

SECTION-1

POETRY

(Poems)

Poetry as a literary form is usually characterised by highly connotative language, condensed form to communicate emotions or ideas, and alliteration, repetition, rhyme, rhythm, and meter to create musical effect. Poetry also characteristically emphasises the interaction between sound and sense. There are various forms of poetry such as the sonnet, epic, ballad, lyric, mock-epic, elegy, etc each of which has its own additional characteristics.

On His Blindness

John Milton

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide,
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."

About the Poet

John Milton (9 December, 1608 - 8 November, 1674) was an English poet, polemicist, man of letters, and a civil servant for the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell. He is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), written in blank verse. He also composed *Paradise Regained*, *L'Allegro*, *Cosmos*, *Lycidas*, etc.

Milton's poetry and prose reflect deep personal convictions and a passion for freedom and self-determination. Writing in English, Latin, Greek, and Italian, he achieved international renown within his lifetime, and his celebrated *Areopagitica* (1644) is one of the most influential and impassioned defenses of freedom of the press.

About the Poem

“On His Blindness” is one of the best known sonnets of John Milton. This is an autobiographical sonnet in which Milton meditates on his own loss of sight. In this sonnet the poet deals with a problem (blindness) with many broader spiritual implications. The poet struggles to understand what God expects of him now that he is losing his sight.

Glossary

ere	: before
light	: eye-sight; vision; the ability to see
talent	: a natural ability to do something well, (here the ability of writing poetry)
maker	: God
lodged	: stayed, deposited, kept, fixed
chide	: to rebuke
denied	: (here) refused to allow the poet to have something that he wanted
His	: God's
bidding	: an act of offering
murmur	: to say something in a soft quiet voice that is difficult to hear or understand
yoke	: a frame that is attached to the heads or necks of two animals

Choose the correct option:

1. “When I consider how my light is spent. . . .” What does the word “light” mean here?
 - (a) The sun light
 - (b) The moon light
 - (c) The eye-sight
 - (d) All of these

2. Why does the poet call the world "dark"?

- (a) because there is no light.
- (b) because there is night all the time.
- (c) because there is no sun-light in the world.
- (d) because he cannot see.

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. Why is the poet so unhappy with God?
2. Who is the "I" in the first stanza of the poem?
3. What does death want to hide?
4. What does the soul of the poet want to do?
5. How does the poet wish to serve his "Maker"?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. What does the poet mean by "Ere half my days"?
2. Why does the poet call the talent "useless"?
3. Why does the poet wish to give his "true account"?
4. What does the poet mean when he says, "They also serve who only stand and wait"?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Write a summary of the poem.
2. Write the critical appreciation of the poem "On His Blindness."

Education is the ability to listen to
almost anything without losing your
temper or your self-confidence.

-Robert Frost

The Seven Ages of Man

William Shakespeare

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly, with a good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

About the Poet

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is England's greatest poet and dramatist. Shakespeare was born and brought up in Stratford-upon-Avon and is often regarded as the 'Bard of Avon.' He is considered as the national poet in England. He belonged to the Renaissance Period also known as Elizabethan Age in the History of English Literature.

He wrote more than thirty plays including romantic comedies, tragic drama, and semi-allegorical pieces. *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Tempest*, etc are some of his greatest plays.

He also composed narrative poems and over a hundred and fifty sonnets. His literary works exhibit an unparalleled power of expression of thoughts, feelings and passions. He had a deep insight into human nature. He was a man of the theatre, an actor, a playwright, a shareholder in the Globe Theatre.

About the Poem

This is Jaques's monologue in Shakespeare's play entitled, *As You Like It* (Act II, scene 7). These beautiful poetic lines vividly describe the seven stages of a man's life from the infancy to the old age. The speaker describes him as an actor on the stage of the world who plays part after part in the drama of life.

Glossary

players	: actors
his acts	: the role he plays
mewling and puking	: crying and vomiting
sighing like furnace	: breathing sighs like a furnace which is an enclosed space or room for heating metal or glass to very high temperatures
made	: composed
pard	: leopard with good capon lined: filled with fat chicken (perhaps a bribe)
wise saws	: wise sayings and commonplace illustrations
modern instances	: commonplace illustrations
pantaloon	: a lean and foolish old man
well-saved	: carefully preserved
his shrunk shrank	: his emaciated (thin and weak) leg
childish treble	: the high pitch of a child's voice
sans	: (a French word) without

Choose the correct option:

1. What does a soldier wish to get?

- (a) Honour
- (b) Oaths
- (c) Fame
- (d) Strength

2. In which age does a man become childish again?

- (a) The third age
- (b) The fourth age
- (c) The fifth age
- (d) The sixth age

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What is the similarity between a bubble and a soldier's reputation?
2. How does the justice/judge play his part in his life?
3. How does a man behave in the old age?
4. How are “all the men and women merely players”?
5. Find the figures of speech in the following table containing the lines/phrases from the poem:

(metaphor, simile, alliteration)

S.N.	Phrase/line of the poem	Figure of speech?
1.	All the world's a stage	
2.	And all men and women are merely players	
3.	seeking the bubble reputation	
4.	Sighing like furnace	
5.	creeping like a snail	
6.	shrunk shank	
7.	plays his part	

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. Why does the poet call “all the world's a stage”?

2. What are the seven ages of a man?
3. Why does the poet compare the lover's sighing to a furnace?
4. Why does the poet call the ballad woeful?

Answer the following questions in 150 words each:

1. Write a summary of the poem.
2. Explain with reference to the context the following extracts of the poem:
 - (a) All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
 - (b) And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow.

The Solitary Reaper

William Wordsworth

Behold her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
 Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! For the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
 More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matters of today?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
 As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending;
I listen'd, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

About the Poet

Born on April 7, 1770 at Cockermouth in England, William Wordsworth was one of the greatest English poets of Nature and Man. Much of his work was inspired by the

landscape of the English Lake District. He spent some time in France where he was influenced by the French Revolution. In collaboration with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, he composed *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), a landmark in the history of English Romantic poetry. Among his famous poems are “Ode on Intimations of Immortality” (1807), sonnets such as “Surprised by Joy” and “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” (both 1815), and the posthumously published autobiographical *The Prelude* (1850). He was appointed Poet Laureate in 1843. He passed away on April 23, 1850.

About the Poem

The poem “The Solitary Reaper” was composed in 1805 and first published in 1807. Here the poet recalls an experience he had during his tour of the Highlands of Scotland with his sister Dorothy. The poem is an expression of the poet’s feelings about a native Highland woman who was singing a melodious song while reaping in the field.

Glossary

behold	: see
solitary	: without companion
melancholy	: sorrowful
strain	: song
vale	: valley
weary	: tired
bands	: groups of travellers
shady haunts	: oasis in deserts
thrilling	: exciting; excited feeling
Hebrides	: a group of islands in the North Atlantic off the west coast of Scotland
plaintive	: sorrowful
numbers	: song
lay	: song
maiden	: an unmarried young girl

Choose the correct option:

1. Which of the following is most nearly similar in meaning to ‘Single’?

- (a) Unattached
 - (b) Isolated
 - (c) Separate
 - (d) Lonely
2. The solitary reaper was singing a song in. . . .
- (a) Scottish
 - (b) English
 - (c) Hebrew
 - (d) None of the above

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What is the Highland girl doing in the field?
2. To whose voice is the voice of the solitary reaper compared?
3. Whom does the poet address in the first stanza?
4. Why does the poet refer to 'nightingale'?
5. What is the poet's concluding remark on the solitary reaper's song?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. What are the poet's guesses about the theme of the solitary reaper's song?
2. What is the effect of the solitary reaper's song on the poet?
3. How does the poet describe the solitary reaper's song?
4. Describe the activities of the solitary reaper?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Discuss the central idea of the poem.
2. Write a note on the use of figures of speech in the poem.

Work without Hope

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter, slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrighten'd, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

About the Poet

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was an English poet, critic, and philosopher who, with his literary companion, William Wordsworth, initiated the Romantic Movement in England. Born on 21 October, 1792 in the country town of Ottery St. Mary, Devon, England, Coleridge is considered as one of the most important figures in English poetry. He is best known for his poems “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” “Kubla Khan,” and “Christabel.”

About the Poem

Composed in 1825, the poem is a sonnet relating nature to the mental and emotional state of the speaker. The poem is built on the contrast between dynamic nature and the idle life of the speaker. It concludes that there cannot be success without hope and hope cannot live without an object or purpose.

Glossary

slug	: (plural: slugs) a small creature like a snail, without a shell that moves slowly
amaranth	: (plural: amaranths) any plant of the genus <i>Amaranthus</i> , some species of which are cultivated as food and some for their showy flower clusters

ye	: (archaic) you
wreathless	: without wreath; a wreath is an arrangement of flowers and leaves twisted or woven into a circle or similar shape. Wreaths are used for decoration or are placed on the dead/grave as a mark of respect
stroll	: to walk slowly and casually
drowse	: to make drowsy/sleepy
nectar	: a sweet liquid produced by flowers and collected by bees for making honey
sieve	: an implement consisting of a wire or plastic net attached to a ring. Sieves are used for separating large pieces of something (which do not pass through) from liquids or very small pieces of something (which can pass through).
slumbering	: sleeping
ken	: to know
fount	: (archaic) a source or origin of something

Choose the correct option

1. Whom does the speaker address in the poem?
 - (a) Work
 - (b) Hope
 - (c) Himself
 - (d) Winter
2. What do the words “birds are on the wing” mean?
 - (a) Birds are sitting on the wing
 - (b) Birds are resting on the other birds’ wing
 - (c) Birds are flying
 - (d) Birds are opening their wings

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. Which creatures are representing nature in the poem?
2. What is the rhyme scheme of the first stanza of the poem?
3. How does the speaker describe himself in the first stanza?
4. Why is winter described as “slumbering”?
5. Why is the first letter of ‘hope’ in line 11 capitalized?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. How is winter described in the poem?
2. What does the speaker contrast himself with?
3. Why does the speaker call “streams” “rich”?
4. What does drawing “nectar in a sieve” metaphorically suggest?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. What is the central idea of the poem? How is it developed?
2. Comment on the use of contrast in the poem.

Crossing the Bar

Alfred Tennyson

Sunset and evening star,
 And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
 Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
 The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
 When I have crost the bar.

About the Poet

A reputed poet of the Victorian Age, Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) was appointed Poet Laureate in 1850. He wrote many good lyrics. Among his notable poems are "In Memoriam," "Idylls of the King," "Maud," "The Princess," "Break, Break, Break," "Ulysses," "The Lotus Eater," and "Crossing the Bar."

About the Poem

This is a lyrical poem. Tennyson wrote it when he was 81, while crossing the river Solent after a serious illness. He explained to his son that the "Pilot" was the Divine, the Unseen who always guided us. The poem is considered the "Swan Song" of the poet. Here, the speaker (the poet) wishes to set out on a journey to eternity in a calm atmosphere, without any "sadness of farewell."

Glossary

moaning	: low mournful sounds
bar	: harbor or shore; sandy ridge across the mouth of a harbor
twilight	: dusk
farewell	: parting
embark	: to depart; to take on a ship
bourne	: boundary; limit
one clear call	: a call of death
Pilot	: here, the Divine

Choose the correct option:

1. What do “Sunset and evening star” imply in the poem?
 - (a) The end of the day
 - (b) The end of evening
 - (c) The end of life
 - (d) The beginning of night
2. What is the mood of the speaker?
 - (a) Sad
 - (b) Cheerful
 - (c) Optimistic
 - (d) Pessimistic

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What is the wish of the speaker?
2. In what atmosphere does the speaker want to die?
3. “I hope to see my Pilot face to face” Whom does the word “Pilot” refer to here?
4. What does the speaker want to suggest by referring to “twilight and evening bell”?

5. What does “the bar” symbolise in the poem?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. Which words and phrases in the poem suggest the idea of death and dying?
2. Why doesn't the speaker want to die in a mournful atmosphere?
3. Explain the phrase “our bourne of Time and Place.”
4. Which expressions in the poem reveal the optimistic mood of the speaker?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Critically appreciate the poem.
2. Discuss the theme of the poem.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

About the Poet

Born in San Francisco, USA, on March 26, 1874, Robert Lee Frost (Robert Frost) is considered as one of America's greatest poets. He has been the most honoured one. He received the Pulitzer Prize four times, more than twenty honorary degrees, several prizes, distinctions, and fellowships. His volumes of poetry include *A Boy's Will* (1913), *North of Boston* (1914), *Mountain Interval* (1916), *New Hampshire* (1923), *West-Running Brook* (1928), *A Further Range* (1936), *A Witney Tree* (1942), *A Masque of Reason* (1945), *A Masque of Mercy* (1947), and *In the Clearing* (1962). Frost's life ended on January 29, 1963.

About the Poem

The present poem is from Robert Frost's fourth volume of poems entitled *New Hampshire*. It is one of Frost's best-known poems which may be read on many levels. On the surface, it can be seen as an expression of a mood—a desire to enjoy nature's beauty and awareness of obligations. But at the deeper level, the poem has symbolic implications. The speaker's journey through woods becomes a journey of life.

Glossary

woods	: an area of land, smaller than a forest, covered with growing plants
queer	: strange; odd
harness	: a set of leather straps and metal parts that is put around a horse's head and body so that the horse can be controlled and fastened to the cart
sweep	: sudden and forceful movement of something
downy	: fine soft feather like
flake	: a small, very thin layer or piece of something.

Choose the correct option:

1. Where does the speaker of the poem stop?
 - (a) At a farmhouse near a frozen lake
 - (b) Somewhere between a village and a farmhouse
 - (c) At a village
 - (4) Somewhere near woods and a frozen lake
2. "He" in line 3 refers to.
 - (a) Horse
 - (b) A villager
 - (c) The owner of woods
 - (d) The poet (speaker) himself

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What does the speaker want to do near the woods?
2. "He gives his harness bells a shake. . . ." Whom does "He" refer to here?
3. Which sound does the speaker refer to in stanza 3?
4. Which word in the poem indicates a change in the mood of the speaker?

5. What contrast do you find in stanza 3?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. What does the speaker want to suggest by referring to the owner of woods?
2. What do the words “My little horse” signify?
3. What does “must” in line 5 suggest?
4. Explain the meaning of the last two lines of the poem.

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Write a note on the style of the poem.
2. What is the central idea of the poem?

You Cannot Call This True Devotion

Mira Bai

(Translated by A. J. Alston)

You cannot call this true devotion,
To bathe one's forehead and apply the tilak
Without cleansing the impurities of the heart.
That cruel cur desire
Has bound me with the cord of greed.
The butcher of anger remains within me,
How can I hope to meet Gopal?
The greedy senses are like a cat,
And I keep on giving them food.
Weakened by my hunger for sense-objects
I do not take the Name of God.
I worship not God but myself,
And glow with ecstasy.
Now that I have built up
This towering rock of pride,
Where can the water of true wisdom collect?
You cannot deceive Him who knows
The inmost recesses of your soul.
The Name of Hari does not enter my heart,
Though I tell with my lips
The beads of my bejewelled rosary.
Learn to love the compassionate Lord,
Give up faith in the world.
Mira is the slave of the courtly Giridhara,
She has adopted the path of simple detachment.

About the Poet

Born about 1498 A.D. in Merta (Rajasthan), Mira Bai was a princess-turned-poet-saint of medieval India. She chose Lord Krishna as her true lover/husband. In her devotion to the Lord, she sang and danced ecstatically and mingled, irrespective of class and caste, with all those who sang glories of God. Her conduct was taken as a transgression and defiance of the cherished aristocratic values and customs. Some of her royal in-laws conspired to harm her but in vain. Nothing could deviate her from her path of devotion.

About the Poem

In this poem, Mira, while expressing her love for Giridhar (Lord Krishna), explains the meaning of true devotion. The strictures she so straightforwardly talks about suggest by implication how our attachment to the world prevents us from treading the path of true devotion.

Glossary

tilak	: a mark worn on the forehead by a Hindu as part of religious devotion
cleansing	: making something thoroughly clean
impurity	: (plural: impurities) a substance present in another substance that makes it of poor quality
cur	: an aggressive dog
cord	: a long thin flexible material made of twisted strands, thinner than rope
butcher	: a person who kills people in a cruel and violent way
sense-objects	: objects that appeal to the senses; that give sensuous pleasure
ecstasy	: a feeling or state of great joy or happiness
recess	: (plural: recesses) a remote or secret place
rosary	: a string of beads used for counting prayers as they are said
give up	: to abandon
adopted	: took over something and used it as one's own
detachment	: the state of being not influenced by people, things, objects etc.

Choose the correct option:

1. "And I keep on giving them food." Whom does "them" refer to here?

- (a) Cats
- (b) The greedy senses
- (c) The sense-objects
- (d) The impurities of the heart

2. Whose slave does Mira call herself?

- (a) Cruel cur desire
- (b) Lord Krishna
- (c) The world
- (d) The greedy senses

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What, according to Mira, is not true devotion?
2. How does Mira describe anger?
3. To whom does Mira compare the greedy senses?
4. What, according to Mira, is the obstacle to true devotion?
5. For whom does Mira use the expression “the compassionate Lord”?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. Which impurities of the heart does Mira refer to in this poem?
2. Point out the logical connection between the first three lines and the last line of the poem.
3. Explain whether the strictures Mira presents in the poem apply to herself or to others?
4. What is Mira’s attitude to the world?

Answer the following questions in 150 words each:

1. What is Mira’s message through the poem?
2. Comment on the use of figures of speech in the poem.

The Song of the Free

Swami Vivekanand

The wounded snake its hood unfurls,
The flame stirred up doth blaze,
The desert air resounds the calls
Of heart-struck lion's rage.

The cloud puts forth its deluge strength
When lightning cleaves its breast,
When the soul is stirred to its inmost depth
Great ones unfold their best.

Let eyes grow dim and heart grow faint,
And friendship fail and love betray,
Let Fate its hundred horrors send,
And clotted darkness block the way.

And nature wear one angry frown,
To crush you out- still know, my soul,
You are Divine. March on and on,
Nor right nor left but to the goal.

Nor angel I, nor man, nor brute,
Nor body, mind, nor he nor she,
The books do stop in wonder mute
To tell my nature; I am He.

Before the sun, the moon, the earth,
Before the stars or comets free,
Before e'en time has had its birth,
I was, I am, I will be.

The beauteous earth and the glorious sun,
The calm sweet moon, the spangled sky,
Causation's law do make them run;
They live in bonds, in bonds they die.

And mind its mental dreamy net
Cast o'er them all and holds them fast.
In warp and woof of thought are set,
Earth, hells, and heavens, or worst or best.

Know these are but the outer crust-
All space and time, all effect, cause.
I am beyond all sense, all thoughts,
The witness of the universe

Not two nor many, 'tis but one,
And thus in me all me's I have;
I cannot hate, I cannot shun
Myself from me, I can but love.

From dreams awake, from bonds be free,
Be not afraid. This mystery,
My shadow, cannot frighten me,
Know once for all that I am He.

About the Poet

Swami Vivekanand was born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta (now Kolkata). His original name was Narendra Nath Dutta. Vivekanand was spiritually inclined. He was influenced by his guru, Ramakrishna from whom he learnt that service to God could be rendered by service to mankind. It was Vivekanand who introduced Hinduism at the Parliament of World's Religions in Chicago in 1893. He died at the age of 39 on July 4, 1902 in Belur Math in West Bengal.

About the Poem

"The Song of the Free" is a philosophical poem expressing the poet's faith in the divine nature of human soul and belief in Advaitism. The poem is highly inspiring in that it urges us not to be daunted or discouraged by the difficulties of life but to continue to march towards the ultimate goal of life.

Glossary

wounded	: injured
hood	: head
unfurl	: to spread open
stir	: excited; moved

doth	: (archaic) does
blaze	: to burn brightly and fiercely
resound	: to echo
rage	: violent anger
deluge	: a great quantity of something
cleave	: to split something
unfold	: to reveal something
faint	: lacking power or strength
betray	: to act in a way that is not worthy of trust
fate	: the power believed to control all events in a way that cannot be resisted; destiny
clotted	: very thick
frown	: a serious, angry or worried look
crush	: to defeat or destroy something/someone completely
angel	: a messenger of God
brute	: an animal, especially large or fierce one
mute	: silent
causation	: the causing or producing of an effect
spangle	: (passive: spangled) to decorate something with spangles (a spangle is a tiny piece of shining metal or plastic)
warp	: (the warp) the threads on a loom over and under which other threads are passed
woof	: (the woof) the threads woven across the other threads on a loom
crust	: a hard outer layer or surface
witness	: someone who is present at something and sees it
shun	: to avoid something
mystery	: a thing of which the cause or origin is not known
frighten	: to fill someone with fear

Choose the correct option:

1. What do the words “when eyes grow dim and heart grows faint” suggest in the poem?
 - (a) The disease of eyes and heart
 - (b) The weakening of eyes and heart due to illness
 - (c) Old age
 - (d) Giddiness
2. Which of the following is an example of personification?
 - (a) “The flame stirred up doth blaze”
 - (b) “Great ones unfold their best”
 - (c) “You are Divine”
 - (d) “And nature wear an angry frown”

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What is the rhyme scheme in the first stanza?
2. Whom does the poet address in stanza 4?
3. “When lightening cleaves its breast...” What does “its” refer to here?
4. Point out an example of metaphor in the poem.
5. Which dreams does the poet refer to in the concluding stanza?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. What idea does the poet want to suggest by referring to activities in nature in the first two stanzas?
2. In stanza 5, why does the poet say “I am He”?
3. Explain the words: “I was, I am, I will be.”

4. What is the poet's view on human soul?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Explain the following passage with reference to the context:

And nature wear one angry frown
To crush you out—still know, my soul,
You are Divine. March on and on,
Nor right nor left but to the goal!

2. What inspiring message does the poem convey?

Village Song

Sarojini Naidu

Full are my pitchers and far to carry,
Lone is the way and long,
Why, O why was I tempted to tarry
Lured by the boatmen's song?
Swiftly the shadows of night are falling,
Hear, O hear, is the white crane calling,
Is it the wild owl's cry?
There are no tender moonbeams to light me,
If in the darkness a serpent should bite me,
Or if an evil spirit should smite me,
Ram Re Ram! I shall die.

My brother will murmur, 'Why doth she linger?'
My mother will wait and weep,
Saying, 'O safe may the great gods bring her,
The Jamuna's waters are deep'...
The Jamuna's waters rush by so quickly,
The shadows of evening gather so thickly,
Like black birds in the sky...
O! if the storm breaks, what will betide me?
Safe from the lightning where shall I hide me?
Unless Thou succor my footsteps and guide me,
Ram Re Ram! I shall die.

About the Poetess

Born on February 13, 1879 in Hyderabad, Sarojini Naidu was a gifted Indian poetess. It was only because of her great poetic talent and melodious voice that she was called "The Nightingale of India." She began writing poems at an early age. Her volumes of poetry include *The Bird of Time*, *The Broken Wing*, and *The Golden Threshold*.

About the Poem

The poem draws a vivid picture of a country woman who, while carrying pitchers of water from the banks of the river Yamuna to her house, is delayed because of her temptation to listen to the boatmen's song. She is now filled with fears as the night is approaching and she is alone. Her emotions are expressed beautifully in the poem.

Glossary

pitcher	: (plural: pitchers) a large container for liquids, especially water
lone	: without companion
tempted	: attracted
tarry	: to delay coming to or going from a place
lured	: attracted; tempted
swiftly	: quickly
crane	: a large bird with long legs and a long neck
evil	: wicked; harmful
smite	: to hit someone/something hard
linger	: to stay for a time especially because one does not want to leave
betide	: happen
lightning	: a flash of brilliant light in the sky
thou	: (archaic) you (second person singular)
succour	: help given to someone in need or in danger

Choose the correct option:

1. What time of the day is referred to in the poem?

- (a) Morning
- (b) Afternoon
- (c) Evening
- (d) Night

2. Which family members does the speaker (the country woman) mention in the poem?

- (a) Brother and father
- (b) Brother and sister

- (c) Mother and uncle
- (d) Mother and brother

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. How does the speaker describe her way to her house?
2. Which animal does she fear that may harm her in darkness?
3. Give one example of simile in the poem.
4. What is the greatest fear of the speaker?
5. Whom does the speaker address in line 6 in the poem?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. How do we know that the speaker in the poem is a country woman?
2. Describe the mood of the speaker in lines 1-4 of the poem.
3. In the poem, whom does the speaker entreat to help her?
4. What dangers does the speaker suspect to face on her way back to her house?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Describe the atmosphere of the poem.
2. Analyse imagery in the poem.

Education
is the most powerful weapon
which you can use to change the
world.

-Nelson Mandela

Discoveries of Science III

Sri Aurobindo

Our science is an abstract cold and brief
That cuts in formulas the living whole.
It has a brain and head but not a soul:
It sees all things in outward carved relief.

But how without its depths can the world be known?
The visible has its roots in the unseen
And each invisible hides what it can mean
In a yet deeper invisible, unshown.

The objects that you probe are not their form.
Each is a mass of forces thrown in shape.
The forces caught, their inner lines escape
In a fathomless consciousness beyond mind's norm.

Probe it and you shall meet a Being still
Infinite, nameless, mute, unknowable.

About the Poet

Sri Aurobindo (Sri Ôrobindo), (15 August 1872–5 December 1950), was an Indian nationalist, philosopher, yogi, guru, and poet. He became a spiritual reformer by introducing his vision of spiritual evolution.

Aurobindo studied for the Indian Civil Service at King's College, Cambridge, England. After returning to India he took up various civil service works and gradually began to involve himself in politics. He was imprisoned by the British for writing articles against the British rule in India. He was released when no evidence was provided. During his stay in jail he had mystical and spiritual experiences, after which he moved to Pondicherry, leaving politics for spiritual work.

During his stay in Pondicherry, Aurobindo developed a method of spiritual practice which he called Integral Yoga. His main literary works are *The Life Divine*, *Synthesis of Yoga*, and *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*, an epic poem. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1943 and for the Nobel Prize in Peace in 1950.

About the Poem

“Discoveries of Science” is a sonnet composed by Aurobindo who describes the efforts made by humanity to discover the truth behind the physical existence of things. The poet observes that the discoveries of science are only fragments of the truth. Science is not able to discover the complete truth as it works with the material objects. Sri Aurobindo does not undermine the attempts of science to find the truth, but finds that an evolution in the nature of scientific inquiry is required in order to discover the ultimate truth. The poet suggests the union of the two (science and spirituality) as the future of humanity.

Glossary :

carve	: to make objects, patterns, etc by cutting away material from wood or stone
consciousness	: the state of being aware of something
fathomless	: impossible to understand
invisible	: that cannot be seen
infinite	: without limits
mute	: silent
probe	: a thorough and careful investigation
Unknowable	: that cannot be known

Choose the correct option:

1. What, according to the poet, does Science have?

- (a) A head
- (b) A brain
- (c) A soul
- (d) Both a brain and a soul

2. What, according to the poet, does science study?

- (a) The known
- (b) The unknown

(c) The known and visible

(d) The unknown and invisible

Answer the following questions in 15-20 words each:

1. What does "the outward carved relief" mean?
2. Where do "the inner lines escape"?
3. Where does the visible have its roots?
4. What do the words "beyond mind's norm" suggest?
5. What are the qualities of the "Being"?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. Explain the lines: "Probe it and you shall meet a Being still/Infinite, nameless, mute, unknowable."
2. Comment on the line: "In a fathomless consciousness beyond mind's norm."
3. What message does the poet wish to give through the poem?
4. Find out the words which bring out the spiritual content of the poem.

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Discuss the central idea of the poem.
2. Explain the following lines of the poem with reference to the context:
"But how withoutunshown."

The Song of Youth

A P J Abdul Kalam

As a young citizen of India,
Armed with technology, knowledge
And love for my nation,
I realize, small aim is a crime.
I will work and sweat for a great vision,
The vision of transforming India
Into a developed nation,
Powered by economic strength with value system.
I am one of the citizens of a billion,
Only the vision will ignite the billion souls.
It has entered into me,
The ignited soul compared to any resource
Is the most powerful resource
On the earth, above the earth and under the earth.
I will keep the lamp of knowledge burning
To achieve the vision - Developed India.

About the Poet

A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (15 October 1931– 27 July 2015) was the 11th President of India (2002–2007). He was born and raised in Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu, and studied physics and aero-space engineering. He is popularly known as the Missile Man of India for his work on the development of ballistic missile and the launch vehicle technology.

He is widely referred to as the "People's President." After a single term as the President of India, he returned to his civilian life of education, writing and social service.

He had literary taste and wrote many books, research papers, articles, and some beautiful, inspiring and educative poems. His major published works include *India 2020: A Vision for the New Millennium*, *Wings of Fire: An Autobiography*, *Ignited Minds: Unleashing the Power Within India*, *The Luminous Sparks*, *Mission India*, *Inspiring Thoughts*, *Indomitable Spirit*, *Envisioning an Empowered Nation*, *You Are Born To Blossom: Take My Journey Beyond*, *My Journey: Transforming Dreams into Actions*, *A Manifesto for Change: A Sequel to India 2020*, *Reignited: Scientific Pathways to a Brighter Future*, and *Advantage India: From Challenge to Opportunity*.

He was a recipient of several prestigious awards, including the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour.

About the Poem

“The Song of Youth” is an inspiring poem for the young people. It contains the poet's great vision for India. Here, Kalam argues that if the youth of India work for the vision with ignited minds, India can certainly be transformed into a vibrant developed country. He appeals to the youth to gain more and more useful knowledge and help the country progress in all fields. Thus, the poem unites not only our minds but also our hearts.

Glossary

ignite	: start to burn, (here, inspire and motivate)
sweat	: to work hard
transform	: to change
vision	: an idea or a picture about the future with great imagination and intelligence
vibrant	: full of life and energy

Choose the correct option:

1. “The Song of Youth” has. . . .
 - (a) an inspirational note
 - (b) a personal note
 - (c) a melancholic note
 - (d) a satirical note
2. What, according to the poet, would motivate the billion souls?
 - (a) The dream
 - (b) The song

- (c) The vision
- (d) The speech

Answer the following question in 15-20 words each:

1. What, according to the poet, should be done for a great vision?
2. What, according to the poet, is a crime?
3. To which vision does the poet refer?
4. What does the poet wish to do in order to realise his vision?
5. What, according to the poet, is the most powerful resource?

Answer the following questions in 30-40 words each:

1. Why is a great vision necessary?
2. What impact does the poem have on the mind of the young people?
3. Why does the poet emphasise the economic strength with a value system?
4. What does the line "On the earth, above the earth and under the earth" suggest?

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:

1. Write a summary of the poem?
2. Discuss the poet's vision for the country?
