also inhuman.

(iv) What is referred to as the "sacred nation"? State two of the offences committed by Antonio against Shylock.

Ans. Shylock refers to his tribe - the Jews - as the "sacred nation."

Antonio has abused Shylock for being a Jew and has abused him for his money lending business.

(v) How does Shylock propose to give the money needed by Bassanio? Why does he need to think of such a proposal?

Ans. Shylock proposes to lend Antonio three thousand ducat without any interest on the term that if he fails to return the amount within stipulated time then Shlock would have the right to cut a pound of Antonio's flesh.

Shylock thinks about such a proposal as he intends Antonio to fail in returning of money so that he can take his revenge against of Antonio.

Question 4

(i) Who is the speaker? Identify the context.

Ans. Shylock is the speaker of the extract from Act I Scene 3.

The extract is in the context when Bassanio has come to ask Shylock for a loan of three thousand ducats and Shylock has stated about the bond. At that point Antonio has arrived and agreed to sign the bond.

(ii) Explain:

(a) my present store: my ready money

(b) cannot instantly raise to the gross: cannot in a moment raise to the full sum

(iii) Who is Tubal? What function has he in the play?

Ans. Tubal is another Jew in the play. His function in the play is not much but to fan Shylock's hatred and wrath against Antonio in particular and Christians in general.

(iv) State in your own words what does the speaker say to Antonio?

Comment on their relationship.

Ans. Shylock says to Antonio that he does not have three thousand ducats readily available with him and that he needs to ask Tubal, another Jew, for some money so as to lend Antonio three thousand ducats and then asks Antonio for how long does he intend to borrow the amount.

(v) What is the meaning of the last line "Your worship was the last man in our mouths."

Ans. It is about you (Antonio) that we (Shylock and Bassanio) were taking about.

Question 5

(i) What is it that is referred to in the first line of the extract? Why do you think that Antonio never uses it?

Ans. It refers to the borrowing of money. Antonio never borrows or lends money with interest as the medieval Christian morality does not allow it.

(ii) Who was holy Abram? What was Jacob's relationship with him?

Explain how Jacob became the third possessor?

Ans. Abram was the founder of the Jewish race and therefore Shylock refers to him as Holy. Jacob was the grandson of Abram. Jacob was third in the line of heirs to family estates. The first one being Abraham and the second, Isaac. Jacob should not have been the heir since he was younger than his brother Esau. But Jacob's mother played a trick to have Jacob as Isaac's heir.

(iii) How does Shylock use Jacob-Laban story to justify the taking of Interest?

Ans. Shylock uses Jacob and Laban story to suggest how a little bit of trick can put one in financially secure position and suggests that similar to the mythical story he also takes interest on the money that he lends.

(iv) How does Antonio explain the fact that Jacob benefited by working for Laban?

Ans. Antonio tells Shylock that it was purely a matter of chance in Jacob's case as he had no control over it himself. Providence guided and governed the event. Moreover Jacob benefitted as he was working for Laban.

(v) How does Antonio prove that Shylock's practices in charging interest are not justified, as was the case with Jacob?

Ans. As Jacob was not justified in what he had done, similarly Shylock is not at all justified in charging interest. Moreover it was not Jacob but the providence who played an important role in it.

Question 6

(i) Who is the speaker? Contextualize the passage.

Ans. Antonio is the speaker. He says this while he has met Shylock with Bassanio in Act I, Scene iii to borrow an amount of three thousand ducats.

(ii) Who is the devil? Do you agree with the speaker that he is a devil?

Ans. Shylock is the devil. He is a devil as he has the ill qualities of wrath, revenge and money-making mindset. But at the same time it should be understood that years of victimization in a Christian society has made this Jew have such a mindset.

(iii) What is the purpose for which the devil cites the scripture? Give examples.

Ans. The devil, Shylock, cites the scripture to justify his taking of interest. Shylock immediately before the extract, tried to justify his charging interest on the Money by referring to the story of Jacob and Laban.

(iv) Why is he 'an evil soul'? Can we term him so? Why?

Ans. He is an evil soul as he is cruel and plots against the life of Antonio to feed upon his grudges against him. We can term him so as he becomes a malicious villain in the course of the play:

(v) State in your own words the speaker's estimation of the character he is speaking about.

Ans. The speaker Antonio is to some extent justified in calling Shylock a devil and an evil man as he is villainous, revengeful and cruel, plotting against Antonio's life. Shylock being a money lender always thinks in terms of money, but at the same time it is true that he is a victim of the circumstances as he is treated like an outsider by the Christian society.

Question 7

(i) Contextualize the extract. Who is addressed as "Sir"? Where are they at this point of time?

Ans. The passage is from Act I, Scene 3 of The Merchant of Venice, when Bassanio and Antonio are talking about the loan of three thousand ducats and also why Shylock charges interest on the money he lends. Shylock addresses Antonio as "Sir". They are at a public place in Venice.

(ii) Why does the speaker say "Hath a dog money"? What does the speaker

imply by "courtesies"? What "courtesies" had the person spoken to be heaped on the speaker?

Ans. The speaker, Shylock, mockingly says "Hath a dog money" as the Christians, especially Antonio had been abusing Shylock for money lending and called him a dog.

Courtesies mean polite actions. But Shylock uses the word to mean abuses. Antonio has abused Shylock time and often for money lending business. Those abuses are referred here.

(iii) Give the meaning of "Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key With bated breath, and whispering humbleness."

Ans. Shylock says - "Shall I bow down anxiously like a slave and humbly whisper to you."

(iv) Give two reasons- one financial and the other racial - for the speaker's hatred for the person addressed to.

Ans. The speaker, that is, Shylock hates Antonio for two reasons

(a) financial - Antonio has many a times thwarted Shylock's money lending business by lending money free of interest and (b) racial- Shylock is a Jew and the Christians hated and abused the Jews.

(v) Why has the person who wants money urgently now come to the dog to borrow money?

Ans. Antonio has come to Shylock to borrow the money as Bassanio needs the money to go to Belmont to participate in the Lottery of caskets to win Portia's hands for marriage. As Antonio's ships are tossing on the sea, therefore he does not have any ready money and needs to borrow from others.

(vi) What is your impression of the speaker at this time?

Ans. Shylock is shown to be someone who is cruel, manipulative and revengeful. The moment Bassanio followed by Antonio comes to borrow money from him, he does not spare a moment to undermine the Christians and moreover agrees to lend the money free of interest

to trap Antonio.

Question 8

(i) What kindness is referred to by Bassanio? Is he really kind? Why do you think so? Which are the legal formalities proposed by Shylock before he would give the loan?

Ans. The kindness of agreeing to lend three thousand ducats is being referred here.

It is not really kind as Shylock has already plotted against Antonio's life that if he is not able to return the money within stipulated date and time then he will take his life by cutting a pound of Antonio's flesh according to the terms and conditions of the bond.

(iii) State the remark which Shylock makes in order to calm any fear Antonio might have about sealing the proposed bond. Is Shylock sincere in his remark? Give a reason to substantiate your answer.

Ans. Shylock states that the signing of the bond is "a merry sport"- a pleasant joke, to make Antonio feel that there is no villainy behind having such a condition.

Shylock is not at all sincere in his remarks. Shylock is trying to trap Antonio into a bond like this as he plans to take his revenge against Antonio.

(iii) What makes Shylock demand a pound of Antonio's flesh? What do you figure out about his character from the extract?

Ans. Shylock demands a pound of Antonio's flesh as a condition to the money borrowed if the borrowed amount is not returned within stipulated time of three months.

Shylock is a cruel and scheming money lender and his hatred for Christians in general and Antonio in particular is evident from the extract.

(iv) What is Antonio's reaction to Shylock's demand? What aspect of Antonio's character is shown through this incident?

Ans. Antonio reacts by saying that he is ready to sign the bond.

We have earlier scene that Antonio is not at all prudent in his commercial dealings and business transactions. But being a noble man he is very emotional about his friend Bassanio and is willing to do anything for his sake.

(v) What was Bassanio's reaction to Antonio's willingness to sign the bond?

Ans. Bassanio did not agree with Antonio's decision to sign the bond as He knows that Shylock has a villainous mind which must be plotting something evil. So he tried to stop Antonio from signing the bond.

(vi) Why is Antonio so confident that he would not have to forfeit a pound of his flesh? Do you think that Antonio acts prudently in agreeing to sign the bond? Why do you think so?

Ans. Antonio thinks that his ships are going to return back to Venice before the stipulated date of returning the amount of three thousand ducats to Shylock. Therefore he is confident to sign the bond.

Antonio is not at all prudent in signing the bond as (i) no one should borrow money on such terms, (ii) and ships tossing on the ocean are prone to many perils.

Question 9

(i) Which Christians in particular are referred to in the extract? Why, according to Shylock, are Christians suspicious?

Ans. Antonio and Bassanio are the Christians referred to in the extract.

Shylock says that they are suspicious as they are thinking that Shylock is scheming something when he has asked Antonio to sign a bond according to which if Antonio fails to return the borrowed money within three months then Shylock would have the right to cut off a pound of Antonio's flesh.

(ii) Give the meaning of the following lines

"If he should break his day, what should I gain

By the exaction of the forfeiture?"

Ans. If he fails to pay on the day agreed upon, then what is it I am gaining by the forfeit of the bond?

(ii) What is Shylock's intention in including the penalty of a pound of Antonio's flesh in the bond? How does Shylock pretend that human flesh is of little value to him?

Ans. Shylock's intention in including the penalty of Antonio's flesh in the bond is that he wants to trap Antonio if he fails to make the payment and take revenge against Antonio for abusing him.

Shylock says that human flesh is of little value to him as it neither valuable nor profitable.

(iv) What steps does Shylock take to ensure that Antonio is bound to the conditions in the bond?

Ans. Shylock asks Antonio to meet at the Rialto so that they can sign a bond so that the conditions of the amount borrowed are not merely oral but written and legally verifiable.

(v) What instruction does Shylock give to Antonio immediately after their Conversation/ What would Shylock himself do then?

Ans. Shylock asks Antonio to go to Notary office and make the bond. Shylock says that in the mean time he will arrange for the money, that is, three thousand ducats and then go to his house to see if it is safe as it is under unreliable custody of an irresponsible servant.

(vi) How do you view the relationship between Antonio and Shylock in regard to the signing of the bond?

Ans. Though Shylock has agreed to provide a loan of three thousand ducats free of interest to Antonio, but their relationship is not at all amicable. Moreover they are foes as Antonio hates Shylock for being the Jew and for money lender and Shylock hates Antonio for hating the Jews and for thwarting and abusing his money lending business.