

CHAPTER-12

A THING OF BEAUTY

IMPORTANT STANZAS FOR COMPREHENSION

Read the stanzas given below and answer the questions that follow each:

1. A thing of beauty is a joy forever
Its loveliness increases, it will never
Pass into nothingness;
but will keep A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.

Questions

(a) Name the poem and the poet of these lines.

(b) How is a thing of beauty a joy for ever ?

(c) What do you understand by a 'bower'?

(d) What kind of sleep does it provide?

Answers:

(a) The poem is A Thing of Beauty. The poet is John Keats.

(b) A thing of beauty is the source of constant joy. Its beauty goes on increasing. It will never pass into nothingness.

(c) A bower is a pleasant place in the shade under a tree. It protects persons/animals from the hot rays of the sun.

(d) It provides us a sound sleep, full of sweet dreams, health and peaceful breathing.

2. Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,

Questions [All India 2014]

(a) Name the poem and the poet.

(b) Why are we despondent?

(c) What removes the pall from our dark spirits?

(d) What are we doing every day?

Answers:

(a) The poet is John Keats. The poem is A Thing of Beauty.

(b) We possess the evil qualities of malice and disappointment. We suffer from the lack of noble qualities. That is why we feel despondent.

(c) Some beautiful shapes or a thing of beauty removes the pall of sadness from our hearts or spirits.

(d) We are weaving a flowery wreath to bind us to the beauties of the earth.

3. Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;

Questions

(a) What removes the pall from our dark spirits?

(b) What spots the shady covert with the green and how?

(c) How do 'daffodils' and 'rills' enrich the environment?

(d) What makes the mid-forest brake rich?

Answers:

- (a) Some beautiful shape or a thing of beauty removes the pall of sadness from our hearts or spirits.
- (b) Old and young trees sprout to make a green covering. It proves a blessing for simple sheep as it serves them as a shelter.
- (c) Daffodils bloom among the green surroundings. The rills or small streams of clear water make a cooling shelter for themselves against the hot season.
- (d) The mid forest brake is made rich by the blooming of beautiful musk-roses.
- (e) (i) pall, (ii) boon, (iii) rills, (iv) covert.

4. And such too is the grandeur of the dooms

We have imagined for the mighty dead;
Mill lovely tales that we have heard or read;
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink

Questions [Delhi 2014]

- (a) Name the poem and the poet of these lines.**
- (b) Explain: 'the grandeur of the dooms'.**
- (c) What is the thing of beauty mentioned in these lines?**
- (d) What image does the poet use in these lines?**

Answers:

- (a) The poem is A Thing of Beauty. The poet is John Keats.
- (b) The magnificence that we imagine for our mighty dead forefathers on the dooms day.
- (c) The lovely tales of mighty men are mentioned in these lines.
- (d) The poet uses the image of 'an endless fountain of immortal drink' to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth. The earth has bestowed us with sun, moon, flowers, rivers, greenery etc.

QUESTIONS FROM TEXTBOOK SOLVED

Q1. List the things of beauty mentioned in the poem.

Ans: Everything of nature is a thing of beauty and a source of pleasure. Some of them are: the sun, the moon, old and young trees, daffodil flowers, small streams with clear water, mass of ferns and the blooming musk-roses. All of them are things of beauty. They are a constant source of joy and pleasure.

Q2. List the things that cause suffering and pain.

Ans: There are many things that cause us suffering and pain. Malice and disappointment are "the biggest source of our suffering. Another one is the lack of noble qualities. Our unhealthy and evil ways also give birth to so many troubles and sufferings. They dampen our spirits. They act as a pall of sadness on our lives.

Q3. What does the line, 'Therefore are we wreathing a flowery band to bind us to earth' suggest to you?

Ans: Keats is a lover of beauty. He employs his senses to discover beauty. The link of man with nature is eternal. The things of beauty are like wreaths of beautiful flowers. We seem to weave a flowery band everyday. It keeps us attached to the beauties of this earth.

Q4. What makes human beings love life in spite of troubles and sufferings?

Ans: There are many things that bring us troubles and sufferings. They dampen our spirits. However, 'some shape of beauty' brings love and happiness in our lives in spite of such unpleasant things. A thing of beauty removes the pall of sadness and sufferings. It makes us love life.

Q5. Why is 'grandeur' associated with the 'mighty dead'?

Ans: The mighty dead were very powerful and dominating persons during their own times. Their achievements made them 'mighty' and great. Their noble works dazzle our eyes. We imagine that such mighty dead forefathers will attain more grandeur on the doomsday. Hence 'grandeur' is associated with the 'mighty dead'.

Q6. Do we experience things of beauty only for short moments or do they make a lasting impression on us?

Ans: We feel happy by coming into contact with things of beauty. They make a lasting impression on us. Keats makes it clear at the outset. A thing of beauty is a joy forever. It is a constant source of joy and pleasure. Its beauty never declines or diminishes. Its loveliness goes on increasing every moment. Its value remains undiminished. It never passes into nothingness. It removes the pall of sadness that covers our dark spirits.

Q7. What image does the poet use to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth?

Ans: John Keats uses a very beautiful image to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth. It is the endless fountain of immortal drink. It pours constantly into our hearts from heaven. Thus, the beautiful bounty of the earth is called "an endless fountain of immortal drink."

MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (Word Limit: 30-40 words)

Q1. How is a thing of beauty a joy forever?

Ans: According to John Keats a thing of beauty is a joy of forever. It is a constant source of happiness and pleasure. Its loveliness increases every moment. It will never pass into nothingness. In other words, a thing of beauty is never devalued.

Q2. How does a thing of beauty provide us shelter and comfort?

Ans: John Keats is a great Romantic poet. He is rich in sensuous imagery. Nature provides us things of rare beauty. It keeps a bower quiet for us. A bower is a pleasant place in the shade under a tree. A thing of beauty also provides us peace and security. We enjoy a sound sleep which is full of sweet dreams, health and peaceful breathing.

Q3. How do we bind ourselves to the earth every morning?

Ans: All the Romantic poets stress upon the relationship between man and nature. Keats believes that there is an unbreakable bond which binds man with nature and the earth. The beauties of the earth fascinate man. Every object of nature is a source of beauty and happiness. Everyday we are weaving a wreath of flowers. This flowery band binds us to the beauties of this earth.

Q4. What are the things that cause miseries, sorrows and sufferings to man ?

Ans: Man himself is the root cause of all his sufferings. We suffer from malice and distress because we lack human qualities that makes us inhuman. Our life becomes gloomy. We cultivate unhealthy and evil ways. All such things bring miseries, sorrows and sufferings to man.

Q5. What spreads the pall of despondence over our dark spirits? How is it removed?

Ans: Man is the creator of his woes. His own nature and actions make his life miserable. He faces miseries and pains. A pall of despondence covers his dark spirits. A thing of beauty provides a ray of hope to man. Some shape of beauty works wonders amid these sorrows and sufferings. It is a thing of beauty that removes the pall of despondence over our dark spirits.

Q6. Name the beauties of nature that are constant source of joy and happiness to man.

Ans: Nature is a store house of beauty. The beauties of nature are endless. The sun, the moon, old and young trees, beautiful daffodil flowers and green surroundings are some of such beautiful things. Small streams with clear water, thick mass of ferns, thickets of forest and musk-rose are some other things of beauty. All such things of beauty are a constant source of joy and happiness to man.

Q7. Why and how is 'grandeur associated with the 'mighty dead'?

Ans: The dooms day is considered the day of judgement, when the dead will receive what is due to them. Our mighty dead forefathers earned name and fame with their noble deeds. It is hoped that they will be rewarded with rare magnificence and grandeur.

Q8. How is a thing of beauty lovelier than all the lovely tales we have heard and read?

Ans: All beautiful things of nature are a boon for humanity. The magnificence and beauty of objects of nature surpasses the grandeur of dooms that we have imagined for our mighty dead forefathers. It is lovelier than all the lovely tales that we have heard or read.

Q9. What is the source of the 'endless fountain' and what is its effect?

Ans: A fountain of eternal joy and immortality pours into the heart and soul of man. It flows right from the heavens brink and pours into the human heart. It is like an immortal nectar. The immortal drink that nature's endless fountain pours into our hearts is a source of immense joy for us.

Q10. What is the message for the theme) of the poem 'A Thing of Beauty'?

Ans: The very first line contains the message that John Keats, the great Romantic poet, wants to convey. Keats was a worshipper of beauty. For him beauty was truth and truth, beauty. Hence, for him a thing of beauty is a joy forever. Beauty never fades. Nor is it ever devalued. It never passes into nothingness. When we are full of sorrows and sufferings, some form of beauty comes to our rescue. It removes the pall of sadness and sorrows and gives us joy and pleasure. Thus, beauty is a boon for human beings.