

Doon Public School Bhuj
English Worksheet

Class: XII Sci, Com

Date: 28.04.2020

Poem -1 (My Mother at Sixty –Six)

Q.1. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

1. “Driving from my parent’s home to Cochin last Friday morning, I saw my mother, beside me, doze, opened mouth, her face ashen like that of a corpse and realised with pain that she was as old as she looked out at young trees sprinting, the merry children spilling out of their homes,.....”

- (a) Name the poem and the poet.
- (b) Where was she driving to?
- (c) How did her mother look like? Why was her mother looking like that of a corpse face?
- (d) What did she notice about her mother?
- (e) Who is ‘I’?
- (f) What did ‘I’ realize with pain?
- (g) Why was the realization painful?
- (h) Identify and name the figure of speech used in these lines.
- (i) What did she see outside?
- (j) Why did she put that thought away?

2. “ ... I looked at her, wan ,pale as a late winter’s moon and felt that old familiar ache, my childhood’s fear, but all I said was, see you soon, Amma, all I did was smile and smile and smile....”

- (a) Who looked ‘wan’ and ‘pale’? When?
- (b) Explain, ‘late winter’s moon’.
- (c) How did the poet console herself and her mother?
- (d) What were the poet’s parting words?
- (e) What does the phrase ‘familiar ache’ means?
- (f) What was the poet’s childhood fear?
- (g) What does the repeated use of the word, ‘smile’ mean?

Answer key:

1. (a) The name of the poem is ‘My Mother at Sixty-Six’ composed by Kamala Das.
 - (b) The poet was driving from her parent’s home to Cochin airport on a Friday morning.
 - (c) Her mother looked sick and drowsy. Her face was ash-coloured like that of a dead body as she was lifeless.
 - (d) The poet noticed that her mother was sleeping with her mouth open.
 - (e) ‘I’ refers to the poet, Kamala Das.
 - (f) The poet realised with pain that her mother was nearing old age.
 - (g) Her mother’s approaching death was a hard fact for her to accept. The thoughts of separation from her mother made her feel sad.
 - (h) Simile: Ashen like that of a corpse.
 - (i) She saw young trees moving fast as if they were sprinting and also saw young children happily running out of their homes to play.
 - (j) The thought of separation from her mother was very unpleasant. She felt uneasy and disturbed, so she decided to ignore the thought.
2. (a) The mother of the poet was looking wan and pale. The poet noticed it , when she was driving to Cochin Airport to catch a plane.
 - (b) The poet has compared her mother’s face colour to the colour of a late winter’s moon which is pale as her skin has lost all its sheen and looks pale.
 - (c) Nevertheless the poet tried to keep a cheerful look and a hopeful time. she smiled and promised to see her mother again.
 - (d) The poet’s words were, “see you soon, Amma”, suggesting hope to herself and her mother that they will meet again.
 - (e) The poet refers to the umpteen number of times when she separated from her mother. Those separations were painful to her. After so many separations, this pain and separations were familiar to the poet.
 - (f) Her childhood fear of separation and the sadness was always associated with the thought of losing her mother.
 - (g) The poet repeats the word ‘smile’ to pacify herself and her mother. She wants to hide her face and attempts to be glad and cheerful. It is a way of reassuring herself that all will be fine.