

## Dust of Snow

### MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. The way a crow  
Shook down on me  
The dust of snow  
From a hemlock tree  
Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.
- (i) Of the many symbols the hemlock tree represents, choose the one that Frost drew upon in all likelihood, for this poem. Symbol of
- (A) longevity.
  - (B) togetherness.
  - (C) healing.
  - (D) protection.
- (ii) Choose the option that lists the possible feelings of the poet prior to the experience shared in the poem.
- a. reassured
  - b. disappointed
  - c. curious
  - d. demotivated
  - e. thankful
  - f. disheartened
  - g. impulsive
- (A) 1, 3 & 7  
(B) 2, 4 & 6  
(C) 5 & 7  
(D) 1 & 3
- (iii) Identify the option that DOES NOT use the word 'rue' correctly.
- (A) The film was a disaster and he rued his decision to act in it.
  - (B) I am sure she rued the day, she listened to a fortune-teller.
  - (C) It wasn't long before I rued my disobedience and my deceit.
  - (D) Others finally rue the one who is dishonest and heartless.
- (iv) Synecdoche is a poetic device that uses a part to represent the whole. E.g. That's a great set of wheels! (Set of wheels has been used for car.) Pick an example of synecdoche from the poem.
- (A) Has given my heart / A change of mood
  - (B) The way a crow/ Shook down on me
  - (C) The dust of snow / From a hemlock tree
  - (D) And saved some part / Of a day I had rued
- (v) Choose the option showing the reason NOT corresponding with "... a crow / Shook down on me / The dust of snow".
- (A) The crow's landing on the branch of the tree.
  - (B) The shivering of the crow, due to the cold.
  - (C) The readjustment of position of the crow on the branch.
  - (D) The cawing of the crow hidden in the foliage.
- Answer:**
- (i) (C)
  - (ii) (B)
  - (iii) (D)
  - (iv) (A)
  - (v) (D)

2. (a) Rationalise what you think the poet was probably doing when the dust of snow fell on him?
- (b) What does the presence of a hemlock tree tell you about the setting of the poem?
- (c) The dusting of snow on account of the crow helped make the poet's day better. How do you think the crow's droppings might have impacted the poet?

**Ans.** (a) The poet was likely outdoors, possibly reflecting on his thoughts, feeling gloomy. The dust of snow from the tree broke his mood, creating a refreshing shift in perspective.

(b) The hemlock tree, associated with solitude and bitterness, suggests a cold, bleak setting that mirrors the poet's initial sorrowful mood, contrasting with the uplifting effect of the snow.

(c) Had it been the crow's droppings instead, it might have worsened the poet's mood rather than uplifting it, adding annoyance rather than a refreshing sense of peace and change.

3. (a) 'Dust of Snow' is one of Frost's most loved poems. Elaborate why you think this is so.

(b) The poem evokes a sense of black and white. Justify.

(c) The crow and hemlock are usually used as negative references in literature. How is this different in this poem?

**Ans.** (a) "Dust of Snow" is cherished for its simplicity and profound message. The poem captures a transformative moment where nature subtly lifts the poet's spirit, showing that even small, unexpected events can change one's outlook. Its universal theme of finding beauty and hope in unlikely moments resonates deeply with readers.

(b) The poem evokes black and white imagery through the stark contrasts of the crow (associated with darkness) and the snow (symbolising purity). This contrast reflects the shift in the poet's mood from despair to hope, symbolising a positive change brought about by something seemingly ordinary and dark.

(c) In Dust of Snow, the crow and hemlock tree, typically seen as symbols of sorrow, bring positivity to the poet. This reversal of traditional symbols suggests that even dark or unpleasant elements in life can offer moments of beauty and inspire optimism, challenging conventional meanings.

4. (a) As a crow you feel highly injured by the incorrect perception humans have about your species. Imagine yourself to be a crow and write your opinion about this prejudice. Make a case for breaking stereotypes.

(b) Imagine that Frost is of present day and has been invited to write for an e-zine - "Teen Talk". He chooses to draw upon his experience with the crow and the dusting of snow to share his thoughts on 'Every cloud has a silver lining'. As Frost, express your thoughts for the e-zine.

**Ans.** (a) I, a crow, feel unfairly labelled as a harbinger of bad luck, a creature associated with darkness. People misjudge my presence, yet I'm part of nature's balance, cleaning up waste, and adding my unique voice to the environment. Just because I'm not colourful or songful doesn't make me less valuable. If people could see beyond my black feathers, they'd realise my contribution to the ecosystem. It's time to break the stereotype and appreciate every creature for its role, not just its appearance. I'm a reminder that everyone, even those who seem 'dark' or 'unpleasant,' has worth. Let's broaden our perspectives beyond stereotypes and appreciate diversity for".

- (b) "In life, we often face moments that seem overwhelmingly bleak. I remember standing under a hemlock tree one winter, feeling weighed down by my thoughts, when a crow shook snow from the branches above. In that unexpected instant, a change swept over me; my gloom gave way to something light and hopeful. That dusting of snow, simple and pure, reminded me of the saying: 'Every cloud has a silver lining.' Life's grey clouds, though heavy, often carry small moments of beauty that we don't anticipate. I encourage you to remain open to these small wonders, as they can shift your mood, just as nature shifted mine. Sometimes, it's the ordinary that lights the way forward."

