

3

A Thing of Beauty

Fastrack« Revision

Master Card

- ▶ A beautiful object is a source of everlasting joy.
- ▶ It lifts the spirits of man.
- ▶ It has a soothing effect on the soul of man.
- ▶ It promotes health and happiness.
- ▶ This is why in spite of disappointments, hardships and sorrows, a beautiful object removes the cover of sadness from our spirits.

▶ Objects of Beauty in Nature

- ▶ The sun, the moon
- ▶ Trees young and old
- ▶ A bower
- ▶ Daffodils
- ▶ Streams
- ▶ Thick plants
- ▶ Musk-rose flowers

► Benefits of Art and Literature

- Tales of great heroes
- Their glorious lives
- Their great sacrifices
- Endless source of immortal drink
- These have a lasting impression on man

Theme

- The very line 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever' strikes the key note of the poem written by *John Keats*. A beautiful object is a source of permanent joy because its memory

grows stronger with the passage of time. So it never fades into nothingness. It rather multiplies manifold whenever it flashes across our mental screen.

Literary Devices Used

► Imagery:

- Daffodils with the green world they live in
- Clear rills

► Metaphor:

- An endless fountain of immortal drink
There is also a sense of hyperbole in it.



Practice Exercise



Extract Based Questions

Directions: Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow:

1. **And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.**

(CBSE SQP 2023-24)

- (a) Which of the following themes is best represented in the given extract?
- (i) The beauty of nature
 - (ii) The power of imagination
 - (iii) The immortality of art and literature
 - (iv) The inevitability of death
- (b) State whether the given statement is True or False, with reference to the extract.
By referring to the dead as 'mighty', the poet emphasises their importance and the power they exerted on the people.
- (c) Complete the sentence appropriately.
The "endless fountain of immortal drink" is an apt analogy for the tales of the mighty dead because
- (d) The use of the word 'brink' in the extract suggests that the immortality that is being poured onto us is on the verge of overflowing. This creates a powerful image of
- (e) Based on the poem rhyme scheme, evident in lines 2-5, of the given extract, which word would rhyme with line 1?
- said, think, tombs
- (f) Select the option that is NOT true about the lack of punctuation at the end of line 1 in the extract.
- (i) Creates a sense of continuity and flow that connects the line with the second line.
 - (ii) Encourages the reader to continue reading seamlessly without any pause.
 - (iii) Creates a sense of anticipation and expectation for the reader.
 - (iv) Encourages a revisit to the ideas in the preceding lines.

Answers

- (a) (iii) The Immortality of art and literature
- (b) False
- (c) Just as a fountain continuously pours forth water, the tales of the mighty dead pour forth limitless inspiration and wisdom for the living beings.
- (d) abundance
- (e) tombs
- (f) (iii) Creates a sense of anticipation and expectation for the reader.
2. **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
and breathing.**
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. (CBSE 2023)
- (a) Keats defines beauty as:
- (i) transient (ii) eternal
 - (iii) illusionary (iv) short lived
- (b) 'will keep a bower quiet for us' means all of the following EXCEPT:
- (i) create a peaceful shady place
 - (ii) provide a shelter
 - (iii) will decrease noise pollution
 - (iv) nature's canopy
- (c) On the basis of the extract, choose the correct option with reference to the two statements given below:
- (I) Beautiful things uplift the soul.
- (II) Beauty is everchanging.
- (i) (I) can be inferred from the extract but (II) cannot.
 - (ii) (II) can be inferred from the extract but (I) cannot.
 - (iii) Both (I) and (II) can be inferred from the extract.
 - (iv) Both (I) and (II) cannot be inferred from the extract.

(d) The things that cause unhappiness are:

(I) lack of noble nature

(II) old tunes

(III) dull days

(IV) calm mind

(V) a flowery band

(VI) strong relationships

Choose the most appropriate option:

(i) (I) and (II)

(ii) (I) and (III)

(iii) (IV) and (V)

(iv) (III) and (VI)

(e) Complete the analogy. Do not repeat from used example:

flowery band : metaphor :: : alliteration.

(f) According to the poet 'every morrow' we are

Answers

(a) (ii) eternal

(b) (iii) will decrease noise pollution

(c) (i) (I) can be inferred from the extract but (II) cannot.

(d) (ii) (I) and (III)

(e) noble natures or we wreathing

(f) wreathing

3. yes, in spite of all,

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;

(a) Pick out the rhyming words.

(b) Boon means:

(i) curse

(ii) hindrance

(iii) blessing

(iv) misfortune

(c) 'Pall' in the given stanza is:

(i) a verb

(ii) a noun

(iii) a preposition

(iv) an interjection

(d) What does the 'shape of beauty' do?

(e) State whether the given statement is True or False.

Beauty in any shape drives away the sadness
from our life.

(f) The poet celebrates the beauty of a 'tree' as

Answers

(a) all, pall; moon, boon

(b) (iii) blessing

(c) (ii) a noun

(d) The 'shape of beauty' removes the darkness from our spirits.

(e) True

(f) a shady boon.

4. 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;

(a) What is the 'mid forest brake' rich with?

(i) Dark spirits

(ii) Musk-rose flowers

(iii) Gloomy days

(iv) Immortal drink

(b) Choose the synonym of 'sprinkling'.

(i) Gathering

(ii) Collecting

(iii) Scattering

(iv) Hiding

(c) Daffodils are

(d) Who is the poet of this extract?

(e) What does 'clear rills' refer to?

(f) State whether the given statement is True or False.

Clear rills provide a cooling effect during hot season.

Answers

(a) (ii) Musk-rose flowers

(b) (ii) Collecting

(c) flowers

(d) John Keats is the poet of this extract.

(e) 'Clear rills' refers to the transparent small rivers flowing from the mountains.

(f) True



Short Answer Type Questions

Q 1. What does the line 'therefore.....are we wreathing a flowery band to bind us to the earth' suggest?

Ans. Keats believes that the earth will be a barren place without nature. Therefore the poet says that in order to make our lives worth living we must remain connected to mother nature or mother earth. That is why we wreath a flowery band every morning.

Q 2. What makes human beings love life in spite of troubles and sufferings?

Ans. There is no denying the fact that life on earth is a saga of suffering and pain, but the intermittent phases of joy and happiness, which beautify our life make human beings love life. The natural beauty which abounds us—the clear rivers that run through mountains, the thick forest bushes rich with aroma of musk-roses—all motivate us to love life with all its shades of pain and sufferings.

Q 3. Why is 'grandeur' associated with the 'mighty dead'?

Ans. Keats finds beauty not only in the sensuous beauty but also in the intellectual and spiritual beauty. The glorious death of a warrior has its own grandeur. Thus the poet associates grandeur with the 'mighty dead' because he sees an intellectual and spiritual beauty in their deaths.

Q 4. Do we experience beauty only for short moments or do they make a lasting impression on us?

Or

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

(CBSE 2023)

Ans. According to John Keats, all things of beauty make an everlasting impact on us. They are a source of joy

forever. Their beauty survives the ravages of time and continues to stay in our thoughts. The loveliness of a thing of beauty never ceases to be. It never passes into nothingness.

Q 5. What image does the poet use to describe the beautiful bounty of the earth?

Ans. The poet uses the image of a perennial fountain which pours forth bounties on earth in the form of immortal drink from the heavens above. The sun, the moon, the simple sheep, the daffodils and the green pastures and clear rivers are all the images of the bounties of beauty on earth which God has bestowed upon us.

Q 6. How is a thing of beauty a joy forever?

Or

How does a thing of beauty provide shelter and comfort? (CBSE 2022 Term-2)

Ans. Being a poet of nature, John Keats finds beauty as a perennial source of joy and happiness. Beauty, he believes, leaves an indelible imprint on the mind of the beholder and provides an eternal joy whenever the thought or sight of it flashes upon our inward eye. The loveliness of a thing of beauty never passes into nothingness, it rather keeps on increasing.

Q 7. What makes the poet believe that a thing of beauty can never pass into nothingness?

Ans. As an ardent lover of nature, John Keats firmly believes that the loveliness of a thing of beauty increases manifold as we reflect upon that thought again and again later sometime. Thus the joy derived from a beautiful object stays on and can never fade away.

Q 8. How does beauty leave an indelible imprint on our mind?

Ans. It is natural that beautiful objects once viewed, get treasured in our mind for they provide a feeling of relaxation and respite in our gloomy days. Hence, beauty leaves an indelible imprint on our mind in the form of sweet dreams. The reflection of a beautiful object so soothes our turbulent mind.

Q 9. How, according to the poet, does the darkness and despair of life wither away?

Ans. When John Keats was quite young, he had to struggle against the odds of life which made him realise that sorrows and sufferings are the inevitable truths of life. He found respite in things of beauty and here too he voices his love for beauty when he says that the darkness and hopelessness of life disappears with shapes and sights of beauty.

Q 10. In the poem 'A Thing of Beauty', how is grandeur connected with the mighty dead? (CBSE 2023)

Ans. In the poem 'A Thing of Beauty' the poet emphasises the importance and greatness of the dead. They may have contributed to society in a significant way or achieved great things in their respective fields in their lifetime. They are a source of endless inspiration and wisdom for the living beings. The poet emphasises their significance and the positive impact or influence they have had on the world.



Long Answer Type Questions

Q 1. List the things of beauty mentioned in the poem?

Or

What images of beauty does the poet refer to?

Ans. The poet discerns beauty in all objects of nature. He sees shades and colours of beauty in the sun, the moon, the trees—old and young, the innocence of the sheep, the blossoming of the daffodils, the rivers and streams, mass of ferns, blooming musk-roses and in every aspect of this green world we live in. Besides, the poet finds beauty in the works of literature created by great poets and writers and calls them an endless fountain of joy.

Q 2. What are the things that cause suffering and pain?

Or

What pains and sufferings of life have been referred to by the poet in the poem?

Ans. Keats is one of those great poets who fall in the category of romantic poets. He had an ardent love for nature. But the pain and sufferings of his life made him realise that these are part and parcel of our life. So, while celebrating beauty in full measure in this poem, Keats doesn't seem to be indifferent to the pain and sufferings one experiences on account of the dearth of noble souls on earth which makes our days gloomy and darkens our ways with despair and despondence.

Q 3. How does the poem highlight 'Keats' yearning for 'ideal beauty'?

Ans. Keats was a devotee of nature and loved the principle of beauty in all things. He visualised beauty as an eternal phenomenon. But mere physical beauty cannot be eternal for it fades away with time. The beauty that Keats advocates, refers to the spiritual one which comforts our spirits— the beauty of the realisation of truth, which transcends time and space. It is this ideal beauty that he refers to, according to him 'Beauty is Truth, Truth a beauty, that is all'.

Q 4. What philosophy of life is pointed out in the poem?

Ans. Keats passionately worshipped beauty both at its sensuous and spiritual level. His entire poetic works reveals a longing for that lofty loveliness which is real and true. However, this passion for beauty did not keep him untouched with the pain and suffering of life which he saw as an indispensability or a fact of life. As an escapist he found refuge from pains of life in beauty itself. He believed that 'beauty moves away the pall from our dark spirits' making us love life in spite of sorrows and sufferings.

Q 5. How does the poem reveal the poet's immense faith in the divine?

Ans. Keats always believed in the oneness of truth and beauty which are the two sides of a single coin. He saw beauty in the sun, the moon, the trees because

these are the reflection of their maker, the God who is the eternal truth. In the concluding lines of the poem, the poet refers to his faith in the Divine

Beauty when he sees nature as an endless fountain which pours from its bounties on earth from the heavens above.



Chapter Test

Extract Based Question

Q 1. And such too is the grandeur of the dooms

We have imagined for the mighty dead;

All lovely tales that we have heard or read;

An endless fountain of immortal drink,

Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

(a) Immortal means:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| (i) that is always moral | (ii) that is not moral |
| (iii) that never dies | (iv) that never lived |

(b) Who is the poet?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| (i) Robert Frost | (ii) John Keats |
| (iii) Pablo Neruda | (iv) Kamala Das |

(c) The rhyme scheme of the stanza is

(d) State whether the given statement is True or False.

The name of the poem is *Keeping Quiet*.

(e) What is the meaning of 'grandeur of the dooms'?

(f) What does 'an endless fountain of immortal drink' refer to?

Short Answer Type Question

Q 2. What impact do things of beauty make on us?

Long Answer Type Question

Q 3. How did Keats visualise beauty?