

COMPREHENSION POEMS

I. Read the lines from the poem 'Lines Written In Early Spring' and answer the following questions:

I heard a thousand blended notes,
while in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.
To her fair works did nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Questions

1. When did the poet hear a thousand blended notes?
2. What do you mean by the expression 'blended notes'?
3. What does the expression 'I sate reclined' indicate about the poet's state of mind?
4. Pick out an instance of alliteration from the given lines.

Answers

1. The poet heard a thousand blended notes while he was sitting in the grove.
2. Blended notes means the varied sounds of nature .
3. The poet was in a relaxed mood.
4. much.... my / man....made of man.

II. Read the lines from the song 'Blowin' in the Wind' and answer the following questions:

Yes, and how many years can a mountain exist

Before it is washed to the sea?

Yes, and how many years can some people exist

Before they are allowed to be free?

Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head

And pretend that he just doesn't see?

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind

The answer is blowin' in the wind.

Questions

1. What does the word 'mountain' stand for? (1)
2. What is the attitude of the man to the suffering people, according to Bob Dylan?
3. Pick out the lines that refer to the denial of Civil Rights?
4. Pick out an example for visual image from the given stanza.

Answers

1. The word mountain stands for the mighty people who are in power.
2. According to Bob Dylan, a man pretends that he does not see the suffering faces of the people.
3. Yes, how many years can some people exist/ Before they are allowed to be free?
4. Mountain /Sea.

III. Read the lines from the song 'The Ballad of Father Gilligan' and answer the following questions:

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep
And the moth-hour went from the fields
And stars began to peep.
They slowly into millions grew
and leaves shook in the wind
And God covered the world with shade
And whispered to mankind.

Questions

1. Who is the 'he' mentioned in the poem?
2. Pick out the lines to show that the time is late evening.
3. What did God cover the world with?
4. Write the rhyme scheme of the stanza.

Answers

1. Father Peter Gilligan is the 'he' mentioned in the passage.
2. And the moth-hour went from the fields/And stars began to peep.
3. God covered the world with shade.
4. abcb

IV. Read the lines from the song 'Poetry' and answer the following questions.

And I infinitesimal being,
drunk with the great starry
void,
likeness, image of
mystery,
felt myself a pure part
of the abyss,
I wheeled with the stars,
my heart broke loose on the wind.

Questions

1. What does the poet realise of himself?
2. 'I wheeled with the stars'. What does the poet mean by this?
3. How does the poet express his delight of writing the first line of poetry?
4. "My heart broke loose on the wind". Which figure of speech is used here?

Answers

1. The poet realises that he is an infinitesimal being.
2. The poet's mind journeyed along with the stars and the unexplored realms.
3. He says that his heart breaks loose on the wind.
4. Hyperbole.

V. Read the lines from the song 'Mother to Son' and answer the following questions:

Well, son. I'll tell you
Life for me in't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards with no carpet on the floor-
Bare.

Questions

1. Who is the speaker in the poem?
2. Do you feel the presence of a listener? How?
3. What do you mean by the expressions 'tacks', 'splinters', and 'boards torn up'?
4. Pick out an example for visual image.

Answers

1. The mother is the speaker.
2. Yes, the mother addresses her son.
3. A life with many difficulties and challenges.
4. crystal stairs/ carpet on the floor.

Practising Questions

I. Read the lines given below and answer the questions that follow.

The birds around me hopped and played
Their thoughts I cannot measure
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air
And I must think, do all I can
That there was pleasure there.

Questions

1. What did the birds around the poet do to express their thrill of pleasure?
2. "Their thoughts I cannot measure". Whose thoughts cannot be measured?
3. What does the poet understand from the least motion of the birds?
4. Why do the budding twigs spread out their fan?
5. "The budding twigs spread out their fan To catch the breezy air". Which figure of speech is used here?
6. Find out the rhyming words from the stanzas.
7. Write the rhyme scheme of the given stanzas.

II. Read the lines and answer the questions that follow.

Once, while he nodded in a chair
At the moth-hour of the eve
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.
'I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace
For people die and die.
And after cried he, 'God forgive me!
My body spake not I!'

Questions

1. Who is the 'he' referred to here?
2. What did Father Gilligan do once?
3. When did father Gilligan nod in a chair?
4. What does 'the moth-hour of eve' indicate?
5. Pick out an example of Visual image from the first stanza.
6. Why did another man send for father Gilligan?
7. Why was the man referred to as poor?
8. Why did father Gilligan lament?
9. Why did father Gilligan seek forgiveness from God?
10. What justification did he give to God for his errant (guilty)?

II. Read the given lines of the poem and write the answers of the following questions:

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tracks in it,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.

Questions

1. Who is the speaker in the poem?
2. Do you feel the presence of a listener? How?
3. What does the expression 'no crystal stair' mean?
4. 'Well, son, I'll tell you'. Who is the 'I' referred to here?
5. What do 'tacks', 'splinters' and boards torn up' mean?
6. Was life easy for the narrator? Pick out evidence from the stanza to support your answer.
7. What does the speaker mean by the word 'bare'?