

**Easy Study Material on**

***Endearing Essence***

(A Text Book Prescribed for **Compulsory English, B.A. Part II Third Semester**)

From academic session 2023-24 (New CBCS) by

RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur.

Compiled under the guidance of

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*Disclaimer- It is only the compilation of the study material provided by various teachers of English from different colleges affiliated to RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur. Hence the style of writing may differ from teacher to teacher.*

**Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Part II**  
**Compulsory English**  
**Third Semester**  
**(Implemented from the Academic Session 2023-24)**

**Course Outcomes**

- Learners will be encouraged to nurture aspirations to be successful in their lives by finding a profession of their choice
- Learners will be made aware of civic sense and inspire to inculcate compassion towards others
- Learners will develop consciousness for environmental preservation
- Learners will be introduced to the idea of ‘Work is Worship’ and realize the importance of hard work

**Prescribed Textbook**

**Endearing Essence (A Textbook of Compulsory English as per NEP 2020)** (Macmillan Education)

**Chief Editors:** Urmila Dabir, Dnyanesh Naik, Usha Sakure

**Co-editors:** Archana Gupta, Kanchan Joshi, Varsha Vaidya, Anita Wanjari

**Unit I (Prose)**

- Taking Studies Seriously – Khushwant Singh
- A Simple Philosophy – Seathl
- The Boy Who Broke the Bank – Ruskin Bond
- The Open Window – Alfred George Gardiner

**Unit II (Poetry)**

- A Worker’s God – Kunj Bihari Das
- The Felling of a Banyan Tree – Dilip Chitre
- Life – Charlotte Bronte
- Siddhartha and the Swan – Sir Edwin Arnold

**Unit III (Writing Skills)**

A. Language Skills Part I

1. Report Writing – News Report, Activity Report (Competition)
2. Data Analysis – Tabular/Pie Chart Interpretation

B. Skills based on the prescribed textbook

**Unit IV (Language Study)**

A. Transformation of the Sentences – Exclamatory, Negative, Interrogative, Affirmative

B. Vocabulary Building – Misspelt Words/ Confusing Words (Fill in the blanks)

**Internal Assessment:** Writing a book review in 200 words

**B. A. Compulsory English  
Question Paper Pattern  
For All Semesters**

Total Marks: 80

**Question No. 1**

- A. Three short answer questions to be attempted out of six in about 75 words with at least one question from each prescribed lesson (5x3) 15 Marks  
B. Five Multiple Choice Questions on Unit I (Prose) (5x1) 5 Marks

**Question No. 2**

- A. Three short answer questions to be attempted out of six in about 75 words with at least one question from each prescribed poem. (5x3) 15 Marks  
B. Five Multiple Choice Questions on Unit II (Poetry) (5x1) 05 Marks

**Question No. 3**

- A. One question out of two to be attempted on Unit III A 10 Marks  
B. One question out of two to be attempted on Unit III B 10 Marks

**Question No. 4**

On Unit IV

To attempt ten questions out of 15 from exercises based on the prescribed Language Study. (10x2) 20 Marks

**Internal Assessment:** The topics prescribed for the internal assessment will carry 10 marks. Besides this, the students shall have to submit a home assignment on which viva voce shall be conducted. It shall carry 05 marks. The remaining 05 marks shall be allotted for students' participation in departmental activities including their regular attendance and study tour by forming cluster of colleges.

**Workload and Slots for each prescribed section (for all semesters):**

- 4 lectures per week of 48 minutes each (3.2 hours per week)
- 1 Tutorial per week for each batch of 20 students (0.8 hours per week)
- 15 weeks of teaching in each semester
- Unit I (Prose): 5 weeks (20 days)
- Unit II (Poetry): 2 weeks (8 days)
- Unit III (Communication and Life Skills): 3 weeks (12 days)
- Unit IV (Language Study): 2 weeks (8 days)
- Activities for Internal Assessment of Students: 2 weeks (8 days)
- Revision/Test: 1 week (4 days)

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03	The Boy Who Broke the Bank By Ruskin Bond	Dr. Madhavi Moharil	14 to 17
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## Taking Studies Seriously

Khushwant Singh

**Answer the following questions in Short.**

**1. Give instances from the passage to show Khushwant Singh uses self – depreciating humour to connect with his audience.**

The author Khushwant Singh tells that he would be the last person to advise students to take their studies seriously as he himself had passed his exams in third divisions. He further says that he scored zeros in arithmetic and just somehow managed to pass with algebra and geometry while in school, college and law school. His classmates took three years to pass law exams, it took him five years to complete the same course. The legal profession he undertook later on also gave him the feeling as if student prepares for exams. Every time he attended the court, he felt as if every attendance was a test. Moreover, he found the law books dull and living out of other people's quarrels was not fulfilling at all.

**2. Mention some challenges Khushwant Singh faced during the developmental phase of his academic career, and what was the turning point of his journey?**

After neglecting studies at school and college, Khushwant Singh chose legal profession. This required a lot of reading briefs and preparations which he did not like. Making profit from other people's quarrels was dissatisfying for him. He did not have many cases to handle and so he started reading books on English Literature. During the partition of India, he was forced to leave Lahore where he had his legal practice. He gave up all his law books, coat, gown and tabs and joined the diplomatic services. This gave him an opportunity to see the world. Wherever he went, he tried to improve his writing skills. He took small jobs to supplement his income. He worked for the New York Times which earned him a good amount of money and then he started on writing a book for another two years.

**3. Why does the author say that those born into wealthy families may not always find satisfaction?**

Khushwant Singh upholds that there are no short cuts to success. He gives us an account of students who take their studies seriously and get a head start in life. Such students were the toppers of the class who ventured into education, administration, engineering, police, foreign and other posts. The ones who took law and medicine were hard workers. According to Khushwant Singh, the only exceptions were the ones who were born in rich industrial or business houses or those who inherit large fortunes. He says such people who have not earned themselves are seldom happy and fulfilled. He further says that money earned by the sweat of the brow is the only way that gives a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

**4. Discuss why Khushwant Singh did not want to contribute in the legal profession.**

Khushwant Singh found the law books very dull and making money out of people's quarrels was not fulfilling at all. He didn't put a lot of interest in the legal profession therefore there were not many cases for him to handle. So, he started reading books of English Literature, especially the classics. He feels that he should have read all these in the school itself but he started reading them in his middle age and understood that it was rewarding. He realized that he was in the wrong profession for the wrong reason. He further tells his audience that earning money for money's sake is the worst way of making a living. he wanted to be a writer even he made very little money out of it.

**5. What can we, as readers, infer from Khushwant Singh’s work ethic, and what does his dedication to writing demonstrate?**

Even when Khushwant Singh takes up the legal profession, he isn’t satisfied with the outcome of living on others’ quarrels. This disinterests him and he does not have many cases to handle. This is when he reads the Classics of English Literature and realizes that he is in the wrong profession for the wrong reason and takes to writing knowing well that it will not fetch him more money. The reflective essay underlines the importance of identifying one’s passion and dedicating oneself to pursuing it. He takes to writing while still in Diplomatic services and continues his passion for writing and publishing. Even after getting belittled by his relatives, friends, and his father, Khushwant Singh took to small jobs to supplement his income. He was never tired of his work or bored as it gave him infinite fulfillment.

**6. What assumptions does Khushwant Singh make about the experiences of his fellow senior editors, and what is the basis for such conclusions?**

Khushwant Singh says that at the age of 77, he starts his day at 4. 30 in the morning and continues to work till 7.30 in the evening and he never gets tired or bored of working. He further says that all the well-known senior journalists who have made it in this profession were just like Khushwant Singh. None of them were really good at studies. He says had they been very good, they would have been in Services or business and would have made good fortunes. Journalism he says was their second or third choice and whatever they are doing in this profession, they are liking it and putting their best. He further elaborates that success didn’t come to them suddenly or by luck, it was their toil and sweat of the brow.

**Choose the correct answer from the options provided.**

1. Which word best describes Khuswant Singh’s attitude towards studying during his school and college years?

- A. Apathetic
- B. Pathetic
- C. Diligent
- D. Perseverant

2. How does Khuswant Singh ‘s use of humour and sarcasm impact his storytelling?

- A. It increases the credibility of his narrative
- B. It flattens the credibility of his arguments
- C. It engages readers and makes his writing relatable
- D. It adds to a sense of indifference and stoicism

3. What is the advantage that students who take their studies seriously have in life?

- A. They amass wealth and become materialistic
- B. They can pursue a writing career with ease
- C. They get a head start in their careers
- D. They inherit large sums of money later on

4. How did Khuswant Singh’s study of literary classics impact him?

- A. He decided to write *Train to Pakistan*.
- B. He decided to become a diplomat.
- C. It inspired him to give up law and start writing.
- D. It made him erratic and indecisive about his career

5. What is the meaning of, 'Nothing venture, nothing have'?
- Success requires one to take risks.
  - Money is the key to happiness.
  - Writing is a lucrative profession.
  - Academic success ensures a bright future.
6. Why did Khuswant Singh choose to become a writer despite making little money out of it?
- He believed that he had a natural flair for writing.
  - He found writing more fulfilling than his legal profession.
  - He wanted to make his father repent for belittling him.
  - He wanted to mimic the writings of Shakespeare and Goethe.
7. Identify Khushwant Singh tone while describing his decision to pursue writing despite initial setbacks.
- Bitter and hurtful
  - Pessimistic and uninspiring
  - Arrogant and boastful
  - Optimistic and hopeful
8. Khuswant Singh challenge the notion of success based on academic achievements-
- By discussing his own lack of academic success.
  - By arguing that academic success does not ensure happiness, following one's flair does.
  - By belittling those who succeed through academic excellence.
  - By highlighting the necessity of academic success for career.
9. State what Khushwant Singh claims about the nature of success in writing.
- It demands luck and windfall opportunities.
  - It can be achieved primarily through academic excellence.
  - It requires hard work, dedication and unrelenting effort.
  - It is primarily determined by one's socio-economic background.
10. Khuswant Singh's father used to call him...
- Fool
  - Bewakoof
  - Intelligent
  - Smart
11. Khushwant Singh's books brought him more...
- Royalties
  - Salary
  - Opportunities
  - Pay cheques

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11
Correct option	D	C	C	C	A	B	D	D	C	C	A

## **A Simple Philosophy**

### **Chief Seathl**

The prose, 'A Simple Philosophy' is a letter written by the Red Indian Chief, Seathl of the Suguamish tribe of the US, to the president of the US, Franklin Pierce. The letter shows the deep respect that the tribe has for nature. It highlights the destructive impact of colonization on the environment and the native American way of life.

The chief in Washington wished to buy the land of the Suguamish tribe. The chief of the tribe knew that if the offer were not considered, their land would be taken away forcefully. So, they don't have any choice. The idea of selling and buying nature is strange for the chief of the tribe. He questions how the sky, the warmth of the land, the freshness of the air, or the sparkle of the water be sold and bought. Every part of this earth, shining pine needles, sandy shores, dark woods, and humming insects is holy for the tribe.

The white man does not understand this. They do not treat Earth like their brother. They treat it like an enemy and move on after conquering it. They leave behind their father's graves uncared and forgotten. Similarly, they kidnap the earth from his children. They extract all the nature and leave behind the earth as a desert. The life of a red man without the sounds of whippoorwill or frogs is incomplete. They prefer the sound and smell of wind cleansed by the rain, or scented by pine. The red man considers air precious as all living things, the animals, the humans, and the trees share the same breath. However, this is not noticed by a white man. They are numb to the smell.

The chief is ready to accept the offer of the white man with certain conditions. One of them is that they must treat the beasts of the land as their brothers. Thousands of buffaloes were killed by white men while they traveled on a train. For the chief of the tribe, these wild animals are more important than a train. Men and beasts are connected. Without them, men would not survive. We will die of loneliness.

The tribes have been defeated in the battles with white men. This has brought idleness into their lives. Now, they are destroying themselves by consumption of sweets, food, and drink. Most of them have lost their lives in the battle. For those alive, it hardly matters where they spend the rest of their lives. Soon no one from the tribe will be left to mourn on the graves. These people were once as powerful and hopeful as the white men.

One day the white man will understand that the God of all is the same. Like land, they think that they own God. Their act of harming the earth is contempt of God. The whites, perhaps will pass away sooner than other tribes. They are destroying nature and will one day pay the price for it. The slaughtered buffaloes, the tamed horses, and the overcrowded nature will have no place for the thicket and the eagle. They all will be gone. That will turn living into mere survival.

The red man does not understand the vision and dream of the future that the white man is creating in the minds of his children. This is because they are savages. The white man does not their plans with the red man. Hence, the red man has no choice but to take their way. But to secure the reservation promised by the white man for them, the red man will be able to pass their remaining days as per their wish.

After the last red man departs from this earth, there won't be anyone to remember them. But the spirit of oneness with nature will survive in the shores and forests. He appeals to the white man to care for nature as the red man has done and preserve it for future generations. God is the same for all and this earth is precious to Him. If they destroy nature, they too will suffer the same fate.

**Attempt the following questions in short:**

**1. Discuss Chief Seathl's letter as a critique of modern society and its impact on the environment.**

The land on which the people of Chief Seathl live is holy to them. Their heart and soul have been connected to their land for ages. Unfortunately, the white man does not understand the feelings of these Red Indians, and they intend to conquer the land. This desire will gradually turn the land into a deserted place with no trees and no sounds of birds and animals, listening to which the Red Indians have lived their life, and no fresh air to breathe. Thus, the White people who consider themselves to be modern will destroy the environment. For the tribe, wild animals are more important than a train. Men and beasts are connected. Without them, men would not survive. We will die of loneliness. The letter shows the deep respect that the tribe has for nature. It highlights the destructive impact of colonization on the environment and the native American way of life.

**2. Chief Seathl asks, 'How can you buy or sell the sky?' How is the question of the Suquamish tribe's philosophy about nature?**

The chief in Washington wished to buy the land of the Suguamish tribe. The chief of the tribe knew that if the offer were not considered, their land would be taken away forcefully. So, they don't have any choice. The idea of selling and buying nature is strange for the chief of the tribe. He questions how the sky, the warmth of the land, the freshness of the air, or the sparkle of the water be sold and bought. Every part of this earth, shining pine needles, sandy shores, dark woods, and humming insects is holy for the tribe. The white man does not understand this. They do not treat Earth like their brother. They treat it like an enemy and move on after conquering it.

**3. How does Chief Seathl view the white man's relationship with the land?**

The White men intend to conquer the land of the Red Indians. Once they have conquered one land, they move on to conquer the other land. In this acquiring process, they do not even care for the graves of their father and the rights of their children to play on the land they are born and move on to conquer more land. The White people have a strong desire to conquer more, and more land. This desire will gradually turn the land into a deserted place with no trees and no sounds of birds and animals, listening to which the Red Indians have lived their life, and no fresh air to breathe. Chief Seathl adds that the white people do not care for such sentiments as they are used to city life with all the hustle and bustle around. The White man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like a man dying for many days, he numbs to the smell of nature around.

**4. What is the tone of Chief Seathl's letter, and how does it contribute to the overall message he is trying to convey?**

The letter, 'A Simple Philosophy', is a great piece of sarcasm as he cannot understand the concept of owning the land by human beings. Chief Seathl believed that humans were not separate from nature, but an integral part of it. This letter is considered a significant document in the history of Native American and environmental advocacy. The letter to the President

reflects the beliefs and values of the Suquamish tribe, particularly their deep respect for nature and their concern for the impact of human actions on the natural world. It highlights the destructive impact of colonization on the environment and the Native American way of life. He critiques the white man's lack of understanding and respect for the natural world, arguing that their focus on conquest and control has left behind a trail of destruction and waste that will ultimately lead to the downfall of the entire planet.

**5. What is the condition that Chief Seathl wants to accept the white man's offer?**

Chief Seathl further adds the Red Indians are ready to accept the offer of the White people if they are ready to consider the beasts of their land as their brothers and do not harm them. Because the white people enjoy shooting beasts, it is a game for them. According to Chief Seathl, if all the beasts are gone then men will die from the loneliness of spirit. If the White people continue to harm the earth and its creatures then a time will come when these white people will suffocate due to the waste all around and no fresh air to breathe. It will then be the end of living and the beginning of survival.

**6. Comment on the differences in philosophy, life, and living between the modern and tribal man as outlined in Chief Seathl's letter.**

The chief of the tribe, questions how the sky, the warmth of the land, the freshness of the air, or the sparkle of the water be sold and bought. The white man does not understand this. They treat it like an enemy and move on after conquering it. The red man considers air precious as all living things, the animals, the humans, and the trees share the same breath. However, this is not noticed by a white man. They are numb to the smell. For the tribe, wild animals are more important than a train. Men and beasts are connected. Without them, men would not survive. We will die of loneliness. The white man does not understand this.

**Choose the correct option from those given below:**

1. Choose the statement that best describes Chief Seathl's view on selling the land.
  - A. he is willing to sell the land to the white man
  - B. He is against selling the land to the white man but he is aware of the white man's power
  - C. He is indifferent about selling the land to the white man.
  - D. He is considering the land to the white man
  
2. What does Chief Seathl compare his words to?
  - A. the stars that do not set
  - B. the sound of the wind
  - C. the cry of the whippoorwill
  - D. the sight of the pond
  
3. What makes Chief Seathl think that the white man does not understand their ways?
  - A. because he leaves behind his father's grave behind and moves on
  - B. because he does not notice the air, he breaths
  - C. because he does not care about the birthrights of his children
  - D. all of the above
  
4. Chief Seathl says that the white man moves on from conquered land because-
  - A. he thinks of himself and not his children or ancestors
  - B. he is not attached to the land as the native Indians
  - C. he is always searching for new opportunities and new resources
  - D. he has a restless and impatient nature

5. According to Chief Seathl, what will happen if all the beasts are gone?
  - A. Men will die from the loneliness of the spirit
  - B. Men will be more civilized
  - C. Men will become more independent
  - D. Men will be more connected to the earth
  
6. What was the main purpose of the letter Chief Seathl wrote to the President of the USA?
  - A. To express his anger towards the white man for occupying more and more of the land
  - B. To express the philosophy of nature conservation and maintenance of the natural balance
  - C. To express his disappointment over the defeat of this tribe.
  - D. To demand an apology from the president of the USA
  
7. Why would Chief Seathl consider the offer of the great chief in Washington?
  - A. because by doing he would create employment for his tribe
  - B. because he would be paid a big amount in return
  - C. because if refused, the white man may come with guns
  - D. because the white men had helped the red men in medical treatment
  
8. What is sacred to the Chief Seathl and his tribe?
  - A. their forest
  - B. their country
  - C. their language
  - D. the whole earth
  
9. What is the white man's attitude towards land?
  - A. the earth is his brother
  - B. he conquers it and stays there
  - C. he unites the earth with its children
  - D. he comes in the night and takes away from the land whatever he needs
  
10. What would a white man's greed do?
  - A. make God unhappy
  - B. convert the land into a desert
  - C. makes his parents dissatisfied
  - D. bring river water into villages
  
11. After their defeat the red man-
  - A. become idle and contaminate their bodies
  - B. prepare for the next battle wholeheartedly
  - C. move away to the bigger cities
  - D. seek help from the other tribes
  
12. How would one heap contempt on God?
  - A. by killing one's friend
  - B. by harming the earth
  - C. by running away from nature to cities
  - D. by not visiting Church on Sundays

13. The significance of the words, 'Where is the thicket? Gone? Where is the eagle? Gone?'

- A. It symbolizes the destruction of nature
- B. It symbolizes the passing of time
- C. it symbolizes the loss of power
- D. it symbolizes the white man's triumph over nature

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
Correct option	B	A	D	A	A	B	C	D	D	B	A	B	A

## The Boy Who Broke the Bank

Ruskin Bond

### Summary

The story is set in a fictional town called Pipalnagar. Nathu is a poor sweeper who works in the Pipalnagar bank. Instead of doing his work properly, he is not well paid. He is frustrated and looking for a new job. Nathu is anxious about his payment and in his frustration, unconsciously raises dust. Sitaram, the son of the washer-man passes Nathu and faces the dust. Sitaram understands Nathu's emotions and talks to him. Sitaram asks him if he is frustrated because the bank is not paying him his extra two rupees monthly. Nathu becomes emotional and says the bank is not paying him even his regular salary. He also adds, 'Who would think a bank would hold up a poor man's salary?'

Sitaram consoles Nathu after listening to his sad story and adds that he will look out for new jobs for Nathu. Sitaram visits Mrs. Srivastava's house and gets to know that she is looking for a sweeper. Sitaram suggests Nathu's name and also shares some glimpses of Nathu's sad story. Mrs. Srivastava tells Sitaram to call Nathu to her the next day.

The story takes a twist when Mrs. Srivastava tells the story to her friend Mrs. Bhushan. She changes the tone of the story and presents it differently. Mrs. Bhushan replies, if they can't pay the sweeper they must be in a bad way. None of the others could be getting paid either. The story spreads like fire. From Mr. Bhushan to Kamal Kishore to Deep Chand to Old Ganpat, the story changes its tone and turns entirely different! People start thinking that the owner, Govind Seth Ram has fled to Kashmir with all the money of the bank.

The townspeople of Pipalnagar start protesting in front of the bank. They shout as 'give us our money or we'll break and fetch Seth, we know he's hiding in a safe deposit locker!' The crowd gets larger and larger. Some people join the crowd without having a bank account. They become restless. Soon they start throwing rocks and breaking the window of the bank.

The next morning Nathu arrives and sees the terrible condition of the bank. He becomes frustrated as he has to do more struggle to clean everything off. Soon Sitaram arrives and shares the terror of the previous day with him. Nathu returns to work, sweeps the floor and waits for the manager to claim his money. He doesn't know about the bank's collapse and thinks about how the thing happened. The story conveys a moral that rumors spread like fire so, everyone should shoulder social responsibility. It also delivers a message that carelessness can lead to the ruin of a situation or individual.

**Answer the following questions in about 150 words.**

**1. Nathu's character reflects the larger themes of poverty and exploitation in Indian society during the period in which the story is set. Cite examples from the text to justify the statement.**

Nathu is presented as the sweeper boy in Pipalnagar Bank. His character reflects the larger themes of poverty and exploitation in Indian society during the period in which the story is set. Nathu works sincerely but he is not paid properly. He is frustrated and looking for a new job. He complains Sitaram, the washerman's son that as soon as he gets his money, he will leave

his job in the bank. In frustration, he says, ‘Who would think a bank would hold up a poor man’s salary?’ He bangs the pan against the dustbin several times just to emphasize his point. His angry expressions and gestures depict his unease with the system in which he lives and works.

**2. What were the different versions of the story that people were narrating while trying to throw light on Seth Govind Ram’s absence?**

**Or**

**Is the title, ‘The Boy Who Broke the Bank’ apt? Justify briefly.**

Nathu complains that he does not receive his regular salary. From Sitaram the news reaches to Mrs. Srivastava that Nathu wants to leave the bank as it is not being paid. Mrs. Srivastava meets her friend Mrs. Bhushan and tells her that Seth Govind Ram’s bank’s sweeper has not received his wages. Mrs. Bhushan thinks the bank must be in a bad way as it cannot pay even the sweeper. From Mrs. Bhushan the news reaches to Kamal Kishor as Seth Govind Ram’s bank is in bankruptcy. The news reaches Deep Chand, the barber that the Pipalnagar Bank is about to collapse and better to get back the money as soon as possible. Seth’s flying to Kashmir to spend his holidays is taken to have fled the town. The customers, betel seller, the tailor, the free vendor, the jeweller even the beggar rush to the bank to withdraw their money. Eventually, the bank collapses and the sweeper boy prove responsible for the same.

**3. Comment on Bond’s use of symbolism, such as the dusty steps of the bank and the shady tamarind tree, to convey deeper meaning about the story’s themes and characters.**

Ruskin Bond in *The Boy Who Broke the Bank* has used the technique of symbolism in the story very effectively. Nathu is frustrated and looking for a new job. Nathu is anxious about his payment and in his frustration, unconsciously raises dust. So dust is used as a symbol for Nathu’s dissatisfaction and frustration for not getting salary on time. Banging of the dustbin by Nathu for several times shows his anger. Shady tamarind tree grew at one end of the crowded bazaar symbolises the small-town life where the people are well connected to each other. Seth Govind Ram is compared to the bird who has flown away. The pace of the spread of the rumour is symbolized by the rapidity of a forest fire.

**4. Reflecting on the story, do you think miscommunication can be damaging? Explain.**

The story shows that miscommunication can be damaging. Nathu simply complains that he does not receive his regular salary. From Sitaram the news reaches to Mrs. Srivastava that Nathu wants to leave the bank as it is not paying him properly. Mrs. Srivastava tells Mrs. Bhushan that Seth Govind Ram’s bank cannot even pay the sweeper who has not received his wages for over a month. Mrs. Bhushan thinks the bank must be in a bad way. From Mrs. Bhushan, the news reaches to Kamal Kishor as Seth Govind Ram’s bank is in bankruptcy. The news reaches to Deep Chand, the barber as the Pipalnagar Bank is about to collapse and better to get back the money as soon as possible. Seth’s flying to Kashmir to spend his holidays is taken as he has fled the town. The news reaches the customers, and miscommunication transforms the news into the rumour and spoils the matter drastically.

**Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option out of the ones provided**

1. What does Nathu and Sitaram's initial conversation reveal about their relationship?
  - A. They were colleagues with a formal relationship
  - B. They were friends who confided in each other
  - C. They were not very close to each other
  - D. They were a part of the same household
  
2. Choose the statement that is NOT true about Mrs. Srivastava.
  - A. She was a gossipmonger
  - B. She went to the market frequently
  - C. She single-handedly took care of her family
  - D. She was bossy, instructing her inferior about their jobs
  
3. Deep Chand's customer yelped because –
  - A. he was hurt because of the cut
  - B. he was annoyed with Deep Chand
  - C. he was hurt by the cut and alarmed by the news of the bank
  - D. he was alarmed by the news of the bank
  
4. The narrator says, "The news spread through the bazaar with the rapidity of forest fire." What news is he talking about?
  - A. Ganapat had a thousand rupees in savings
  - B. There was a forest fire in Pipalnagar
  - C. Nathu was not being paid by the bank
  - D. The bank was about to collapse
  
5. The reaction of the people of Pipalnagar to the big news indicates that—
  - A. The people had nothing to do all-day
  - B. The small town seldom faced any crisis
  - C. People loved to gossip all the time
  - D. Nobody trusted anyone in the town
  
6. Choose the option that best describes the significance of the tamarind tree.
  - A. It is a symbol of the prosperity of the townsfolk
  - B. It is a provider of shade during the blazing heat of Pipalnagar
  - C. It is a symbol of growth and nourishment
  - D. It is the central meeting point of the townsfolk
  
7. What is the central conflict in the text?
  - A. Nathu's desire for a higher salary
  - B. Mrs. Srivastava's shopping trip
  - C. The collapse of Seth Govind Ram's bank
  - D. Nathu's search for a new job
  
8. What does the phrase 'making a beeline' mean in the context of the story?
  - A. Moving slowly and steadily
  - B. Moving in a zigzag pattern
  - C. Moving quickly and directly toward something
  - D. Stopping frequently to chat with others

9. What is the role of gossip in the text?

- A. It is a way to spread news and information quickly
- B. It is a source of entertainment for the characters
- C. It is a way to undermine the power of the wealthy
- D. It is a reflection of the community's lack of co-operation

**Answer key**

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Correct option	B	A	C	D	C	D	C	C	B

## The Open Window

A.G. Gardiner

### Summary

"The Open Window" is a satirical essay that describes a humorous account of a train journey wherein Gardiner finds himself in a compartment with five other passengers, including a domineering and rude woman who demands that the window be left open despite the discomfort it causes to others. Gardiner paints a vivid picture of the other passengers, including the lady's husband who is clearly subservient to his wife and unwilling to contradict her. The narrator takes seat between a man in the corridor and a lady dressed in handsome fur in the window corner. A girl sitting opposite to lady was her daughter and a man who had buried his head in newspaper was her obedient husband. On entering the train compartment, narrator vaguely realized that he has broken into an unfinished drama. The lady in fur looked domineering and rude woman who demands that the window be left open despite the discomfort it causes to others. The atmosphere of the train was charged with the subdued and unexpressed feeling of hostility among the co-passengers. The window by which that lady sat was half-open, as the train gathered speed, the wind felt like a whiplash on the face of the narrator and curled around the neck of the man sitting at the corridor. The narrator leaned forward and requested the lady that the window should be closed. To this lady curtly replied in negation. From this one can gather that extremely rude and insensible person. Gardiner paints a vivid picture of the other passengers, including the lady's husband who is clearly subservient to his wife and unwilling to contradict her. The lady is the prototype of those individuals who lack consideration and empathy for their fellow passengers. She showed complete disregards for courtesy and good manners.

The battle over the window ended on the note of retreat of the man in the corner. The man at the corridor tried to endure the gushing wind for some time. To trouble his unpleasant foe, he flung the corridor door open. But she seemed to be extremely invulnerable to such attacks. She behaved more viciously that made her opponent fled from the battlefield. In the final scene, the intimidated passenger removed his luggage and sought a place for himself in another compartment. The lady's victory was complete who asked her husband to close the corridor door which his defeated antagonist has shamelessly left open. She sat happily with an air of being victorious. Her husband once again gets absorbed in his newspaper.

**Answer each of the following questions in about 150 words.**

### **1. What is the initial atmosphere like in the train compartment and what disrupts it?**

In "The Open Window" the narrator in a train journey finds himself in a compartment with five other passengers. He takes seat between a man in the corridor and a lady dressed in handsome fur in the window corner. A girl sitting opposite to lady was her daughter and a man who had buried his head in newspaper was her husband. On entering the train compartment, narrator vaguely realized that he has broken into an unfinished drama. The lady in fur looked to be a rude woman who demands that the window be left open despite the discomfort it causes to others. The atmosphere of the train was charged with the feeling of hostility among the co-passengers. The window by which that lady sat was half-open. As the train gathered speed, the

wind felt like a whip-lash on the face of the narrator and curled around the neck of the man sitting at the corridor corner. The lady's husband is clearly subservient to his wife and unwilling to contradict her. The lady was not ready to answer any request of closing the window and looked extremely formidable with her battle-ready look.

**2. How does the lady react when the man asks her to close the window, and what does her reaction suggest about her personality?**

After entering the train compartment, Gardiner takes seat between a man in the corridor and a lady dressed in handsome fur in the window corner. The lady in fur looked domineering and rude woman who demands that the window be left open despite the discomfort it causes to others. The window by which that lady sat was half-open, as the train gathered speed, the wind felt like a whip-lash on the face of the passenger at the narrator and curled around the neck of the man sitting at the corridor. The narrator requested the lady that the window should be closed but she refused. The lady is the prototype of those individuals who lack consideration and empathy for their fellow passengers. She showed complete disregards for courtesy and good manners.

**3. How does the man in the corner attempt to end the battle over the window, and why does he eventually leave the compartment?**

The battle over the window ended on the note of retreat of the man in the corner. The lady at the window corner refused the request to close the window. The man at the corridor tried to endure the gushing wind for some time. To trouble his unpleasant foe, he flung the corridor door open. But she seemed to be extremely invulnerable to such attacks. She behaved more viciously that made her opponent fled from the battlefield. In the final scene, the intimidated passenger removed his luggage and sought a place for himself in another compartment. The lady's victory was complete who asked her husband to close the corridor door which his defeated antagonist has shamelessly left open.

**4. Assess the significance of the story about the old parson and the farmer. How does it relate to the husband's situation in the train compartment?**

An old parson was driving with his wife in a country lane met a farmer in his cart. There was no room to pass, and the law of the road made the parson the offender. It was his business to "back" to a wide place in the lane to allow the farmer's cart to pass. But the parson's wife would not let him do so. The farmer must get out of the way. The poor parson was in tears between his duty and terror of his wife. The farmer asked the parson not to worry as he could understand his problem as he too had similar type of wife. In the similar manner, when the lady at the window corner turned down the request of the narrator as well as the gentleman at the corner, her husband offered to occupy the seat at the corridor on his place. He was a typical hen-pecked husband who led the most miserable life due to his wife's overbearing and dominating nature.

**5. Comment on the power dynamics between the husband and his wife. How does this affect the husband's behaviour?**

"The Open Window" is a satirical essay that describes a humorous account of a train journey wherein Gardiner finds himself in a compartment with five other passengers, including a domineering and rude woman who demands that the window be left open despite the discomfort it causes to others. The lady's husband is clearly subservient to his wife and

unwilling to contradict her. When the passenger in the train addresses the lady's husband, the other buries his head in his newspaper. Finally, when the husband was dragged into the fighting-line, the husband lowered his paper looked at the lady timidly. In response to this, the lady emits a little snort and turns the pages as if she were wringing their necks. When the lady at the window corner turned down the request of the narrator as well as the gentleman at the corner, her husband offered to occupy the seat at the corridor on his place. He was a typical hen-pecked husband who led the most miserable life due to his wife's overbearing and dominating nature.

**6. What is the significance of the essay's title, "The Open Window"? How does it relate to the central themes of the text?**

"The Open Window" is a satirical essay that describes a humorous account of a train journey wherein Gardiner finds himself in a compartment with five other passengers, including a domineering and rude woman who demands that the window be left open despite the discomfort it causes to others. The window by which that lady sat was half-open, as the train gathered speed, the wind felt like a whiplash on the face of the passenger at the narrator and curled around the neck of the man sitting at the corridor. The narrator requested the lady that the window should be closed but she refused. When the lady at the window corner turned down the request of the narrator as well as the gentleman at the corner, her husband offered to occupy the seat at the corridor on his place. A case of single open window arouses humour at the same time chastise the habits of those people who are oblivious of co-passenger's convenience while using public transport.

**Choose the correct option out of the ones provided below.**

1. How does the narrator feel about the other passengers in the compartment?

- A. He is oblivious to their existence.
- B. He is annoyed by their arguments.
- C. He is sympathetic towards their plight.
- D. He is indifferent to them.

2. What is the significance of the wind in the story?

- A. It symbolises the characters' internal conflicts.
- B. It represents the unpredictable nature of life.
- C. It adds to the overall atmosphere of the story.
- D. It has no significant meaning.

3. The woman showed that she could not be taken lightly by.....

- A. speaking in an authoritative manner.
- B. pressing her lips tightly.
- C. turning the pages of her picture...
- D. emitting a snort

4. The husband immersed herself in the newspaper to.....

- A. know the latest news
- B. get away from his wife's anger
- C. pass time
- D. avoid getting dragged into the controversy

5. Why did the farmer understand the parson's predicament?
- A. He realised how worried he was.
  - B. He had a similar type of wife.
  - C. He had no choice.
  - D. He felt sorry for him.
6. How does the setting of the train compartment contribute to the plot?
- A. It conveys a sense of claustrophobia and discomfort to the readers.
  - B. It emphasises the characters' social status and ideologies.
  - C. It highlights the characters' lack of privacy and miscommunication.
  - D. It heightens the lady's lack of courtesies being in a public place.
7. The lady is oblivious to her own lack of manners and courtesy. This was most obvious when she .....
- A. refused to close the window.
  - B. watched the gentleman leave the compartment.
  - C. called his act of leaving the corridor door open as shameless.
  - D. stabbed the pages of her picture-book viciously.
8. Identify the message that the story seeks to convey.
- A. The battle of the sexes.
  - B. The importance of compromise.
  - C. The dangers of pride.
  - D. The challenges of communication.
9. How does the story use humour to convey its message?
- A. It uses exaggerated characters and situations.
  - B. It relies on witty dialogue and wordplay.
  - C. It includes illogical and shallow comedy.
  - D. It does not use humour at all.
10. How does the story reflect the societal norms of the time it was written in?
- A. It challenges traditional gender roles.
  - B. It reinforces gender stereotypes.
  - C. It promotes social equality.
  - D. It is not influenced by societal norms.

**Answer Key**

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
Correct option	C	C	D	D	B	D	A	C	A	A

## The Worker's God

Kunj Bihari Das

### Summary

The poem 'The Worker's God' is written by Kunj Bihari Das Babaji. His original name was Kunja Kishor Tewari. He was the only son of Nilakamal Tewari and Muktamala Devi. He became interested in religious subjects as a boy and read the Ram-charit-manas of Sant Tulsidasji early in life. After he grew up, he ran a school in his village in Northwest Bengal along with his spiritual quest. He also involved his students in nationalism by growing cotton and spinning it for the purpose of making homespun cloth. He followed the Vaishnav tradition throughout his life.

In the poem, Kunj Bihari Das, calls himself an ordinary common man. The common man does not know about religion or spirituality. He prays to God when he is in any kind of problem. And conveniently forgets God in times of happiness. The poet acknowledges that God helps the poor people. Many times, He shuns the rich and the mighty. The poet does not beg for God's blessings by going to the temple. He cannot sing beautiful and melodious hymns in praise of God. He does all kinds of hard and rough work in life. He focuses on work and that is worship for him.

The poet does not light lamps in the temples like others. According to him, God has created the Sun, the Stars, and the entire Universe. We do not need to light lamps for the One who owns the entire Universe. He does not kneel in front of God to plead. He is aware that God exists. This knowledge is enough for him.

In the second stanza, Kunj Bihari Das continues by identifying himself as a common man. Like every common man, he also spends his time and energy in performing his everyday duties. He hews wood, digs the earth, trims the hedges, and weeds the fields. He feels tired because of the hard work he does every day. After finishing his duty, he goes home every evening. He complains about the difficulties and challenges he faces in his life. He does not have time for himself. How will he remember God?

Kunj Bihari Das writes that he does not have any extra time for rituals. He works very hard to put food in his children's hungry stomach. The poor people can think only of food and shelter. They cannot afford to visit temples and sing hymns. By the end of the day, he is so exhausted that he falls asleep immediately.

In the concluding stanza, Kunj Bihari Das admits that he does not tell beads nor chants God's name. He knows that the divine architect, Vishwakarma, is very industrious. He takes inspiration from God. God wants him to work hard instead of wasting time in passive things. Faith lies within the heart. One should work honestly and diligently. It will be akin to worship. He does not understand the 'shastras' (the science of religion). But knows well that God is not hungry of praises, flattery and rituals. God lives in the heart which is full of compassion. God looks after the sick and the needy who have no home to call their own. The farmers also look towards God with tearful eyes for help. God listens to all those who silently remember Him and continue doing their duty.

In the end, Kunj Bihari writes that he would never be a burden on God. He will not trouble God with his challenges. Instead, he would concentrate on his work and perform his duty. He realizes that God is with him because He belongs to the workers.

**Answer the following questions in about 150 words each:**

**1. Describe how the ‘common man, most ordinary’ has been portrayed in the poem.**

In the poem, ‘The Worker’s God’ Kunj Bihari Das, calls himself an ordinary and a common man. He does not know about religion or spirituality. He prays to God when he faces any problem. And conveniently forgets God in times of happiness. The poet acknowledges that God helps the poor people. The poet does not beg for God’s blessings by going to the temple. He does not sing beautiful and melodious hymns in praise of God. He does not hold up light. He does all kinds of hard and rough work in life. He works hard to feed his children and family. He focuses on work and that is worship for him. There is no need for us to show our love towards God by performing rituals. Having Faith in our heart is a form of prayer. The common man is exhausted at the end of the day. He does hard work in the fields. He does not have the time and energy to worship God.

**2. What is the ‘truth’ presented by the worker? How has he arrived at this truth?**

In the poem ‘The Worker’s God’ Kunj Bihari Das calls himself a common and ordinary man. He is a hardworking and dedicated man. He does not go to the temple to pray to God. Instead of that he works hard to feed his family. He realizes the truth. The truth is that God exists. There is no need to show our love and devotion through worship. Hard work and dedication is also a form of worship to God. God is with the poor people who labor. He shuns prosperity. The real worship of God would be to do one’s duty honestly. God is labour’s friend. He helps those who are needy and poor. God belongs to the worker. This is the truth that the poet believes in.

**3. Discuss why the speaker’s relationship with God is unique.**

The poem ‘The Worker’s God’ is about the relationship of the poet with God. People usually visit temples and pray to God. They tell beads and spend hours in singing hymns of God. They want to please God and ask for boons. They perform many rituals to please God. But the poet has a different approach. He knows the truth. God wants his people to work hard and honestly. He is with the poor people who realize this. He shuns the rich and the prosperous. Because they have not understood the reality. The poet does not take his problems to God. He works hard in the fields. When he goes home, he is very tired. He tries to solve his problems by working hard. He spends his time and effort feeding his children and his family. He understands the essence of God. God always helps the needy and the poor. He loves workers. He does not like idleness. So, we can say that the poet’s relationship with God is unique.

**4. What is the speaker’s idea of God?**

In the poem ‘The Worker’s God’ Kunj Bihari Das considers himself a common and ordinary man. For him, God is a ‘friend of need’. God shuns prosperity and rich people. God wants us to work hard. Our dedication and honesty will give us His blessings. God exists and He wants our faith. Lord Vishwakarma does not like idleness. God does not want us to flatter him by singing hymns. God hears the prayers of the oppressed and the poor people. Work is life. Work is duty. The poet knows this truth. God does not expect us to put our problems on a platter and present it to Him. Instead God wants us to solve our own problems. God loves workers. He helps the poor and the needy people. The poet considers God as a supporter of hard work.

### 5. How has the poet successfully exemplified the theme and title of the poem?

In the poem 'The Worker's God' Kunj Bihari Das calls himself an ordinary common man. He does not know about religion or spirituality. The poet does not beg for God's blessings by going to the temple. He cannot sing beautiful and melodious hymns in praise of God. He does all kinds of hard and rough work in life. He focuses on work and that is worship for him. He takes inspiration from God. God wants him to work hard instead of wasting time in passive things. One should work honestly and diligently. It will be akin to worship. God looks after the sick and the needy who have no home to call their own. The farmers also look towards God with tearful eyes for help. God listens to all those who silently remember Him and continue doing their duty. He is a 'worker's God' in the true sense.

#### Choose the correct answer from the options provided below:

1. The speaker accepts that he forgets God in his \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. Poverty
  - B. Daily struggles
  - C. Exhaustion
  - D. Happiness
  
2. What is the speaker's view of the role of God in the lives of common people?
  - A. God is a distant and uninvolved deity.
  - B. God is a close friend who helps people in need.
  - C. God is a harsh judge who punishes people for their sins.
  - D. God is a force of nature that cannot be understood by humans.
  
3. What does the speaker mean when he says, 'I do not go to the temple to offer / My suffering and poverty upon a platter'?
  - A. He does not believe in God.
  - B. He does not visit the temple to burden God with his problems.
  - C. He feels that the temple is not a suitable place to express his troubles.
  - D. He is not allowed to enter the temple due to his social status.
  
4. What does the speaker mean when he says, 'I chip and grind my flesh'?
  - A. He works hard and physically strains himself.
  - B. He mutilates himself as a form of penance.
  - C. He is a manual laborer and works with sharp tools.
  - D. He is suffering from a chronic illness.
  
5. What does the speaker mean by 'God is labour's friend'?
  - A. God is always willing to help labourers with their work.
  - B. God favours labourers over other social classes.
  - C. God values hard work and dedication.
  - D. God is more likely to answer the prayers of labourers.
  
6. What is the speaker's attitude towards education and theories?
  - A. He values them highly.
  - B. He does not have an opinion about them.
  - C. He sees them as unnecessary for his daily life.
  - D. He is critical of people who are educated and well-read.

7. According to the speaker, calling God repeatedly will make Him \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Irritated
  - B. Angry
  - C. Impatient
  - D. Frustrated
8. What is the speaker's relationship with this work?
- A. He finds work to be a call of duty.
  - B. He enjoys working and finds it fulfilling.
  - C. He sees work as a way to worship God.
  - D. All of the above.
9. According to the speaker, where will God be found?
- A. In temples and shrines.
  - B. In the homes of the wealthy and prosperous.
  - C. In the hearts of those who constantly praise him.
  - D. In the hard and honest work of ordinary men.
10. Why cannot the poet sing hymn in praise of God?
- A. Because he does not know how to sing
  - B. Because his voice is rough
  - C. Because he hates singing
  - D. Because he does not believe in God.
11. What does the poet mean by the line 'Grant me pain and spare me loss!'?
- A. God should help the poet in earning money.
  - B. The poet wants God to give him pain.
  - C. By giving less pain, God should save the poet from a bigger loss.
  - D. The poet wants an easy and happy life
12. What happens when the poet goes home after a day's work?
- A. The poet meets his family and is happy.
  - B. The poet is very hungry and tired.
  - C. The poet's wife serves him food.
  - D. The poet sleeps peacefully.
13. Why does the poet not meditate like the others?
- A. Because he forgets himself while working.
  - B. Because he does not believe in meditation.
  - C. Because he believes in donating money instead of praying.
  - D. Because his family does not allow him to meditate.
14. The poet knows that God belongs to the \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Devotees
  - B. The poet
  - C. The farmers
  - D. The workers

15. According to the poet, God will be \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Amongst his devotees
- B. With the starving sick people
- C. With the prosperous people
- D. With the poet

**Answer key**

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Correct option	D	B	B	A	C	C	B	D	D	B	C	B	A	D	A

## **The Felling of the Banyan Tree**

**Dilip Chitre**

### **Summary**

The poem, 'The Felling of the Banyan Tree', talks about the poet Dilip Chitre's compassion and love for trees and nature. He is sad about trees being cut down from his house and compares it with the murder of humans.

The poet says that his father asked all the tenants to leave their house so that they could proceed with its demolition. All the houses except for the one in which the poet's family resided and a banyan tree considered holy by his grandmother were demolished. The trees were cut down, including several medicinal and sacred ones. However, the cutting of the enormous banyan tree that was so tall and had deep roots was a big problem. Still, the father gave the order to cut the tree.

The tree was thrice the size of the poet's house, and its trunk had a circumference of about fifty feet. Its aerial roots were thirty feet long and touched the ground. They started by shredding the branches, which caused the insects and birds to leave the tree. Fifty men had to constantly chop its trunk. Everyone saw the tree's ring that showed its age of about two hundred years. The people witnessed this slaughter with fear and fascination. The poet expresses that soon after that, they moved to Mumbai from Baroda, where they could not see many trees. If they could see some trees, it was in their dreams only, as they looked forward to turning into reality and touching the ground, changing into a concrete building.

With this poem, the poet delves into an exploration of a particular time in his life when his family roots were torn out, and they had to change their old way of life. At the start, the reader knows that the decision was made by the patriarch, the father. Contrary to the masculine approach, the antithetical is the feminine grandmother who speaks for nature and attaches a sacred aura to the trees. She adds a religious element and says that according to traditions, harming the trees is a crime. The poet names the trees that his father massacred. When the poet talks about the tree's shape, he represents the centuries of living and the connection between heaven and earth.

Further, the poet talks about the helplessness of the tree, for it cannot resist being hacked by dozens of men. It gives the idea of a battle and foretells the environmental struggles. The two emotions that the speaker experiences are terror and fascination. The former is caused by fear of the future, and the latter because of the enormous tree crashing down, showing its rings and antiquity. The poem is based on up rootedness, the idea of leaving behind a family home. It also highlights the ecosystems and the massive destruction it is subjected to, particularly the felling of trees for profit under the garb of progress. In the poem, the speaker moving and the tree being cut down are inextricably linked. The tree is the metaphor he used for his life and the upheaval moving to a different place caused.

**Answer each of the following questions in short.**

**1. What message do you think the poet is trying to convey through the poem?**

The poem 'Felling of the Banyan Tree' by Dilip Chitre has theme of uprootedness. It highlights the massive destruction ecosystems are subjected to, particularly in the process of the felling of trees for profit under the garb of progress. The banyan tree is a metaphor for the upheaval caused by moving to a different place. The poet's father represents masculinity and authority and is the cause behind such an upheaval. Along with the idea of leaving behind a family home, it also highlights the ecosystems and the massive destruction it is subjected to, particularly the felling of trees for profit under the façade of development and modernity. The selfishness of human is leading to mass destruction of nature and giving way to concrete jungles instead.

**2. How does the metaphor of the tree contribute to the overall theme of the poem ?**

The poem, 'Felling of the Banyan Tree', is focused on a specific time in the family's history when an important decision had to be made by the father, which involved demolishing the house on the hills and cutting down a huge tree that had stood there for ages. The poet Dilip Chitre explores the time when he was uprooted from Baroda and sent to Mumbai. The tree is the metaphor he used for his life and the upheaval moving to a different place caused. In the poem, the speaker moving and the tree being cut down are inextricably linked. The banyan tree is a metaphor for the speaker's family history.

**3. What does the speaker mean by 'raw mythology' in the poem?**

The banyan tree has various mythological references associated with it. The grandmother also considered this tree highly sacred to them. The banyan trees were chopped down by the order of the poet's father. This process revealed the age of the tree. The poet felt like the tree concealed age-old knowledge witnessed numerous historical events and saw generations grow old. Now the tree has been slaughtered the divine shade of the banyan tree is gone once and for all. The tree was mythically huge and concealed various witnesses within it. The tree resembles the life it has charted through the era of two centuries. The events the tree had witnessed are now gone for eternity. The tree perished and took away centuries' worth of memories along with it.

**4. Discuss the role of the father in the poem and how his actions contribute to meaning.**

The poet's father is authoritative and practical in the real world. The sentence where it is mentioned that the trees are being cut down as per his father's order emphasises that his father was a man of modern values and had lesser regard for their traditions. It is an autobiographical poem, being Dilip Chitre's exploration of a time when he was uprooted from Baroda to the city of what was then called Bombay, modern-day Mumbai. The man responsible for the move is none other than the father, representing all that is masculine, dominant, forward-looking, and destructive. Contrast this with the traditional knowledge of the grandmother, representing all that is feminine - the past, nurturing, religious and conservative. This patriarchal versus matriarchal theme is central to the poem, the speaker appears to favour the latter but is helpless to stop the inevitable momentum of progress, as applied by the father.

**5. Comment on the poet's use of imagery and sensory details to convey the loss, destruction and memory.**

In the form of the Banyan tree, the whole ecosystem is gradually brought down. The imagery is clear. The great banyan, is hacked at by dozens of men. It's like something out of a battle. This felling does seem to foretell the coming environmental struggles that are global. The speaker has two emotions - terror and fascination. The former is based on sadness and fear for the future, the latter on the awesome sight of a massive tree coming crashing to the ground, revealing its rings and ancient history. People who surrounded to see the banyan tree was being chopped down were all in shock. A lot of memories were associated with the trees many of them have lived their entire life seeing those trees.

**6. What is the impact of the final line in the context of the whole poem?**

In the end, the poet shifted to Mumbai with his family. The poet saw a banyan tree and remembered the one that stood tall in his garden. The tree that used to be in his paternal home has been cut down; however, its memories remain wide. The banyan tree has been personified by the poet as this is the tree that grows in his dreams. The banyan tree is personified by the poet as the one that grows big in his dreams. The trees seethe in his dream implying that he is writhing in agony in his dreams. The poet is trying to convey that the tree is in anguish in his dreams as it was mercilessly chopped down.

**Choose the correct option from those provided below.**

1. What is the main reason for the father's decision to cut down the banyan tree?
  - A. It was obstructing the view from their house.
  - B. The tree was diseased and posed a safety risk.
  - C. The father believed it would increase the property's value.
  - D. The father had a disregard for the cultural significance of trees.
2. What is the effect of the speaker's use of the word 'massacre' to describe the cutting of the trees?
  - A. It creates a sense of urgency and drama.
  - B. It emphasises the brutality of the act.
  - C. It highlights the speaker's emotional attachment to the trees.
  - D. It implies the father's indifference to the destruction.
3. Which of the following lines from "The Felling of the Banyan Tree" are an example of personification?
  - A. 'Only our own house remained and the trees'.
  - B. Trees are sacred my grandmother used to say'..
  - C. The huge banyan tree stood like a problem'.
  - D. 'Whose roots lay deeper than all our lives'.
4. How does the banyan tree's size contribute to the poem's themes?
  - A. It emphasises the tree's cultural significance.
  - B. It highlights the father's desire for power and control.
  - C. It suggests the inevitability of nature's destruction.
  - D. It symbolises the family's detachment from their cultural heritage.

5. What is the purpose of the line, 'Insects and birds began to leave the tree' in the poem?
- To create a sense of foreboding.
  - To highlight the ecological impact of the tree's removal.
  - To emphasise the tree's significance to the natural world
  - To provide a moment of relief from the tension of the scene.
6. The removal of the banyan tree revealed its rings of two hundred years, be interpreted as a symbol of
- destruction and loss of history
  - the resilience and endurance of nature
  - the greed and selfishness of humans
  - a biological detail irrelevant to the poem
7. What is the overall mood of the poem "The Felling of the Banyan Tree"?
- Joyful and optimistic.
  - Melancholic and sombre.
  - Ironic and sarcastic.
  - Suspenseful and mysterious.
8. How does the description of the banyan tree's destruction create a sense and suspense in the poem?
- By using vivid sensory details to convey the brutality of the act.
  - By contrasting the tree's size and strength with the vulnerability.
  - By highlighting the tree's cultural significance to the community.
  - By foreshadowing the consequences of the father's actions.
9. The protagonist and his family move to Bombay soon after the banyan tree was cut which suggests that
- they wanted to escape the memory of the tree
  - they needed to move for personal reasons unrelated to the tree
  - they were unable to live in a place without trees the tree
  - the banyan tree stopped them from living their lives normally
10. In the line 'Where there are no trees except the one,' what is the significance of the word 'one'?
- It refers to a specific type of tree.
  - It emphasises the importance of nature.
  - It represents the speaker's longing for the banyan tree.
  - It is a metaphor for hope.

**Answer key**

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
Correct option	C	B	D	C	B	A	B	A	B	D

## Life

Charlotte Bronte

### Summary

The speaker of the poem "Life" begins with a sombre tone as they consider how ephemeral existence is and how inevitable death is. She observes how everything is carried along with life's ceaseless river of progress. The poem serves as a reminder to be completely present in the moment and to discover meaning and purpose in our experiences, despite difficulty and adversity. It communicates a timeless message that still has meaning for readers today. It is an exploration of the human experience and the shared struggle to understand our existence.

The title is repeated at the start of the poem by Bronte. The reader is made aware right away that this poem will be about a particular aspect of life. She wrote this poem with a comparatively straightforward message in mind. She wants to eliminate the misconception—or any dark ideas—that life is inevitably negative, gloomy, and unpleasant. The speaker tackles several aspects of life that one could find unpleasant throughout the first verse and breaks them down into their smaller, brighter pieces. She starts off by stating that life is not some sort of terrifying nightmare. This stanza contains two more instances from her. The speaker mentions dark clouds in the sky that, despite appearing menacing and scary, will eventually clear. They are "transient" in nature and do not endure forever. The last two lines of this poem include her third example. She queries why one should "lament its fall" since the rain ensures that all the roses will bloom. These aspects of life will all pass or bring something good with them, so there is no cause to feel depressed about them.

The speaker uses the second stanza, which is shorter and more straightforward, to "merrily" and "cheerily" celebrate the "sunny hours" of life. The second stanza is significantly more lyrically composed. The lyrics practically beg to be sung. One can see someone celebrating these words by spinning in a circle and dancing. The speaker claims that time will "rapidly" and "merrily" pass by. The hours will go by without your awareness until they vanish all of a sudden. The speaker wants people to live in a way that values and cherishes each hour that passes.

The final stanza is the longest of this poem it deals with the scariest aspect of life—death. In the first two complete sentences of this stanza, the speaker essentially poses the question, "So what?" What if "Death occasionally steps in...?" What does it matter if "sorrow seems to win?" These issues are transient. The speaker is aware that these things exist, but she refuses to let them influence her. This stanza's fifth line expresses more optimism. Hope, in her words, has "elastic springs." Despite the fact that "she fell" in grief, she will get back up in hope. She still has "strong" and "buoyant" "golden wings" that will be able to "bear us well."

This character in the poem might be a mother or sister figure, or it might be the poet herself, or even someone she knows well and has relied on for support in the past. The poem's final four words, which are about strength, encourage the speaker to live "fearlessly" and "manfully" (like a strong man would). She concludes the poem by stating that there is nothing in life that can quell courage, not even death.

**Answer each of the following questions in short.**

**1. What is the central message of the poem “Life”? Explain your answer and provide examples from the text to support your analysis.**

The central message to be taken from the poem "Life" is that life should be accepted with a cheerful and courageous attitude, despite its difficulties and times of despair. The poem expresses the idea that hardships are transient and eventually give way to happier times, and that life is not as hopeless as some sages may claim. It exhorts the reader to cherish and embrace the fleeting moments of joy, to hold onto hope despite grief and suffering, and to bravely face life's challenges. The poem "Life" exhorts readers to keep a positive mindset in the midst of hardship and to tackle life's challenges with courage since this courage may defeat despair. It sends the idea that happy moments should be cherished and enjoyed and that challenges in life are only transitory.

**2. What message does the line ‘If the shower will make the roses bloom, /O why lament its fall?’ convey?**

The line "If the shower will make the roses bloom, /O why lament its fall?" communicates the idea that, despite facing obstacles or challenges (represented by the "shower"), we shouldn't be excessively depressed by their occurrence. Instead, we should recognize that these challenges can have positive outcomes. In this case, the "shower" or difficulty can lead to the blooming of roses, which represents the emergence of beauty or something positive. The line encourages us to adopt a more optimistic perspective and to see challenges as opportunities for growth and improvement. It suggests that lamenting or being overly distressed by challenges is unnecessary because, like the rain that nourishes the roses, these difficulties can lead to something better in the end. It's a reminder to focus on the potential positive outcomes that can result from facing and overcoming challenges rather than dwelling on the challenges themselves.

**3. Discuss the speaker’s philosophy of death as expressed in the poem.**

The speaker's philosophy of death in the poem "Life" is one of resilience, hope, and an optimistic outlook. The speaker acknowledges the inevitability of death and the presence of sorrow in life but presents them as challenges that can be overcome with the right attitude and mindset. The speaker recognizes that death is a part of life and that it can be especially painful when it takes away loved ones. The speaker's philosophy of death in the poem is that while death and sorrow are undeniable aspects of life, they do not have to define or overwhelm us. Instead, the poem encourages us to maintain hope, courage, and gratitude in the face of life's challenges, including the loss of loved ones. It's a message that urges us to find strength and resilience in the face of adversity and to appreciate the beauty of life, even in the presence of death.

**4. How does the speaker encourage one to enjoy the present moment?**

The poem “Life” is a reminder to live fully in the present moment and to find meaning and purpose in our experiences, even in the face of hardship and adversity. The phrase "Life's sunny hours flit by" in the poem means that the happy and joyful moments in life pass by

quickly. It suggests that moments of happiness and positivity are fleeting and do not last long, just as sunny hours in a day do not endure for an extended period. The poem is reminding the reader to appreciate and enjoy these moments while they are present, as they may be brief, and one should make the most of them. It emphasizes the idea that life is made up of a series of fleeting, precious moments that should be cherished.

**5. What is the significance of the word ‘elastic’ in the line ‘Yet hope again elastic springs’?**

The primary message to be taken from the poem "Life" is that life should be accepted with a cheerful and courageous attitude, despite its difficulties and times of despair. The poem expresses the idea that hardships are transient and eventually give way to happier times, and that life is not as hopeless as some sages may claim. It exhorts the reader to cherish and embrace the fleeting moments of joy, to hold onto hope despite grief and suffering, and to bravely face life's challenges. The word "elastic" in the line "Yet Hope again elastic springs" is significant because it conveys the idea that hope has the ability to bounce back or recover after setbacks and challenges. Just like a material with elasticity can stretch and return to its original shape, hope in this context is resilient and can withstand difficulties. It can be temporarily pressed down or diminished but has the capacity to rebound and remain strong.

**6. How can the idea of courage conquering despair be applied in our own lives?**

In the poem "Life," the idea of courage conquering despair is conveyed as a source of inspiration to face life's challenges with optimism and resilience. The poem encourages us to maintain a positive outlook even when faced with difficulties. We can apply this by recognizing that challenges are temporary, and by maintaining an optimistic attitude, we can navigate through them. When the poem talks about sorrow seeming to win over hope, it suggests that we should not give in to despair. Instead, we should summon the courage to be resilient in the face of sorrow and find the strength to overcome it. Just as the poem conveys that hope remains strong to bear us well, we can use courage to face setbacks, learn from them, and grow as individuals. Overall, the poem "Life" inspires us to approach life's ups and downs with a courageous and hopeful spirit.

**Choose the correct answer from the options provided below.**

1. What is the tone of the poem ‘Life’?

- A. Pessimistic
- B. Optimistic
- C. Cynical
- D. Melancholic

2. What does a little morning rain often foretell according to the poem?

- A. A day full of problems.
- B. A day full of sunshine.
- C. A day full of cold weather.
- D. A day full of sadness.

3. How are the 'clouds of gloom' in life according to the poem?  
 A. Permanent  
 B. Transient  
 C. Hopeless  
 D. Inspiring
4. What is the meaning of 'Life's sunny hours flit by' in the poem?  
 A. Life is always happy.  
 B. Life is brief and should be enjoyed.  
 C. Life is fleeting and meaningless.  
 D. Life is full of ups and downs.
5. How should we enjoy life's sunny hours?  
 A. Gratefully and cheerily.  
 B. Begrudgingly.  
 C. Unenthusiastically.  
 D. Greatly and rapidly.
6. What is the quality of hope according to the poem?  
 A. Fragile  
 B. Elastic  
 C. Weak  
 D. Unpredictable
7. What is the role of hope in the face of difficulties according to the poem?  
 A. Hope makes difficulties disappear.  
 B. Hope helps us bear difficulties.  
 C. Hope exacerbates difficulties.  
 D. Hope is irrelevant in the face of difficulties.
8. What does the phrase 'Manfully, fearlessly' in the poem suggest?  
 A. Men are the only ones capable of facing difficulties.  
 B. There is irony in the word manfully.  
 C. Women are not capable of facing difficulties.  
 D. Fearlessness is not that important in the face of difficulties.

**Answer key**

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
Correct option	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B

## Siddhartha and the Swan

Sir Edwin Arnold

### Summary

The poem 'Siddhartha and the swan' is a part of the book 'The Light of Asia' published in 1880 written by Edwin Arnold. It is related to an episode in the life of Prince Siddhartha, who later becomes Buddha. It is a narrative poem based on the teachings of Buddha, i.e., principal of compassion, mercy and respect for all living beings. The poem portrays him as a wise and just leader who is willing to stand up for his beliefs.

The poem starts with the beautiful scene of the royal garden of prince Siddhartha's kingdom. It was a day of spring when the flock of wild swans were flying heading towards their nests on Himalaya Mountain. The bright white birds were flying forming a snowy line following their pilot bird.

Devdatta, cousin of Siddhartha shoots an arrow at the foremost swan. It was flying in the blue sky and got injured; fell down with the arrow in his wing. On seeing the bleeding swan, prince Siddhartha lifted it in his lap. He soothed the injured bird with his kind palms. He drew out the cruel arrow from the wound and laid cool leaves and honey on it. Here the poet says, that the prince Siddhartha who was unaware of the suffering feels the stab of the arrow in his wrist very pathetically he soothes the bird.

At that time one servant of prince Devdatta came there and claimed the wounded swan. Siddhartha then refused to hand over the swan to him saying that if the bird were dead he would belong to the slayer. But as the bird is alive, so it belongs to the cherisher. Devdatta argues that swan dead or living was rightfully his. Prince Siddhartha refused the claim by saying that the swan belongs to him by the right of mercy and love lordliness.

With this incident prince Siddhartha claims that from hereafter he would teach compassion to humanity and would become the voice of the speechless. It was then decided to submit the matter into the court and let the wise decide and give the verdict. Many people debated on the matter. There visited an unknown priest. He gave his opinion that if life is something, then saviour owns the living thing more than the one who slays it. This judgement was approved by all the people present here.

The king Sudhodhana then sought out the priest for honor, but he was gone. Someone saw the presence of a hooded snake in the court. It was said that god himself came there in disguise of a priest to give the verdict. Prince Siddhartha thus started his noble work of mercy.

### Answer the following questions in short.

#### 1. Compare the characters of Siddhartha and his cousin as depicted in the poem.

As an earnest spiritual pilgrim, Siddhartha is totally consumed by his quest for spiritual enlightenment. Siddhartha possesses an incredible degree of patience. When Devdatta, cousin of prince Siddhartha, shoots an arrow at the white swan, the injured bird falls at the feet of Siddhartha. Siddhartha the merciful prince tended the bird by applying herbs with his cool hands. He also refused to return back the wounded bird to Devdatta. His demeanour depicts his traits of mercy, compassion and non-violence. He has an insight of interpreting the voice of voiceless creatures. Devdatta, the cousin of prince Siddhartha on the other hand displays the

opposite traits. Though he is also a prince, but does not possess the traits of mercy, compassion. Instead he behaves like a royal prince. Rejoice in hunting voiceless creatures. He cherishes in darting arrows at vulnerable birds. He fights for his rights of possessions though insane one. He considered the fallen injured swan as his prize for shooting. Here the prince Devadatta depicts the qualities of a hunter, slayer.

## **2. How Siddhartha was affected by the wounded swan and how he tended to it?**

Devdatta shoots a wild white swan. It fell near Siddhartha. He feels the pain of the wounded bird. Siddhartha was moved by seeing the blood oozing from the white swan. He could not see the injured bird lying on the ground. He lifted it in his lap, removed the arrow from his wing. He applied cool leaves and healing honey on the wound. Siddhartha wanted to feel the pain of the injured swan. so he pressed the barb of arrow in his wrist and feels the sting. Tears came rolling unto his eyes. When Devadatta came there claims the bird as his prize, Siddhartha like a just king refuses to hand it over to him. He laid the swan's neck besides his own smooth cheek and said that he is the saviour of the bird. So he would not return it back to Devdatta. In this way prince Siddhartha feels the pain of the wounded swan and tended to it very emphatically.

## **3. Do you think the journey of Siddhartha from a prince to the enlightened one had begun with his rescue of the afflicted swan and his refusal to hand it over to Devdatta?**

Prince Siddhartha began his life as a royal prince. He was named Siddhartha Gautama. At twelve, Gautama was sent away for schooling. At the age of sixteen he returned home. The prince was deliberately shielded from all sufferings of the world. But this attempt failed when he witnesses the sight of sick man, aged man, funeral procession and a beggar, sights of suffering, sickness and decay shocked and moved the prince. Prior to this prince Siddhartha witness an incident in which his cousin Devdatta shoots an arrow at the wild white swan. He demands the injured bird from Siddhartha who claims it by applying cool leaves and honey on this wound. Siddhartha refuses to return it back to Devdatta. According to him he is the saviour and cherisher of the bird. So, it belongs to him and not of the one who try to kill it. After this Siddhartha decides to preach mercy, compassion and humanity to the world and he would become the voice of the voiceless creatures.

## **4. Who do you think was the sage who solved the dispute of the afflicted swan? How did he settle it?**

When there arise a dispute between prince Siddhartha and Devdatta on the possession of a wounded bird, many debated on the issue. Devdatta had shoot an arrow at the bird. The bird falls near prince Siddhartha. He lifted it with cool leaves and honey. He also felt the agony of the wounded bird. When Devdatta claimed the possession of the bird, Siddhartha refused to return the bird. Then it was decided to hand over the matter to the court. Some people favoured Devdatta and some took sides of Siddhartha. Then the king invited a wise priest to solve the matter and give the verdict. The wise man said that the saviour of life owns the living thing than the slayer. The cherisher is the possessor who saves the life and not the killer who takes the life of the creature. When the king wanted to reward the priest, he was gone. It was said that it must be the god in disguise.

## **5. Discuss some Buddhist philosophies that have been explored in the poem.**

The study of philosophy explores the most fundamental questions about the nature of reality the human mind and the human condition. The core beliefs of Buddhism include Wisdom, Modesty, and Compassion. In the poem 'Siddhartha and the Swan' prince Siddhartha is very kind and compassionate towards the injured swan. He pacifies it by applying cool herbs and

honey, feels the pain of that bird. Prince refuses to hand over the injured bird to Devdatta, who shoot it. Later Siddhartha decides to preach mercy and compassion to humanity. So these philosophies have been explored in the poem.

**Choose the correct answer from the options given below:**

1. Identify the season when the events of the poem take care.
  - A. Summer
  - B. Winter
  - C. Spring
  - D. Autumn
  
2. The birds were guided on their journey by\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. intuition
  - B. instinct
  - C. togetherness
  - D. fond love
  
3. What did Devadatta do when the wild swans passed by?
  - A. Shot an arrow at them.
  - B. Took a shot of them with his camera.
  - C. Fed them with seeds.
  - D. Shot a glance at them.
  
4. The line 'Yet all so little knew the boy of pain' means
  - A. The prince had never been ill so far.
  - B. The prince had led a very privileged life.
  - C. The prince had never experienced any hardship.
  - D. The prince had never been exposed to any suffering.
  
5. How did Prince Siddhartha calm the injured swan?
  - A. By pointing his bow at it.
  - B. By giving it healing honey.
  - C. By composing its ruffled wings.
  - D. By shouting loudly.
  
6. What can you conclude about Devadatta's character from the poem?
  - A. He was a proud villain who loved destruction.
  - B. He was an ordinary, flawed man who didn't understand compassion.
  - C. He was a compassionate and generous man, ready to teach compassion.
  - D. He was a privileged boy who did not care about others.
  
7. Siddhartha claimed the swan to be his\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. because he had found it.
  - B. for he had tended to its injuries.
  - C. by right of mercy and love's superiority
  - D. by right of ownership

8. What did the unknown priest say about the saviour of a life?

- A. The saviour spoils and wastes it, and the slayer sustains it.
- B. The saviour owns it because he has the power to save it.
- C. The slayer owns it because he has the power to kill it.
- D. The ownership should be decided by a divan.

9. What did the snake symbolise at the end of the story?

- A. Danger
- B. Wisdom
- C. Evil
- D. Goodness

10. The poem highlights the importance of\_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Compassion, mercy, non-violence
- B. Two Princes and their responsibilities
- C. Wild Life and environment
- D. Religious preaching

11. Siddhartha pressed the arrow's barb in his wrist to \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. deceive Devdatta
- B. experience the pain of the injured swan
- C. change the shape of barb
- D. treat the swam with his blood

12. The slayer in the poem is\_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Siddhartha
- B. Devadatta
- C. King
- D. Wise man

### Answer key

Ques No	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12
Correct option	C	D	A	D	C	D	C	B	D	A	B	B