

The Ball Poem

MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. What is the boy now, who has lost his ball,
What, what is he to do?

I saw it go Merrily bouncing, down the street, and
then Merrily over – there it is in the water! No use
to say – ‘O there are other balls’: [CBSE 2012]

- (a) What has happened to the boy?
(b) Why does the poet say ‘No use to say – ‘O there are other balls’?
(c) Which word means ‘happily’?
(d) Where did the ball go?

- Ans.** (a) The boy was very sad as he had lost his ball.
(b) The poet says so as the loss of the ball is of a major consequence to the boy.
(c) Merrily means happily.
(d) The ball went to the water.

2.Now
He senses first responsibility
In a world of possessions. People will take
Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.
And no one buys a ball back. Money is external.

- (a) What does the boy understand?
(b) What does the word ‘balls’ signify?
(c) What is meant by the word ‘possessions’?
(d) What does “In a world of possessions mean?”

- Ans.** (a) The boy learns to grow up and understands his first responsibility.
(b) ‘Balls’ signify the boy’s innocence and happy young days.
(c) ‘Possessions’ means something that is owned or possessed.
(d) It means that everybody loves to possess things or materials in their names.

3. What does John Berryman want to convey through this poem?

Ans. Poet John Berryman wants to convey the importance of loss and responsibility in life. We all should learn our responsibility and how to cope up with the loss.

4. Write the sum and substance of the poem “The Ball Poem”.

Ans. In “The Ball Poem”, Berryman tells us about how our childhood can quickly fly by, as quickly as a ball is lost and how we sometimes unsuspectingly must grow up and face hardships, like loss.

5. “Money is external”. What does the poet mean by this expression?

Ans. The poet makes the boy understand about his responsibility as the loss is immaterial. Money is external as it cannot buy memories, nor can it replace the things that we love, the things that really matter.

6. Why did the poet not offer the boy money to buy another ball?

Ans. The poet watched the boy who had plunged in grief at the loss of his ball. He did not offer the boy money to buy another ball. He felt that another ball could not console the boy. It seemed that the boy had the ball for a long time. The poet also wanted the boy to realise the epistemology of loss.

7. Why is it important for everyone to experience loss and to stand up after it?

Ans. It is important for everyone to experience loss and to stand up after it in order to be strong and to get on with life. One needs to stay strong no matter how

much it hurts inside. Staying strong is the only way to survive. Moreover, one needs to learn to accept and let go and not cling to something that they can never have. One should understand that the past is gone and it will never come back. Experiencing loss sometimes helps us to grow up and face hardships, like loss. This helps us in breaking all the boundaries into freedom.

