

2nd Year English Elective Notes

A New Anthology of Poems - Poems 13 to 23

Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore - Complete Chapter Wise Question Answers

These are original study and revision notes in simple English. They summarise each poem in the student's own words for revision. They do NOT reproduce the poems, they are NOT the textbook, NOT official board notes, NOT leaked material, and NOT a guarantee of questions or marks.

Board and book identification: Cover title 'A New Anthology of Poems for Classes 11-12, English Elective, Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore'. In the BISE Lahore English Elective syllabus, Class 11 covers poems 1 to 12 and Class 12 covers poems 13 onwards. In the Punjab Textbook Board edition consulted, the contents list runs to poem 23, Life and Death. This set therefore covers poems 13 to 23, the 2nd year portion in that edition. If your edition lists a 24th poem, tell me its title and it will be added.

Contents: 13 Prayer before Birth, 14 Ducks, 15 Across the Indus, 16 The Express, 17 An Old Woman of the Roads, 18 Time, Gentlemen, Time, 19 Young and Old, 20 Everyone Sang, 21 The Seal Boy, 22 The Watchers, 23 Life and Death.

Poem 13: Prayer before Birth - Louis MacNeice

In this poem an unborn child speaks to God before it is born. The child asks for protection from the evils of the modern world. It fears that after birth it will be forced into a life of hatred, war, greed, cruelty and dishonesty, and that it will lose its innocence.

So the child prays again and again to be kept safe, and to be allowed to remain human. The poem is not a story with a happy ending. It is a warning: if society teaches a child only fear and violence, the child may grow up without kindness and truth.

Theme:

The poem warns that a cruel world can destroy innocence, and that a child needs moral protection more than material comfort.

Important Points:

- The speaker is an unborn child.
- The child fears war, hatred, greed and cruelty.
- Innocence is presented as something precious and fragile.
- The repeated prayer gives the poem urgency and emotion.
- The poem is a criticism of modern society, not only a personal prayer.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Who is the speaker in the poem?

Answer: The speaker is an unborn child. The child has not yet entered the world, so it speaks with complete innocence. Because it has not yet been touched by the evils of society, its prayer sounds pure and sincere.

Q2. What does the child fear most?

Answer: The child fears that the world will make it cruel, greedy and dishonest. It fears war and hatred more than physical pain. In short, it fears losing its human goodness after birth.

Q3. Why does the child pray again and again?

Answer: The child repeats its prayer because its fear is very strong. Repetition shows that the danger is not small or temporary. It also shows that the child feels helpless and can only ask God for help.

Q4. What is the central message of the poem?

Answer: The central message is that society can corrupt a child. If children grow up among war, greed and lies, they may lose innocence. The poem asks readers to protect children from such influences.

Q5. How is the poem relevant today?

Answer: The poem is still relevant because children today also face violence, greed and dishonesty through wars, media and social pressure. The poem reminds parents, teachers and society to give children a safe and moral environment.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Explain the theme of innocence and corruption in Prayer before Birth in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem is built on a contrast between innocence before birth and corruption

after birth. Explanation: Before birth the child is pure, but it knows that the world outside is full of war, hatred and greed. It fears that after birth it will be taught to hate, to kill and to lie, and that it will forget kindness. The poet uses this fear to criticise modern society, which often values power and money more than truth and love. Conclusion: The poem therefore teaches that innocence must be protected, and that a society which corrupts its children is itself in danger.

Q2. Why is Prayer before Birth called a warning poem? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: A warning poem does not only describe a feeling; it alerts readers to a danger.

Explanation: In this poem the unborn child warns us that the world is not ready for a new life. It lists the evils it fears, and each fear points to a real problem in society, such as war, cruelty and materialism. The child cannot save itself, so its prayer becomes a warning to adults to change their ways.

Conclusion: The poem warns that if we do not change society, every new child will face the same danger.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. Who speaks in Prayer before Birth?

- A. An unborn child
- B. A soldier
- C. A teacher
- D. An old man

Correct Answer: A

2. What does the child ask God for?

- A. Protection
- B. Wealth
- C. Fame
- D. Power

Correct Answer: A

3. What does the child fear?

- A. Losing innocence
- B. Going to school
- C. Playing games
- D. Sleeping

Correct Answer: A

4. The poem criticises mainly:

- A. Modern society
- B. Nature
- C. Sports
- D. Science

Correct Answer: A

5. The tone of the poem is:

- A. Serious and fearful
- B. Funny
- C. Careless
- D. Proud

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 14: Ducks - Taufiq Rafat

This poem describes ducks that come as migratory guests from far away, from cold northern lands. They fly across the sky in a beautiful formation and land on the lakes and wetlands of this country. For a short time they look like welcome guests in nature.

But the poem then shows a sad irony. The same ducks that are welcomed as guests are hunted with guns. The poet criticises this cruel welcome. The beauty of the ducks and the violence of the hunt are placed side by side, and the contrast makes the reader think about human cruelty towards nature.

Theme:

The poem criticises human cruelty towards nature, and shows how beauty is destroyed by hunting.

Important Points:

- The ducks are migratory birds from cold northern areas.
- They are described as guests, not as enemies.
- Their flight is beautiful and graceful.
- Hunting turns a welcome into violence.
- The poem uses irony to criticise hunters.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Who are the ducks in the poem?

Answer: The ducks are migratory birds that travel from cold northern lands to warmer places. They arrive in large numbers and stay for a season. The poet calls them guests because they come from far away and do no harm.

Q2. Why are the ducks called guests?

Answer: They are called guests because they arrive from another land and are welcomed by nature. The word guest suggests that they should be treated with kindness and respect, just as a human guest is treated in a home.

Q3. What is the irony in the poem?

Answer: The irony is that the guests are welcomed with gunshots instead of kindness. People admire their beauty, yet they hunt and kill them. This contrast between welcome and violence is the central irony of the poem.

Q4. What does the poem criticise?

Answer: The poem criticises hunting and human cruelty towards innocent creatures. It shows that human beings often destroy the very beauty they admire. The poet asks readers to feel pity for the ducks.

Q5. What is the message of the poem?

Answer: The message is that nature should be protected, not destroyed. Migratory birds are a gift of nature, and killing them for sport is cruel. The poem asks for sympathy and care for wildlife.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss the irony in Ducks in detail.

Answer: Introduction: Irony means a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens. Explanation: In this poem the ducks are expected to be welcomed as guests, because they travel a long distance and bring beauty to the lakes. But instead of a kind welcome, they receive gunshots. The hunters admire their flight, yet they kill them. This irony exposes human selfishness: we praise beauty and then destroy it. Conclusion: Through irony the poet makes the reader feel the cruelty of hunting more strongly than a direct complaint would.

Q2. How does Ducks present the theme of man versus nature? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem presents a conflict between innocent nature and cruel human beings. Explanation: Nature is represented by the ducks, which fly gracefully and harm no one. Human beings are represented by hunters, who use guns for sport. The ducks cannot defend themselves, so the conflict is unequal. The poet sides with nature and shows that human power is misused when it destroys innocent life. Conclusion: The poem teaches respect for nature and warns that cruelty towards animals harms human character as well.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The ducks in the poem come from:

- A. Cold northern lands
- B. Deserts
- C. Mountains only
- D. Cities

Correct Answer: A

2. The ducks are called:

- A. Guests
- B. Enemies
- C. Thieves
- D. Soldiers

Correct Answer: A

3. The central irony is:

- A. Welcome with gunshots
- B. Welcome with food
- C. Welcome with songs
- D. No welcome

Correct Answer: A

4. The poem criticises:

- A. Hunting
- B. Flying
- C. Swimming
- D. Singing

Correct Answer: A

5. The tone towards ducks is:

- A. Sympathetic
- B. Angry at ducks
- C. Careless
- D. Proud

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 15: Across the Indus - Shahid Hosain

This poem describes a city across the river Indus. From a distance the city looks beautiful. Its buildings, lights and shape create a pleasing picture, and a traveller may admire it from far away.

But when the traveller comes close, the picture changes. The city is shown to be dirty and unhygienic. The poem therefore teaches a simple truth: appearance and reality are often different. A place, a person or a thing may look attractive from a distance, but close examination can reveal a very different truth.

Theme:

The poem presents the contrast between appearance and reality.

Important Points:

- The city looks beautiful from a distance.
- At close quarters it is dirty and unhygienic.
- Distance hides faults, closeness reveals them.
- The poem is about a Pakistani city across the Indus.
- The message is general: do not judge only by appearance.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. What does the city look like from a distance?

Answer: From a distance the city looks beautiful and attractive. Its shape and lights create a pleasing picture. A traveller who sees it from far away may think it is a clean and pleasant place.

Q2. What is the reality at close quarters?

Answer: At close quarters the city is dirty and unhygienic. Its streets and surroundings are not clean. The beauty seen from a distance disappears when the traveller comes near.

Q3. What is the main contrast in the poem?

Answer: The main contrast is between appearance and reality. From far away the city appears beautiful, but from near it appears dirty. The poet uses this contrast to teach a lesson about judgement.

Q4. What lesson does the poem teach?

Answer: The poem teaches that we should not judge anything only by its outward appearance. A person, a place or a thing may look good from outside, but its real condition can be different. Careful observation is necessary.

Q5. Why is the Indus important in the poem?

Answer: The Indus is the river across which the city lies. It creates distance between the observer and the city. That distance is important because it hides the faults of the city and creates a false impression of beauty.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Explain the theme of appearance versus reality in Across the Indus in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem is built on one clear contrast: what a city looks like from far away and what it really is from near. Explanation: From a distance the city across the Indus looks beautiful,

because distance hides dirt and disorder. When the traveller comes close, the reality is dirty and unhygienic. The poet does not only describe a city; he gives a general lesson. In life also, people and things often look attractive from outside, but their real condition is revealed only on close examination. Conclusion: The poem therefore warns readers not to trust first impressions alone.

Q2. How does the poet use distance as a symbol in the poem? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: Distance is not only a physical fact in the poem; it is also a symbol. Explanation: Physical distance between the observer and the city hides its faults, just as social or emotional distance can hide the faults of a person or a system. When distance is removed, truth appears. The river Indus therefore stands for the gap between seeing and knowing. Conclusion: The poem teaches that true knowledge comes from closeness and careful observation, not from distant admiration.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. From a distance the city looks:

- A. Beautiful
- B. Dark
- C. Empty
- D. Small

Correct Answer: A

2. At close quarters the city is:

- A. Dirty
- B. Clean
- C. Rich
- D. Quiet

Correct Answer: A

3. The main theme is:

- A. Appearance vs reality
- B. War
- C. Love
- D. Travel

Correct Answer: A

4. The city is across the:

- A. Indus
- B. Jhelum
- C. Ravi
- D. Chenab

Correct Answer: A

5. The poem warns against:

- A. Judging by appearance
- B. Travelling

C. Rivers

D. Cities

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 16: The Express - Stephen Spender

This poem describes a fast express train. The train moves with great speed and power through the countryside. It passes fields, hills and villages, and its movement creates a feeling of energy and excitement.

The poem also presents the train as a symbol of modern life. Modern life is fast, powerful and always moving forward. But the poem also suggests that such speed can be both exciting and frightening, because it leaves the slow, quiet world behind.

Theme:

The poem presents speed, power and modern life through the image of an express train.

Important Points:

- The train is fast and powerful.
- It moves through fields, hills and villages.
- Speed creates excitement and energy.
- The train symbolises modern life.
- Modern speed can also feel frightening.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. What is described in the poem?

Answer: An express train is described in the poem. The train moves very fast through the countryside. Its speed, sound and power are presented in a lively way, so the reader can feel its movement.

Q2. How does the train move?

Answer: The train moves with great speed and force. It does not stop for small places; it rushes forward. Its movement is continuous, like modern life which never stops.

Q3. What does the train symbolise?

Answer: The train symbolises modern life and modern progress. Just as the train is fast and powerful, modern life is also fast and full of energy. The train shows how machines have changed human life.

Q4. Why is speed both exciting and frightening?

Answer: Speed is exciting because it shows power and progress. But it is frightening because it leaves behind the slow and quiet world of nature and villages. The poem suggests that progress has both gains and losses.

Q5. What is the feeling created by the poem?

Answer: The poem creates a feeling of movement and energy. The reader feels the rush of the train and the excitement of speed. At the same time there is a sense of wonder at human power.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss The Express as a poem about modern life in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem uses a train to describe modern life. Explanation: The express train is fast, powerful and never stops, just like modern life. It passes through nature without waiting, and this shows how modern progress changes the old, slow world. The poet admires the power of the machine,

but he also hints that speed can make life restless. Conclusion: The poem is therefore both a celebration of modern power and a quiet warning about its effects.

Q2. How does the poet create a feeling of speed in the poem? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: A poem about a train must make the reader feel movement, not only understand it. Explanation: The poet does this by describing the train rushing through fields and villages, by using images of power and energy, and by keeping the movement continuous. The train does not pause, and the reader feels that same continuous rush. Conclusion: Through these images the poem becomes a living picture of speed, not just a description of a train.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The poem describes:

- A. An express train
- B. A bus
- C. A ship
- D. A plane

Correct Answer: A

2. The train symbolises:

- A. Modern life
- B. Old age
- C. War
- D. Love

Correct Answer: A

3. The train moves through:

- A. Countryside
- B. Sea only
- C. Desert only
- D. Cities only

Correct Answer: A

4. Speed in the poem is:

- A. Exciting and frightening
- B. Boring
- C. Slow
- D. Silent

Correct Answer: A

5. The main image is:

- A. A train
- B. A horse
- C. A river

D. A bird

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 17: An Old Woman of the Roads - Padraic Colum

This poem describes an old woman who travels on the roads. She has no fixed home, and she walks from place to place. She is old, tired and lonely, yet she keeps travelling.

The poem presents both the freedom and the sadness of her life. She is free because she is not tied to one place, but she is sad because she has no home, no family comfort and no rest. The roads, the open sky and the changing seasons become her companions.

Theme:

The poem presents old age, wandering, freedom and loneliness together.

Important Points:

- The old woman has no fixed home.
- She travels on the roads from place to place.
- She is old, tired and lonely.
- Her life has both freedom and sadness.
- Nature and the roads are her companions.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Who is the old woman?

Answer: The old woman is a homeless wanderer who travels on the roads. She has no house of her own and no fixed place to live. She walks from one place to another, carrying her few belongings with her.

Q2. Why does she travel on the roads?

Answer: She travels because she has no home to stay in. The roads have become her life. Travelling is not a choice for pleasure; it is the only life she has.

Q3. What is sad about her life?

Answer: Her life is sad because she is old, tired and lonely. She has no family comfort, no warm home and no rest. Old age makes her journey even harder.

Q4. What is free about her life?

Answer: Her life is free because she is not tied to one place, one house or one routine. She can go wherever the road leads. This freedom, however, comes with loneliness.

Q5. What do the roads symbolise?

Answer: The roads symbolise a life of wandering and uncertainty. They also symbolise the journey of life itself, which goes on without stopping. For the old woman, the road is both her home and her fate.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss the theme of freedom and loneliness in An Old Woman of the Roads in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem presents two opposite feelings at the same time: freedom and loneliness. Explanation: The old woman is free because she is not bound to a house or a routine, and she can walk wherever she likes. But this freedom is lonely, because she has no home, no family and no rest. Old age increases her loneliness, as her body grows tired. Conclusion: The poem therefore

shows that freedom without love and shelter can become a form of sadness.

Q2. How does the poet create sympathy for the old woman? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poet does not tell the reader to feel pity; he creates pity through description.

Explanation: He shows an old, tired woman walking alone on the roads, with no home and no companion except nature. Her age, her loneliness and her endless journey make the reader feel sympathy. The simple, quiet tone of the poem also adds to this feeling. Conclusion: Through these details the poem becomes a human picture of old age and homelessness, not just a description of a traveller.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The old woman travels on:

- A. Roads
- B. Rivers
- C. Trains
- D. Ships

Correct Answer: A

2. She has:

- A. No fixed home
- B. A palace
- C. A farm
- D. A shop

Correct Answer: A

3. Her life has:

- A. Freedom and loneliness
- B. Only joy
- C. Only wealth
- D. Only fame

Correct Answer: A

4. Old age makes her journey:

- A. Harder
- B. Easier
- C. Faster
- D. Richer

Correct Answer: A

5. Her companions are:

- A. Roads and nature
- B. Kings
- C. Soldiers

D. Merchants

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 18: Time, Gentlemen, Time - Oliver St John Gogarty

This poem is about time and how quickly it passes. The title itself is like a call in a public house at closing time, when people are told that time is over. The poet uses this everyday call to remind readers that life also has a closing time.

The poem says that youth, joy and opportunities do not last forever. Time moves forward without waiting for anyone. Those who waste time will regret it later, when time has already passed.

Theme:

The poem warns that time passes quickly and cannot be brought back.

Important Points:

- Time is compared to closing time in a public house.
- Youth and joy do not last forever.
- Time waits for no one.
- Wasting time leads to regret.
- The poem is a warning to use time well.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. What does the title mean?

Answer: The title is like the call made in a public house when closing time comes. People are told that time is over and they must leave. The poet uses this call as a symbol for the end of life's opportunities.

Q2. Why is time compared to closing time?

Answer: Time is compared to closing time because both come suddenly and cannot be delayed. Just as customers must leave when the house closes, human beings must also accept that their time will end.

Q3. What is the main message of the poem?

Answer: The main message is that time passes very quickly and cannot be recovered. People should use their youth and opportunities wisely, because once time is gone it never returns.

Q4. How does the poem create a feeling of urgency?

Answer: The poem creates urgency by repeating the idea that time is short. The call 'Time, gentlemen, time' sounds like a final warning. It makes the reader feel that there is no time to waste.

Q5. What will happen to those who waste time?

Answer: Those who waste time will regret it later. When youth and opportunities have passed, they will wish they had used them well. Regret is the natural result of wasted time.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss Time, Gentlemen, Time as a warning about time in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem is a warning, not just a description of time. Explanation: The poet uses the familiar call of closing time to show that life also has a limit. Youth, strength and chances do not last forever, and time moves forward without stopping for anyone. Those who delay and waste their days will find, too late, that their time is over. Conclusion: The poem therefore teaches readers to value time,

to work while they can, and to enjoy life responsibly before it passes.

Q2. How does the poet use an everyday image to discuss a serious theme? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: Great poetry often uses simple, everyday images to discuss serious ideas.

Explanation: In this poem the closing call of a public house is a common, everyday sound. The poet turns it into a symbol of death and the end of opportunities. This makes a serious theme easy to understand, because every reader knows what closing time feels like. Conclusion: By using a simple image, the poet makes the abstract idea of passing time concrete and urgent.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The title is like a call at:

- A. Closing time
- B. Opening time
- C. Morning
- D. Night only

Correct Answer: A

2. Time in the poem:

- A. Passes quickly
- B. Stands still
- C. Goes back
- D. Stops

Correct Answer: A

3. The poem warns against:

- A. Wasting time
- B. Working
- C. Reading
- D. Travelling

Correct Answer: A

4. Youth in the poem is:

- A. Temporary
- B. Permanent
- C. Unimportant
- D. Painful

Correct Answer: A

5. Wasted time leads to:

- A. Regret
- B. Joy
- C. Wealth
- D. Fame

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 19: Young and Old - Charles Kingsley

This poem compares the young and the old. The young see the world with hope and excitement. Everything looks new, bright and full of promise to them. They believe that life will be long and joyful.

The old, on the other hand, see the world with experience. They know that life has sorrows as well as joys, and that time passes quickly. The poem does not say that one view is right and the other wrong. It shows that youth and age see the same world differently, because their experience is different.

Theme:

The poem presents the contrast between the hope of youth and the experience of old age.

Important Points:

- The young are hopeful and excited.
- The old are experienced and thoughtful.
- Both see the same world differently.
- Youth looks forward, age looks back.
- The poem is balanced and sympathetic to both.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. How do the young see the world?

Answer: The young see the world with hope and excitement. Everything appears new and bright to them. They believe that life will bring joy and success, because they have not yet faced many sorrows.

Q2. How do the old see the world?

Answer: The old see the world with experience and caution. They know that life includes sorrow, loss and disappointment as well as joy. Their view is more thoughtful because it is based on what they have lived through.

Q3. Why do young and old differ?

Answer: They differ because their experience is different. The young have little experience, so they hope for the best. The old have much experience, so they understand both the bright and dark sides of life.

Q4. Does the poet favour the young or the old?

Answer: The poet does not favour one side completely. He presents both views with sympathy. Youth has hope, which is beautiful, and age has wisdom, which is valuable. Both are part of human life.

Q5. What is the lesson of the poem?

Answer: The lesson is that every stage of life has its own view and its own value. Youth should learn from age, and age should remember the hope of youth. Understanding both views makes a person wiser.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss the contrast between youth and age in Young and Old in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem is built on a contrast between two stages of life. Explanation: Youth is presented as hopeful, bright and forward-looking, because young people have not yet faced the

sorrows of life. Old age is presented as experienced and thoughtful, because old people have seen both joy and sorrow. The contrast is not a quarrel; it is a picture of how experience changes vision. Conclusion: The poem teaches that youth and age are both valuable, and that a complete understanding of life needs both hope and experience.

Q2. Why is Young and Old a balanced poem? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: A balanced poem does not praise one side and condemn the other. Explanation: In this poem the young are not shown as foolish, and the old are not shown as bitter. The young have hope, which gives life energy. The old have wisdom, which gives life depth. By presenting both with sympathy, the poet shows that life is a journey from hope to wisdom. Conclusion: The balance of the poem is its strength, because it respects every stage of life.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The young are:

- A. Hopeful
- B. Bitter
- C. Tired
- D. Fearful

Correct Answer: A

2. The old are:

- A. Experienced
- B. Careless
- C. Ignorant
- D. Proud

Correct Answer: A

3. The poem compares:

- A. Youth and age
- B. Rich and poor
- C. War and peace
- D. City and village

Correct Answer: A

4. Youth looks:

- A. Forward
- B. Backward only
- C. Downward
- D. Nowhere

Correct Answer: A

5. The poem is:

- A. Balanced
- B. One-sided

C. Angry

D. Funny

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 20: Everyone Sang - Siegfried Sassoon

This poem describes a moment of sudden joy after war. Soldiers who have lived through fear and suffering suddenly begin to sing. Their singing is not planned; it comes naturally, like birds singing in spring.

The poem presents this singing as a symbol of freedom and relief. After the darkness of war, life returns. The soldiers feel free, hopeful and alive again. The poem is short, but its joy is powerful, because it comes after great suffering.

Theme:

The poem presents joy, freedom and relief after the darkness of war.

Important Points:

- The soldiers sing suddenly and naturally.
- Their singing is like birds singing.
- Joy comes after suffering and fear.
- Singing symbolises freedom.
- The poem is about relief after war.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Who sings in the poem?

Answer: Soldiers sing in the poem. They have lived through war, fear and suffering. Their singing is sudden and unplanned, which makes it feel natural and sincere.

Q2. Why is their singing compared to birds?

Answer: Their singing is compared to birds because birds sing freely and naturally in spring. Like birds, the soldiers sing without fear and without planning. The comparison shows that their joy is natural and alive.

Q3. What does singing symbolise?

Answer: Singing symbolises freedom and relief. After war, the soldiers are no longer afraid. Their song shows that life, hope and happiness have returned after darkness.

Q4. Why is the joy powerful?

Answer: The joy is powerful because it comes after great suffering. Joy after pain feels stronger than ordinary joy. The soldiers have seen death and fear, so their sudden happiness is deeply moving.

Q5. What is the message of the poem?

Answer: The message is that even after war and suffering, human beings can find joy again. Freedom and hope can return, just as spring returns after winter. The poem celebrates the human spirit.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss Everyone Sang as a poem of joy after war in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem is short, but it describes a great change: from war to joy. Explanation: Soldiers who have lived in fear suddenly sing, and their song is compared to birds singing in spring. This comparison shows that their joy is natural, free and full of life. The poem does not describe battles;

it describes the moment when fear ends and hope returns. Conclusion: The poem therefore celebrates relief, freedom and the power of the human spirit to recover after suffering.

Q2. How does the poet use the image of birds in the poem? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: Birds are a traditional symbol of freedom and spring. Explanation: In this poem the soldiers' singing is compared to birdsong, because both are natural, free and joyful. Birds sing without fear, and after war the soldiers also sing without fear. The image turns a human moment into a picture of nature returning to life. Conclusion: Through the bird image the poet shows that peace is natural, while war is unnatural and temporary.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. Who sings in the poem?

- A. Soldiers
- B. Children
- C. Farmers
- D. Kings

Correct Answer: A

2. Their singing is like:

- A. Birds
- B. Thunder
- C. Waves
- D. Bells

Correct Answer: A

3. Singing symbolises:

- A. Freedom
- B. War
- C. Fear
- D. Death

Correct Answer: A

4. Joy comes after:

- A. Suffering
- B. Wealth
- C. Fame
- D. Sleep

Correct Answer: A

5. The poem celebrates:

- A. Human spirit
- B. Weapons
- C. Kings

D. Cities

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 21: The Seal Boy - George Barker

This poem tells the story of a boy who has a special connection with seals. He lives near the sea, and he feels more at home among seals than among human beings. The sea world attracts him with its freedom and mystery.

In the end the boy returns to the sea and to the seals. The poem suggests that some people belong more to nature than to ordinary human life. It presents the sea as a world of freedom, beauty and mystery, and the boy's return as a natural homecoming.

Theme:

The poem presents a boy's belonging to nature and the sea, and the theme of freedom versus ordinary life.

Important Points:

- The boy feels at home among seals.
- The sea represents freedom and mystery.
- Human life feels strange to him.
- His return to the sea is a homecoming.
- The poem blends folklore and nature.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Who is the seal boy?

Answer: The seal boy is a boy who lives near the sea and feels a special connection with seals. He understands their world better than the world of human beings. His story has the feeling of an old folk tale.

Q2. Why does he feel at home among seals?

Answer: He feels at home among seals because the sea world is free and natural. Among human beings he feels strange and restricted, but among seals he feels accepted and free.

Q3. What does the sea symbolise?

Answer: The sea symbolises freedom, mystery and a deeper natural life. It is not just water; it is a world with its own laws and beauty. For the seal boy, the sea is home.

Q4. Why does he return to the sea?

Answer: He returns to the sea because that is where he truly belongs. Ordinary human life cannot satisfy him. His return is presented as natural, not as escape, because his heart is with the seals.

Q5. What is the message of the poem?

Answer: The message is that every person has a place where they truly belong. For some, that place is nature. The poem asks readers to respect different natures and the call of the natural world.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss the theme of belonging in The Seal Boy in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem is about belonging: where does a person truly feel at home?
Explanation: The seal boy does not feel at home among human beings, even though he lives among

them. He feels at home among seals and in the sea, because that world matches his nature. His return to the sea is therefore not a rejection of life, but a discovery of his true home. Conclusion: The poem teaches that belonging is not about where we are born, but about where our heart finds freedom and peace.

Q2. How does the poem blend folklore and nature? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem has the feeling of an old folk tale, where human beings and animals can be connected. Explanation: The boy's connection with seals is not explained scientifically; it is presented as a mystery of nature. The sea, the seals and the boy form one world, and the poem uses simple, musical language to create that world. Conclusion: By blending folklore and nature, the poet makes the boy's return to the sea feel both magical and natural.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The seal boy belongs to:

- A. The sea
- B. The city
- C. The desert
- D. The mountains

Correct Answer: A

2. He feels at home among:

- A. Seals
- B. Kings
- C. Soldiers
- D. Merchants

Correct Answer: A

3. The sea symbolises:

- A. Freedom
- B. War
- C. Wealth
- D. Fame

Correct Answer: A

4. His return is:

- A. A homecoming
- B. A punishment
- C. A dream
- D. A joke

Correct Answer: A

5. The poem is like:

- A. A folk tale
- B. A history book

C. A newspaper

D. A letter

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 22: The Watchers - Lord Dunsany

This poem describes two imaginary spirits who look down on the earth. They wonder who will rule the earth. At first the obvious choice seems to be the mammoth, a huge animal with great tusks and strength.

But the spirits decide to wait a million years before deciding. After a million years they look again and see man ruling the earth with his brain and machines. Yet they still decide to wait another million years, because human power may also be temporary.

Theme:

The poem presents the temporary nature of power and the vastness of time.

Important Points:

- Two spirits watch the earth from above.
- First the mammoth seems strongest.
- After a million years man seems to rule.
- The spirits still wait to decide.
- Human power may also be temporary.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Who are the watchers?

Answer: The watchers are two imaginary spirits who look down on the earth from above. They are not human beings; they watch history from a great distance and over a very long time.

Q2. Why do they first think of the mammoth?

Answer: They first think of the mammoth because it is huge, strong and powerful. With its great tusks and size, it seems the natural ruler of the earth. Physical strength appears to be the obvious sign of power.

Q3. What do they see after a million years?

Answer: After a million years they see man ruling the earth. Man does not rule by physical size, but by brain and machines. Human intelligence has given man power over nature.

Q4. Why do they still wait?

Answer: They still wait because they know that power can change. Just as the mammoth lost its rule, man may also lose his rule one day. A million years is a very short time in the history of the earth.

Q5. What is the message of the poem?

Answer: The message is that no power lasts forever. Physical strength and even human intelligence are temporary. Time is greater than any ruler, and humility is wiser than pride.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss the theme of temporary power in The Watchers in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem asks a simple question: who will rule the earth? Explanation: First the mammoth seems to rule by strength, then man seems to rule by intelligence. But the spirits refuse to decide, because they know that a million years can change everything. The mammoth is now extinct,

and man may also disappear one day. Conclusion: The poem therefore teaches humility. No creature should be proud of its power, because time is stronger than all.

Q2. How does the poem use time as a central idea? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: Time is the real subject of the poem, not the mammoth or man. Explanation: The spirits think in millions of years, while human beings think in days and years. From their point of view, human history is very short. What seems permanent to us may be temporary in the long history of the earth. Conclusion: By using vast time, the poet makes readers see human pride in a new, humble light.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The watchers are:

- A. Two spirits
- B. Two kings
- C. Two soldiers
- D. Two farmers

Correct Answer: A

2. First ruler seems to be:

- A. The mammoth
- B. Man
- C. The lion
- D. The eagle

Correct Answer: A

3. Man rules by:

- A. Brain and machines
- B. Size only
- C. Wings
- D. Speed only

Correct Answer: A

4. The spirits wait:

- A. A million years
- B. A day
- C. A week
- D. A year

Correct Answer: A

5. The message is:

- A. Power is temporary
- B. Man is eternal
- C. Animals rule
- D. Time stops

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Poem 23: Life and Death - Mumtaz Shahnawaz

In this poem the speaker says she lost herself while playing hide and seek between today and yesterday. She moved aimlessly through hours and days, like a child playing a game, without thinking about where life was going.

Then she sees her reflection in a looking glass, and the truth becomes clear. She realises that she is dying all the time, little by little, in every hour. She will soon join millions of people who have already died. The poem therefore says that death is not a single moment at the end; it is a process that happens throughout life.

Theme:

The poem presents time, mortality and the idea that we die a little in every hour.

Important Points:

- The speaker plays hide and seek with time.
- She moves aimlessly between today and yesterday.
- Her reflection in the mirror reveals truth.
- We are dying all the time, in every hour.
- Death is a process, not only a single moment.

Short Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. What game does the speaker mention?

Answer: The speaker mentions hide and seek. She says she lost herself playing this game between today and yesterday. The game is a symbol for a life lived without direction or purpose.

Q2. What does the looking glass show her?

Answer: The looking glass shows her a stranger with new and hostile eyes. It shows that she has changed, and that time has changed her. The reflection forces her to face the truth about herself.

Q3. What does 'we are dying all the time' mean?

Answer: It means that death does not come only at the end of life. In every hour we lose a part of ourselves, and time moves us closer to death. Life is a slow process of dying.

Q4. Why is the poem called Life and Death?

Answer: It is called Life and Death because it joins the two ideas together. Life and death are not separate; they happen at the same time. Every hour of life is also an hour of dying.

Q5. What is the message of the poem?

Answer: The message is that time should not be wasted. If we live aimlessly, like playing hide and seek, we will suddenly realise that life has passed. The poem asks readers to live with awareness.

Long Questions with Full Answers:

Q1. Discuss the theme of time and mortality in Life and Death in detail.

Answer: Introduction: The poem joins two ideas that seem opposite: life and death. Explanation: The speaker lives aimlessly, moving between today and yesterday like a child in a game. Then her reflection shows her the truth: she is changing, and she is dying in every hour. The poet suggests that death is

not only the final moment; it is present in every passing hour. Conclusion: The poem therefore teaches that life must be lived with awareness, because time lost cannot be regained.

Q2. How does the poet use the image of hide and seek? Discuss in detail.

Answer: Introduction: Hide and seek is a children's game, but in this poem it becomes a symbol of life. Explanation: The speaker hides from herself and from truth, moving aimlessly through days. Like a child, she does not think about the end of the game. When she sees her reflection, the game ends, and she realises that she has lost herself in time. Conclusion: Through this simple image the poet makes a deep idea easy to feel: an aimless life is a life lost in time.

MCQs with Answer Key:

1. The speaker plays:

- A. Hide and seek
- B. Chess
- C. Cricket
- D. Cards

Correct Answer: A

2. She moves between:

- A. Today and yesterday
- B. Day and night only
- C. Summer and winter
- D. East and west

Correct Answer: A

3. The mirror shows:

- A. A stranger
- B. A child
- C. A friend
- D. A king

Correct Answer: A

4. We are dying:

- A. All the time
- B. Only at the end
- C. Never
- D. Once a year

Correct Answer: A

5. The poem teaches:

- A. Use time wisely
- B. Play games
- C. Avoid mirrors

D. Fear life

Correct Answer: A

Revision: Read the summary again, repeat the short answers in your own words, and solve the MCQs without looking at the key.

Revision Checklist

All 11 poems, 13 to 23, revised. Short answers repeated in own words. Long answers practised in full paragraphs. 55 MCQs solved without the key.