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English 1st Year

Complete Notes — All 14 Units

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Prepared by freebooks.pk — original student notes covering the PECTAA Board English 1st Year syllabus (Updated NCP 2023). Each unit includes key concepts, definitions, glossary, diagrams, comprehension Q&A, MCQs, revision and exam tips.

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Unit 1: Khatam-un-Nabiyeen Hazrat

Muhammad (ﷺ)

This unit introduces the Seerah (biography) of Rasoolullah (ﷺ), Khatam-un-Nabiyeen, as presented in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

Framed as a biography/personal recount, the passage traces his early life in Makkah, his character before Prophethood, the first revelation, the migration to Madinah, and the Farewell Sermon, while also building students' skills in reading comprehension and vocabulary.

These notes summarise the passage strictly as given in the textbook, preserving the honorifics used for Rasoolullah (ﷺ) and Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها), and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Respond to the text through arguments and class discussion about its key events and values.
- Read the passage aloud with correct pronunciation, appropriate pitch, and voice variation suitable for a biographical/non-fictional text.
- Analyse the passage as a biography/personal recount and identify its structure and purpose.
- Distinguish between the denotative (literal) and connotative (emotional/cultural) meanings of words used in the passage.
- Build subject-specific vocabulary using the glossary words introduced in this unit.
- Write informative/explanatory texts, such as short essays and biographical sketches, based on the unit's content.



Key Concepts

Early Life and Orphanhood

Rasoolullah (ﷺ) was born in 571 AD in Makkah into the noble and highly esteemed Quraish clan, at a time when Arabian society was marked by moral decay, idolatry, tribal arrogance, and widespread injustice. Known as the benefactor of humanity, he appeared while the world was silently yearning for the dawn of enlightenment and divine guidance.

His early years were shaped by profound personal loss. His father, Hazrat Abdullah, passed away before his birth, and his mother, Hazrat Amina, died when he was only six years old. Orphaned at such a tender age, he was taken in by his grandfather, Hazrat Abdul Muttalib, who cared for him until his own passing two years later, after which his paternal uncle, Hazrat Abu Talib, became his steadfast guardian throughout his youth.

Character, Trade, and Hilf al-Fudul

Despite the hardship of orphanhood, Rasoolullah (ﷺ) grew into a young man of exceptional character — known for his truthfulness, humility, generosity, and sense of justice. His honest and fair dealings in trade earned him universal respect among the people of Makkah, who bestowed on him the titles Al-Sadiq (The Truthful) and Al-Amin (The Trustworthy).

Two events from his early adulthood illustrate this noble character. He took part in Hilf al-Fudul, a pact formed by the tribes of Makkah to defend the oppressed and uphold justice — an alliance he later said he would still honour even after the advent of Islam. He also gave a wise, impartial solution during the reconstruction of the Ka'bah, when a dispute arose among the Quraish over who would place the Hajr-e-Aswad (Black Stone), preventing conflict and earning admiration from all quarters.

Marriage to Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها)

A significant chapter of his personal life began with his marriage to Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها), a woman of outstanding virtue, intellect, and business acumen who had inherited and successfully managed her father's prosperous



trade. Hearing of his integrity in business, she entrusted him with a trade expedition to Syria.

Deeply impressed by his honesty, graceful conduct, and upright character, she later proposed marriage through the family of Hazrat Abu Talib, and their union was built on mutual respect and affection. Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها) stood beside Rasoolullah (ﷺ) as his first supporter, providing emotional and financial support during the most challenging early years of his mission.

The First Revelation

As Rasoolullah (ﷺ) approached the age of forty, he became deeply saddened by the moral decay and injustice prevailing in Makkan society, and would frequently retreat to the Cave of Hira seeking solitude and reflection. During one such retreat in the month of Ramadan, Hazrat Jibraeel (عليه السلام) appeared before him with the first revelation, commanding 'Read!', after which the opening verses of Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1-5) were revealed.

This moment marked the beginning of his mission as the last Rasool of Allah. The revelation of the Qur'an brought spiritual awakening and initiated a radical transformation in Arabia's socio-political and moral fabric — the call to Tauhid (the Oneness of Allah) challenged deep-rooted idolatry, class privilege, and social injustice, laying the foundation for a society based on truth, equality, accountability, and compassion.

Persecution and the Hijrah to Madinah

The same Quraish who had once admired Rasoolullah (ﷺ) now became his staunch opponents, viewing his message as a threat to their traditions and authority. The Muslims faced relentless persecution, economic boycotts, and social ostracism, yet Rasoolullah (ﷺ) remained unwavering and continued preaching Islam with patience, wisdom, and resilience.

As oppression grew unbearable, Rasoolullah (ﷺ) was divinely commanded to migrate to Madinah. This migration, the Hijrah, was a decisive turning point in Islamic history, marking the establishment of the first Islamic society.



The Charter of Madinah and Early Battles

In Madinah, the Charter of Madinah — crafted under the guidance of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) — introduced principles of governance rooted in civic equality, religious freedom, and the rule of law. It united diverse communities, guaranteeing protection for all citizens regardless of faith or ethnicity, a revolutionary model of coexistence and justice for its time.

The growing strength of the Muslim community led to military encounters with the Quraish. The first major battle, Badr, resulted in a remarkable Muslim victory and reinforced the legitimacy of Rasoolullah's (ﷺ) mission.

The Conquest of Makkah

Further victories culminated in the Conquest of Makkah in 8 AH. This event was astonishingly bloodless, marked by the exemplary mercy of Rasoolullah (ﷺ), who declared a general amnesty even for those who had persecuted him — a victory not merely of land, but of spirit, the triumph of forgiveness over vengeance.

This unmatched act of compassion transformed the hearts of the people and marked not just the political liberation of Makkah but a spiritual awakening across Arabia, reflecting the Qur'anic description of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) as sent 'as a mercy to the worlds' (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:107).

The Farewell Sermon and Legacy

By the tenth year of Hijrah, Islam had spread across the Arabian Peninsula. That year, Rasoolullah (ﷺ) performed Hajjat-ul-Wida (the Farewell Pilgrimage), and on the plain of Arafat he delivered his final sermon — a profound address affirming universal human dignity: 'An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have superiority over an Arab... except through piety and righteous action' (Musnad Ahmad, 23489).

With this address, the divine mission of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) reached its fulfilment. He had delivered the final message of Allah, established a community of believers, and modelled a way of life balancing faith with justice, mercy, and



truth — a legacy that continues to inspire and guide humanity across all barriers of time, place, and culture.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

acumen

the ability to understand and decide things quickly and well

alliance

an agreement between countries, political parties, etc. to work together in order to achieve something that they all want

benefactor

a person who offers support, help, or assistance, often in the form of financial aid, teachings, and actions, guiding and uplifting individuals, communities, or causes in need

idolatry

the practice of worshipping statues as gods

legitimacy

the quality of being based on a fair or acceptable reason

ostracism

the act of deliberately not including somebody in a group or activity; the state of not being included

persecution

the act of treating somebody in a cruel and unfair way, especially because of their race, religion or political beliefs

profound

showing great knowledge or understanding

radical

relating to the most basic and important parts of something; complete and detailed

solitude

the state of being alone, especially when you find this pleasant

vengeance



the act of punishing or harming somebody in return for what they have done to you, your family or friends

yearning

a strong and emotional desire

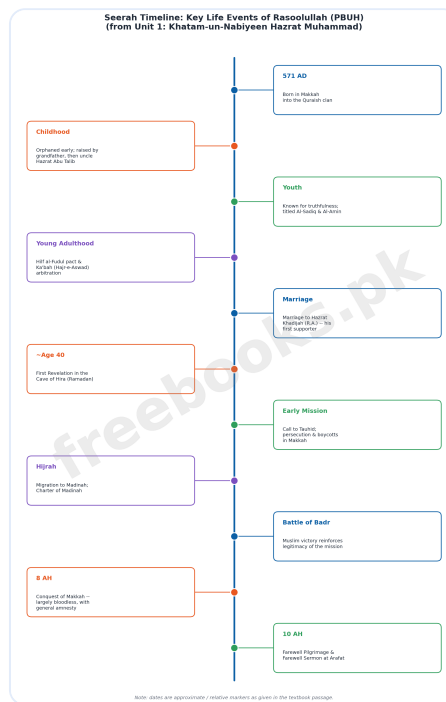
Key Facts: Seerah Timeline

Date / Period	Key Event
571 AD	Birth of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) in Makkah into the Quraish clan.
Age 6	Death of his mother, Hazrat Amina; raised thereafter by his grandfather, then his uncle Hazrat Abu Talib.
Before Prophethood	Marriage to Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها), who became his first supporter.
Age 40	First revelation in the Cave of Hira during Ramadan (Surah Al-'Alaq, 96:1-5).
1 AH	Hijrah — migration to Madinah; the Charter of Madinah is established.
2 AH	Battle of Badr — the first major victory, reinforcing the legitimacy of the mission.
8 AH	Conquest of Makkah — largely bloodless, marked by a general amnesty.
10 AH	Farewell Sermon (Hajjat-ul-Wida) delivered at Arafat.

Diagram

Seerah Timeline: A vertical, purely textual timeline of the key life events of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) as described in the passage, from his birth in Makkah (571 AD) through his childhood, marriage, first revelation, Hijrah, Battle of Badr, Conquest of Makkah, and the Farewell Sermon, shown as labelled boxes and dates connected by a single line (no illustrated figures).





Seerah Timeline

Short Questions & Answers

Where and when was Rasoolullah (ﷺ) born, and what was the condition of Arabian society at that time?

He was born in 571 AD in Makkah into the Quraish clan. Arabian society at that time was marked by moral decay, idolatry, tribal arrogance, and widespread injustice.

Who cared for Rasoolullah (ﷺ) after his mother's death?

After his mother, Hazrat Amina, passed away when he was six, he was first raised by his grandfather, Hazrat Abdul Muttalib, and after his grandfather's death, by his paternal uncle, Hazrat Abu Talib.

What titles did Rasoolullah (ﷺ) earn in his youth, and why?

He earned the titles Al-Sadiq (The Truthful) and Al-Amin (The Trustworthy) because of his truthfulness, humility, generosity, sense of justice, and honest dealings in trade.

What was Hilf al-Fudul, and why is it significant?

Hilf al-Fudul was a pact formed by the tribes of Makkah to defend the oppressed and uphold justice. Rasoolullah (ﷺ) took part in it and later spoke fondly of



honouring such a cause even after the advent of Islam, showing his lifelong commitment to justice.

How did Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها) come to marry Rasoolullah

(ﷺ)?

She was impressed by his honesty, graceful conduct, and upright character after entrusting him with a trade expedition to Syria. She then proposed marriage through the family of Hazrat Abu Talib.

What happened at the Cave of Hira?

Around the age of forty, Rasoolullah (ﷺ) retreated to the Cave of Hira for solitude and reflection. During Ramadan, Hazrat Jibrael (عليه السلام) appeared and brought the first revelation, the opening verses of Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1-5).

What was the Charter of Madinah?

The Charter of Madinah was drafted under the guidance of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) after the Hijrah. It introduced principles of civic equality, religious freedom, and the rule of law, uniting diverse communities and guaranteeing protection for all citizens regardless of faith or ethnicity.

What happened during the Conquest of Makkah, and why is it significant?

The Conquest of Makkah in 8 AH was largely bloodless. Rasoolullah (ﷺ) declared a general amnesty, forgiving even those who had persecuted him, showing that the triumph of forgiveness over vengeance was more important than mere conquest of land.



Long Questions & Answers

Discuss the early life and character of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) before Prophethood, and explain what these events reveal about his personal qualities.

What personal losses did Rasoolullah (ﷺ) experience in early life, and who raised him afterwards?

His father, Hazrat Abdullah, passed away before his birth, and his mother, Hazrat Amina, died when he was only six years old. Orphaned at a tender age, he was first raised by his grandfather, Hazrat Abdul Muttalib, and after his grandfather's death two years later, by his paternal uncle, Hazrat Abu Talib, who remained a steadfast guardian throughout his youth. These early losses reveal that, despite great personal hardship, he grew into a young man of exceptional strength and character.

How did the people of Makkah regard Rasoolullah (ﷺ) before Prophethood, and why?

He was known for his truthfulness, humility, generosity, and sense of justice, and his interactions reflected integrity and gentleness. He engaged in trade with honesty and fairness, and these qualities earned him universal respect among the people of Makkah, who bestowed on him the titles Al-Sadiq (The Truthful) and Al-Amin (The Trustworthy). This widespread respect, built entirely on his conduct rather than on wealth or status, later became one reason his early message was taken seriously by those who knew him well.

What does his role in Hilf al-Fudul and the Ka'bah dispute reveal about his character?

His participation in Hilf al-Fudul, a pact formed by the tribes of Makkah to defend the oppressed and uphold justice, shows his early and lasting commitment to fairness; he later said he would still honour such a cause even after the advent of Islam. His wise, impartial arbitration in the dispute over placing the Hajr-e-Aswad during the Ka'bah's reconstruction prevented conflict among the Quraish and



earned admiration from all quarters, revealing his wisdom, fairness, and ability to unite rival parties.

How did his marriage to Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها) reflect on his early reputation?

Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها), a woman of virtue and business acumen, entrusted him with a trade expedition to Syria after hearing of his integrity. Deeply impressed by his honesty and upright conduct, she proposed marriage through the family of Hazrat Abu Talib. This shows that his reputation for honesty and trustworthiness was already widely recognised in Makkah before his Prophethood began.

Explain the mission of Rasoolullah (ﷺ) from the first revelation to the Farewell Sermon.

What happened at the Cave of Hira, and why is the first revelation significant?

Around the age of forty, Rasoolullah (ﷺ) had been retreating to the Cave of Hira for solitude and reflection, troubled by the moral decay of Makkan society. During one such retreat in Ramadan, Hazrat Jibraeel (عليه السلام) appeared with the first revelation, the opening verses of Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1-5). This moment marked the beginning of his mission as the last Rasool of Allah and initiated a radical transformation in Arabia, as the call to Tauhid challenged idolatry, class privilege, and social injustice.

Why did Rasoolullah (ﷺ) migrate to Madinah, and what was this migration called?

As Quraish opposition grew into persecution, economic boycotts, and social ostracism, and oppression became unbearable, he was divinely commanded to migrate from Makkah to Madinah. This migration is known as the Hijrah, and it marked a decisive turning point in Islamic history, ending years of hardship in Makkah and leading directly to the establishment of the first Islamic society under his leadership.



What did the Charter of Madinah establish, and what was the outcome of the Battle of Badr?

The Charter of Madinah, drafted under his guidance, introduced principles of governance rooted in civic equality, religious freedom, and the rule of law, uniting diverse communities and guaranteeing protection for all citizens regardless of faith or ethnicity. The Battle of Badr, the first major military encounter with the Quraish, resulted in a remarkable Muslim victory that reinforced the legitimacy of the mission.

What happened at the Conquest of Makkah, and what core message did the Farewell Sermon deliver?

The Conquest of Makkah in 8 AH was largely bloodless; Rasoolullah (ﷺ) declared a general amnesty even for those who had persecuted him, a triumph of forgiveness over vengeance. By 10 AH, Islam had spread across Arabia, and at the Farewell Sermon delivered at Arafat, he proclaimed the equality of all human beings regardless of race, declaring that superiority lies only 'through piety and righteous action', marking the fulfilment of his mission.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

In which year and city was Rasoolullah (ﷺ) born?

- A. 571 AD, Madinah
- B. 571 AD, Makkah
- C. 610 AD, Makkah
- D. 622 AD, Madinah

Answer: B. 571 AD, Makkah

Explanation: The passage states he was born in 571 AD in Makkah into the Quraish clan.

What titles were given to Rasoolullah (ﷺ) in his youth for his honesty in trade?

- A. Al-Fatih and Al-Ameen
- B. Al-Sadiq and Al-Amin
- C. Al-Mursal and Al-Hadi
- D. Al-Kareem and Al-Rasheed



Answer: B. Al-Sadiq and Al-Amin

Explanation: The people of Makkah gave him the titles Al-Sadiq (The Truthful) and Al-Amin (The Trustworthy).

Where did Rasoolullah (ﷺ) receive the first revelation, and who brought it?

- A. Cave of Thawr, brought by Hazrat Abu Bakr
- B. Cave of Hira, brought by Hazrat Jibrael (عليه السلام)
- C. Masjid al-Haram, brought by Hazrat Khadijah
- D. Mount Arafat, brought by Hazrat Abu Talib

Answer: B. Cave of Hira, brought by Hazrat Jibrael (عليه السلام)

Explanation: The first revelation was brought by Hazrat Jibrael (عليه السلام) to Rasoolullah (ﷺ) during a retreat at the Cave of Hira.

What did the Charter of Madinah establish?

- A. Trade routes between Makkah and Syria
- B. Civic equality, religious freedom, and the rule of law
- C. A ban on all religious practices
- D. A single-tribe government

Answer: B. Civic equality, religious freedom, and the rule of law

Explanation: The Charter of Madinah introduced principles of governance rooted in civic equality, religious freedom, and the rule of law for all communities.

What characterised the Conquest of Makkah in 8 AH?

- A. A prolonged and bloody siege
- B. A largely bloodless conquest with a general amnesty
- C. The destruction of the Ka'bah
- D. A treaty that excluded the Quraish

Answer: B. A largely bloodless conquest with a general amnesty

Explanation: The Conquest of Makkah was largely bloodless, and Rasoolullah (ﷺ) declared a general amnesty even for former persecutors.

According to the Farewell Sermon, what determines a person's superiority over another?

- A. Race and tribal lineage
- B. Wealth and social status



- C. Piety and righteous action
- D. Place of birth

Answer: C. Piety and righteous action

Explanation: The Farewell Sermon proclaimed that no Arab has superiority over a non-Arab, nor a white person over a black person, except through piety and righteous action.

Before Islam, many tribes in Arabia practised widespread idolatry, bowing before carved stone idols instead of worshipping one God. In this sentence, 'idolatry' means:

- A. the belief in one God
- B. the practice of worshipping statues as gods
- C. a system of trade
- D. a form of poetry

Answer: B. the practice of worshipping statues as gods

Explanation: Idolatry means the practice of worshipping statues as gods, as given in the unit's glossary.

The early Muslims endured harsh persecution from the Quraish, including social boycotts and open hostility, simply for their faith. Here, 'persecution' means:

- A. generous support
- B. cruel and unfair treatment because of one's beliefs
- C. friendly negotiation
- D. a formal celebration

Answer: B. cruel and unfair treatment because of one's beliefs

Explanation: Persecution means treating somebody in a cruel and unfair way, especially because of their beliefs, as given in the glossary.

The Farewell Sermon was a profound address that captured the ethical heart of Islam in a few sentences. In this context, 'profound' means:

- A. showing great knowledge or understanding
- B. short and simple
- C. loud and dramatic
- D. written in verse

Answer: A. showing great knowledge or understanding



Explanation: Profound means showing great knowledge or understanding, as given in the unit's glossary.

Facing ostracism from their own tribe, the early Muslims found themselves excluded from Makkan social and economic life. 'Ostracism' here means:

- A. a warm welcome
- B. deliberate exclusion from a group
- C. a financial reward
- D. a religious festival

Answer: B. deliberate exclusion from a group

Explanation: Ostracism means the act of deliberately not including somebody in a group or activity, as given in the glossary.

Quick Revision Summary

- Rasoolullah (ﷺ) was born in 571 AD in Makkah into the Quraish clan, at a time of moral decay and idolatry.
- Orphaned early, he was raised first by his grandfather Hazrat Abdul Muttalib, then by his uncle Hazrat Abu Talib.
- Known in youth for truthfulness and trustworthiness, he earned the titles Al-Sadiq and Al-Amin.
- He took part in Hilf al-Fudul and gave a wise, impartial solution to the Ka'bah's Hajr-e-Aswad dispute.
- He married Hazrat Khadijah (رضي الله عنها), who became his first supporter emotionally and financially.
- At about age 40, he received the first revelation from Hazrat Jibraeel (عليه السلام) in the Cave of Hira during Ramadan.
- The call to Tauhid led to Quraish persecution, boycotts, and social ostracism of the early Muslims.
- The divinely commanded Hijrah to Madinah led to the Charter of Madinah, establishing civic equality and rule of law.
- Victory at Badr was followed by the largely bloodless Conquest of Makkah in 8 AH, marked by general amnesty.
- The Farewell Sermon at Arafat in 10 AH proclaimed human equality through piety alone, marking the fulfilment of his mission.



Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'prose group' (Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10), which under the current paper pattern carries heavier weight — 5 of the paper's synonym questions and 3 of its MCQs are drawn from these prose units, so revise the 12 glossary words in this unit carefully.
- Since only 7 of the 10 short questions asked from the prose group need to be attempted, practice answering all 8 short questions in this unit so you have a comfortable choice on exam day.
- This unit's passage may also be set for the punctuation exercise, so practice punctuating an unpunctuated extract drawn from this unit as part of your preparation.
- Be ready for either the Urdu-translation option or the alternate essay-writing option paired with this unit — practice translating a few passage extracts into Urdu, and also outline a short essay in case that option is chosen instead.
- Learn the glossary words with their exact textbook meanings, since examiners often test vocabulary directly through synonym-in-context questions like the ones in this unit's MCQs.
- Maintain a formal, respectful tone and stick strictly to facts from the text when answering questions about Rasoolullah (ﷺ); avoid inserting personal opinions or unsupported details.



Unit 2: Responsibility of the Youth in Nation-Building

This unit presents excerpts from the speech delivered by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah at the Dhaka University Convocation on 24 March 1948, as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

Addressing the graduating students not as Head of State but as a friend, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah reflects on the birth of a sovereign, independent Pakistan, the responsibilities that come with freedom, the hardships the new state overcame, and the paths of opportunity open to educated youth beyond Government service.

These notes summarise the passage strictly as given in the textbook, preserving the respectful references used for Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Speak confidently and fluently on the ideas of freedom, responsibility, and national duty raised in the address, using them in discussion, debate, and role-play.
- Read and use inference and deduction to recognise the implicit meaning of the speaker's words, using contextual cues and prior knowledge of Pakistan's early history.
- Evaluate two or more central ideas of the text — such as youth's responsibility and economic self-reliance — and analyse how they interact and build on one another.
- Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech, such as construct, constructive, and construction.



- Use all types of tenses correctly in speech and writing, drawing on examples adapted from the speech.
- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of the text, using valid reasoning and relevant evidence from Quaid-e-Azam's address.

Key Concepts

A Personal Address, Not a Formal Lecture

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah opens by explaining that, given the many demands on his time, he could not prepare a formal, academic Convocation Address covering the great subjects with which a university deals, such as arts, history, philosophy, science, and law. He had, however, promised the Vice-Chancellor a few words to the students, and he keeps that promise.

He makes clear that he speaks not as Head of the State but as a friend who has always held the students in affection. He thanks the Vice-Chancellor for his kind words and states that whatever he has been able to do, he has done merely as a duty incumbent upon him to serve his people honestly and selflessly. This informal, personal framing sets the tone for the rest of the address.

Freedom and Responsibility in a Sovereign State

Congratulating the graduating students on their diplomas and degrees, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah reminds them that, unlike their predecessors, they leave university to enter life under a sovereign, independent State of their own. He explains that the shackles of slavery have been broken, and that the State and Government are now their own — of the people and responsible to the people.

He immediately qualifies this freedom: 'freedom does not mean license.' Students cannot behave as they please without regard for others or the State. A great responsibility now rests on the youth, and it is more necessary than ever to work as a united and disciplined nation. What is now required is a constructive spirit, not the militant spirit of the independence struggle — and he stresses that it is far more difficult to construct a Government than to fight or go to jail for freedom.



The Hardships Pakistan Overcame

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah describes the dangers and difficulties faced by the new State soon after its birth. Enemies who had failed to prevent Pakistan's creation turned to weakening it instead. Hardly had the State come into being when the Punjab and Delhi holocaust struck — thousands of men, women, and children were mercilessly butchered, and millions were uprooted from their homes, with over fifty lakh refugees arriving in the Punjab within weeks.

The care and rehabilitation of these refugees presented problems that might have destroyed a well-established State, yet Pakistan not only survived this upheaval but emerged stronger, more chastened, and better equipped. Further difficulties followed — India withholding Pakistan's cash balances and its share of military equipment, and later an almost complete economic blockade of the province. Quaid-e-Azam notes that right-thinking people in India would deplore these happenings, but stresses that Pakistanis must take note of these events and maintain continued vigilance.

A Warning Against Exploitation and Disunity

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah urges students to devote themselves solely to their studies, in fairness to themselves, to their parents, and to the State — this, he says, is the only way to equip themselves for the battle of life ahead and to become a source of strength and pride to their State.

He then lists points about which the youth should be vigilant: beware of the fifth columnists among them; guard against and weed out selfish people who wish only to exploit them for their own gain; and learn to judge who are truly honest and unselfish servants of the State, serving the people with heart and soul.

Breaking Free of the Colonial 'Clerk Mentality'

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah criticises the old system of education and government, which — as the Vice-Chancellor had also stated — was designed mainly to produce well-trained, well-equipped clerks for the Civil Service, staffed originally by the British. This system created a mentality in which the average



graduate's only ambition was to secure a Government job, considering that the height of achievement.

He points out the poor result of this mentality: an M.A. graduate could earn less than a taxi driver, and many so-called Government servants lived more miserably than menial servants employed by well-to-do people. He urges the students to break free of this rut and mentality, now that Pakistan is free.

New Avenues: Commerce, Industry, and Technical Education

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah explains that Government cannot absorb thousands of graduates, and that most students competing for Government service will only become demoralised; those left out, growing disgruntled, become easy targets for exploitation by self-interested people. He therefore urges students to divert their ambitions to other channels — there is no shame in manual work and labour, and immense scope exists in technical education, banking, commerce, trade, and law, as new industries, banks, insurance companies, and commercial firms open up.

He gives the example of a young man who left Government service to join a banking corporation four years earlier on two hundred rupees a month, and who, having studied banking, was by then a Manager drawing fifteen hundred rupees a month. Quaid-e-Azam presents this as proof of the opportunities available in commerce and industry, urging students to think in these terms for their own benefit and that of the State.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

affection

the feeling of liking or loving somebody/something very much and caring about them

avenue

a choice or way of making progress towards something

blockade

the action of surrounding or closing a place, especially a port, in order to stop people or goods from coming in or out



chancellor

the official head of a university

deplore

to criticize something, especially publicly, because you think it is very bad

disgruntled

annoyed or disappointed because something has happened to upset you

exploit

to treat somebody unfairly by making them work and not giving them much in return

holocaust

a situation in which many things are destroyed and many people killed, especially because of a war or a fire

incumbent

a person who has an official position

selflessly

in a way that shows that you are thinking more about the needs, happiness, etc. of other people than about your own

vigilance

great care that is taken to notice any signs of danger or trouble

Key Facts

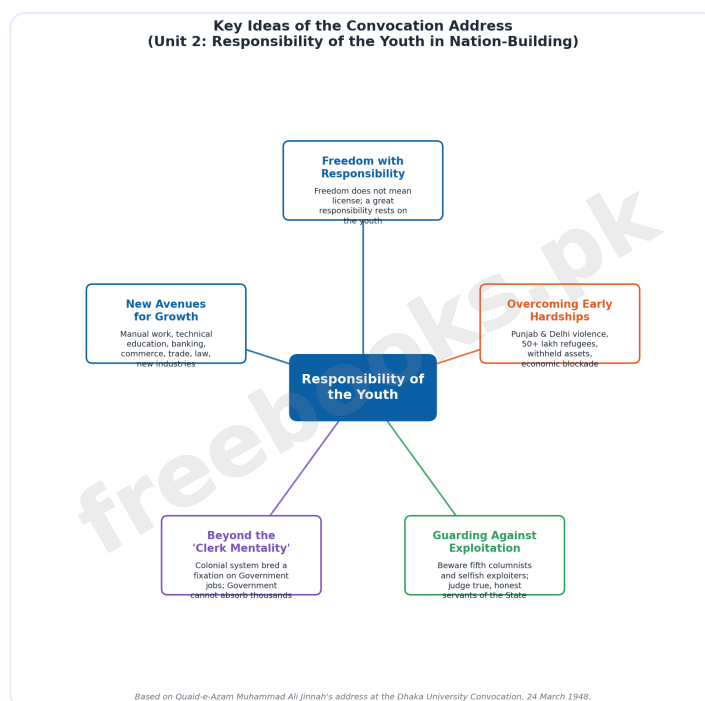
Aspect	Key Fact
Speaker	Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.
Occasion	Dhaka University Convocation Address.
Date	24 March 1948.
Central theme	Nation-building through responsible citizenship and purposeful education.
Freedom vs license	Freedom does not mean license; a great responsibility rests on the youth.



Aspect	Key Fact
Early hardships	Punjab and Delhi holocaust, over 50 lakh refugees, withheld assets, economic blockade.
The 'clerk mentality' problem	Old colonial system pushed graduates only towards Government service, even though an M.A. could earn less than a taxi driver.
Suggested alternative fields	Manual work, technical education, banking, commerce, trade, law, and new industries.

Diagram

Key Ideas of the Convocation Address: A branching mind-map diagram with a central node, 'Responsibility of the Youth', connected to five sub-theme boxes drawn from the passage: Freedom with Responsibility, Overcoming Early Hardships, Guarding Against Exploitation, Beyond the 'Clerk Mentality', and New Avenues for Growth, shown as labelled text boxes joined by connecting lines (no illustrated figures).



Key Ideas of the Convocation Address



Short Questions & Answers

According to Quaid-e-Azam, why does he say he is not speaking as Head of the State?

He explains that he is addressing the students as a friend who has always held them in affection, rather than in an official capacity, so as to speak to them personally on this occasion.

What does Quaid-e-Azam mean by 'our State is our own State... responsible to the people'?

He means that, unlike under colonial rule, Pakistan's Government now belongs to its own people, works for their good, and is accountable to them rather than to a foreign power.

Why does Quaid-e-Azam say 'freedom does not mean license'?

He means that independence does not give people the right to behave however they please, ignoring the interests of others or the State; a great responsibility now rests on the youth to act with discipline.

What hardships does Quaid-e-Azam describe in the early days of Pakistan?

He describes the Punjab and Delhi holocaust in which thousands were killed and millions uprooted, the arrival of over fifty lakh refugees in the Punjab, India withholding Pakistan's cash balances and military equipment share, and an economic blockade of the province.

Whom does Quaid-e-Azam warn the students to beware of?

He warns them to beware of fifth columnists among them, to guard against selfish people who wish to exploit them, and to learn to judge who are truly honest and unselfish servants of the State.

What does Quaid-e-Azam criticise about the old system of education and government?

He criticises it for creating a mentality in which the only ambition of graduates was to secure Government service, a mindset built to produce well-trained clerks rather than independent, capable citizens.

Why does Quaid-e-Azam say Government service is not a viable path for most graduates?



He explains that Government cannot absorb thousands of graduates, so most who compete for such jobs become demoralised, and those left out grow disgruntled and vulnerable to exploitation.

What example does Quaid-e-Azam give to illustrate the opportunities in commerce and industry?

He gives the example of a young man who left Government service for a banking corporation on two hundred rupees a month and rose, in four years, to become a Manager earning fifteen hundred rupees a month.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how Quaid-e-Azam describes the responsibilities that come with freedom in his address to the youth.

What does Quaid-e-Azam mean when he says 'freedom does not mean license'?

Quaid-e-Azam explains that gaining independence does not mean students can behave just as they please, irrespective of the interests of other people or the State. Instead, a great responsibility now rests on the youth, and it is more necessary than ever to work as a united and disciplined nation. He contrasts this constructive spirit with the militant spirit needed during the independence struggle, noting it is far more difficult to construct a Government than to fight for freedom.

What hardships does Quaid-e-Azam say Pakistan overcame after independence?

He describes how, hardly had the new State come into being, the Punjab and Delhi holocaust struck, with thousands of men, women, and children mercilessly butchered and millions uprooted from their homes. Over fifty lakh refugees arrived in the Punjab within weeks, presenting problems that might have destroyed a well-established State. Yet Pakistan survived this upheaval and emerged stronger, more chastened, and better equipped than before.



What warning does Quaid-e-Azam give about fifth columnists and exploiters?

Quaid-e-Azam tells the students to be vigilant and beware of the fifth columnists among them, and to guard against and weed out selfish people who wish only to exploit them for their own gain. He urges them to learn to judge who are truly honest and unselfish servants of the State, serving the people with heart and soul, so that they are not misled by those with self-interested motives.

Why does Quaid-e-Azam say a constructive spirit is harder than a militant one?

He explains that it is easier to go to jail or fight for freedom than to run a Government, because building and governing a new State requires sustained discipline, unity, and hard work rather than a single burst of struggle. This constructive spirit, he stresses, is now what is required of the whole nation, more than ever before, as Pakistan works to establish itself as a sovereign, self-sufficient State.

Explain Quaid-e-Azam's criticism of the colonial 'clerk mentality' and his vision for the youth's future.

What did the old education and Government system encourage, according to Quaid-e-Azam?

Quaid-e-Azam explains that the old system of education and Government, as the Vice-Chancellor had also noted, was really designed to produce well-trained, well-equipped clerks, since the Civil Service was originally staffed by the British. This created a mentality in which an average graduate's only ambition after passing a B.A. or M.A. was to look for a Government job, considering that the peak of achievement, regardless of how poorly such positions were actually paid or regarded.

Why does Quaid-e-Azam say Government 'cannot absorb thousands'?

He points out plainly that Government cannot absorb thousands of graduates seeking service — it is impossible. Most students competing for the limited Government positions available will only become demoralised, and Government



can take only a certain number of them. Those who cannot settle into Government service, being disgruntled, are then vulnerable to being exploited by persons with their own self-interested motives.

What alternative fields does Quaid-e-Azam recommend to the youth?

He tells students there is no shame in manual work and labour, and stresses the immense scope for technical education, since technically qualified people are badly needed. He also encourages them to study banking, commerce, trade, and law, noting that new industries, banks, insurance companies, and commercial firms were opening and would continue to grow, offering more happiness, prosperity, and opportunities to rise than a life spent in Government clerkship.

What example does Quaid-e-Azam give of a young banker, and why does he mention it?

Quaid-e-Azam mentions a young man who had been in Government service but left it four years earlier to join a banking corporation on two hundred rupees a month, having studied the subject of banking. By the time of the speech, that young man was a Manager in the firm, drawing fifteen hundred rupees a month. Quaid-e-Azam offers this as concrete proof of the opportunities available outside Government service, urging students to think seriously in these terms.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

In what capacity does Quaid-e-Azam say he is addressing the students?

- A. As Head of the State
- B. As a friend
- C. As a former student
- D. As a University official

Answer: B. As a friend

Explanation: He explicitly states he is not speaking as Head of the State but as a friend who has always held the students in affection.

Where and on what date was this Convocation Address delivered?

- A. Lahore University, 14 August 1947
- B. Dhaka University, 24 March 1948
- C. Karachi University, 11 September 1948



D. Peshawar University, 23 March 1949

Answer: B. Dhaka University, 24 March 1948

Explanation: The address was delivered at the Dhaka University Convocation on 24 March 1948.

What does Quaid-e-Azam mean by saying 'freedom does not mean license'?

- A. Freedom requires official permits
- B. Freedom does not allow people to act without regard for others or the State
- C. Freedom means unlimited personal power
- D. Freedom applies only to certain citizens

Answer: B. Freedom does not allow people to act without regard for others or the State

Explanation: He clarifies that independence does not permit people to behave as they please, ignoring the interests of others or the State; a great responsibility rests on the youth.

Which event does Quaid-e-Azam describe as striking Pakistan soon after its birth?

- A. The Bengal famine
- B. The Punjab and Delhi holocaust
- C. The Kashmir conflict
- D. A drought in Sindh

Answer: B. The Punjab and Delhi holocaust

Explanation: He describes how, soon after the new State's formation, the Punjab and Delhi holocaust occurred, with mass killings and millions uprooted.

Approximately how many refugees does Quaid-e-Azam say arrived in the Punjab within weeks?

- A. Fifty lakh
- B. Five lakh
- C. Fifteen lakh
- D. One crore

Answer: A. Fifty lakh

Explanation: The passage states that over fifty lakh refugees arrived in the Punjab within a matter of weeks.



What does Quaid-e-Azam say about India's actions towards the new State of Pakistan?

- A. India fully supported Pakistan financially
- B. India withheld cash balances, military equipment share, and imposed an economic blockade
- C. India offered Pakistan additional territory
- D. India provided free technical training

Answer: B. India withheld cash balances, military equipment share, and imposed an economic blockade

Explanation: He describes India withholding Pakistan's cash balances and share of military equipment, followed by an economic blockade of the province.

What mentality does Quaid-e-Azam criticise as a result of the old colonial system?

- A. A focus on agriculture
- B. The pursuit of Government service as the only ambition
- C. An interest in foreign travel
- D. A preference for military careers

Answer: B. The pursuit of Government service as the only ambition

Explanation: He criticises the old system for producing well-trained clerks and instilling a mentality where graduates sought only Government jobs.

According to Quaid-e-Azam, why can most graduates not rely on Government service?

- A. Government service pays extremely well
- B. Government cannot absorb thousands of graduates
- C. Government service is only for foreigners
- D. There are no Government jobs at all

Answer: B. Government cannot absorb thousands of graduates

Explanation: He states plainly that Government cannot absorb thousands of graduates, so most who compete for such jobs will only be demoralised.

What alternative fields does Quaid-e-Azam recommend to the youth?

- A. Only politics and journalism
- B. Manual work, technical education, banking, commerce, trade, and law
- C. Only agriculture
- D. Only the armed forces



Answer: B. Manual work, technical education, banking, commerce, trade, and law

Explanation: He recommends manual work, technical education, banking, commerce, trade, law, and new industries, banks, and insurance firms as open avenues.

Enemies of Pakistan, thwarted in their desire to prevent its establishment, turned their attention to weakening it through renewed hardship. In this context, 'thwarted' most nearly means:

- A. encouraged
- B. prevented or blocked from succeeding
- C. financially rewarded
- D. openly celebrated

Answer: B. prevented or blocked from succeeding

Explanation: Thwarted means prevented from succeeding in an aim, matching how Pakistan's enemies were unable to stop its establishment.

Quick Revision Summary

- Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah delivered this address at the Dhaka University Convocation on 24 March 1948.
- He speaks not as Head of the State but as a friend who holds the students in affection.
- He reminds students that Pakistan is now a sovereign, independent State, responsible to its own people.
- 'Freedom does not mean license' — a great responsibility rests on the youth to be disciplined and constructive.
- A constructive spirit is harder to sustain than the militant spirit of the independence struggle.
- Pakistan overcame the Punjab and Delhi holocaust, over fifty lakh refugees, withheld assets, and an economic blockade.
- Students are urged to devote themselves to their studies in fairness to themselves, their parents, and the State.
- Quaid-e-Azam warns against fifth columnists and selfish exploiters, urging youth to judge true, honest servants of the State.



- He criticises the colonial 'clerk mentality' that pushed graduates solely towards Government service.
- He urges students towards manual work, technical education, banking, commerce, trade, and law, citing a young banker's rise from Rs. 200 to Rs. 1500 a month in four years.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'prose group' (Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10), which under the current paper pattern carries heavier weight — 5 of the paper's synonym questions and 3 of its MCQs are drawn from these prose units, so revise the 11 glossary words in this unit carefully.
- Since only 7 of the 10 short questions asked from the prose group need to be attempted, practice answering all 8 short questions in this unit so you have a comfortable choice on exam day.
- This unit's passage may also be set for the punctuation exercise, so practice punctuating an unpunctuated extract drawn from this unit as part of your preparation.
- The textbook itself includes an official Urdu-translation exercise on a passage from this unit — practice translating it, and also outline a short essay in case the alternate essay-writing option is chosen instead.
- Learn the glossary words with their exact textbook meanings, since examiners often test vocabulary directly through synonym-in-context questions like the ones in this unit's MCQs.
- Maintain a formal, respectful tone and stick strictly to facts from the text when answering questions about Quaid-e-Azam's address; avoid inserting personal opinions or unsupported details.



Unit 3: A Bird Came Down the Walk

This unit presents Emily Dickinson's poem 'A Bird Came Down the Walk', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The poem is a close, intimate observation of a bird as it eats a worm, drinks dew, lets a beetle pass, notices the speaker, cautiously accepts nothing from an offered crumb, and finally flies away with silent grace. Written in the 19th century, it presents nature with a blend of beauty and raw reality rather than the more romanticised nature poetry common among Dickinson's contemporaries.

These notes summarise the poem strictly as given in the textbook, provide the full poem text, a stanza-wise explanation (the specific skill tested in the exam question 'explain the given stanza with reference to context'), literary devices with examples from the poem, comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the rhyme scheme and the quatrain (four-line) stanza structure used in the poem.
- Interpret figures of speech such as simile, personification, imagery, and symbolism in context and analyse their role in the poem.
- Analyse multiple interpretations of the poem's imagery, evaluating how each interpretation is supported by textual evidence.
- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the poem states explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from it.
- Identify and correctly use compound prepositions and prepositional phrases in writing.
- Use summary-writing skills to write an objective summary of the poem, covering its main idea, key imagery, and emotional tone.



Key Concepts

About the Poet: Emily Dickinson

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was an American poet known for her unique and unconventional style. Much of her poetry explores themes of nature, life, death, and the human experience, often through a deeply introspective and reflective lens.

Like many of Dickinson's poems, 'A Bird Came Down the Walk' was not published during her lifetime. It was only after her death that her work was brought to the public, and even then it was often edited to fit more conventional poetic norms of the time. Today, Dickinson is celebrated for her original voice and her contributions to American poetry.

Background to the Poem

'A Bird Came Down the Walk' is one of Emily Dickinson's many poems that examines nature in a detailed and intimate manner. Written in the 19th century, during a time when nature was a common subject in literature, Dickinson's approach to nature is distinct in its close observation and subtle complexity.

Unlike the more romanticised views of nature held by her contemporaries, Dickinson often presents nature with a blend of beauty and raw reality, capturing both its grace and its underlying brutality — a quality clearly visible in this poem, where the bird's violent treatment of the worm sits alongside its delicate, graceful flight.

Theme: Nature's Balance

The poem contrasts the beauty and brutality of nature, showing how these elements coexist harmoniously. The bird's actions — such as eating a worm and then gracefully avoiding a beetle — highlight this delicate balance between raw survival and gentle grace within a single, ordinary moment observed on a garden walk.



Theme: Human Interaction with Nature

The poem explores the distance between humans and the natural world. The speaker observes the bird and offers it a crumb, but the bird's decision to fly away underscores nature's independence and the boundary that exists between human interaction and natural autonomy.

Theme: Freedom and Independence

The bird symbolises freedom and self-reliance. Its refusal of the crumb and its graceful flight reflect the theme of natural independence and the desire to remain untamed by human influence, even when that influence is offered gently.

Theme: Innocence and Danger

The poem subtly contrasts innocence with the potential for danger. The bird's cautious behaviour, especially in the line 'Like one in danger, Cautious,' suggests an underlying awareness of threats present even in an otherwise peaceful moment.

Poem Text

*A Bird came down the Walk—
He did not know I saw—
He bit an Angleworm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw,*

*And then he drank a Dew
From a convenient Grass—
And then hopped sideways to the Wall
To let a Beetle pass—*

*He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all around—
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—
He stirred his Velvet Head*



*Like one in danger, Cautious,
I offered him a Crumb
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home—*

*Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam—
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon
Leap, plashless as they swim.*

Stanza-wise Explanation

Stanza 1

*A Bird came down the Walk—
He did not know I saw—
He bit an Angleworm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw,*

The poem opens with the speaker secretly watching a bird that has come down onto a garden walk, unaware it is being observed. The bird immediately bites an angleworm in half and eats it raw, a startlingly blunt and violent image with which to open the poem. This direct, unflinching visual imagery sets the poem's tone of close, honest observation, establishing from the very first stanza that Dickinson will present nature's raw reality rather than a softened, sentimental picture of it.

Stanza 2

*And then he drank a Dew
From a convenient Grass—
And then hopped sideways to the Wall
To let a Beetle pass—*

Immediately after the violence of the first stanza, the bird's behaviour turns gentle and considerate: it drinks a drop of dew from a nearby blade of grass and



then hops aside to let a beetle pass by unharmed. This sudden shift from predator to polite neighbour captures the poem's central idea of nature's balance — the same creature capable of raw brutality is equally capable of small, almost courteous grace, showing that beauty and harshness exist side by side in the natural world.

Stanza 3

*He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all around—
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—
He stirred his Velvet Head*

Here the speaker studies the bird's eyes and head in close detail. Its eyes dart rapidly in every direction, and the speaker compares them, through simile, to 'frightened Beads' — small, hard, glassy, and anxious. The bird then stirs its 'Velvet Head', a tactile, personifying image that lends it a soft, delicate quality. This stanza builds the poem's watchful, slightly tense mood, showing the bird's instinctive wariness even as it is described with tenderness.

Stanza 4

*Like one in danger, Cautious,
I offered him a Crumb
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home—*

The speaker now enters the scene directly, offering the bird a crumb, but the bird's cautious response — behaving 'Like one in danger' — signals its instinctive distrust of the human presence. Rather than accepting the offer, it unrolls its feathers and 'rows' itself away, softer and more controlled than a startled flight. This marks the turning point of the poem, where human interaction is gently but firmly declined, foreshadowing the bird's final, independent departure.



Stanza 5

*Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam—
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon
Leap, plashless as they swim.*

The final stanza extends the image of the bird's flight into an extended comparison: its wings divide the air the way oars divide the ocean, too smooth and silver to leave any seam or trace, and it moves as soundlessly as butterflies leaping, 'plashless', from sunlit banks. This closing imagery symbolises the bird's — and nature's — complete freedom, its untroubled, seamless grace forming a striking contrast to the raw, violent opening image and completing the poem's balance between beauty and brutality.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

angleworm

another term for an earthworm, commonly used in the 19th century

beads

a small piece of glass, wood, etc., with a hole through it, that can be put on a string with others of the same type and worn as jewellery, etc.

cautious

being careful about what you say or do, especially to avoid danger or mistakes; not taking any risks

convenient

useful, easy or quick to do; not causing problems

dew

the very small drops of water that form on the ground, etc. during the night

oars

a long pole with a flat part at one end that is used for rowing a boat

plashless



an old-fashioned word meaning without splashing, used to describe the silent, graceful movement of the bird in flight

seam

a line along which two edges of cloth, etc. are joined or sewn together

velvet

a type of cloth made from silk, cotton or nylon, with a thick, soft surface

Poem at a Glance

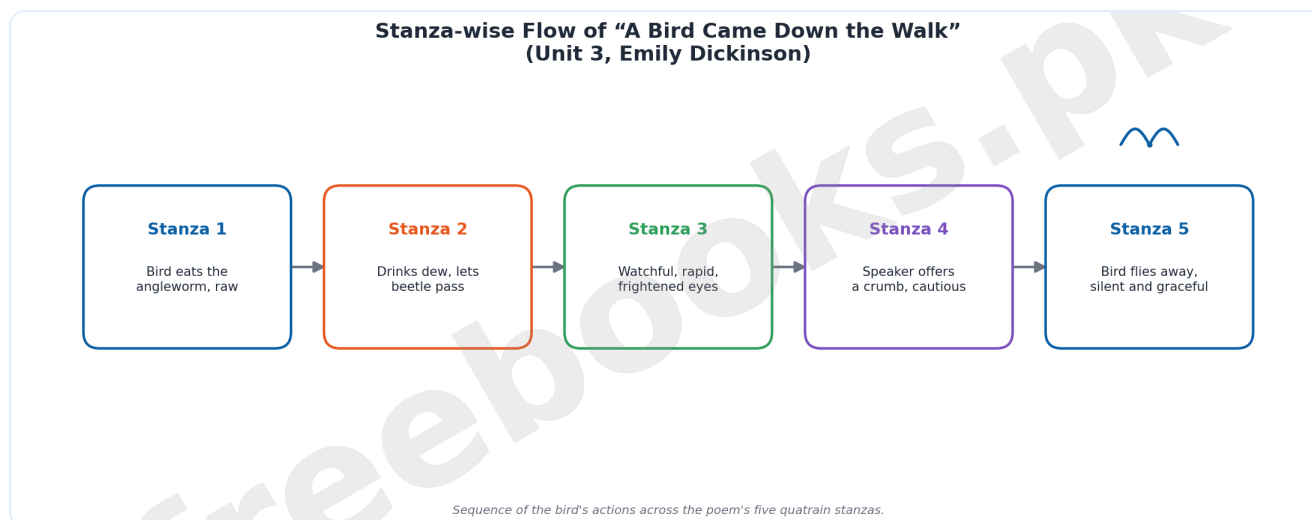
Aspect	Key Fact
Poet	Emily Dickinson (1830-1886).
Form	Five quatrain stanzas (four lines each).
Style	Close, intimate, unsentimental observation of nature — beauty and raw reality shown side by side.
Central theme	Nature's balance between beauty and brutality, and the bird's freedom and independence.
Simile	"They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—" — comparing the bird's eyes to beads using 'like'.
Personification	"He stirred his Velvet Head." — giving the bird's head a soft, human-like quality.
Imagery	"He bit an Angleworm in halves / And ate the fellow, raw," — vivid visual imagery of nature's raw reality.
Symbolism	The bird's silent, graceful flight in the final stanza symbolises freedom and untamed natural independence.

Diagram

Stanza-wise Flow of the Poem: A sequential flow diagram of five connected boxes, one per stanza, captioned with the bird's action in that stanza — eating the worm, drinking dew and letting the beetle pass, watchful frightened eyes, the



offered crumb, and the final graceful flight — joined by arrows showing the poem's progression, with a small abstract bird-icon accent marking the flight.



Stanza-wise Flow of the Poem

Short Questions & Answers

What is the first action the bird performs after coming down the walk?

The bird bites an angleworm in halves and eats it raw, a direct and unsentimental image of nature's brutality.

How does the bird behave towards the beetle?

The bird hops sideways to the wall to let the beetle pass, showing a small, almost courteous gesture of consideration within the natural world.

Identify the simile used to describe the bird's eyes and explain its effect.

The bird's eyes are compared to 'frightened Beads' — this simile conveys their small, glassy, rapidly-moving quality and suggests the bird's instinctive wariness.

Give an example of personification in the poem.

"He stirred his Velvet Head" personifies the bird by giving its head a soft, delicate, almost human quality through the word 'Velvet'.

How does the bird respond when the speaker offers it a crumb?

The bird behaves cautiously, 'Like one in danger', and instead of accepting the crumb, it unrolls its feathers and flies off, declining the human offer.

What does the bird's final flight symbolise?



The bird's silent, graceful flight symbolises freedom and natural independence, its untamed autonomy from human influence.

How is the bird's flight described in the final stanza?

Its flight is compared to oars dividing the ocean without a seam, and to butterflies leaping 'plashless' from sunlit banks — smooth, silent, and seamless.

What overall contrast does the poem draw about nature?

The poem contrasts nature's raw brutality, seen in the bird eating the worm, with its delicate grace, seen in its drinking of dew and its silent flight, showing that both exist together in nature.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss the use of figurative language and imagery in 'A Bird Came Down the Walk'.

Explain the simile used in the poem with its example.

Dickinson uses a simile in the line 'They looked like frightened Beads, I thought —', comparing the bird's rapidly moving eyes to small, frightened beads using the word 'like'. This simile captures the hard, glassy, anxious quality of the bird's gaze, conveying its instinctive wariness and heightened alertness even in an apparently peaceful garden setting, and it deepens the reader's sense of the bird as a small, vulnerable, watchful creature.

Explain the personification used in the poem with its example.

In the line 'He stirred his Velvet Head', Dickinson personifies the bird by describing its head as 'Velvet', a word usually applied to soft, human-made cloth. This gives the bird a delicate, almost human tenderness, softening the reader's impression of the creature after the raw imagery of the opening stanza and reinforcing the poem's balance between nature's brutality and its beauty.

Explain the visual and tactile imagery used to describe the bird's actions.

The poem opens with vivid visual imagery in 'He bit an Angeworm in halves / And ate the fellow, raw,' which lets readers picture the bird's action clearly and conveys the unfiltered, raw aspect of nature. This is balanced by the tactile



imagery of the 'Velvet Head', which appeals to the sense of touch and softens the tone, together illustrating how Dickinson blends harsh and gentle sensory detail throughout the poem.

Explain the symbolism of the bird's final flight.

The bird's graceful, untroubled flight at the end of the poem, described as dividing the air like oars divide the ocean 'too silver for a seam' and leaping 'plashless' like butterflies, symbolises freedom and the seamless, self-sufficient natural world. This flight contrasts with the human world's boundaries and limitations, reinforcing the theme that nature remains fundamentally independent of human influence, however gently that influence is offered.

Explain the theme of nature's balance between beauty and brutality in the poem, with reference to the speaker's interaction with the bird.

Discuss the bird's raw and violent action of eating the worm.

The poem opens with the bird biting an angleworm in halves and eating it 'raw' — a blunt, unsentimental image that shows nature's underlying brutality without any softening language. Dickinson does not use euphemism here; she presents the bird's predatory action directly, establishing from the outset that this poem will not romanticise nature but will show it exactly as observed, including its harsher realities.

Discuss the bird's graceful and delicate actions, such as drinking dew and stirring its head.

Immediately after the violent opening, the bird drinks a drop of dew from convenient grass, lets a beetle pass unharmed, and stirs its 'Velvet Head' — all gentle, almost courteous actions. These moments of delicacy sit directly beside the earlier brutality, and this juxtaposition is central to the poem's portrayal of nature's balance: the same small creature is capable of both raw survival instinct and quiet grace within moments of each other.



Explain the significance of the bird refusing the offered crumb.

When the speaker offers the bird a crumb, it responds cautiously, 'Like one in danger', and does not accept it — instead unrolling its feathers and flying off. This refusal is significant because it marks the boundary between the human world and the natural one; the bird does not need or trust human charity, and its cautious retreat shows that its instinct for self-preservation outweighs any comfort human interaction might offer.

What does the bird's behaviour reveal about freedom and independence as a theme?

The bird's refusal of the crumb and its subsequent graceful, silent flight reveal that it values its independence above any human offering. This reflects the broader theme of freedom and independence in the poem — the bird symbolises a natural world that remains self-reliant and untamed, choosing to fly away 'softer' and more controlled rather than accept a dependency on the speaker, reinforcing that true freedom includes the freedom to decline connection.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

What is the bird's first action when it comes down the walk?

- A. It drinks from a puddle.
- B. It bites an angleworm in halves.
- C. It flies away.
- D. It hops to a wall.

Answer: B. It bites an angleworm in halves.

Explanation: The poem's opening stanza states the bird 'bit an Angleworm in halves / And ate the fellow, raw,' as its first action.

How does the speaker describe the bird's eyes?

- A. Bright as the sun.
- B. Like sparkling jewels.
- C. Like frightened Beads.
- D. As calm and serene.

Answer: C. Like frightened Beads.



Explanation: The speaker describes the bird's eyes as looking 'like frightened Beads', a simile conveying their rapid, anxious movement.

What does the bird do after the speaker offers it a crumb?

- A. Eats the crumb.
- B. Flies away.
- C. Sings a song.
- D. Hops closer to the speaker.

Answer: B. Flies away.

Explanation: The bird behaves cautiously and, instead of accepting the crumb, unrolls its feathers and flies away.

The bird's flight in the final stanza is compared to:

- A. Leaves falling from a tree.
- B. Waves crashing on the shore.
- C. Oars dividing the ocean.
- D. Wind blowing through the trees.

Answer: C. Oars dividing the ocean.

Explanation: The final stanza compares the bird's flight to oars dividing the ocean, 'Too silver for a seam'.

How many stanzas does the poem have, and what is their structure?

- A. Four stanzas of five lines each.
- B. Five stanzas of four lines each (quatrains).
- C. Six stanzas of three lines each.
- D. Three stanzas of six lines each.

Answer: B. Five stanzas of four lines each (quatrains).

Explanation: The poem has five stanzas, each a quatrain comprised of four lines.

"He stirred his Velvet Head" is an example of:

- A. Euphemism.
- B. Oxymoron.
- C. Simile.
- D. Personification.

Answer: D. Personification.

Explanation: Describing the bird's head as 'Velvet' gives it a soft, human-like quality, which is personification.



Which line contains a simile?

- A. "He bit an Anglemorm in halves"
- B. "And he unrolled his feathers"
- C. "They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—"
- D. "He stirred his Velvet Head"

Answer: C. "They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—"

Explanation: The word 'like' signals the simile comparing the bird's eyes to frightened beads.

What does the bird's final flight symbolise in the poem?

- A. Danger and threat.
- B. Freedom and natural independence.
- C. Sadness and loss.
- D. Human dominance over nature.

Answer: B. Freedom and natural independence.

Explanation: The bird's graceful, silent flight symbolises freedom and its untamed independence from human influence.

In the phrase "a convenient Grass", the word 'convenient' most nearly means:

- A. Expensive.
- B. Useful or easy to reach, causing no problems.
- C. Dangerous.
- D. Colourful.

Answer: B. Useful or easy to reach, causing no problems.

Explanation: 'Convenient' means useful, easy, or quick to make use of, without causing problems — here, grass that is easy for the bird to drink dew from.

The word 'plashless', used to describe the bird's flight, means:

- A. Loud and splashing.
- B. Without splashing, silent and graceful.
- C. Slow and clumsy.
- D. Bright and colourful.

Answer: B. Without splashing, silent and graceful.

Explanation: 'Plashless' is an old-fashioned word meaning without splashing, describing the bird's silent, graceful movement.



Quick Revision Summary

- 'A Bird Came Down the Walk' is by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), an American poet whose work was mostly published after her death.
- The poem has five quatrain stanzas (four lines each).
- The bird's first action is biting and eating an angleworm raw — a blunt image of nature's brutality.
- The bird drinks dew and hops aside to let a beetle pass, showing nature's gentler side.
- The bird's eyes are compared to 'frightened Beads' — a simile showing its wariness.
- "He stirred his Velvet Head" personifies the bird with soft, tender, human-like qualities.
- The speaker offers the bird a crumb, but it responds cautiously, 'Like one in danger'.
- The bird refuses the crumb and flies away rather than accept human interaction.
- The final stanza's imagery of oars and splashless butterflies symbolises the bird's freedom and independence.
- The poem shows nature's balance: beauty and brutality, delicacy and danger, existing side by side.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'poem group' (Units 3, 6, 11, 13), which under the current paper pattern carries lighter weight — 3 synonym questions and 2 MCQs are drawn from these poem units, and only 5 of 8 short questions from this group need to be attempted.
- The poem group is specifically and reliably tested with the question 'Explain the given stanza with reference to context' (5 marks) — practice writing a stanza-by-stanza explanation exactly like the one in this unit's notes, covering meaning, imagery, and how the stanza fits the poem's progression.
- Since any one of the five stanzas could be set for the 'reference to context' question, make sure you can explain all five, not just your favourite one — the stanza-wise section in these notes covers every stanza in full.



- Memorise the literary device definitions together with their exact example lines from the poem — simile ('like frightened Beads'), personification ('Velvet Head'), imagery (the angleworm lines), and symbolism (the final flight) — as examiners often ask you to identify the device from a quoted line.
- Know the poet's background facts (Emily Dickinson, 1830-1886, American, reclusive, posthumously published) since short questions in the poem group often test factual recall about the poet alongside the poem's content.
- Remember that Dickinson does not use euphemism or oxymoron in this poem — if a question asks you to find an example of either, the correct response is to note their absence, as the poem's language is direct rather than softened or contradictory.



Unit 4: Team Moon

This unit presents 'Team Moon', an adapted, reimagined account inspired by Catherine Thimmesh's book 'Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The text moves beyond the three astronauts of Apollo 11 to tell the story of the 400,000 people who worked behind the scenes to make the 1969 Moon landing possible — from the seamstresses who stitched the spacesuits, to the engineers who built the Saturn V rocket, to Mission Control, to software engineer Margaret Hamilton, whose work saved the mission during the final descent.

These notes summarise the passage strictly as given in the textbook and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Engage in extended discussions and critiques of the text, considering other speakers' viewpoints and presenting one's own with clarity.
- Analyse how the author's choices in structuring the narrative — such as where to begin the story and how to sequence different contributors' roles — contribute to its overall meaning and impact.
- Examine how the text develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters and contributors, such as the astronauts, engineers, and seamstresses.
- Read and analyse a descriptive, high-interest text drawn from a real historical event, identifying its key explanations of how something works.
- Identify and use adjectival and adverbial phrases correctly in reading and writing tasks based on the text.
- Construct complex sentences using main and subordinate clauses with appropriate transitional devices and correct punctuation.
- Write a book review that includes an introduction, discussion of key themes, evaluation, and recommendation.



Key Concepts

One Small Step, a Vast Hidden Army

The passage opens with the iconic moment of 6 July 1969 (as depicted in the story), when Neil Armstrong became the first human to step onto the Moon, speaking the words 'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.' The author immediately widens the frame: behind this monumental moment were not just the three astronauts aboard Apollo 11, but a vast, hidden army of 400,000 people, each contributing expertise, determination, and heart to the mission.

This opening move sets up the passage's central structural choice — rather than focusing solely on the astronauts, the narrative deliberately shifts attention to the unseen contributors whose combined work made the landing possible.

The Seamstresses Who Stitched for the Stars

In a quiet workshop far from the launch pads of Cape Canaveral, a team of seamstresses at Playtex were responsible for crafting the spacesuits that would protect the astronauts in the harsh environment of space. The suits had to be flexible enough for movement yet strong enough to withstand the vacuum of space — one misplaced stitch could spell disaster.

Working with meticulous care and quiet pride, these women stitched layer upon layer of specialised fabric, knowing their work was literally a matter of life and death. Each seam and stitch is described as a thread in the larger tapestry of the Apollo 11 mission — a section that highlights how skilled, careful labour far from the spotlight was just as essential as the mission's more visible engineering work.

The Engineers Who Reached for the Stars

Across the country, NASA engineers tackled problems no one had solved before, refining the Saturn V rocket — described as a towering behemoth of engineering — through countless tests, simulations, and calculations. They faced challenges that seemed insurmountable: keeping the rocket stable, navigating through space with precision, and bringing the astronauts home safely.



The engineers worked tirelessly, often late into the night, driven by the belief that they were part of something bigger than themselves — a section that emphasises collective purpose and sustained effort as the true engine behind the mission's success.

Mission Control: The Nerve Centre of Apollo 11

At NASA's Mission Control in Houston, a team of young flight controllers prepared for the mission with military precision, practising every possible scenario from equipment failures to emergency aborts. As the lunar module 'Eagle' descended towards the Moon, unexpected alarms suddenly blared.

Mission Control sprang into action: flight controllers scanned their screens, consulted their manuals, and conferred with each other, realising within seconds that the alarms were not mission-critical — the guidance computer was simply overloaded but still functioning. Their swift decision-making and calm under pressure allowed Armstrong and Aldrin to continue their descent, culminating in Armstrong's radio message: 'Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed.'

Margaret Hamilton and the Software That Saved the Mission

One of the passage's unsung heroes is Margaret Hamilton, a software engineer who led the team that developed the onboard flight software for the lunar module. In an era when coding was done by hand with punch cards, Hamilton and her team created software able to prioritise the most critical tasks.

This foresight proved invaluable during the lunar landing: when the computer became overloaded with unnecessary data, Hamilton's code discarded the less important tasks and focused on landing the spacecraft — an action the passage credits as playing a crucial role in the mission's success.

The Unseen Heroes and the World's Reaction

The passage describes the mission's success as 'a symphony conducted by countless hands' — from the janitors who kept the labs clean to the technicians who fuelled the rockets to the scientists who plotted the trajectories, every



person had a part to play. As Armstrong and Aldrin explored the lunar surface, the world watched in awe.

For the 400,000 people who had poured their hearts into the mission, the Moon landing is presented as a triumph of human ingenuity and perseverance — the result of years of collaboration, countless late nights, moments of doubt, and relentless problem-solving.

Bringing the Heroes Home and the Passage's Theme

After spending just over 21 hours on the lunar surface, Armstrong and Aldrin rejoined Collins in the command module for the journey back to Earth, splashing down safely in the Pacific Ocean. The passage states plainly that the triumph belonged not just to NASA, but to every engineer, scientist, seamstress, and technician who had dared to dream.

The passage's theme is the power of teamwork and collaboration in achieving extraordinary goals: the success of Apollo 11 was due not just to the astronauts but to the combined efforts of 400,000 people working behind the scenes, illustrating that innovation, problem-solving, and dedication are key to overcoming challenges and that great achievements are made possible through working together.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

abort

to end or cause something to end before it has been completed, especially because it is likely to fail

behemoth

something which has the qualities of great power and might

collaboration

the act of working with another person or group of people to create or produce something

foresight

the ability to predict what is likely to happen and to use this to prepare for the future



insurmountable

(of difficulties, problems, etc.) that cannot be dealt with successfully

monumental

very important and having a great influence, especially as the result of years of work

perseverance

the quality of continuing to try to achieve a particular aim despite difficulties

precision

the quality of being exact, accurate, and careful

simulation

a situation in which a particular set of conditions is created artificially in order to study or experience something that could exist in reality

testament

a legal document stating what should happen to a person's money and property after death; in this text used more broadly to mean clear proof or evidence of something, as in 'a testament to what humanity can achieve'

trajectory

the curved path of something that has been fired, hit, or thrown into the air

Key Facts

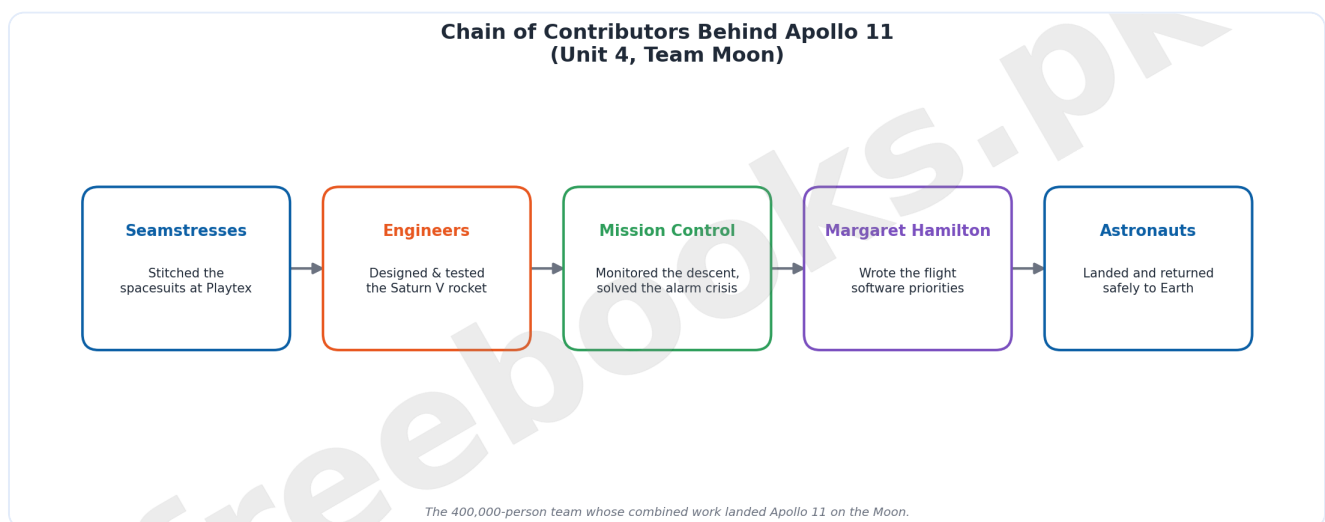
Aspect	Key Fact
Author / adaptation	Adapted and reimagined from 'Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon' by Catherine Thimmesh.
Mission	Apollo 11, the 1969 Moon landing mission.
Central theme	The power of teamwork and collaboration in achieving extraordinary goals.
Key contributors named	Seamstresses at Playtex, NASA engineers, Mission Control flight controllers, software engineer Margaret Hamilton, astronauts Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins.
Crisis moment	



Aspect	Key Fact
	Unexpected alarms during the lunar descent, resolved by Mission Control and Hamilton's prioritising software.
Famous quotation	"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." — Neil Armstrong.
Time on lunar surface	Just over 21 hours before Armstrong and Aldrin rejoined Collins for the return journey.
Splashdown	The Pacific Ocean, marking the mission's safe and successful conclusion.

Diagram

Chain of Contributors Behind Apollo 11: A sequential flow diagram of five connected boxes — Seamstresses, Engineers, Mission Control, Margaret Hamilton, and Astronauts — joined by arrows showing how each group's work fed into the mission's overall success, illustrating the passage's central idea that Apollo 11 was a team effort of 400,000 people.



Chain of Contributors Behind Apollo 11

Short Questions & Answers

What words did Neil Armstrong speak as he became the first human to step onto the Moon?



He said, 'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,' words that became a symbol of human achievement and were heard across televisions and radios worldwide.

Why was the work of the seamstresses at Playtex so important for the mission?

They crafted the spacesuits that protected the astronauts in the vacuum of space, and the suits had to be flexible yet strong enough that one misplaced stitch could spell disaster — making their careful, precise work a matter of life and death.

What challenges did the NASA engineers face with the Saturn V rocket?

They faced insurmountable-seeming challenges such as keeping the rocket stable, navigating through space with precision, and bringing the astronauts home safely, solving them through countless tests, simulations, and calculations.

What happened at Mission Control during the lunar module's descent?

Unexpected alarms suddenly blared as the lunar module 'Eagle' descended; flight controllers quickly determined the guidance computer was simply overloaded but still functioning, and their swift, calm decision-making allowed the descent to continue safely.

Who was Margaret Hamilton, and why was her work important?

She was the software engineer who led the team that developed the lunar module's flight software, creating code that could prioritise critical tasks — a feature that let the overloaded computer discard less important tasks and focus on landing safely.

What does the phrase 'a symphony conducted by countless hands' suggest about the mission's success?

It suggests that Apollo 11's success depended on the coordinated efforts of many different people — from janitors and technicians to scientists — each playing an essential part, much like musicians in an orchestra.

How long did Armstrong and Aldrin spend on the lunar surface, and what happened afterward?

They spent just over 21 hours on the lunar surface before rejoining Collins in the command module for the journey back to Earth, splashing down safely in the Pacific Ocean.



What is the central theme of 'Team Moon' according to the passage?

The central theme is the power of teamwork and collaboration in achieving extraordinary goals, showing that Apollo 11's success belonged to the 400,000 people who worked together, not just the three astronauts.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how the passage highlights the contributions of lesser-known individuals behind the Apollo 11 mission.

How does the passage describe the seamstresses' contribution?

The passage describes a team of seamstresses at Playtex who crafted the astronauts' spacesuits with meticulous care, knowing that one misplaced stitch could mean disaster. Their work, done far from the launch pads and public attention, is presented as a matter of life and death, showing that skilled manual labour was just as essential to the mission's success as the more visible engineering and piloting roles.

How does the passage present the role of the NASA engineers?

The engineers are shown tackling problems no one had solved before, refining the Saturn V rocket through countless tests, simulations, and calculations, and working tirelessly, often late into the night. The passage credits their collective effort and belief that they were part of something larger than themselves as central to overcoming the mission's technical challenges.

What role does Margaret Hamilton play in the narrative, and why is she called an 'unsung hero'?

Margaret Hamilton led the team that developed the lunar module's flight software, writing code by hand that could prioritise critical tasks during the landing. She is called an unsung hero because her foresight directly saved the mission when the computer became overloaded during descent, yet her contribution is far less publicly celebrated than the astronauts'.



Why does the author choose to widen the narrative beyond the three astronauts?

By naming and describing the seamstresses, engineers, flight controllers, and software engineers, the author shows that the Moon landing was not achieved by three individuals alone but by 400,000 people working together. This structural choice reinforces the passage's central theme of teamwork and gives credit to workers whose contributions are often overlooked in traditional retellings of the space race.

Explain the crisis during the lunar descent and how it was resolved, and discuss what this reveals about the mission's teamwork.

What happened when the lunar module 'Eagle' began its descent?

As the lunar module descended towards the Moon, unexpected alarms suddenly blared inside the spacecraft and at Mission Control — error codes that no one had expected during the final, most critical phase of the landing, creating a moment of intense tension.

How did the flight controllers at Mission Control respond to the alarms?

The flight controllers quickly sprang into action, scanning their screens, consulting their manuals, and conferring with each other. Within mere seconds, they determined that the alarms were not mission-critical — the guidance computer was simply overloaded with data but still functioning properly, allowing Armstrong and Aldrin to safely continue their descent.

How did Margaret Hamilton's software contribute to resolving the crisis?

Hamilton's team had designed the flight software with the foresight to prioritise the most critical tasks. When the computer became overloaded during the descent, this design meant it automatically discarded less important tasks and focused on the essential task of landing the spacecraft, directly enabling the mission's success at its most dangerous moment.



What does this crisis and its resolution reveal about the mission as a whole?

The crisis shows that Apollo 11's success depended on the calm, trained expertise of many people working together under pressure — flight controllers making split-second decisions and a software engineer's earlier foresight combining at the critical moment. It reinforces the passage's theme that no single person, however skilled, could have landed on the Moon alone; it required the coordinated readiness of the entire team.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

What words did Neil Armstrong speak upon stepping onto the Moon?

- A. "Houston, Tranquility Base here."
- B. "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."
- C. "The Eagle has landed safely."
- D. "We came in peace for all mankind."

Answer: B. "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Explanation: Armstrong's famous words upon becoming the first human to step onto the Moon were 'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.'

What was the seamstresses' task at Playtex?

- A. Testing rocket engines
- B. Crafting the astronauts' spacesuits
- C. Writing the flight software
- D. Monitoring Mission Control screens

Answer: B. Crafting the astronauts' spacesuits

Explanation: The seamstresses at Playtex were responsible for crafting the spacesuits that protected the astronauts in the harsh environment of space.

What rocket is described as a 'towering behemoth of engineering'?

- A. The Eagle lunar module
- B. The Saturn V rocket
- C. The command module Columbia
- D. The Mission Control tower

Answer: B. The Saturn V rocket



Explanation: The passage describes the Saturn V rocket as a towering behemoth of engineering that had to function flawlessly.

What caused the alarms during the lunar module's descent?

- A. A fuel leak
- B. The guidance computer being overloaded with data
- C. A structural crack in the module
- D. Loss of radio contact with Houston

Answer: B. The guidance computer being overloaded with data

Explanation: The alarms were caused by the guidance computer being overloaded with unnecessary data, though it was still functioning properly.

Who led the team that developed the lunar module's flight software?

- A. Neil Armstrong
- B. Buzz Aldrin
- C. Margaret Hamilton
- D. Michael Collins

Answer: C. Margaret Hamilton

Explanation: Margaret Hamilton was the software engineer who led the team that developed the onboard flight software for the lunar module.

What did Hamilton's software do when the computer became overloaded?

- A. It shut down completely
- B. It discarded less important tasks and focused on landing
- C. It restarted the entire system
- D. It transferred control to Mission Control

Answer: B. It discarded less important tasks and focused on landing

Explanation: Hamilton's foresight meant the software discarded less critical tasks and focused on landing the spacecraft when the computer became overloaded.

What phrase does the passage use to describe the mission's overall success?

- A. "A race against time"
- B. "A symphony conducted by countless hands"
- C. "A leap into the unknown"
- D. "A battle of wits"



Answer: B. "A symphony conducted by countless hands"

Explanation: The passage describes the mission's success as 'a symphony conducted by countless hands', emphasising the coordinated efforts of many contributors.

Approximately how long did Armstrong and Aldrin spend on the lunar surface?

- A. Just over 21 hours
- B. About 3 days
- C. Roughly 6 hours
- D. Just over 48 hours

Answer: A. Just over 21 hours

Explanation: The passage states that Armstrong and Aldrin spent just over 21 hours on the lunar surface before rejoining Collins for the return journey.

Where did the Apollo 11 command module splash down after the mission?

- A. The Atlantic Ocean
- B. The Indian Ocean
- C. The Pacific Ocean
- D. The Gulf of Mexico

Answer: C. The Pacific Ocean

Explanation: The astronauts splashed down safely in the Pacific Ocean, marking the successful conclusion of the mission.

What is the central theme of 'Team Moon' as presented in the passage?

- A. The dangers of space travel
- B. The power of teamwork and collaboration in achieving extraordinary goals
- C. The rivalry between NASA engineers and astronauts
- D. The technical limits of 1960s computing

Answer: B. The power of teamwork and collaboration in achieving extraordinary goals

Explanation: The passage's central theme is the power of teamwork and collaboration, showing that Apollo 11's success depended on 400,000 people working together, not just the astronauts.



Quick Revision Summary

- 'Team Moon' is adapted from Catherine Thimmesh's book about the 400,000 people who worked together to land Apollo 11 on the Moon.
- Neil Armstrong's words, 'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,' became a symbol of human achievement.
- Seamstresses at Playtex hand-stitched the astronauts' spacesuits with meticulous care, knowing errors could be fatal.
- NASA engineers built and refined the Saturn V rocket through countless tests, simulations, and calculations.
- At Mission Control, flight controllers quickly resolved unexpected alarms during the lunar module's descent.
- Margaret Hamilton led the team that wrote the flight software, which prioritised critical tasks and saved the landing.
- The passage describes the mission's success as 'a symphony conducted by countless hands.'
- Armstrong and Aldrin spent just over 21 hours on the lunar surface before returning to the command module.
- The astronauts splashed down safely in the Pacific Ocean, completing the mission.
- The central theme is that great achievements, like the Moon landing, are made possible through teamwork and collaboration.

Exam Tips

- Unit 4 does not currently appear in this year's PECTAA paper pattern (the pattern draws from Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10 as the prose group and Units 3, 6, 11, 13 as the poem group), so treat this unit as extra reading and comprehension practice rather than a primary exam-focus unit.
- Even though it may not be directly examined this year, the vocabulary and glossary words here (behemoth, insurmountable, perseverance, trajectory, and others) are useful general-purpose academic words worth learning for the synonym questions drawn from other units.
- Practise identifying the main idea of each of the passage's named sections (seamstresses, engineers, Mission Control, Margaret Hamilton) — this kind of



section-by-section comprehension skill transfers directly to the examinable prose units.

- If your teacher does include this unit for internal assessment, the Mission Control crisis (unexpected alarms during descent) is the passage's most detailed, exam-worthy episode — be ready to narrate it in sequence.
- Use this unit's questions on structure and point of view (why the author focuses on lesser-known contributors) as practice for the kind of critical-thinking questions that may appear on other units in this book.
- Keep the distinction clear between the real historical facts of Apollo 11 and the fact that this specific text is an adapted, reimagined retelling — exam answers should stay faithful to what the passage itself states.



Unit 5: Impact of Global Warming on Pakistan

This unit presents an informational text on the 'Impact of Global Warming on Pakistan', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023, examining the country's vulnerability to climate change under the lens of SDG 13: Climate Action.

The text explains why Pakistan is especially susceptible to global warming and details its effects across six major areas: rising temperatures and heatwaves, melting glaciers and water scarcity, extreme weather events, agriculture and food security, coastal erosion and sea-level rise, and threats to biodiversity — supported throughout by data tables and named Government initiatives launched under SDG 13.

These notes summarise the passage strictly as given in the textbook and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Provide an objective summary of an informational, non-fiction text, capturing its main ideas and key data points.
- Use summary skills to extract salient points and develop a mind map summarising the text's structure and content.
- Interpret and integrate information from a variety of sources, including tables and charts, for comprehension.
- Consult reference materials to clarify the precise meaning, part of speech, or etymology of unfamiliar words.
- Comprehend and correctly use contemporary idioms and proverbs in speech and writing.
- Recognise and use subordinating and correlative conjunctions to connect clauses effectively.
- Produce clear, coherent, informative writing appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.



Key Concepts

Why Pakistan Is Vulnerable to Global Warming

The passage opens by situating Pakistan's vulnerability within the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established in 2015, with SDG 13: Climate Action being particularly relevant. Pakistan's vulnerability stems from its diverse geography — high mountain ranges, vast plains, and an extensive coastline — which exposes it to a wide range of climate-related risks including glacial melt, extreme heat, and sea-level rise.

This vulnerability is compounded by heavy dependence on agriculture (a sector highly sensitive to temperature and precipitation changes), rapid urbanisation of cities like Karachi and Lahore combined with inadequate infrastructure, limited financial and technical resources for mitigation and adaptation, and immense pressure on resources from a population exceeding 220 million.

Rising Temperatures and Heatwaves

Pakistan has seen a significant rise in average temperatures over recent decades, driven by increased global greenhouse gas emissions and worsened locally by urban heat islands in densely built-up areas like Karachi. The textbook's own data (Table 1) shows the temperature increase accelerating from $+0.2^{\circ}\text{C}$ (1901-1950) to $+0.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ (1951-2000) to $+0.6^{\circ}\text{C}$ (2001-2020).

In 2022, Jacobabad recorded 51°C (124°F), among the highest temperatures in the world, and the 2015 Karachi heatwave resulted in over 1,200 deaths. In response, Pakistan introduced the Heatwave Management Plan, including early warning systems and public awareness campaigns, under SDG 13.

Melting Glaciers and Water Scarcity

Glaciers in the Himalayas and Karakoram ranges, crucial for feeding the Indus River, are melting at an accelerated rate due to rising temperatures. This initially increases water flow and flood risk, but over time reduces water availability, threatening agriculture and drinking water — a problem acute for Pakistan given its heavy reliance on the Indus River.



The textbook's data (Table 2) shows glacier melt rising from 10% (1980s, slight impact) to 20% (2000s, noticeable reduction) to 30% (2020s, significant reduction), with over 30% of Pakistan's glacial ice already melted. Pakistan has implemented the Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) project under SDG 13, building early warning systems and protective infrastructure.

Increased Frequency of Extreme Weather Events

Pakistan is witnessing more frequent and severe floods, droughts, and cyclones, driven by disrupted global weather patterns causing more intense rainfall and prolonged dry periods. The 2010 floods affected over 20 million people and caused an estimated \$10 billion in economic losses, while regions like Tharparkar face more frequent droughts, worsening water shortages and food insecurity.

In response, Pakistan developed the National Disaster Risk Management Framework under SDG 13, aiming to enhance disaster preparedness, response mechanisms, and resilience in vulnerable communities.

Impact on Agriculture and Food Security

Because Pakistan relies heavily on agriculture for food security and employment, unpredictable temperature and precipitation changes are making the sector less productive. The textbook's data (Table 3) projects wheat yields declining from 0% (2020) to 3% (2030) to 6-8% (2050) due to changing climate conditions.

The 2020 locust attack, driven by unusual weather patterns, caused crop losses worth \$2.2 billion, underlining the sector's vulnerability. Pakistan is promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture under SDG 13, including drought-resistant crops, optimised water use, and improved soil management.

Coastal Erosion and Sea-Level Rise

Rising sea levels and coastal erosion, driven by global temperature increases, threaten the coastline of Sindh and Balochistan, risking displacement of coastal communities, damage to infrastructure, and inundation of agricultural lands. The textbook's data (Table 4) projects sea levels rising from 0.1m (2020, 0.2 million displaced) to 0.3m (2050, 2.0 million displaced) to 0.6m (2100, 5.0 million displaced).



The primary causes are thermal expansion of seawater and melting polar ice caps. Pakistan has launched the Mangrove Rehabilitation Project under SDG 13, restoring mangrove forests that act as natural barriers against coastal erosion and sea-level rise.

Threats to Biodiversity and Ecosystems

Changing temperature and precipitation patterns are disrupting natural habitats, causing species decline and ecosystem degradation — a serious concern given Pakistan's reliance on natural resources for livelihood. The textbook's data (Table 5) shows forest cover loss rising from 20,000 hectares (2000) to 30,000 (2010) to 43,000 hectares annually (2020).

Species such as the snow leopard and the Indus River dolphin are losing habitat due to changing climate conditions, driven by habitat destruction, deforestation, and unsustainable land use. Pakistan has initiated the Protected Areas Initiative under SDG 13 to conserve critical habitats and endangered species.

Theme: Climate Change and a Vulnerable Nation

The unit's theme is climate change and its multifaceted effects on a vulnerable nation. It explores how global warming, driven by human activities, impacts Pakistan's environment, economy, and society, emphasising the urgent need for climate action as outlined in SDG 13, and highlighting the complex, interconnected nature of rising temperatures, glacier melting, extreme weather, agricultural decline, coastal erosion, and biodiversity loss.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

biodiversity

the existence of a large number of different kinds of animals and plants which make a balanced environment

diversity

a range of many people or things that are very different from each other

glacial

caused or made by a slow-moving mass or river of ice, formed from snow on mountains or near the North Pole or South Pole



habitat

the place where a particular type of animal or plant is normally found

infrastructure

the basic systems and services necessary for a country or an organisation to run smoothly, for example buildings, transport, and water and power supplies

mitigate

to make something less harmful, serious, etc.

precipitation

rain, snow, etc. that falls, or the amount of this that falls

projections

an estimate or statement of what figures, amounts, or events will be in the future, based on what is happening now

scarcity

a situation in which there is not enough of something and it is difficult to obtain

susceptible

very likely to be influenced, harmed, or affected by something

sustainable

involving the use of natural products and energy in a way that does not harm the environment

urbanization

the process in which towns, streets, factories, etc. are built where there was once countryside

vulnerability

the fact of being weak and easily hurt physically or emotionally

Key Facts

Aspect	Key Fact
Relevant SDG	SDG 13: Climate Action, part of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (established 2015).

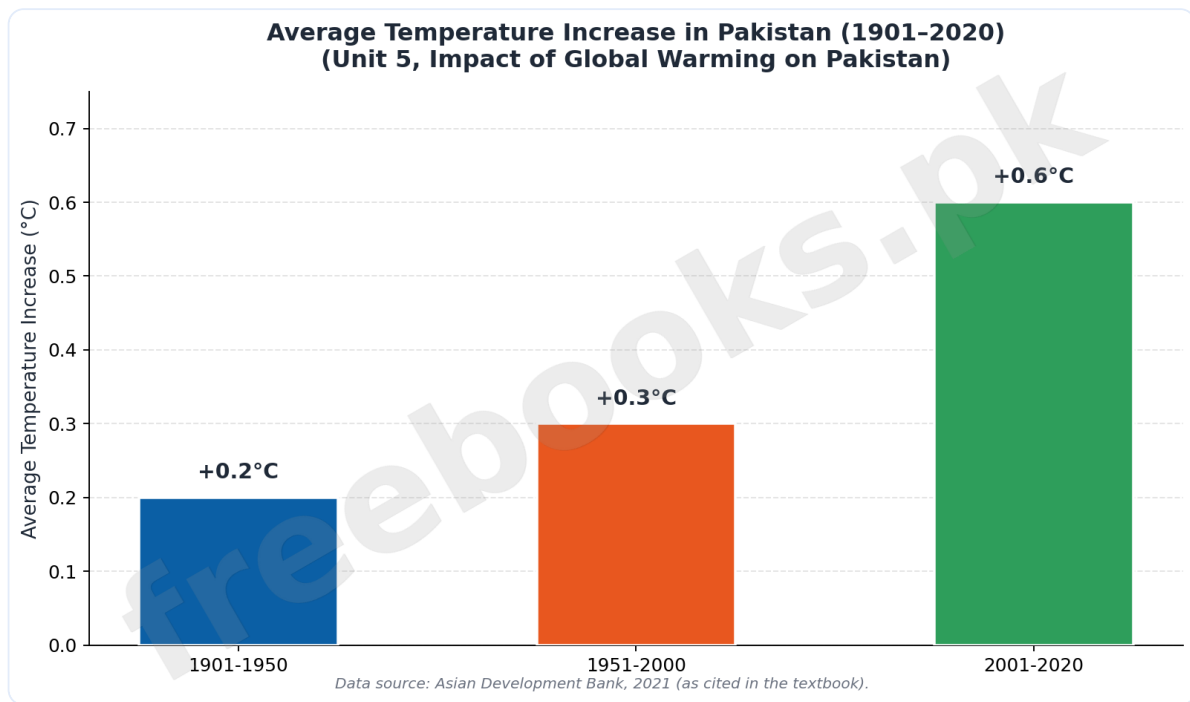


Aspect	Key Fact
Six impact areas covered	Rising temperatures/heatwaves, glacier melting/water scarcity, extreme weather events, agriculture/food security, coastal erosion/sea-level rise, biodiversity threats.
Temperature rise (2001-2020)	+0.6°C, up from +0.2°C in 1901-1950 (Table 1, Asian Development Bank, 2021).
Jacobabad 2022 record	51°C (124°F), among the highest temperatures recorded in the world.
2015 Karachi heatwave	Over 1,200 deaths (BBC News, 2015).
Glacier melt	Over 30% of Pakistan's glacial ice already melted by the 2020s (Table 2).
2010 floods	Affected over 20 million people; economic losses of \$10 billion (World Bank, 2010).
Projected wheat yield decline	6-8% by 2050 due to climate change (IFPRI, 2021).
Sea-level rise by 2100	0.6 metres, potentially displacing up to 5 million people (IUCN, 2022).
Forest cover loss (2020)	Approximately 43,000 hectares annually (Global Forest Watch, 2022).

Diagram

Average Temperature Increase in Pakistan (1901-2020): A bar chart plotting the textbook's Table 1 data, showing the average temperature increase across three periods: +0.2°C (1901-1950), +0.3°C (1951-2000), and +0.6°C (2001-2020), illustrating the accelerating pace of warming described in the passage.





Average Temperature Increase in Pakistan (1901-2020)

Short Questions & Answers

What makes Pakistan particularly vulnerable to the impacts of global warming?

Pakistan's vulnerability stems from its diverse geography (mountains, plains, coastline), heavy dependence on agriculture, rapid urbanisation with inadequate infrastructure, limited financial and technical resources, and immense pressure on resources from a population exceeding 220 million.

How does rising temperature affect urban areas like Karachi?

Rising temperatures cause more frequent and intense heatwaves in Karachi, worsened by urban heat islands where densely built-up areas retain more heat; the 2015 Karachi heatwave alone resulted in over 1,200 deaths.

What is the connection between glacial melting and water scarcity in Pakistan?

Melting glaciers initially increase water flow and flood risk, but over time reduce water availability, threatening agriculture and drinking water supplies, since Pakistan's agriculture depends heavily on the Indus River fed by these glaciers.

Why are extreme weather events becoming more frequent in Pakistan?



Global warming has disrupted global weather patterns, leading to more intense rainfall and prolonged dry periods; combined with Pakistan's geographical diversity, rapid urbanisation, and population growth, this makes the country especially susceptible to floods, droughts, and cyclones.

How does global warming impact Pakistan's agriculture sector?

Changes in temperature, precipitation, and increased extreme weather events make agriculture more unpredictable and less productive, with wheat yields projected to decline 6-8% by 2050 and events like the 2020 locust attack causing \$2.2 billion in crop losses.

Why is it important for Pakistan to implement the Heatwave Management Plan under SDG 13?

The plan, including early warning systems and public awareness campaigns, helps reduce the severe health risks posed by extreme heat, as seen in the 2015 Karachi heatwave, which caused over 1,200 deaths.

What role does Pakistan's reliance on agriculture play in its vulnerability to climate change?

Since agriculture is highly sensitive to temperature and precipitation changes and remains a major source of food security and employment, Pakistan's heavy dependence on it exacerbates the country's overall vulnerability to climate change.

Can limited financial and technical resources hinder Pakistan's ability to adapt to climate change?

Yes — the passage states that Pakistan's limited financial and technical resources hinder its ability to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate change, compounding the other geographic and economic vulnerabilities it faces.



Long Questions & Answers

Discuss the major impacts of global warming on Pakistan as described in the passage, with reference to specific data.

How has global warming affected temperatures and heatwaves in Pakistan?

The passage shows temperatures rising from $+0.2^{\circ}\text{C}$ (1901-1950) to $+0.6^{\circ}\text{C}$ (2001-2020), with Jacobabad recording 51°C in 2022 and the 2015 Karachi heatwave causing over 1,200 deaths — effects worsened locally by urban heat islands in cities like Karachi.

What impact has glacier melting had on Pakistan's water resources?

Over 30% of Pakistan's glacial ice has already melted, initially increasing water flow and flood risk but ultimately reducing water availability for agriculture and drinking water, since the Indus River — Pakistan's main water source — depends on these glaciers.

How have extreme weather events and agriculture been affected?

Extreme weather events have intensified, exemplified by the 2010 floods that affected over 20 million people and caused \$10 billion in losses; agriculture has suffered too, with wheat yields projected to decline 6-8% by 2050 and the 2020 locust attack causing \$2.2 billion in crop losses.

What threats do coastal areas and biodiversity face?

Sea levels are projected to rise 0.6 metres by 2100, potentially displacing up to 5 million people along Sindh and Balochistan's coastline, while Pakistan loses approximately 43,000 hectares of forest annually, threatening species like the snow leopard and Indus River dolphin.



Explain the steps Pakistan has taken under SDG 13 to address the effects of global warming described in the passage.

What has Pakistan done to manage heatwaves and glacial risks?

Pakistan introduced the Heatwave Management Plan, featuring early warning systems and public awareness campaigns, and the Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) project, which builds early warning systems and protective infrastructure against glacial melt risks.

What measures address extreme weather events and agricultural vulnerability?

Pakistan developed the National Disaster Risk Management Framework to enhance disaster preparedness and community resilience, and is promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture, including drought-resistant crops, optimised water use, and improved soil management.

How is Pakistan responding to coastal and biodiversity threats?

Pakistan launched the Mangrove Rehabilitation Project to restore mangrove forests as natural barriers against coastal erosion and sea-level rise, and initiated the Protected Areas Initiative to conserve critical habitats and expand protection for endangered species.

Why does the passage present these initiatives as part of a single, connected response?

Because all these initiatives fall under SDG 13: Climate Action, the passage frames them as parts of a coordinated national strategy — showing that Pakistan is not just documenting the effects of climate change but actively working, sector by sector, to mitigate and adapt to them.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Which of the following is a primary reason for Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change?



- A. Lack of technology
- B. Geographic diversity
- C. High literacy rate
- D. Industrial growth

Answer: B. Geographic diversity

Explanation: The passage identifies Pakistan's diverse geography — mountains, plains, and coastline — as a primary reason for its vulnerability to climate-related risks.

What is the major effect of glacier melting in Pakistan as mentioned in the text?

- A. Increased agricultural productivity
- B. Decreased sea levels
- C. Reduced water availability
- D. More frequent earthquakes

Answer: C. Reduced water availability

Explanation: Over time, glacier melting reduces water availability, threatening agriculture and drinking water supplies dependent on the Indus River.

Which city in Pakistan is particularly affected by rising temperatures and heatwaves, according to the text?

- A. Islamabad
- B. Karachi
- C. Lahore
- D. Peshawar

Answer: B. Karachi

Explanation: The passage highlights Karachi as particularly affected, citing the 2015 heatwave that caused over 1,200 deaths.

Which step has Pakistan taken to address the risks of glacial melting?

- A. Renewable Energy Development Program
- B. Urban Heat Island Reduction Plan
- C. Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) Project
- D. Coastal Erosion Prevention Program

Answer: C. Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) Project

Explanation: Pakistan implemented the Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) project under SDG 13 to address glacial melt risks.



Which areas are being threatened by rising sea levels in Pakistan?

- A. Desert regions
- B. Mountainous regions
- C. Coastal regions
- D. Urban centers

Answer: C. Coastal regions

Explanation: The coastline of Sindh and Balochistan is threatened by rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

What temperature did Jacobabad record in 2022, as cited in the passage?

- A. 44°C
- B. 48°C
- C. 51°C
- D. 55°C

Answer: C. 51°C

Explanation: Jacobabad recorded 51°C (124°F) in 2022, among the highest temperatures recorded in the world.

According to Table 3, by how much are wheat yields projected to decline by 2050?

- A. 0%
- B. 3%
- C. 6-8%
- D. 15%

Answer: C. 6-8%

Explanation: The passage projects wheat yields to decline by 6-8% by 2050 due to changing climate conditions (IFPRI, 2021).

What initiative is Pakistan promoting to address agricultural vulnerability under SDG 13?

- A. Urban Heat Island Reduction Plan
- B. Climate-Smart Agriculture
- C. Mangrove Rehabilitation Project
- D. National Disaster Risk Management Framework

Answer: B. Climate-Smart Agriculture



Explanation: Pakistan is promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture, including drought-resistant crops and improved water and soil management.

Approximately how many people could be displaced by sea-level rise in Pakistan by 2100?

- A. 0.2 million
- B. 2 million
- C. 5 million
- D. 10 million

Answer: C. 5 million

Explanation: The passage projects up to 5 million people could be displaced by 2100 due to a 0.6-metre sea-level rise.

Which species are named in the passage as losing habitat due to climate change?

- A. Tigers and elephants
- B. Snow leopard and Indus River dolphin
- C. Polar bears and penguins
- D. Cheetahs and gazelles

Answer: B. Snow leopard and Indus River dolphin

Explanation: The passage names the snow leopard and the Indus River dolphin as species losing habitat due to changing climate conditions.

Quick Revision Summary

- Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change stems from its diverse geography, agricultural dependence, rapid urbanisation, limited resources, and large population.
- Average temperatures rose from +0.2°C (1901-1950) to +0.6°C (2001-2020); Jacobabad recorded 51°C in 2022.
- The 2015 Karachi heatwave caused over 1,200 deaths; Pakistan responded with the Heatwave Management Plan.
- Over 30% of Pakistan's glacial ice has melted, threatening the Indus River's water supply; the GLOF project addresses this risk.
- The 2010 floods affected over 20 million people and caused \$10 billion in losses; the National Disaster Risk Management Framework was developed in response.



- Wheat yields are projected to decline 6-8% by 2050; the 2020 locust attack caused \$2.2 billion in crop losses.
- Sea levels could rise 0.6 metres by 2100, displacing up to 5 million people; the Mangrove Rehabilitation Project protects the coastline.
- Pakistan loses about 43,000 hectares of forest annually, threatening species like the snow leopard and Indus River dolphin.
- All these responses fall under SDG 13: Climate Action, part of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
- The unit's theme is climate change's multifaceted, interconnected effects on a vulnerable nation.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'prose group' (Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10), which under the current paper pattern carries heavier weight — 5 of the paper's synonym questions and 3 of its MCQs are drawn from these prose units, so revise the 13 glossary words in this unit carefully.
- Since only 7 of the 10 short questions asked from the prose group need to be attempted, practice answering all 8 short questions in this unit so you have a comfortable choice on exam day.
- Memorise the key data points (temperature figures, glacier melt percentages, flood and displacement statistics) exactly as given in the textbook tables — examiners often test recall of specific numbers from informational texts like this one.
- Learn each SDG 13 initiative alongside the specific problem it addresses (Heatwave Management Plan → heatwaves, GLOF project → glacial melt, and so on) as this pairing is a common source of short-answer and MCQ questions.
- This unit's passage may also be set for the punctuation exercise or Urdu-translation/essay-writing option, so practice both as part of your preparation for this and the other prose units.
- When answering long questions, structure your answer sector by sector (temperature, glaciers, weather events, agriculture, coast, biodiversity) exactly as the passage does, rather than mixing the impacts together.



Unit 6: The Echoing Green

This unit presents William Blake's poem 'The Echoing Green', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The poem follows a single day on a village green from sunrise to sunset — children playing, the elderly watching and remembering their own youth, and the children finally growing weary and going home to rest — using this day-cycle to reflect the joyful innocence of childhood and the larger cycle of human life.

These notes summarise the poem strictly as given in the textbook, provide the full poem text, a stanza-wise explanation (the specific skill tested in the exam question 'explain the given stanza with reference to context'), literary devices with examples from the poem, comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate attentive listening skills while working in groups and taking turns to speak with standard pronunciation and intonation.
- Use pre-reading and while-reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within the poem, including biases and opinions.
- Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase by checking its inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- Apply knowledge of parts of speech, tenses, and sentence structure to understand how language functions within the poem.
- Use paraphrasing skills to restate a stanza of the poem in simpler words while preserving its meaning.



Key Concepts

About the Poet: William Blake

William Blake (1757-1827) was an English poet and painter, known for his unique and visionary work. 'The Echoing Green' reflects his recurring themes of innocence, nature, and the cycles of life, expressing the joy and innocence of children's early life experiences and appreciating nature in simple words.

Blake often combined his poetry with illustrations, creating a blend of visual and literary art — a wider body of work into which 'The Echoing Green' fits as an example of his 'Songs of Innocence' style.

Central Idea of the Poem

The central idea of 'The Echoing Green' is the joyful and harmonious relationship between nature and human life. The poem celebrates the happiness of children playing and the wisdom of the elderly, all within the peaceful setting of a green field.

The progression of the day is used to reflect the cycle of life: the bright morning, full of birdsong and play, gives way to a calm, darkening evening, mirroring the movement from childhood through adulthood and into old age.

Theme: Innocence and Joy of Childhood

The children's carefree play on the Green — described through cheerful bells, singing birds, and lively 'sports' — represents pure, untroubled innocence. Blake presents this joy as something natural and universal, requiring no explanation beyond the simple pleasure of a spring day.

Theme: Age, Memory, and the Passage of Time

Old John and the other elderly folk sit beneath the oak, laughing at the children's play and remembering, 'Such, such were the joys... in our youth-time,' when they too played on the Green. This creates a bridge between generations, showing how the same joys repeat across a human lifetime, and how memory allows the old to relive their youth by watching the young.



Theme: Nature and the Cycle of the Day

The poem is structured around the natural progression of a single day — sunrise, midday activity, and sunset — used as a symbol for the larger cycle of human life from childhood to old age. The 'darkening Green' at the poem's close does not suggest sadness so much as natural, peaceful rest, paralleling old age as a calm, restful stage of life rather than an ending to be feared.

Poem Text

*The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells' cheerful sound.
While our sports shall be seen
On the Echoing Green.*

*Old John, with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk,
They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say.
'Such, such were the joys.
When we all girls & boys,
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Echoing Green.'*

*Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:*



*Round the laps of their mothers,
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest;
And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.*

Stanza-wise Explanation

Stanza 1

*The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around,
To the bells' cheerful sound.
While our sports shall be seen
On the Echoing Green.*

The poem opens at sunrise, with the rising sun making the sky 'happy' — an example of personification that sets a joyful, welcoming tone. Church bells ring cheerfully to welcome spring, and the sky-lark and thrush sing louder in response, as if nature itself is celebrating the season. The stanza closes by introducing the children's 'sports' (games and play) on the Echoing Green, establishing the poem's central setting and its atmosphere of shared, natural joy between the birds, the bells, and the children.

Stanza 2

*Old John, with white hair
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk,*



*They laugh at our play,
And soon they all say.
'Such, such were the joys.
When we all girls & boys,
In our youth-time were seen,
On the Echoing Green.'*

The scene shifts to Old John and the elderly folk sitting beneath an oak tree, watching the children play. Their laughter 'away care' shows that watching the young brings them relief from the burdens of age. Their remembered words — 'Such, such were the joys... in our youth-time' — form the poem's most direct statement of its theme: the same green, the same joys, are shared across generations, with the elders reliving their own childhood through the children in front of them.

Stanza 3

*Till the little ones weary
No more can be merry
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end:
Round the laps of their mothers,
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest;
And sport no more seen,
On the darkening Green.*

As the day ends, the children grow weary and their play comes to a natural close, timed exactly with the setting sun — 'The sun does descend, / And our sports have an end.' The children return to their mothers' laps, and Blake compares them to birds settling into a nest, a simile that conveys warmth, safety, and natural rest rather than loss. The 'darkening Green' that closes the poem completes the day-cycle begun in stanza one, and by extension suggests that old age and rest are a peaceful, natural close to life's cycle, not something to fear.



Important Definitions (Glossary)

cheerful

happy, and showing it by the way that you behave

descend

to slope or move downwards

folk

people in general

merry

happy and cheerful

thrush

a bird with a brown back and brown spots on its chest

weary

very tired, especially after working hard or doing something for a long time

youth

the time of life when a person is young, especially the time before a child becomes an adult

Poem at a Glance

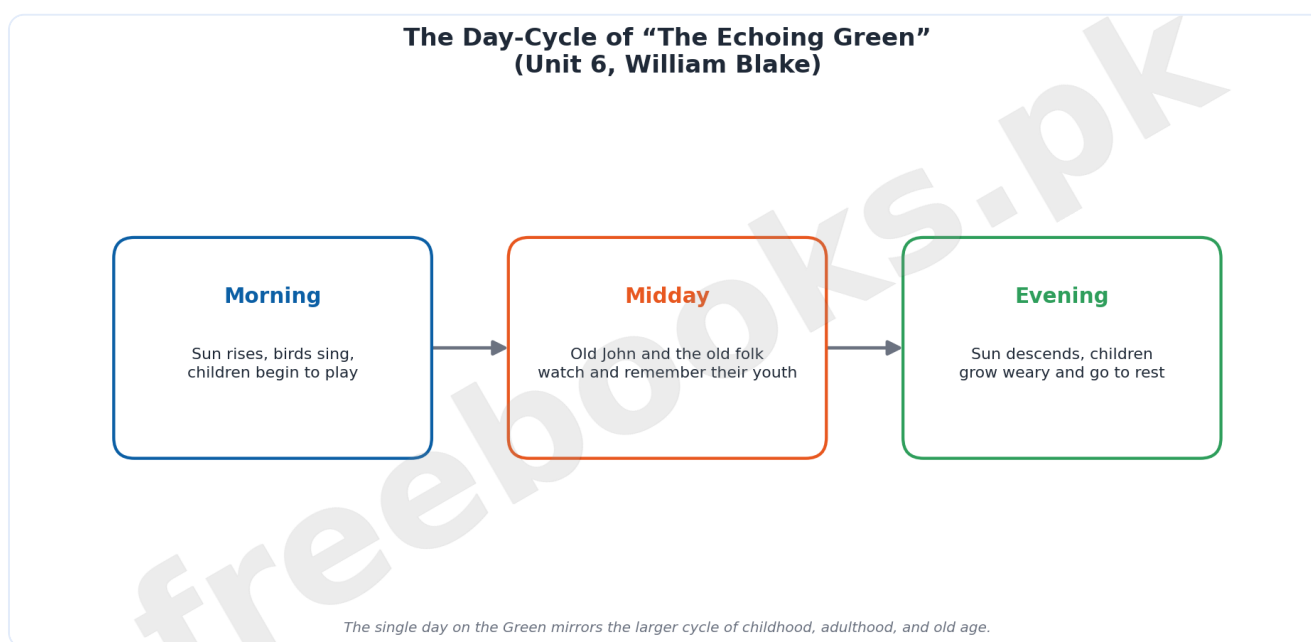
Aspect	Key Fact
Poet	William Blake (1757-1827).
Form	Three stanzas of ten lines each, simple rhyming couplets.
Style	Song-like, simple language associated with Blake's 'Songs of Innocence'.
Central theme	The joyful cycle of life, reflected through a single day's progression from sunrise to sunset.
Personification	"The sun does arise, / And make happy the skies." — the sun and sky are given human-like joy.
Simile	



Aspect	Key Fact
	"Like birds in their nest, / Are ready for rest" — comparing tired children to birds settling for the night.
Symbolism	The Echoing Green itself symbolises a shared, timeless space where childhood joy repeats across generations.
Structure mirrors theme	Morning → Midday → Evening structure mirrors the human life cycle of childhood → adulthood → old age.

Diagram

The Day-Cycle of the Poem: A sequential flow diagram of three connected boxes — Morning, Midday, and Evening — each captioned with the poem's corresponding stanza content, showing how the single-day cycle on the Echoing Green mirrors the larger cycle of childhood, adulthood, and old age.



The Day-Cycle of the Poem

Short Questions & Answers

What activities are taking place on the Echoing Green?

Children are playing joyful games ('sports') on the green, accompanied by ringing bells and birdsong, while the elderly watch from beneath an oak tree.



How does Blake portray the relationship between nature and human life in the poem?

Blake portrays nature and human life as harmonious and interconnected: the sun, birds, and bells celebrate the children's play, and the day's natural cycle from sunrise to sunset mirrors the human cycle from youth to old age.

What role do the 'old folk' play in the scene described?

The old folk, led by Old John, watch the children's play with joy, laughing away their cares and remembering their own youthful days on the same green, connecting the poem's generations through shared memory.

What is the significance of the shift from lively activity to quietness as the poem progresses?

The shift from lively morning play to a quiet, darkening evening mirrors the natural progression of a human life from active youth to restful old age, suggesting that this transition is peaceful and natural rather than something to fear.

How might the 'echoing' of the green symbolise memory or continuity between generations?

The 'echoing' suggests that the same joys and games are repeated across generations — the old folk's memories of their own youth on the green 'echo' in the children's play happening in front of them.

Identify an example of personification in the poem and explain its effect.

"The sun does arise, / And make happy the skies" personifies the sun and sky as capable of happiness, immediately establishing a joyful, welcoming tone for the poem's opening.

In what ways does the poem reflect the themes of innocence and the passage of time?

The children's carefree play reflects pure innocence, while the presence of Old John and the elderly, along with the day's progression from sunrise to sunset, reflects the passage of time and the cycle from youth to old age.

How might the poem be interpreted as a reflection on the cycles of life and the natural world?



By structuring the poem around a single day's natural cycle — sunrise, midday, sunset — Blake uses nature's rhythm as a metaphor for the human life cycle, suggesting that childhood, adulthood, and old age are as natural and peaceful as day turning to night.

Long Questions & Answers

Explain how William Blake uses the structure and imagery of a single day to reflect the cycle of human life in 'The Echoing Green'.

How does the poem's morning imagery represent childhood?

The first stanza's sunrise, cheerful bells, and singing birds represent the bright, joyful energy of childhood, with the children's 'sports' introduced as the natural centre of this lively morning scene.

How does the midday scene with Old John represent adulthood and memory?

The second stanza shifts to the old folk watching from beneath the oak, their laughter and memories of their own 'youth-time' representing a stage of life defined by reflection and connection to one's own past through the joy of others.

How does the evening imagery represent old age and rest?

The third stanza's setting sun and weary children returning to their mothers' laps, compared to birds settling into a nest, represent the peaceful winding-down of activity, mirroring old age as restful rather than sorrowful.

Why is this day-to-life structure an effective choice for the poem's theme?

Because a single day is something every reader has directly experienced, using its natural rhythm to represent the human life cycle makes the poem's message — that each stage of life is natural, connected, and worth celebrating — immediately relatable and emotionally accessible.



Discuss the significance of Old John and the 'old folk' in developing the poem's central idea.

What is Old John's role in the poem's scene?

Old John sits under the oak among the old folk, watching the children's play; his white hair marks him as elderly, and his laughter shows that observing the children's joy brings him relief from the cares of age.

What do the old folk's remembered words reveal about the poem's theme?

Their words, 'Such, such were the joys... in our youth-time were seen, on the Echoing Green,' directly state the poem's central idea — that the same joys experienced by the children were once experienced by the elderly themselves, linking the generations through shared, repeating experience.

How does the presence of the old folk change the meaning of the children's play?

Without the old folk, the children's play would simply be a scene of youthful joy; their presence transforms it into a demonstration of continuity, showing that childhood joy is not lost with age but lives on in memory and is renewed in each new generation.

What overall message does this generational connection communicate?

It communicates that life's joys are cyclical and shared rather than fleeting or exclusive to youth — the Echoing Green becomes a symbol of a joy that echoes across time, connecting every generation that has played, watched, and remembered there.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who is the poet of 'The Echoing Green'?

- A. William Wordsworth
- B. William Blake
- C. Emily Dickinson
- D. John Keats



Answer: B. William Blake

Explanation: 'The Echoing Green' was written by William Blake (1757-1827).

What time of day does the poem's first stanza describe?

- A. Noon
- B. Sunrise
- C. Midnight
- D. Sunset

Answer: B. Sunrise

Explanation: The first stanza opens with 'The sun does arise', describing sunrise.

Who is 'Old John' in the poem?

- A. A young boy playing games
- B. An elderly man sitting under the oak
- C. The poet himself
- D. A bird singing in the bush

Answer: B. An elderly man sitting under the oak

Explanation: Old John is described as an elderly man with white hair, sitting under the oak among the old folk.

What do the old folk say as they watch the children play?

- A. "Be careful and quiet."
- B. "Such, such were the joys... in our youth-time were seen."
- C. "The Green is not safe today."
- D. "We must go home now."

Answer: B. "Such, such were the joys... in our youth-time were seen."

Explanation: The old folk remember, 'Such, such were the joys... when we all girls & boys, in our youth-time were seen, on the Echoing Green.'

What happens to the children's play as the poem progresses?

- A. It continues into the night
- B. It ends when the sun descends and they grow weary
- C. It is interrupted by rain
- D. It moves indoors

Answer: B. It ends when the sun descends and they grow weary

Explanation: As the sun descends and the children grow weary, their sports come to a natural end and they are 'ready for rest.'



To what are the tired children compared in the final stanza?

- A. Flowers closing at night
- B. Birds in their nest
- C. Falling leaves
- D. Sleeping cats

Answer: B. Birds in their nest

Explanation: The children are compared to 'birds in their nest', a simile conveying warmth, safety, and natural rest.

"The sun does arise, / And make happy the skies" is an example of:

- A. Simile
- B. Personification
- C. Alliteration
- D. Metaphor

Answer: B. Personification

Explanation: This line personifies the sun and sky by giving them the human quality of happiness.

What does 'the Echoing Green' most likely symbolise?

- A. A dangerous, forbidden place
- B. A shared, timeless space where childhood joy repeats across generations
- C. A place of sadness and loss
- D. A location only children may visit

Answer: B. A shared, timeless space where childhood joy repeats across generations

Explanation: The Green symbolises a space where the same joys are experienced and remembered across generations, linking the young and the old.

Which structural pattern does the poem follow to reflect the human life cycle?

- A. Night to day
- B. Morning, midday, evening
- C. Spring to winter
- D. City to countryside

Answer: B. Morning, midday, evening

Explanation: The poem's three stanzas move from morning to midday to evening, mirroring the stages of childhood, adulthood, and old age.



The word 'weary' in the poem most nearly means:

- A. Excited
- B. Very tired
- C. Frightened
- D. Curious

Answer: B. Very tired

Explanation: 'Weary' means very tired, especially after doing something for a long time — here, after a full day of play.

Quick Revision Summary

- 'The Echoing Green' was written by William Blake (1757-1827), reflecting themes of innocence, nature, and the cycle of life.
- The poem has three stanzas of ten lines each, structured around a single day: morning, midday, and evening.
- Stanza 1 opens at sunrise, with cheerful bells and birdsong welcoming the children's play on the Green.
- Stanza 2 introduces Old John and the old folk, who watch the children and remember their own youth on the same green.
- Stanza 3 shows the sun descending and the weary children returning to their mothers, 'like birds in their nest'.
- "The sun does arise, / And make happy the skies" is a key example of personification in the poem.
- The children's tiredness is expressed through a simile comparing them to birds settling into a nest.
- The Echoing Green symbolises a shared, timeless space linking childhood joy across generations.
- The poem's central idea is the joyful, harmonious relationship between nature and human life, and the natural cycle from youth to old age.
- The 'darkening Green' at the poem's end suggests peaceful rest, not sorrow, paralleling old age as a natural, calm stage of life.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'poem group' (Units 3, 6, 11, 13), which under the current paper pattern carries lighter weight — 3 synonym questions and 2



MCQs are drawn from these poem units, and only 5 of 8 short questions from this group need to be attempted.

- The poem group is specifically and reliably tested with the question 'Explain the given stanza with reference to context' (5 marks) — practice writing a stanza-by-stanza explanation exactly like the one in this unit's notes, covering meaning, imagery, and how the stanza fits the poem's progression.
- Since any one of the three stanzas could be set for the 'reference to context' question, make sure you can explain all three, not just your favourite one — the stanza-wise section in these notes covers every stanza in full.
- Memorise the literary device definitions together with their exact example lines from the poem — personification ('make happy the skies'), simile ('like birds in their nest'), and symbolism (the Green itself) — as examiners often ask you to identify the device from a quoted line.
- Know the poet's background facts (William Blake, 1757-1827, English poet and painter, known for combining poetry with illustration) since short questions in the poem group often test factual recall about the poet alongside the poem's content.
- Practice paraphrasing at least one stanza in your own words, as the textbook itself sets paraphrasing as a specific writing task for this unit.



Unit 7: What You Do is What You Are

This unit presents the essay 'What You Do Is What You Are' by Nickie McWhirter, as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The essay argues that society unfairly judges and values people based on their jobs and job titles rather than who they are as individuals, examining how the unemployed, retired, and low-prestige workers are dismissed as being merely 'just' something, while certain professions are automatically granted greater respect regardless of their actual social value.

These notes summarise the passage strictly as given in the textbook and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Choose words and phrases for effect, recognising the persuasive and ironic tone of the essay.
- Apply skimming and scanning strategies to identify the writer's purpose, intended audience, and main theme.
- Give an informed personal and analytical response to the text with supporting textual references.
- Practise précis writing skills by summarising the essay's main argument in 80-100 words.
- Use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases such as 'validate' and 'cast in bronze'.
- Identify and correctly use gerunds, infinitives, and participles in reading and writing tasks.

Key Concepts

Defining People by Their Jobs

McWhirter opens by observing that, unlike people in most other parts of the world, society in this context tends to define and judge everyone by the work



they do, especially paid work. She gives examples such as 'Charlie is a doctor; Sam is a carpenter; Mary Ellen is a copywriter,' arguing that a person's job title is treated as if it validates or rejects their very existence.

For those without current paid work, she notes, society instead defines them by their past job history — 'Larry is a laid-off auto worker; Tony is a retired teacher' — assigning such non-employed persons to a kind of limbo, valued only for what they once did rather than who they are now.

The Limits of Past Identity

McWhirter finds this peculiar: people are not 'cast in bronze' because of the jobs they hold or once held, yet society treats job titles as permanent markers of identity. She illustrates this with Tony, a retired teacher who may spend significant volunteer time helping handicapped children — work that 'doesn't count' in the public eye, since he remains simply 'a retired teacher.'

Similarly, Larry, a laid-off auto worker, may pump gas or sell encyclopaedias on weekends, yet until he returns to steady work, he remains defined as 'laid-off auto worker' — as if, McWhirter writes ironically, 'he is nothing now, but he used to be something.'

The 'Just' Category

McWhirter identifies a whole category of people dismissed as being 'just' something — 'just' a housewife, 'just' a bum, 'just' a kid, 'just' a drunk, 'just' a cab driver, 'just' a janitor — a label she argues totally discounts a person's value, present and past. She notes pointedly that 'no one is ever just a vice-president,' showing that the 'just' label is reserved for low-pay, low-prestige, or non-earning roles.

This category includes present non-earners, people without a highly valued past job history, and people whose current jobs sit at the low end of pay and prestige scales — revealing, in McWhirter's view, how selectively and unfairly society applies this dismissive label.



A 'Classless' Society That Isn't

McWhirter points out the contradiction in a society that claims to be classless — refusing to recognise titled nobility or dynastic privilege — while still clearly separating the 'valued' from the 'valueless' based largely on jobs and the prestige attached to them. This section makes explicit the essay's central irony: formal equality exists alongside deep, informal inequality of respect.

Teaching Children How the System Works

McWhirter argues it is 'no use arguing whether any of this is correct or proper' — rationally, she admits, the system is silly, but since it is how society actually operates, children should be taught how it works. She uses the examples of wanting to grow up to be a cowboy or a nurse: children should understand that, apart from earning potential, a cattle breeder is far more respected than a hired hand, and a doctor receives far more respect and privilege than a nurse.

An Uncatalogued System of Respect

McWhirter suggests that an anthropologist ought to study this unwritten, uncatalogued system by which respect and deference are awarded based on jobs. She raises pointed, half-humorous questions — comparing a 'vice-president, product planning' to a 'vice-president, sales,' and observing that writers earn very little money ('diddly') yet may be held in higher esteem than wealthy rock musicians, at least among older generations.

Unequal Labels, Unequal Value, and the Essay's Theme

McWhirter closes by questioning why someone who builds shopping centres is called an 'entrepreneur' while someone who builds freeways is called a 'contractor' — two similar roles given very differently prestigious labels. She offers no final answers, but urges readers to notice this phenomenon the next time they are tempted to fawn over a stranger for holding a prestigious job, or to discount the worth of a garbage collector.

The essay's theme is a critique of how society judges individuals by their occupation or employment status rather than their actual character or



contribution — exposing the irrationality of a supposedly 'classless' society that nonetheless ranks people sharply according to their work.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

anthropologist

a person who studies the human race, especially its origins, development, customs, and beliefs

bum

a person who has no home or job and who asks other people for money or food

cast in bronze

to be permanently celebrated, honoured, or remembered for something, especially for a particular role, achievement, or status

classless

not clearly belonging to a particular social class

deference

behaviour that shows that you respect somebody or something

diddly

not anything; nothing

dynastic

connected with a series of leaders of a country who all belong to the same family

entrepreneur

a person who makes money by starting or running businesses, especially when this involves taking financial risks

fawn

to try to please somebody by praising them or paying them too much attention

limbo

a situation in which you are not certain what to do next and cannot take action, especially because you are waiting for somebody else to decide

non-earners

people who do not currently earn money through a job or paid employment



peculiar

strange or unusual, especially in a way that is unpleasant or makes you worried

prestige

the respect and value that somebody or something has because of their social position, or what they have done

privilege

a special right or advantage that a particular person or group of people has

uncatalogued

not formally recorded or arranged in any recognised order or system

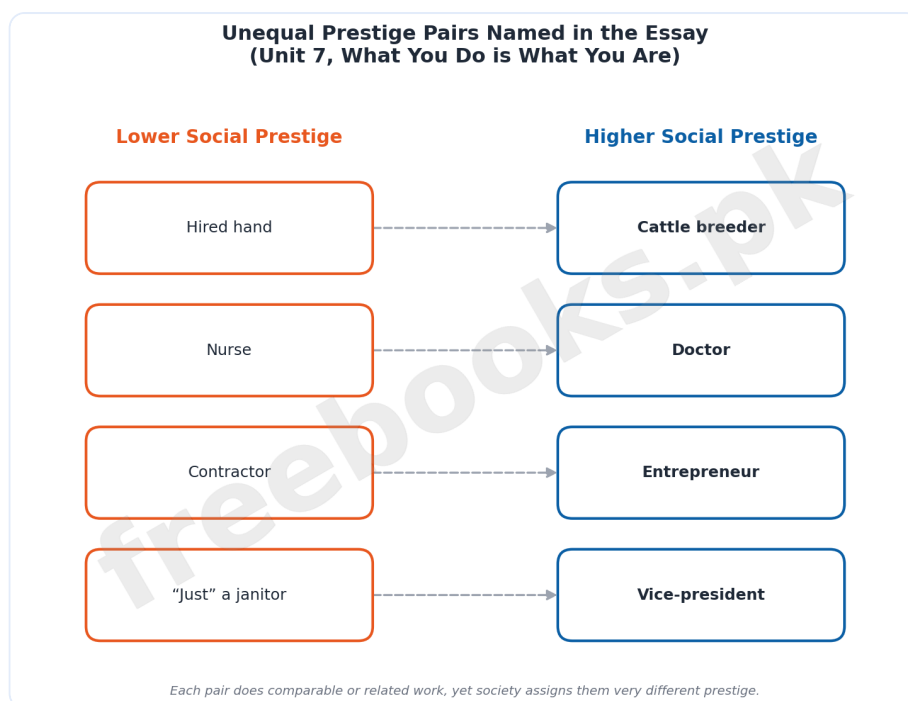
Key Facts

Aspect	Key Fact
Author	Nickie McWhirter.
Text type	Reflective, persuasive essay with an ironic tone.
Central theme	Society unfairly judges and values people based on their job or employment status rather than who they are.
Key phrase	"Cast in bronze" — no one should be permanently defined by a job they hold or once held.
The 'just' label	Applied to low-pay, low-prestige, or non-earning roles (e.g. 'just' a housewife, 'just' a janitor); never applied to high-prestige roles like vice-president.
Central irony	Society claims to be 'classless' yet clearly separates the valued from the valueless based on jobs.
Cowboy/nurse example	Children should be taught that a cattle breeder is more respected than a hired hand, and a doctor more than a nurse, regardless of earnings.
Entrepreneur vs contractor	Someone who builds shopping centres is called an entrepreneur; someone who builds freeways is called a contractor — unequal labels for comparable work.



Diagram

Unequal Prestige Pairs Named in the Essay: A two-column comparison diagram pairing the lower-prestige and higher-prestige job labels named in the passage — hired hand/cattle breeder, nurse/doctor, contractor/entrepreneur, and 'just' a janitor/vice-president — connected by dashed lines, illustrating the essay's central point about unequal social respect for comparable or related work.



Unequal Prestige Pairs Named in the Essay

Short Questions & Answers

Why does the author describe the way society defines people by their jobs as 'peculiar'?

She finds it peculiar because people are not permanently 'cast in bronze' by the jobs they hold or once held, yet society treats job titles as if they define a person's entire worth and identity, ignoring everything else about them.

Provide two examples the author uses to show how individuals are judged based on their employment status.

She gives Tony, a retired teacher whose volunteer work with handicapped children 'doesn't count' in the public eye, and Larry, a laid-off auto worker who remains defined by that past job even while doing other work on the side.



What does the phrase 'cast in bronze' symbolise in the context of the text?

It symbolises being permanently honoured or fixed in a particular identity or status; McWhirter argues people are not permanently defined this way by their jobs, even though society often treats job titles as if they were.

What is the critique behind labels like 'just a housewife' or 'just a janitor'?

McWhirter critiques these labels for totally discounting a person's value and contribution, showing that society reserves the dismissive word 'just' for low-pay, low-prestige, or non-earning roles, while never applying it to high-prestige jobs like vice-president.

In what way does the author suggest that children should be taught to understand respect and job roles in society?

She suggests children should be taught how the system actually works — for example, that a cattle breeder is more respected than a hired hand, and a doctor more than a nurse — even though she admits the system itself is 'rationally... silly.'

Why does the author state that no one is ever described as 'just' a vice-president?

This reveals that society reserves dismissive labels for low-status jobs while automatically granting respect and immunity from such labels to high-status positions, regardless of actual merit or contribution.

What contrast does the author draw between an entrepreneur and a contractor?

She contrasts someone who builds shopping centres, called an entrepreneur, with someone who builds freeways, called a contractor — two comparable roles given very differently prestigious labels, illustrating the arbitrary nature of social value judgments.

What is McWhirter's overall purpose in writing this essay?

Her purpose is to expose and critique the irrational, inconsistent way society assigns respect and value to people based on their jobs, and to encourage readers to notice and question this pattern in their own attitudes.



Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how the author critiques society's tendency to define people by their jobs, with reference to specific examples from the text.

How does the author introduce the idea that society defines people by their work?

McWhirter opens by noting that people are commonly identified by their job titles — 'Charlie is a doctor; Sam is a carpenter' — arguing that this practice treats a person's job as if it validates or rejects their very existence, rather than seeing the person as more than their occupation.

How are non-employed people treated differently, according to the essay?

Non-employed people are defined by their past job history instead, such as 'Larry is a laid-off auto worker' or 'Tony is a retired teacher,' with McWhirter noting that other meaningful activities these people do now — such as volunteering or part-time work — simply 'don't count' in how society labels them.

What is the significance of the 'just' category in the essay?

The 'just' category (e.g. 'just' a housewife, 'just' a janitor) represents the most extreme form of this judgment, totally discounting a person's value; McWhirter points out that this label is never applied to high-prestige roles like vice-president, revealing the selective unfairness of the practice.

What does the essay ultimately suggest about a 'classless' society?

McWhirter argues that although society claims to be classless — rejecting titled nobility and dynastic privilege — it nonetheless sharply separates the valued from the valueless based on jobs, showing that class-like distinctions persist informally through the prestige attached to different kinds of work.



Explain the examples of unequal prestige that McWhirter uses to support her argument, and discuss what she suggests should be done about this.

What example does the author give involving cowboys and cattle breeders?

She notes that while it is 'perfectly swell' for a child to want to grow up to be a cowboy, children should understand that, apart from earnings potential, a cattle breeder is far more respected in society than a hired hand doing similar physical work.

How does the doctor/nurse comparison support her argument?

She points out that a doctor receives far more respect and privilege than a nurse, even though both work in healthcare, illustrating how professional hierarchies grant unequal prestige to related roles based on factors beyond the actual value of the work performed.

What does the entrepreneur/contractor example add to her argument?

By noting that someone who builds shopping centres is called an 'entrepreneur' while someone who builds freeways is called a 'contractor,' she shows that even similar kinds of work can receive very different social labels and levels of admiration, purely based on the vocabulary society chooses to use.

What does McWhirter suggest readers should do in response to these patterns?

She does not offer a solution but urges readers to notice the phenomenon — to be conscious the next time they are tempted to fawn over someone because of a prestigious job title, or to discount the personal worth of someone like a garbage collector, encouraging greater self-awareness about these unconscious judgments.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who is the author of 'What You Do Is What You Are'?



- A. Emily Dickinson
- B. Nickie McWhirter
- C. William Blake
- D. Catherine Thimmesh

Answer: B. Nickie McWhirter

Explanation: The essay 'What You Do Is What You Are' was written by Nickie McWhirter.

According to the essay, how does society typically define non-employed people?

- A. By their hobbies
- B. By their past job history
- C. By their family background
- D. By their education level

Answer: B. By their past job history

Explanation: Society defines non-employed people by their past job history, such as calling someone a 'laid-off auto worker' or 'retired teacher.'

What does the phrase 'cast in bronze' mean in the context of the essay?

- A. Turned into statues to be honoured forever
- B. Paid for their work
- C. Made into machines
- D. Made unemployed

Answer: A. Turned into statues to be honoured forever

Explanation: 'Cast in bronze' means to be permanently celebrated or fixed in a particular identity or status.

Which of the following is NOT given as an example of the 'just' category in the text?

- A. 'Just' a housewife
- B. 'Just' a janitor
- C. 'Just' a vice-president
- D. 'Just' a bum

Answer: C. 'Just' a vice-president

Explanation: The text explicitly states that 'no one is ever just a vice-president,' showing the label is reserved for low-prestige roles.



What contradiction does the author highlight about society being 'classless'?

- A. Society has no jobs at all
- B. Society refuses titled nobility yet still separates the valued from the valueless based on jobs
- C. Society values all jobs equally
- D. Society only values unpaid work

Answer: B. Society refuses titled nobility yet still separates the valued from the valueless based on jobs

Explanation: McWhirter points out that despite claiming to be classless, society still sharply separates people by the prestige attached to their jobs.

In the essay, who is said to be more respected: a cattle breeder or a hired hand?

- A. The hired hand
- B. The cattle breeder
- C. Both are equally respected
- D. Neither is respected

Answer: B. The cattle breeder

Explanation: McWhirter states that, apart from earning potential, the cattle breeder is much more respected than the hired hand.

What does the author suggest about writers compared to wealthy rock musicians?

- A. Writers earn more money
- B. Writers may be held in higher esteem despite earning very little
- C. Writers are never respected
- D. Rock musicians are always more respected

Answer: B. Writers may be held in higher esteem despite earning very little

Explanation: McWhirter suggests writers earn very little ('diddly') but may be held in higher esteem than wealthy rock musicians, especially among older generations.

What contrast does the author draw between an entrepreneur and a contractor?

- A. They earn the same amount
- B. Someone who builds shopping centres is called an entrepreneur, someone



who builds freeways is called a contractor

C. Both terms mean exactly the same thing

D. Contractors are always more respected than entrepreneurs

Answer: B. Someone who builds shopping centres is called an entrepreneur, someone who builds freeways is called a contractor

Explanation: She contrasts these two similar roles as an example of unequal prestige attached through differing job labels.

What is the overall theme of 'What You Do Is What You Are'?

A. The importance of higher education

B. Society's unfair judgment of people based on their jobs or employment status

C. The history of the American workforce

D. The benefits of retirement

Answer: B. Society's unfair judgment of people based on their jobs or employment status

Explanation: The essay's central theme is a critique of how society unfairly judges and values people based on their occupation or employment status.

What tone does McWhirter primarily use in the essay?

A. Purely factual and detached

B. Reflective and mildly ironic

C. Angry and aggressive

D. Formal and legalistic

Answer: B. Reflective and mildly ironic

Explanation: McWhirter uses a reflective, sometimes ironic tone to expose the flaws in society's job-based value system.

Quick Revision Summary

- 'What You Do Is What You Are' is an essay by Nickie McWhirter critiquing how society judges people by their jobs.
- People are often defined by current job titles ('Charlie is a doctor') or, if unemployed, by past job history ('Larry is a laid-off auto worker').
- McWhirter argues people are not 'cast in bronze' by their jobs, yet society treats job titles as permanent identity markers.
- The 'just' category (e.g. 'just' a housewife, 'just' a janitor) totally discounts a person's value; no one is ever 'just' a vice-president.



- Society claims to be classless but still separates the valued from the valueless based on job prestige.
- McWhirter argues children should be taught how this system works, even though she admits it is 'rationally... silly.'
- Examples of unequal prestige include cattle breeder vs hired hand, doctor vs nurse, and entrepreneur vs contractor.
- Writers may be held in higher esteem than wealthy rock musicians despite earning far less money.
- The essay's theme is a critique of judging people's worth by their occupation rather than their character or contribution.
- McWhirter ends by urging readers to notice this pattern rather than offering a direct solution.

Exam Tips

- Unit 7 does not currently appear in this year's PECTAA paper pattern (the pattern draws from Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10 as the prose group and Units 3, 6, 11, 13 as the poem group), so treat this unit as extra reading and comprehension practice rather than a primary exam-focus unit.
- Even though it may not be directly examined this year, the vocabulary here (entrepreneur, prestige, deference, and others) is useful general-purpose academic vocabulary worth learning for the synonym questions drawn from other units.
- Practise identifying the author's ironic tone and persuasive word choices in this essay — this skill transfers directly to the examinable prose units, which are also tested on tone and word-choice questions.
- If your teacher does include this unit for internal assessment, the essay's key examples (Tony, Larry, the 'just' category, and the entrepreneur/contractor contrast) are its most detailed, exam-worthy material — be ready to explain each with its significance.
- Use this unit's précis-writing exercise (80-100 words) as practice for précis skills that may be assessed elsewhere, since précis writing is a specific skill named in this unit's learning outcomes.



- Keep your understanding of gerunds, infinitives, and participles from this unit's grammar section sharp, as these grammar points may reappear in the grammar section of the paper regardless of which reading units are examined.



Unit 8: Clean Water

This unit presents an informational text on 'Clean Water', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023, examining why clean water is essential for human health, the environment, and the economy.

The text explains the scale of the global water crisis using specific data — including WHO mortality figures and global access statistics — and covers the causes of water scarcity and contamination, their effects on health, agriculture, and ecosystems, and the collaborative solutions needed to address them.

These notes summarise the passage strictly as given in the textbook and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Engage effectively in collaborative discussions on grade-level topics, texts, and issues.
- Analyse organisational patterns in an informational text, including cause-effect and problem-solution structures.
- Distinguish cause from effect, and fact from opinion, with specific reference to informational texts.
- Acquire and independently gather vocabulary important for comprehension and expression.
- Write formal letters to people in extended academic and professional environments for various purposes.

Key Concepts

Why Clean Water Matters

The passage opens by establishing water's fundamental role in life: it constitutes about 60% of the human body and covers roughly 70% of the planet, yet only 3% of the earth's water is fresh water, and only one third of that fraction is readily available for use — this small share supports all life on land.



The passage warns that human activity and climate patterns are depleting and mistreating this limited resource, using water faster than it precipitates to the ground, putting both humans and entire ecosystems at risk. Clean water is described as vital for drinking, cooking, sanitation, and hygiene, and as a cornerstone of public health, environmental sustainability, and economic development.

Impact on Human Health

Contaminated water can harbour harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites, and chemicals that cause waterborne diseases such as cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis, with severe consequences for vulnerable populations such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 829,000 people die each year from diarrhoea caused by contaminated drinking water, sanitation, and poor hand hygiene.

Globally, around 2.2 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and 4.2 billion lack access to safely managed sanitation services. In areas where water is scarce or contaminated, people are less likely to practise good hygiene, leading to higher rates of illness — with children especially vulnerable, many dying before their fifth birthday due to lack of clean water and sanitation.

Environmental and Economic Implications

Clean water is crucial for maintaining ecosystems: rivers, lakes, and wetlands depend on it to support diverse wildlife and plant species. Pollution from industrial activities, agricultural runoff, and improper waste disposal can degrade aquatic life and disrupt delicate ecosystems, leading to declines in fish populations and habitat loss.

Pollutants such as heavy metals, chemicals, and pesticides can accumulate in water bodies, posing risks to both human health and the environment, compounding the challenges of water scarcity and contamination described elsewhere in the passage.



Impact on Agriculture and Food Security

Clean water is vital for agricultural and food production: farmers rely on it for irrigation, livestock watering, and crop production. Without access to clean water, farmers may struggle to grow crops and raise livestock, leading to food shortages, economic hardship, and increased prices affecting both local and global markets.

The economic burden of treating waterborne diseases and managing water pollution can be substantial for governments and communities, meaning that investing in clean water infrastructure improves public health while also fostering economic stability and growth.

Barriers to Universal Access

Despite its importance, access to clean water is not universal — many regions, particularly in developing countries, face challenges related to water scarcity and contamination, worsened by population growth, climate change, and pollution. In arid and semi-arid regions, water sources are often limited, making it difficult to meet the needs of growing populations, while climate change alters precipitation patterns, leading to droughts and reduced freshwater availability.

Solutions: Infrastructure, Community Initiatives, and Technology

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach combining sustainable solutions and community engagement. Governments, policymakers, international organisations, and local communities must work together to improve water infrastructure, implement effective waste management, and promote sustainable water use.

Community-based initiatives such as rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and watershed management can improve access to clean drinking water, while investments in water purification technologies and research can help develop innovative solutions for water treatment and management.

Education, Awareness, and Conclusion

Education and awareness are described as key components of improving water access and quality: teaching communities about the importance of clean water,



proper sanitation, and pollution prevention empowers individuals to protect their water sources. Supporting initiatives that provide clean water to underserved areas, such as building wells and water treatment facilities, can have a profound impact on public health and quality of life.

The passage concludes that clean water is a fundamental resource supporting human health, environmental sustainability, and economic development, and that ensuring clean water for all through collaborative effort is not only a matter of public health but a critical step towards global prosperity and well-being.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

accumulate

to gradually get more and more of something over a period of time

arid

having little or no rain; very dry

collaborative

involving, or done by, several people or groups of people working together

constitute

to be considered to be, or to form, something

contamination

the process of making something dirty or poisonous

disrupt

to make it difficult for something to continue in the normal way

drastically

in an extreme way that has a sudden, serious, or violent effect on something

drought

a long period of time when there is little or no rain

hygiene

the practice of keeping yourself and your living and working areas clean

inadequate

not enough; not good enough



incidence

the extent to which something happens or has an effect

innovative

introducing or using new ideas, ways of doing something, etc.

multifaceted

having many different aspects to be considered

profound

very great

scarcity

a shortage or lack of something

substantial

large in amount, value, or importance

vulnerable

weak and easily hurt physically or emotionally

Key Facts

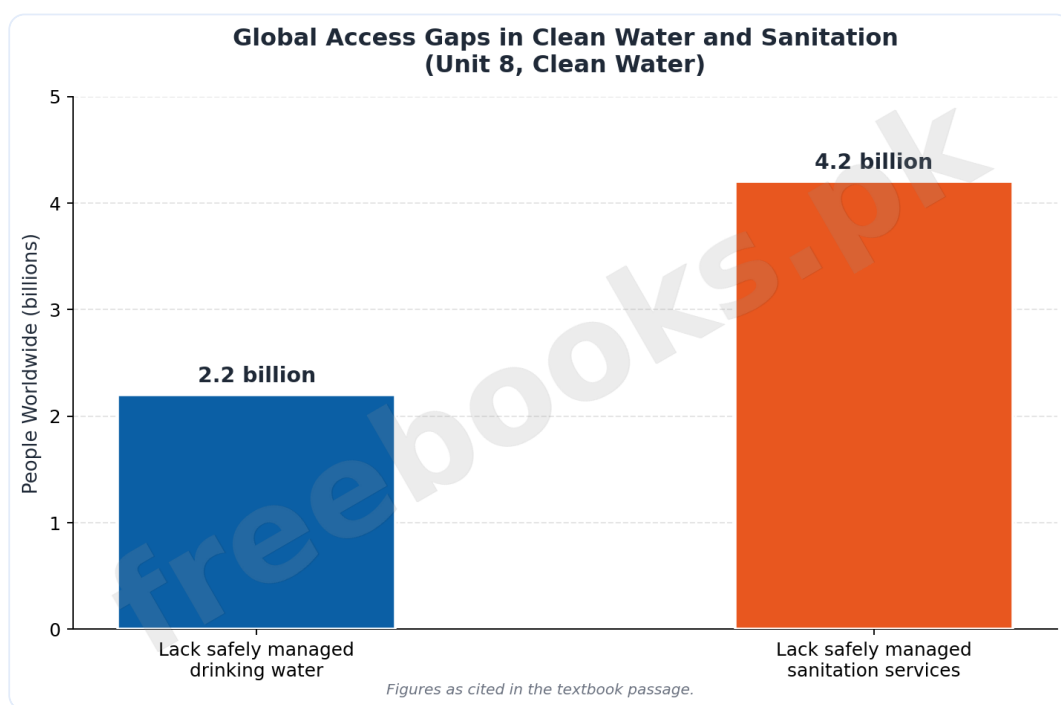
Aspect	Key Fact
Water on Earth	Covers ~70% of the planet, but only 3% is fresh water, and only one-third of that is readily available for use.
Water in the human body	Constitutes about 60% of the human body.
WHO mortality figure	Around 829,000 people die each year from diarrhoea caused by contaminated water, sanitation, and hygiene.
Lack safe drinking water	Around 2.2 billion people worldwide lack access to safely managed drinking water services.
Lack safe sanitation	Around 4.2 billion people worldwide lack access to safely managed sanitation services.
Waterborne diseases named	Cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis.



Aspect	Key Fact
Most vulnerable groups	Children, pregnant women, and the elderly.
Suggested solutions	Improved infrastructure, rainwater harvesting, water conservation, watershed management, purification technology, and education/awareness.

Diagram

Global Access Gaps in Clean Water and Sanitation: A bar chart plotting the passage's own statistics: 2.2 billion people worldwide lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and 4.2 billion lack access to safely managed sanitation services.



Global Access Gaps in Clean Water and Sanitation

Short Questions & Answers

Why is water described as fundamental to all forms of life?

Water constitutes about 60% of the human body and is essential for nearly every daily activity, yet only 3% of the earth's water is fresh, and only one third of that is readily available, making it a scarce and vital resource for all life on land.



How does contaminated water affect human health?

Contaminated water can harbour harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites, and chemicals that cause waterborne diseases such as cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis, with the WHO reporting around 829,000 deaths each year from diarrhoea linked to contaminated water, sanitation, and hygiene.

What environmental effects does water pollution cause, according to the passage?

Pollution from industrial activities, agricultural runoff, and improper waste disposal can degrade and harm aquatic life, disrupt delicate ecosystems, and cause declines in fish populations and habitat loss, with pollutants like heavy metals and pesticides accumulating in water bodies.

How does inadequate access to clean water affect agricultural productivity?

Farmers rely on clean water for irrigation, livestock watering, and crop production; without it, they may struggle to grow crops and raise livestock, leading to food shortages, higher prices, and economic hardship affecting local and global markets.

What factors worsen water scarcity in developing regions, according to the passage?

Population growth, climate change, and pollution worsen water scarcity, with arid and semi-arid regions having especially limited water sources, and climate change altering precipitation patterns to cause droughts and reduce freshwater availability.

What community-based initiatives are mentioned for improving access to clean drinking water?

The passage mentions rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and watershed management as community-based initiatives that can improve access to clean drinking water alongside investments in purification technology.

Why is education and awareness important for improving water access and quality?

Teaching communities about the importance of clean water, proper sanitation, and pollution prevention empowers individuals to take action and protect their water sources, supporting broader efforts to improve water access and quality.



How can investing in clean water infrastructure contribute to global prosperity and well-being?

Investing in clean water infrastructure improves public health by reducing waterborne disease, while also fostering economic stability and growth, since it reduces the substantial economic burden of treating disease and managing pollution.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss the effects of inadequate access to clean water on human health, the environment, and the economy, as described in the passage.

What effects does contaminated water have on human health?

Contaminated water spreads diseases such as cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis, causing around 829,000 deaths annually from diarrhoea according to the WHO, with children, pregnant women, and the elderly especially vulnerable to these severe health consequences.

What environmental damage results from water pollution?

Pollution from industrial activities, agricultural runoff, and improper waste disposal degrades aquatic ecosystems, harming fish populations and other wildlife, while pollutants such as heavy metals and pesticides accumulate in water bodies and pose ongoing risks to both humans and the environment.

How does water scarcity affect agriculture and the economy?

Without adequate clean water for irrigation, livestock watering, and crop production, farmers face reduced productivity, leading to food shortages and higher prices; additionally, governments and communities bear a substantial economic burden treating waterborne disease and managing pollution.

How are these three impact areas connected in the passage's argument?

The passage presents health, environmental, and economic impacts as interconnected consequences of the same underlying problem — inadequate



access to clean water — showing that solving water scarcity and contamination would simultaneously improve public health, protect ecosystems, and strengthen economies.

Explain the solutions the passage proposes for addressing global water scarcity and contamination.

What role do governments and international organisations play in the proposed solutions?

The passage states that governments, policymakers, international organisations, and local communities must work together to improve water infrastructure, implement effective waste management practices, and promote sustainable water use, framing the solution as fundamentally collaborative.

What community-based initiatives does the passage recommend?

It recommends rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and watershed management as community-based initiatives that can play a crucial role in improving access to clean drinking water at the local level.

What role does technology play in the passage's proposed solutions?

The passage highlights investments in water purification technologies and research as important for developing innovative solutions for water treatment and management, addressing contamination at its source.

Why does the passage emphasise education and awareness as a solution?

Because teaching communities about the importance of clean water, proper sanitation, and pollution prevention empowers individuals to take direct action to protect their own water sources, making education a foundational, enabling solution alongside infrastructure and technology investments.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

What percentage of the human body does water constitute, according to the passage?



- A. 40%
- B. 50%
- C. 60%
- D. 70%

Answer: C. 60%

Explanation: The passage states that water constitutes about 60% of the human body.

What percentage of the earth's water is fresh water?

- A. 1%
- B. 3%
- C. 10%
- D. 25%

Answer: B. 3%

Explanation: The passage states that only 3% of the earth's water is fresh water, and only one third of that is readily available for use.

According to the WHO, approximately how many people die each year from diarrhoea caused by contaminated water?

- A. 82,900
- B. 829,000
- C. 8.29 million
- D. 82.9 million

Answer: B. 829,000

Explanation: The passage cites the WHO figure of around 829,000 deaths each year from diarrhoea caused by contaminated water, sanitation, and hygiene.

How many people worldwide lack access to safely managed drinking water services, according to the passage?

- A. 0.22 billion
- B. 1.2 billion
- C. 2.2 billion
- D. 4.2 billion

Answer: C. 2.2 billion

Explanation: The passage states that around 2.2 billion people worldwide lack access to safely managed drinking water services.



How many people worldwide lack access to safely managed sanitation services?

- A. 1.2 billion
- B. 2.2 billion
- C. 3.2 billion
- D. 4.2 billion

Answer: D. 4.2 billion

Explanation: The passage states that 4.2 billion people worldwide lack access to safely managed sanitation services.

Which of the following is NOT named as a waterborne disease in the passage?

- A. Cholera
- B. Typhoid
- C. Malaria
- D. Dysentery

Answer: C. Malaria

Explanation: The passage names cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis as waterborne diseases; malaria is not mentioned.

What does the passage identify as a major cause of ecosystem disruption in water bodies?

- A. Overfishing
- B. Pollution from industrial activities, agricultural runoff, and improper waste disposal
- C. Excessive rainfall
- D. Coral bleaching

Answer: B. Pollution from industrial activities, agricultural runoff, and improper waste disposal

Explanation: The passage identifies pollution from industrial activities, agricultural runoff, and improper waste disposal as key causes of ecosystem disruption.

What community-based initiative is mentioned for improving water access?

- A. Deep-sea mining
- B. Rainwater harvesting



- C. Coal power expansion
- D. Urban high-rise construction

Answer: B. Rainwater harvesting

Explanation: The passage mentions rainwater harvesting, along with water conservation and watershed management, as community-based initiatives.

What factors does the passage say worsen water scarcity in developing regions?

- A. Only pollution
- B. Population growth, climate change, and pollution
- C. Only population growth
- D. Only climate change

Answer: B. Population growth, climate change, and pollution

Explanation: The passage identifies population growth, climate change, and pollution together as factors that exacerbate water scarcity.

What does the passage identify as key components of improving water access and quality?

- A. Military intervention
- B. Education and awareness
- C. Reducing agricultural production
- D. Banning industrial activity entirely

Answer: B. Education and awareness

Explanation: The passage states that education and awareness are key components of improving water access and quality.

Quick Revision Summary

- Water constitutes about 60% of the human body; only 3% of the earth's water is fresh water, and only a third of that is readily usable.
- The WHO reports around 829,000 deaths each year from diarrhoea caused by contaminated water, sanitation, and hygiene.
- Globally, 2.2 billion people lack safely managed drinking water, and 4.2 billion lack safely managed sanitation services.
- Waterborne diseases named in the passage include cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and hepatitis.



- Pollution from industry, agriculture, and waste disposal disrupts ecosystems and harms aquatic life.
- Clean water is essential for agriculture; its scarcity leads to food shortages and economic hardship.
- Population growth, climate change, and pollution worsen water scarcity, especially in arid and semi-arid regions.
- Proposed solutions include improved infrastructure, rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and purification technology.
- Education and awareness are described as key to empowering communities to protect their water sources.
- The passage concludes that ensuring clean water for all is essential to public health and global prosperity.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'prose group' (Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10), which under the current paper pattern carries heavier weight — 5 of the paper's synonym questions and 3 of its MCQs are drawn from these prose units, so revise the 17 glossary words in this unit carefully.
- Since only 7 of the 10 short questions asked from the prose group need to be attempted, practice answering all 8 short questions in this unit so you have a comfortable choice on exam day.
- Memorise the key statistics (60% of body, 3% fresh water, 829,000 deaths, 2.2 billion/4.2 billion access gaps) exactly as given in the textbook — examiners often test recall of specific numbers from informational texts like this one.
- This unit's passage is explicitly used for organisational-pattern questions (cause-effect, problem-solution) in the textbook exercises, so practice identifying these patterns as they may be tested directly.
- This unit's passage may also be set for the punctuation exercise or Urdu-translation/essay-writing option, so practice both as part of your preparation for this and the other prose units.
- When answering long questions, structure your answer by impact area (health, environment, agriculture/economy, solutions) exactly as the passage does, rather than mixing the points together.



Unit 9: Freedom

This unit presents Langston Hughes's poem 'Freedom', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The poem is an urgent, direct demand for immediate freedom, rejecting compromise, fear, and the passive idea of waiting for 'tomorrow's bread.' The speaker asserts an equal right to freedom, compares freedom to a strong seed planted in great need, and closes by insisting that freedom is wanted 'just as' anyone else wants it — a universal, personal claim.

These notes summarise the poem strictly as given in the textbook, provide the full poem text, a stanza-wise explanation (the specific skill tested in the exam question 'explain the given stanza with reference to context'), literary devices with examples from the poem, comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Ask and answer questions for a range of communicative purposes based on the poem.
- Comment on implied meaning, including the writer's viewpoint and the poem's central argument.
- Identify rhyme scheme and figurative language in the poem.
- Evaluate the poem's point of view, examining how the poet distinguishes his position from that of others.
- Demonstrate command of standard English capitalisation, punctuation, and spelling.
- Develop précis and summary-writing skills using the poem as source material.



Key Concepts

About the Poet: Langston Hughes

James Mercer Langston Hughes (1901-1967) was an influential American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright, and columnist, and a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance, a 1920s cultural movement celebrating African American culture.

Hughes often wrote about the struggles, desires, and aspirations of Black Americans, emphasising themes such as racial identity, injustice, and the quest for freedom, expressing a powerful sense of dignity, pride, and hope in the face of adversity — qualities clearly present in 'Freedom.'

Central Theme: An Urgent, Unwavering Demand

The central theme of 'Freedom' is the urgent, unwavering demand for immediate freedom and equality. Hughes emphasises that freedom cannot be achieved through passivity, compromise, or deferred promises, reflecting the frustration of those denied their rights and highlighting the need for active resistance against injustice.

The poem also explores universal equality, asserting that freedom is a fundamental right for all, not something to be postponed or earned over time — a claim made explicit in the poem's closing lines, 'I live here, too. / I want my freedom / just as you.'

Structure of the Poem

'Freedom' is a five-stanza poem in free verse, separated into uneven sets of lines: the first and fourth stanzas are quatrains (four lines), the second and third are quintains (five lines), and the final stanza is a tercet (three lines). Despite being free verse, the poem contains occasional rhyme, such as 'fear' and 'year' in stanza one and 'stand' and 'land' in stanza two, used to emphasise key lines.

The poem's irregular line alignment — lines staggered or indented in places — visually reflects its theme of struggle, representing the irregular, uneven path towards achieving freedom, and creating a sense of disruption or tension that



echoes the difficult, disjointed process of gaining social, political, and personal liberty.

Literary Devices

Metaphor: Hughes compares freedom to 'a strong seed', symbolising growth, and contrasts it with 'tomorrow's bread', highlighting that freedom cannot be delayed.

Enjambment: continuous lines running on without pause create a sense of urgency, pushing the reader forward. Repetition: the frequent use of the word 'freedom' emphasises its importance and the speaker's strong desire for it. Imagery: vivid images make freedom tangible, helping readers visualise the need for autonomy. Contrast: the speaker's active pursuit of freedom is set directly against the passive attitude of others ('let things take their course'), stressing urgency.

Poem Text

*Freedom will not come
today, this year
nor ever
through compromise and fear.*

*I have as much right
as the other fellow has
to stand
on my two feet
and own the land.*

*I tire so of hearing people say,
let things take their course.
Tomorrow is another day.
I do not need my freedom when I'm dead.
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread.*



*Freedom
Is a strong seed
planted
in a great need.*

*I live here, too.
I want my freedom
just as you.*

Stanza-wise Explanation

Stanza 1

*Freedom will not come
today, this year
nor ever
through compromise and fear.*

The poem opens with a flat, unqualified rejection: freedom will never arrive through compromise or fear, no matter how much time passes — 'today, this year / nor ever.' This immediately establishes the poem's urgent, uncompromising tone, rejecting gradual or negotiated approaches to justice from the very first stanza. The rhyme of 'fear' and 'year' gives the stanza a firm, closed sound that reinforces its finality.

Stanza 2

*I have as much right
as the other fellow has
to stand
on my two feet
and own the land.*

The speaker asserts personal and collective equality directly: he has 'as much right as the other fellow' to stand independently and own land. This stanza shifts from stating what freedom is not (stanza 1) to asserting a positive, concrete



claim — the right to basic dignity and ownership, phrased in simple, physical terms ('stand on my two feet') that make the abstract idea of 'rights' immediate and tangible. The rhyme of 'stand' and 'land' underlines this claim to physical, rooted equality.

Stanza 3

*I tire so of hearing people say,
let things take their course.
Tomorrow is another day.
I do not need my freedom when I'm dead.
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread.*

Here the speaker directly criticises those who counsel patience — 'let things take their course,' 'tomorrow is another day' — exposing his exhaustion with such passive attitudes. The powerful line 'I do not need my freedom when I'm dead' makes clear that a delayed freedom is no freedom at all, and the closing metaphor, 'I cannot live on tomorrow's bread,' argues that promises of future justice cannot sustain someone suffering injustice now, just as a person cannot physically survive on food that does not yet exist.

Stanza 4

*Freedom
Is a strong seed
planted
in a great need.*

This short stanza offers the poem's central metaphor: freedom as 'a strong seed planted in a great need.' A seed suggests both vitality and the necessity of growth — freedom is not simply given but takes root and grows from real, pressing necessity. The stanza's brevity and simple, staggered lines mirror the poem's broader visual pattern of irregular structure representing struggle, while the seed image balances the urgency of earlier stanzas with a note of natural, inevitable growth.



Stanza 5

*I live here, too.
I want my freedom
just as you.*

The poem closes with its shortest stanza (a tercet), delivering its final, most personal and universal claim: 'I live here, too' asserts belonging and equal stake in the land and society, while 'I want my freedom / just as you' insists that the speaker's desire for freedom is identical to, not lesser than, anyone else's. This ending completes the poem's argument — moving from rejecting compromise, through claiming rights and criticising patience, to a final direct, universal statement of shared human desire for freedom.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

bread

a type of food made from flour, water, and usually yeast, mixed together and baked; also old-fashioned slang for money

compromise

an agreement made between two people or groups in which each side gives up some of what they want so that both sides are satisfied

course

to move or flow quickly (as used in 'let things take their course', meaning to let events develop naturally without interference)

fear

the bad feeling you have when you are in danger or when something frightens you

fellow

used to describe somebody who is the same as you in some way, or in the same situation

tire

to become tired and feel as if you want to sleep or rest; to make somebody feel this way



Poem at a Glance

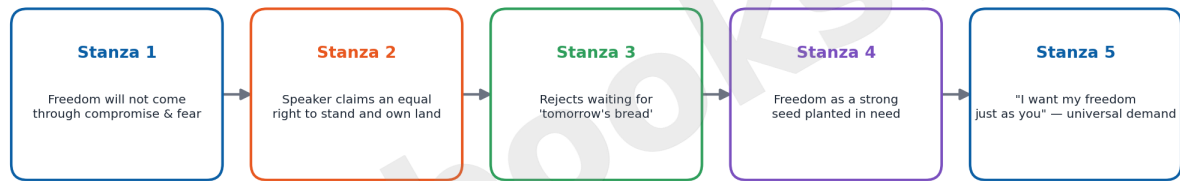
Aspect	Key Fact
Poet	Langston Hughes (1901-1967), a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance.
Form	Five stanzas of uneven length: quatrain, quintain, quintain, quatrain, tercet — free verse with occasional rhyme.
Central theme	An urgent, unwavering demand for immediate freedom and equality, rejecting compromise and delay.
Metaphor	"Freedom / Is a strong seed / planted / in a great need." — freedom compared to a growing seed.
Key contrast image	"I cannot live on tomorrow's bread." — freedom promised for the future cannot sustain someone suffering now.
Rhyme examples	'fear'/'year' (stanza 1), 'stand'/'land' (stanza 2), used to emphasise key lines within the free-verse structure.
Closing claim	"I live here, too. / I want my freedom / just as you." — a universal, personal demand for equal freedom.
Structural symbolism	The poem's irregular, staggered line alignment visually represents the uneven, difficult path towards freedom.

Diagram

Progression of the Argument in the Poem: A sequential flow diagram of five connected boxes, one per stanza, tracing the poem's argument from rejecting compromise and fear, through claiming equal rights and rejecting the promise of 'tomorrow's bread', to the central seed metaphor and the closing universal demand for freedom.



Progression of the Argument in "Freedom" (Unit 9, Langston Hughes)



The poem builds from rejecting compromise to a final, universal demand for freedom now.

Progression of the Argument in the Poem

Short Questions & Answers

Whose perspective is the poem written from, and how does this influence its message?

The poem is written from a first-person perspective, which allows the poet to speak personally while also representing the shared experience of all those denied freedom, making the demand for freedom feel both intimate and universal.

How does Hughes criticise those who believe in gradual change for freedom?

Hughes directly criticises them in stanza three, saying he 'tires so of hearing people say, let things take their course' and 'tomorrow is another day,' rejecting the idea that freedom can be safely postponed to an unspecified future.

Why does the poet reject the idea of 'tomorrow's bread'?

He rejects it because a delayed freedom is not real freedom — just as a person cannot physically survive on bread that does not yet exist, he cannot live meaningfully while waiting for a promised future justice that may never fully arrive.

What does the metaphor 'Freedom is a strong seed planted in a great need' suggest?



It suggests that freedom grows naturally and powerfully out of genuine necessity, much like a seed grows into a plant — freedom is not simply handed down but takes root and develops from real, urgent human need.

Why does the poet use the words 'compromise and fear' specifically in the first stanza?

These words suggest that those in power maintain injustice through negotiated half-measures ('compromise') and by intimidating the oppressed into silence ('fear'), and Hughes rejects both as false paths to genuine freedom.

How does the poem's contrast between the speaker and 'others' add to its power?

By setting the speaker's active, urgent demand for freedom against the passive attitude of those who say 'let things take their course,' the poem sharpens its argument, showing the speaker's position as morally and emotionally more justified than passive acceptance.

Identify one example of repetition in the poem and explain its effect.

The word 'freedom' is repeated throughout the poem, reinforcing its central importance and the speaker's persistent, unwavering desire for it, ensuring the reader cannot lose sight of the poem's central demand.

What is the effect of the poem's final stanza, 'I live here, too. I want my freedom just as you'?

This short, direct closing stanza universalises the speaker's demand, asserting equal belonging and an equal claim to freedom, making the poem's final statement personal, simple, and impossible to dismiss.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how Langston Hughes builds his argument for immediate freedom across the five stanzas of the poem.

How does the poem's argument begin in stanza one?

The poem opens by flatly rejecting the idea that freedom will ever come through 'compromise and fear', establishing from the outset that the speaker demands freedom now, not through negotiated, gradual change.



How does the speaker build his claim to freedom in stanza two?

The speaker asserts he has 'as much right as the other fellow' to stand independently and own land, turning the abstract demand of stanza one into a concrete, personal claim to equality and dignity.

How does stanza three intensify the poem's urgency?

The speaker openly criticises passive attitudes ('let things take their course', 'tomorrow is another day') and declares he 'cannot live on tomorrow's bread', making clear that any delay in achieving freedom is unacceptable and unsustainable.

How do the final two stanzas conclude the poem's argument?

Stanza four's metaphor of freedom as 'a strong seed planted in a great need' frames freedom as a natural, necessary growth, while the final stanza's declaration 'I want my freedom just as you' completes the argument with a direct, universal, and undeniable personal claim.

Explain the structure and literary devices Hughes uses in 'Freedom', and discuss how they reinforce the poem's theme.

How does the poem's uneven stanza structure reflect its theme?

The poem's five stanzas vary irregularly in length — quatrain, quintain, quintain, quatrain, tercet — and its staggered line alignment visually represents the uneven, difficult path towards achieving freedom, echoing the disjointed nature of the real struggle for liberty.

How does Hughes use metaphor to convey his message?

Hughes compares freedom to 'a strong seed planted in a great need', suggesting natural, necessary growth, and contrasts this with 'tomorrow's bread', a metaphor showing that a delayed freedom cannot sustain someone suffering injustice in the present.



What role does contrast play in the poem?

Contrast is central to the poem's power: the speaker's active, urgent pursuit of freedom is set directly against the passive stance of others who say 'let things take their course', sharpening the poem's argument for immediate action.

How do repetition and enjambment contribute to the poem's tone?

The repetition of 'freedom' throughout the poem reinforces its central importance, while enjambment — lines running on without pause — creates a sense of urgency and momentum, pushing the reader forward much as the speaker pushes for immediate change.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who is the poet of 'Freedom'?

- A. Emily Dickinson
- B. William Blake
- C. Langston Hughes
- D. Catherine Thimmesh

Answer: C. Langston Hughes

Explanation: 'Freedom' was written by Langston Hughes (1901-1967), a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance.

According to the poem, freedom will not come through:

- A. Patience and perseverance
- B. Compromise and fear
- C. Courage and unity
- D. Knowledge and education

Answer: B. Compromise and fear

Explanation: The poem's opening stanza states that freedom will not come 'through compromise and fear.'

Why does the speaker compare freedom to a seed?

- A. It is difficult to find
- B. It can be easily destroyed
- C. It must be planted and grown
- D. It is available to everyone



Answer: C. It must be planted and grown

Explanation: The metaphor 'Freedom is a strong seed planted in a great need' suggests freedom must be planted and grown from real necessity.

Why does the poet mention 'tomorrow's bread'?

- A. To emphasise that freedom can be postponed
- B. To show that food is more important than freedom
- C. To illustrate that freedom must be experienced now, not in the future
- D. To highlight the importance of patience

Answer: C. To illustrate that freedom must be experienced now, not in the future

Explanation: The line 'I cannot live on tomorrow's bread' argues that freedom must come now, since a promised future freedom cannot sustain someone in the present.

What is the effect of the first-person perspective in the poem?

- A. It creates a sense of distance
- B. It makes the poem impersonal
- C. It allows the poet to speak for a group while expressing personal feelings
- D. It focuses only on the lives of others

Answer: C. It allows the poet to speak for a group while expressing personal feelings

Explanation: The first-person perspective allows Hughes to speak personally while representing the shared experience of all those denied freedom.

Which best describes the tone of the poem?

- A. Humorous and light
- B. Calm and accepting
- C. Urgent and demanding
- D. Mysterious and suspenseful

Answer: C. Urgent and demanding

Explanation: The poem's tone is urgent and demanding, rejecting compromise, fear, and passive waiting.

How many stanzas does the poem have, and what is notable about their structure?

- A. Four stanzas, all quatrains
- B. Five stanzas of uneven length
- C. Three stanzas, all tercets



D. Six stanzas of equal length

Answer: B. Five stanzas of uneven length

Explanation: The poem has five stanzas of uneven length: two quatrains, two quintains, and one tercet.

Which pair of words rhyme in the poem's second stanza?

A. fear / year

B. stand / land

C. seed / need

D. here / freedom

Answer: B. stand / land

Explanation: In stanza two, 'stand' and 'land' rhyme, emphasising the speaker's claim to physical, rooted equality.

What does the poem's irregular line alignment represent?

A. A printing error

B. The uneven, difficult path towards achieving freedom

C. The poet's indecision

D. A traditional sonnet structure

Answer: B. The uneven, difficult path towards achieving freedom

Explanation: The staggered, irregular line alignment visually reflects the poem's theme of struggle and the uneven path to freedom.

How does the final stanza conclude the poem's argument?

A. By apologising for the speaker's demands

B. By asserting a universal, personal claim to freedom equal to anyone else's

C. By suggesting freedom is no longer needed

D. By returning to the idea of compromise

Answer: B. By asserting a universal, personal claim to freedom equal to anyone else's

Explanation: The final stanza, 'I live here, too. I want my freedom just as you,' asserts a universal, personal, and equal claim to freedom.

Quick Revision Summary

- 'Freedom' was written by Langston Hughes (1901-1967), a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance.



- The poem has five stanzas of uneven length (quatrain, quintain, quintain, quatrain, tercet), written in free verse with occasional rhyme.
- Stanza 1 rejects the idea that freedom will ever come through 'compromise and fear.'
- Stanza 2 asserts the speaker's equal right to 'stand on my two feet and own the land.'
- Stanza 3 criticises passive waiting ('let things take their course') and rejects 'tomorrow's bread.'
- Stanza 4 compares freedom to 'a strong seed planted in a great need.'
- Stanza 5 closes with the universal demand, 'I want my freedom just as you.'
- Key literary devices include metaphor, enjambment, repetition, imagery, and contrast.
- The poem's irregular line alignment visually represents the uneven path towards freedom.
- The central theme is an urgent, unwavering demand for immediate freedom and equality, rejecting delay and compromise.

Exam Tips

- Unit 9 does not currently appear in this year's PECTAA paper pattern (the pattern draws from Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10 as the prose group and Units 3, 6, 11, 13 as the poem group), so treat this unit as extra reading and comprehension practice rather than a primary exam-focus unit.
- Even though it may not be directly examined this year, practising the 'explain the given stanza with reference to context' skill on this poem is useful preparation, since that exact question type is reliably tested on the examinable poem units.
- If your teacher does include this unit for internal assessment, make sure you can explain all five stanzas individually, since any one could be set for a reference-to-context question — the stanza-wise section in these notes covers every stanza in full.
- Learn the poet's background facts (Langston Hughes, Harlem Renaissance, themes of racial identity and justice) since short questions on poem units often test factual recall about the poet alongside the poem's content.



- Memorise the literary device definitions together with their exact example lines from the poem — metaphor ('a strong seed'), contrast ('let things take their course' vs the speaker's urgency), and repetition (of 'freedom') — as examiners often ask you to identify the device from a quoted line.
- Practise summary and précis writing using this poem, since the textbook explicitly sets both tasks for this unit, and précis-writing skills are assessed more broadly across the paper.



Unit 10: The Punishment of Shahpesh, the Persian, on Khipil, the Builder

This unit presents George Meredith's short story 'The Punishment of Shahpesh, the Persian, on Khipil, the Builder', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

Set in a Persian court in the tradition of Middle Eastern moral storytelling, the story follows Khipil, a builder who spends four years failing to complete King Shahpesh's palace while entertaining the workers with stories and eloquent talk. Shahpesh punishes Khipil's idle talk through a series of ironic 'honours' — each disguised as a reward but really a humiliation matched to his negligence.

These notes summarise the story strictly as given in the textbook and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit.

Learning Objectives

- Evaluate how the setting of the unfinished palace shapes the characters and plot of the story.
- Evaluate the stages of plot development in a fictional text: exposition, setting, climax, character development, and resolution.
- Examine how a complex character like Khipil, with conflicting motivations, develops over the course of the text and advances its theme.
- Read and analyse a narrative from a non-print or classical storytelling tradition, identifying its moral and satirical elements.
- Construct sentences using appropriate sentence patterns and structures for narrative writing.
- Write narratives that develop real or imagined events using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.



Key Concepts

About the Author and the Short Story Form

George Meredith (1828-1909) was an English novelist and poet known for his witty, insightful, and often ironic style, whose works frequently explore human nature, morality, and social norms through vivid characters and dramatic situations.

Short stories became a popular literary form in the nineteenth century, as rising literacy and flourishing periodicals made them an accessible medium for exploring human nature and moral dilemmas. 'The Punishment of Shahpesh' draws on the tradition of moral storytelling common in Middle Eastern literature, such as the Arabian Nights, while reflecting nineteenth-century interest in complex human behaviour and moral consequences.

Exposition: Khipil's Idle Talk and the Unfinished Palace

The story opens with King Shahpesh commanding the building of a palace, with Khipil as his builder. The work lingers from the first year of Shahpesh's reign to the fourth. When the King visits the site, he finds Khipil seated among idle masons and stonecutters, entertaining them with anecdotes, recitations, and poetic instances rather than overseeing construction — establishing from the outset that Khipil values eloquent talk over productive action.

Shahpesh's Ironic Praise

When Shahpesh asks to see the palace, Khipil answers with elaborate, flattering language describing the site's supposed excellence, without acknowledging that the palace itself remains unfinished. Shahpesh responds with a pointed metaphor about a farm servant who, having failed to sow in season, boasts of his soil's richness at harvest by displaying its abundant weeds — a direct, ironic comment on Khipil's own boastful talk masking his neglected work.

As Shahpesh tours the unfinished saloons, imperfect courts, and roofless rooms, he praises Khipil's craft and diligence with exaggerated, sarcastic admiration, 'feigning not to behold his negligence' — establishing the story's central technique of mock-honour used to expose and later punish Khipil.



The Bath of Surprise and the Chair of Mockery

Shahpesh orders Khipil to walk ahead across a marble terrace with a wide, unfinished gap in it. Despite Khipil's protests that the gap is incomplete, Shahpesh insists all parts of the palace are equally perfect and, with guards' arrows pointed at him, forces Khipil forward — causing him to fall into deep water below. Shahpesh then ironically praises this 'apt contrivance for a bath' as a fitting daily reward for Khipil's excessive talking.

Next, Shahpesh 'honours' Khipil by inviting him to sit in the throne's marble chair — which, like the rest of the palace, does not yet exist. Fearing the King, Khipil mimes sitting in the non-existent chair, and Shahpesh then orders him to remain in that strained, sitting posture until noon, surrounded by twenty-five archers, or be shot with twenty-five arrows if he moves. The crowd's laughter at Khipil's absurd, cramped position emphasises his public humiliation.

The Desert Garden and the Nettle Nosegay

Shahpesh next leads Khipil to the palace gardens, which — like the rest of the palace — are neglected: full of weeds and nettles, with dry fountains and no trees. Continuing his irony, Shahpesh praises the 'coolness' of the nonexistent fountains and asks Khipil to pick flowers and describe their perfume. Khipil is forced to pluck nettles, which burn and redden his nose as he pretends to admire their fragrance before the King.

Shahpesh then orders Khipil to present this nettle 'nosegay' to his mistress in his name, and later reveals that Khipil may seek relief for his burning nose by asking his neighbours to 'chafe' it — but they misunderstand and chafe him elsewhere, adding further humiliation and physical discomfort to his punishment.

Further Punishments: The Drought and the Pomegranate Tree

Shahpesh's persecution of Khipil continues under the guise of honour: for three days and three nights, Khipil is denied water and made to endure the drought of a dry fountain as a supposed privilege. For seven days and seven nights, he is forced to stand with his arms stretched out like the branches of a tree, holding a pomegranate in each hand, presented to the court as a 'wondrous pomegranate shoot' Khipil himself supposedly planted.



Through these escalating, ironic punishments — each dressed as a reward — Shahpesh publicly demonstrates that Khipil's idle talk and negligence will be answered in kind, teaching a lesson that discourages others in the kingdom from imitating Khipil's behaviour.

Theme and Moral: The Palace of the Wagging Tongue

The story is a timeless satire on the foolishness of valuing words over deeds, warning that speech without responsibility or results can lead to disgrace. Khipil uses eloquence and flattery to hide his negligence and laziness, but Shahpesh's irony and mock-honour expose the danger of mistaking talk for action.

The story closes by noting that anyone punished in this manner is said to be sent 'to the Palace of the Wagging Tongue' — a phrase that has since become proverbial for the humiliation that follows empty, self-important talk unmatched by real accomplishment.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

anecdote

a short, interesting or funny story about a real person or event

contrived

planned in advance and not natural; arranged in a way that is not natural or realistic

dominateth

an old or poetic form of 'dominates', meaning to have control, influence, or power over something or someone

gabble

to talk quickly so that people cannot hear you clearly or understand you

hath

an old-fashioned form of 'has'

intersperse

to put something in, among, or between other things

loquacious



talking a lot

mason

a person who builds using stone, or works with stone

nosegay

a small bunch of flowers

obelisk

a tall, pointed stone column with four sides, put up in memory of a person or an event

posture

the position in which you hold your body when standing or sitting

transfix

to make somebody unable to move because they are afraid, surprised, etc.

Key Facts

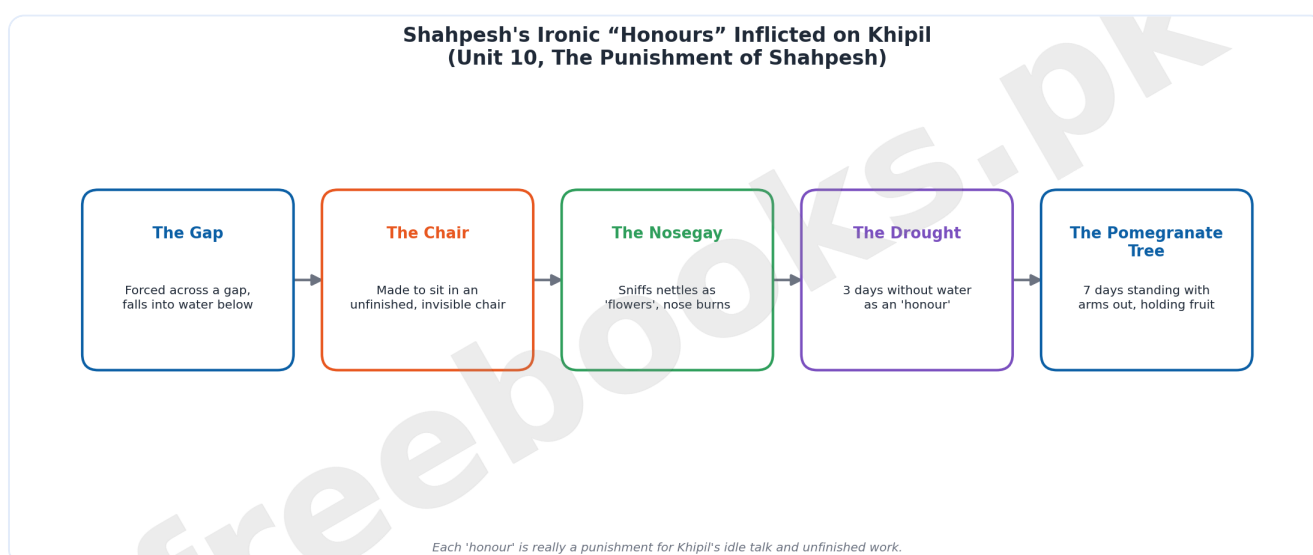
Aspect	Key Fact
Author	George Meredith (1828-1909), English novelist and poet.
Genre	Nineteenth-century short story / satirical moral tale in the Middle Eastern storytelling tradition.
Central theme	A satire on valuing words over deeds; idle talk without responsibility leads to disgrace.
Main characters	Shahpesh (the Persian King) and Khipil (his negligent, loquacious builder).
Time taken to build the palace	Four years, and still unfinished by the time of the story's events.
Shahpesh's method	Ironic, mock-honour — punishing Khipil while pretending to reward and praise him.
Sequence of punishments	The gap/bath of surprise, the invisible chair, the nettle nosegay, three days without water, and seven days as a 'pomegranate tree'.



Aspect	Key Fact
Proverbial phrase	"The Palace of the Wagging Tongue" — used to describe anyone punished for empty, boastful talk.

Diagram

Shahpesh's Ironic 'Honours' Inflicted on Khipil: A sequential flow diagram of five connected boxes tracing Khipil's escalating punishments across the story — the gap/bath of surprise, the invisible chair, the nettle nosegay, three days without water, and seven days standing as a 'pomegranate tree' — each disguised by Shahpesh as an honour or reward.



Shahpesh's Ironic 'Honours' Inflicted on Khipil

Short Questions & Answers

What is the central message conveyed through the fate of Khipil?

The story teaches that valuing eloquent talk over real, responsible action leads to disgrace and humiliation, as shown through Shahpesh's series of ironic punishments disguised as honours for Khipil's negligence.

How does Shahpesh use sarcasm and irony in his treatment of Khipil?

Shahpesh consistently praises Khipil's unfinished, neglected work as if it were excellent, and frames each humiliating punishment as a reward or honour, exposing Khipil's failures through pointed irony rather than direct anger.



What metaphor does Shahpesh use about a farm servant, and what does it reveal?

Shahpesh compares Khipil to a farm servant who failed to sow seed in season but boasted of his soil's richness at harvest by pointing to its weeds, revealing his view that Khipil's boastful talk is masking neglected, unproductive work.

Why does Khipil hesitate to step into the gap on the terrace?

Khipil hesitates because the gap is wide, filled with deep water below, and he cannot swim — his hesitation reveals both his physical fear and his awareness, however belated, that the palace truly is incomplete.

What is the significance of Khipil being made to sit in the 'invisible' chair?

It exposes Khipil's habit of pretending completed work exists when it does not, forcing him to physically enact his own dishonesty by miming a sitting posture in a chair that was never built.

Why does Shahpesh send Khipil to present nettles to his mistress?

This is a further ironic punishment: by disguising nettles as a fragrant gift, Shahpesh humiliates Khipil both physically (his burning nose) and socially (his mistress's anger at the gift).

What do the punishments of the drought and the 'pomegranate tree' represent?

They represent the culmination of Shahpesh's escalating, ironic justice — physical suffering (thirst) and public ridicule (being displayed as a supposed 'wondrous' plant) matched precisely to Khipil's idle boastfulness.

What does the phrase 'Palace of the Wagging Tongue' mean by the end of the story?

It becomes a proverbial phrase describing anyone who is punished, like Khipil, for prioritising empty, boastful talk over real, responsible achievement.



Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how George Meredith uses irony to punish Khipil throughout the story, with reference to specific incidents.

How does Shahpesh's irony begin with the farm servant metaphor?

Shahpesh compares Khipil to a farm servant who boasts of his soil's richness through its weeds rather than its crop, subtly signalling from early in the story that he sees through Khipil's talk and recognises the palace's true, neglected state.

How is irony used in the incident of the gap and the 'bath of surprise'?

Shahpesh insists the unfinished, dangerous gap in the terrace is 'perfect' and forces Khipil across it, causing him to fall into water; he then ironically praises this accident as a delightful 'bath' invented for Khipil's benefit, turning a punishment into a mock reward.

How does the invisible chair episode use irony to punish Khipil?

By 'honouring' Khipil with permission to sit in a chair that does not exist, Shahpesh forces him to physically perform the same kind of pretence Khipil has used verbally throughout the story, then extends the humiliation by making him hold the pose for hours under threat of arrows.

What does this pattern of ironic punishment reveal about Shahpesh as a ruler?

It reveals a ruler who is shrewd, controlled, and precise in his justice — rather than punishing Khipil through open anger or violence, Shahpesh matches each punishment cleverly to Khipil's specific failing, making the lesson memorable and instructive to the wider court.



Explain the theme of 'valuing words over deeds' in the story, and discuss how Khipil's character embodies this flaw.

How does Khipil demonstrate a preference for talk over action from the story's opening?

From the first scene, Khipil is shown entertaining idle workers with anecdotes and poetic recitations rather than supervising the palace's construction, establishing his character as someone who substitutes eloquence for genuine productivity.

How does Khipil's language throughout the story reinforce this flaw?

Khipil consistently responds to Shahpesh with elaborate, flattering, and evasive language, describing the unfinished palace in glowing terms and avoiding direct acknowledgement of his failures, showing that his skill lies entirely in speech rather than construction.

How does the story's resolution punish this specific flaw?

Each of Shahpesh's punishments directly targets Khipil's reliance on words — forcing him to physically enact false claims (the chair), suffer for his exaggerated praise (the nettle 'flowers'), and be publicly displayed as a mock symbol of his own boastfulness (the pomegranate tree).

What broader lesson does the story's conclusion draw from Khipil's fate?

The story concludes that after Khipil's punishment, few in Shahpesh's kingdom sought to imitate his idle, talkative behaviour, establishing the tale's satirical moral: that real achievement, not eloquent talk, is what deserves honour and reward.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who is the author of 'The Punishment of Shahpesh, the Persian, on Khipil, the Builder'?

- A. Nickie McWhirter
- B. George Meredith
- C. Langston Hughes



D. William Blake

Answer: B. George Meredith

Explanation: The story was written by George Meredith (1828-1909), an English novelist and poet.

How long had Khipil been building the palace by the time of the story's events?

A. One year

B. Two years

C. Four years

D. Ten years

Answer: C. Four years

Explanation: The work lingered from the first year of Shahpesh's reign to the fourth, meaning Khipil had spent four years without completing it.

What was Khipil doing when Shahpesh first arrived to inspect the palace?

A. Overseeing the masons carefully

B. Reciting anecdotes and poetry to idle workers

C. Repairing a collapsed wall

D. Meeting with foreign sultans

Answer: B. Reciting anecdotes and poetry to idle workers

Explanation: Khipil was found reciting anecdotes, recitations, and poetic instances to the idle masons and workers rather than supervising construction.

What metaphor does Shahpesh use to comment on Khipil's boastfulness?

A. A shepherd and his flock

B. A farm servant who failed to sow but boasted of his soil at harvest

C. A bird building a nest

D. A river changing course

Answer: B. A farm servant who failed to sow but boasted of his soil at harvest

Explanation: Shahpesh compares Khipil to a farm servant who neglected to sow in season but boasted of his soil's richness using its weeds as proof.

What happens to Khipil at the gap in the terrace?

A. He successfully leaps across it

B. He refuses to move and is imprisoned



- C. He is forced across it and falls into water below
- D. He builds a bridge over it

Answer: C. He is forced across it and falls into water below

Explanation: Despite his fear, Khipil is forced forward at arrow-point and falls into the deep water beneath the gap.

Why is Khipil made to sit in the 'chair' in the hall of state?

- A. The chair was newly built for him
- B. The chair does not actually exist, and Khipil must pretend to sit in it
- C. It was a genuine honour with no irony intended
- D. He requested to sit there himself

Answer: B. The chair does not actually exist, and Khipil must pretend to sit in it

Explanation: Like the rest of the palace, the chair has not been built, forcing Khipil to mime sitting in a nonexistent chair as part of Shahpesh's ironic punishment.

What are the 'flowers' Khipil is forced to pick and admire in the garden?

- A. Roses
- B. Nettles
- C. Tulips
- D. Jasmine

Answer: B. Nettles

Explanation: The neglected garden contains only weeds and nettles, which Khipil is forced to pluck and pretend to admire as fragrant flowers.

How many days and nights is Khipil made to go without water?

- A. One day and night
- B. Three days and nights
- C. Five days and nights
- D. Ten days and nights

Answer: B. Three days and nights

Explanation: Khipil is made to go three days and three nights without water, presented ironically as an honour by Shahpesh.

What is Khipil made to do for seven days and seven nights?

- A. Stand with arms outstretched, holding a pomegranate in each hand
- B. Guard the palace gates
- C. Write poetry for the King



D. Sleep in the unfinished chair

Answer: A. Stand with arms outstretched, holding a pomegranate in each hand

Explanation: For seven days and nights, Khipil is forced to stand with stretched arms, holding a pomegranate in each hand, mimicking a tree.

What does the story's central theme criticise?

A. The dangers of foreign travel

B. Valuing words and talk over real deeds and responsibility

C. The unfairness of monarchy

D. The difficulty of palace construction

Answer: B. Valuing words and talk over real deeds and responsibility

Explanation: The story is a satire criticising the tendency to value eloquent talk over genuine action and responsibility.

Quick Revision Summary

- 'The Punishment of Shahpesh, the Persian, on Khipil, the Builder' is a short story by George Meredith (1828-1909).
- Khipil, the King's builder, spends four years failing to complete Shahpesh's palace, entertaining workers with talk instead.
- Shahpesh compares Khipil to a farm servant who boasted of his soil's richness through its weeds rather than its crop.
- Shahpesh forces Khipil across an unfinished gap, causing him to fall into water — ironically praised as a 'bath.'
- Khipil is made to sit in a chair that does not exist, under threat of arrows if he moves, while the court laughs.
- In the neglected garden, Khipil is forced to pluck and admire nettles as if they were fragrant flowers.
- Khipil goes three days without water and stands seven days with arms outstretched holding pomegranates, as further ironic 'honours.'
- Each punishment matches and exposes Khipil's specific failing: pretence, boastfulness, and empty talk.
- The story's theme is a satire on valuing words over deeds, warning that empty talk leads to disgrace.
- The tale ends with the proverbial phrase 'the Palace of the Wagging Tongue' for anyone punished this way.



Exam Tips

- Unit 10 belongs to PECTAA's 'prose group' (Units 1, 2, 5, 8, 10), which under the current paper pattern carries heavier weight — 5 of the paper's synonym questions and 3 of its MCQs are drawn from these prose units, so revise the 12 glossary words in this unit carefully.
- Since only 7 of the 10 short questions asked from the prose group need to be attempted, practice answering all 8 short questions in this unit so you have a comfortable choice on exam day.
- Memorise the sequence of Khipil's punishments in order (gap/bath, chair, nettle nosegay, drought, pomegranate tree) — examiners often ask you to narrate or identify events from this narrative in sequence.
- Be ready to explain how each punishment ironically matches Khipil's specific failing, since this cause-and-effect, irony-based reasoning is central to the story's exam-style comprehension questions.
- This unit's passage may also be set for the punctuation exercise or Urdu-translation/essay-writing option, so practice both as part of your preparation for this and the other prose units.
- When answering long questions, structure your answer around the story's plot stages (exposition, rising action through the punishments, resolution, theme) exactly as the story unfolds, rather than jumping between events out of order.



Unit 11: Those Winter Sundays

This unit presents Robert Hayden's poem 'Those Winter Sundays', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The poem is a reflective, adult look back at a father's quiet, unappreciated sacrifices on cold winter mornings, exploring how love can be expressed through difficult, silent action rather than words, and how such love is often only recognised in hindsight, with regret.

These notes summarise the poem's content, structure, and meaning strictly based on the textbook's presentation, and provide a stanza-by-stanza paraphrase and explanation (the specific skill tested in the exam question 'explain the given stanza with reference to context'), literary devices, comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit. As the poem remains under copyright, its text is paraphrased throughout rather than quoted in full, with only brief quoted fragments used for reference.

Learning Objectives

- Use complex questions for a range of audiences based on the poem's themes.
- Identify rhyme scheme and figurative language in the poem.
- Summarise the poem's content by paraphrasing it using correct language structure and own words.
- Consult reference materials to clarify the precise meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Demonstrate command of standard English capitalisation, punctuation, and spelling.
- Write a dialogue using appropriate vocabulary, tone, and narration conventions, inspired by the poem's family theme.



Key Concepts

About the Poet: Robert Hayden

Robert Hayden (1913-1980) was an American poet known for his reflective, emotional poetry about family, history, and African American experiences. Born in Detroit, he grew up in a foster home marked by hardship, an experience that inspired many of his poems, including 'Those Winter Sundays.'

Educated at Detroit City College and the University of Michigan, Hayden became the first African American Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress (equivalent to U.S. Poet Laureate). His famous works include 'Middle Passage', 'Frederick Douglass', and 'Those Winter Sundays', celebrated for their emotional depth and vivid imagery.

What the Poem Describes

The poem is spoken by an adult looking back on his childhood. It describes how, even on Sundays, his father would rise early in the freezing pre-dawn cold to light the household fires and warm the house before anyone else woke, despite hands sore and damaged from a hard week's physical labour — sacrifices that went completely unthanked at the time.

The child would eventually wake to the sound of the cold breaking as the house warmed, then rise reluctantly, not out of gratitude but out of a quiet fear of the tense, difficult atmosphere in the home. Speaking to his father with indifference as a child, the speaker did not recognise the additional small kindnesses his father performed, such as warming the house and caring for his belongings.

The poem closes with the adult speaker's regretful realisation of how little he understood, as a child, about the demanding, solitary, often unacknowledged nature of a parent's love — expressed through the poem's central closing image of love as a set of difficult, lonely duties carried out without expectation of thanks.



Central Theme: Unspoken Parental Love and Regret

The poem explores the theme of unspoken parental love, where a father's quiet, selfless sacrifices go unnoticed and unappreciated by his child. Through vivid imagery of harsh winter mornings and the father's physical labour, the poem highlights how love is often shown through actions rather than affectionate words.

It also captures the theme of regret and realisation, as the adult speaker looks back with remorse for failing to recognise his father's devotion. The tension in the household adds depth to the emotional distance between father and child, ultimately revealing that true love can be silent, enduring, and often unacknowledged.

Structure and Literary Devices

The poem is written in free verse, lacking a consistent rhyme scheme or meter, which creates a natural, conversational, and reflective style suited to the speaker's retrospective tone. It is arranged in three stanzas of uneven length (five, four, and five lines).

Key literary devices include vivid imagery describing the harsh winter cold and the father's physical hardship; symbolism, where winter represents emotional distance and fire represents the father's love and warmth; alliteration adding rhythm to key phrases; repetition of a key regretful question near the poem's end, emphasising the speaker's growing understanding; and a central metaphor comparing parental love to demanding, solitary duties. The poem's tone shifts from a neutral, descriptive opening to a reflective, regretful close, tracing the speaker's emotional realisation.

Stanza-wise Paraphrase and Explanation

This poem remains under copyright, so it is not reproduced in full here. Each stanza is explained below in original, paraphrased words, with only short quoted phrases used for reference.



Stanza 1

The poem opens by describing how, even on Sundays, the father rose early and dressed in the intensely cold, dark early morning — captured in the poem's well-known invented phrase "blueblack cold", which conveys both the colour and depth of the pre-dawn chill. Though his hands were "cracked" and sore from a week of hard physical labour, the father lit the household fires himself and worked them into a blaze to warm the house before anyone else woke. The stanza's blunt final statement, "No one ever thanked him", introduces the poem's central irony: this daily act of quiet sacrifice went completely unacknowledged by his family.

Stanza 2

The speaker recalls waking to the sound of the cold "splintering, breaking" as the house warmed, an image that gives the father's effort an almost physical, audible presence. Once the rooms were warm, the father would call for the speaker to get up, and the child would rise slowly and dress — not out of gratitude, but, as the speaker admits, out of fear of "the chronic angers of that house", a phrase suggesting a tense, emotionally difficult home atmosphere that stood between father and child.

Stanza 3

In the final stanza, the adult speaker admits to having spoken "indifferently" to his father as a child, despite the father having driven out the cold and even polished the child's shoes — small additional acts of care that went unnoticed at the time. The poem closes with its most reflective and regretful lines: the repeated question "What did I know, what did I know" underscores the speaker's belated realisation of how much he failed to understand as a child, and the poem's closing metaphor describes parental love as consisting of "austere and lonely offices" — difficult, thankless duties carried out in solitude, without expectation of recognition.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

ache



to feel a continuous pain that is not severe

austere

simple and plain; without any decoration

bank

to pile coal, etc. on a fire so that it burns slowly for a long time

blaze

to burn brightly and strongly

chronic

lasting a long time; difficult to solve

cracked

damaged with lines in its surface but not completely broken

indifferently

in a way that shows you are not interested in or do not care about somebody/ something

lonely

where only a few people ever come or visit

office

here, a duty or task performed for somebody, especially one that is difficult or unpleasant

splinter

to break, or to make something break, into small, thin, sharp pieces

Poem at a Glance

Aspect	Key Fact
Poet	Robert Hayden (1913-1980), first African American U.S. Poet Laureate.
Publication	Widely considered one of Hayden's most celebrated poems, drawing on his difficult childhood in foster care.
Form	



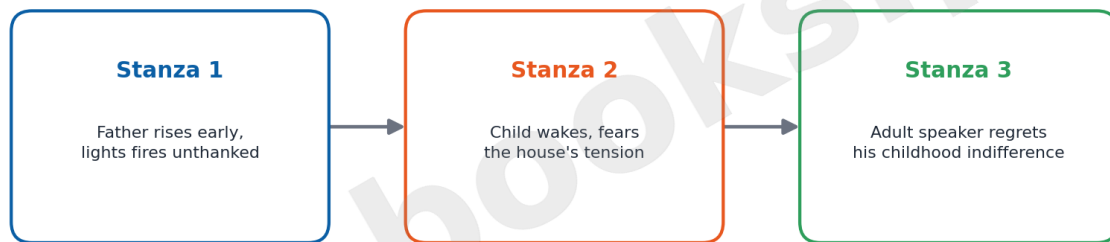
Aspect	Key Fact
	Three stanzas of uneven length (five, four, five lines), written in free verse.
Central theme	Unspoken parental love expressed through quiet sacrifice, and the adult speaker's regret at failing to recognise it as a child.
Key symbolism	Winter/cold represents emotional distance; fire represents the father's unspoken love and warmth.
Key phrase (5 words)	"No one ever thanked him" — the poem's central statement of unacknowledged sacrifice.
Closing metaphor	Parental love described as "austere and lonely offices" — difficult, solitary, thankless duties.
Tone shift	Moves from a neutral, descriptive opening to a reflective, regretful close.

Diagram

Progression of the Poem: A sequential flow diagram of three connected boxes, one per stanza, tracing the poem's movement from the father's unseen morning sacrifice, through the child's fear and indifference, to the adult speaker's final regret and realisation about the nature of parental love.



Progression of "Those Winter Sundays" (Unit 11, Robert Hayden)



The poem moves from unseen sacrifice to childhood fear to adult regret and understanding.

Progression of the Poem

Short Questions & Answers

What is Robert Hayden's attitude towards the father's sacrifices in the poem?

Hayden treats the father's sacrifices with quiet respect and underlying sorrow, showing through the adult speaker's regretful, reflective tone that these unthanked acts deserved far more recognition than they received at the time.

How does the speaker's viewpoint change from childhood to adulthood?

As a child, the speaker responded with fear and indifference to his father's efforts, but as an adult looking back, he recognises and regrets his failure to understand the depth of his father's quiet devotion.

Why does the speaker use the phrase 'blueblack cold' to describe the winter morning?

This vivid, invented compound word conveys both the visual darkness and the intense, biting quality of the early morning cold, immediately establishing the harshness the father endured before anyone else woke.

What does the phrase 'No one ever thanked him' reveal about the father's efforts?



It reveals that the father's daily sacrifice went completely unacknowledged by his family, establishing the poem's central irony between the scale of his effort and the total absence of recognition.

What can be inferred about the father's job from the description of his hands?

The description of his hands as 'cracked' and aching from labour suggests the father worked in physically demanding, likely manual work throughout the week, leaving him in pain even before his Sunday morning duties.

What does 'the chronic angers of that house' suggest about the family's emotional environment?

It suggests a long-lasting, tense, and difficult atmosphere within the home, hinting at unspoken conflict or hardship that created emotional distance between the speaker and his father.

Why does the speaker repeat 'What did I know, what did I know' near the end of the poem?

The repetition emphasises the speaker's deep regret and dawning realisation, as an adult, of how little he understood as a child about the difficult, selfless nature of his father's love.

What does the closing image of love as 'austere and lonely offices' suggest about parental love?

It suggests that genuine parental love can take the form of difficult, solitary, and thankless duties performed without expectation of recognition, rather than being expressed through affectionate words.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how Robert Hayden conveys the theme of unspoken parental love across the three stanzas of the poem.

How does stanza one establish the father's unacknowledged sacrifice?

The first stanza describes the father rising early into the 'blueblack cold' with hands already 'cracked' from a week of labour, lighting the household fires alone,



and closes with the blunt statement 'No one ever thanked him', establishing that his sacrifice went entirely unrecognised.

How does stanza two show the child's response to the father's efforts?

The second stanza shows the child waking to the sound of the warming house and rising slowly, but motivated by fear of 'the chronic angers of that house' rather than gratitude, revealing the emotional distance and tension present within the family.

How does stanza three convey the adult speaker's regret?

The final stanza reveals the child spoke 'indifferently' to a father who had also quietly cared for him in small ways, and the adult speaker's repeated question 'What did I know, what did I know' expresses his belated, sorrowful understanding of what he failed to appreciate.

What does the poem ultimately suggest about how love can be expressed?

The poem suggests that genuine love does not require words or visible affection — it can be expressed silently, through difficult, repeated, physical acts of care, and may only be recognised and understood long after the fact, as captured in the closing metaphor of love's 'austere and lonely offices.'

Explain the literary devices used in 'Those Winter Sundays' and discuss how they contribute to the poem's emotional impact.

How does imagery contribute to the poem's meaning?

Vivid imagery, such as the description of the intense pre-dawn cold and the father's cracked, aching hands, creates a strong sensory impression of the harsh conditions and physical toll of the father's sacrifice, making his unacknowledged effort feel immediate and real to the reader.

How does the poem use symbolism?

Winter and cold symbolise emotional distance within the family, while the fire the father lights symbolises his quiet, warming love — a contrast that runs



throughout the poem and culminates in the final stanza's reflection on the nature of that love.

What effect does the poem's free verse form have on its tone?

Because the poem lacks a fixed rhyme scheme or meter, it reads in a natural, conversational, reflective voice appropriate to an adult recalling and processing a childhood memory, rather than sounding formal or artificially poetic.

How does repetition affect the poem's closing impact?

The repeated phrase 'What did I know, what did I know' slows the poem down at its most emotional point, mimicking the halting, regretful voice of someone genuinely grappling with a realisation, and reinforces the depth of the speaker's remorse.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who is the poet of 'Those Winter Sundays'?

- A. Langston Hughes
- B. William Blake
- C. Robert Hayden
- D. Emily Dickinson

Answer: C. Robert Hayden

Explanation: 'Those Winter Sundays' was written by Robert Hayden (1913-1980).

What position did Robert Hayden hold, making him a historic figure in American poetry?

- A. U.S. Secretary of Education
- B. First African American Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress
- C. Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom
- D. President of a major university

Answer: B. First African American Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress

Explanation: Hayden became the first African American Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, equivalent to U.S. Poet Laureate.

What does the father do early in the morning, even on Sundays?



- A. Reads the newspaper
- B. Lights the household fires to warm the house
- C. Prepares breakfast for the family
- D. Goes to work at his job

Answer: B. Lights the household fires to warm the house

Explanation: The father rises early even on Sundays to light the fires and warm the house before the family wakes.

How are the father's hands described in the poem?

- A. Soft and delicate
- B. Cracked and aching from labour
- C. Cold and lifeless
- D. Clean and smooth

Answer: B. Cracked and aching from labour

Explanation: The father's hands are described as cracked and aching from a week of physical labour.

What is the effect of the statement 'No one ever thanked him'?

- A. It shows the father did not deserve thanks
- B. It highlights that his sacrifice went completely unacknowledged
- C. It suggests the father did not want thanks
- D. It shows the family was often away

Answer: B. It highlights that his sacrifice went completely unacknowledged

Explanation: This blunt statement highlights the central irony of the poem: the father's daily sacrifice was never acknowledged.

What does the child fear each morning, according to the poem?

- A. Being late for school
- B. The chronic angers of the house
- C. The cold weather outside
- D. Losing his father's approval

Answer: B. The chronic angers of the house

Explanation: The child rises out of fear of 'the chronic angers of that house', suggesting a tense home atmosphere.

How does the speaker describe his own behaviour towards his father as a child?



- A. Warm and affectionate
- B. Indifferent
- C. Openly hostile
- D. Constantly grateful

Answer: B. Indifferent

Explanation: The adult speaker admits to having spoken 'indifferently' to his father as a child.

What form is the poem written in?

- A. A strict sonnet
- B. Free verse
- C. Rhyming couplets
- D. A limerick

Answer: B. Free verse

Explanation: The poem is written in free verse, lacking a consistent rhyme scheme or meter.

What does the poem's closing metaphor compare parental love to?

- A. A joyful celebration
- B. Austere and lonely offices (difficult, solitary duties)
- C. A simple gift
- D. A public performance

Answer: B. Austere and lonely offices (difficult, solitary duties)

Explanation: The poem closes by comparing parental love to 'austere and lonely offices' — difficult, thankless, solitary duties.

What is the central theme of 'Those Winter Sundays'?

- A. The beauty of winter landscapes
- B. Unspoken parental love and the speaker's later regret
- C. The importance of punctuality
- D. A celebration of family holidays

Answer: B. Unspoken parental love and the speaker's later regret

Explanation: The poem's central theme is unspoken parental love, expressed through sacrifice, and the adult speaker's regret at not recognising it sooner.



Quick Revision Summary

- 'Those Winter Sundays' was written by Robert Hayden (1913-1980), the first African American U.S. Poet Laureate.
- The poem has three stanzas of uneven length, written in free verse without a fixed rhyme scheme.
- Stanza 1 describes the father rising early into the cold to light fires, an effort that went unthanked.
- Stanza 2 shows the child rising out of fear of the household's tense atmosphere, not gratitude.
- Stanza 3 reveals the adult speaker's regret at having spoken indifferently to a father who quietly cared for him.
- Winter and cold symbolise emotional distance; fire symbolises the father's silent love and warmth.
- The poem's closing lines compare parental love to demanding, solitary, thankless duties.
- Repetition of a regretful question near the poem's end emphasises the speaker's belated understanding.
- The poem's tone shifts from neutral and descriptive to reflective and regretful.
- The central theme is that true love can be silent, enduring, and often unacknowledged until much later.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'poem group' (Units 3, 6, 11, 13), which under the current paper pattern carries lighter weight — 3 synonym questions and 2 MCQs are drawn from these poem units, and only 5 of 8 short questions from this group need to be attempted.
- The poem group is specifically and reliably tested with the question 'Explain the given stanza with reference to context' (5 marks) — since this poem is under copyright, practise explaining each stanza in your own words (paraphrase) rather than memorising it verbatim, focusing on meaning, imagery, and how the stanza fits the poem's progression.
- Make sure you can explain all three stanzas individually, since any one could be set for a reference-to-context question — the stanza-wise section in these notes covers every stanza in full.



- Learn the poet's background facts (Robert Hayden, first African American U.S. Poet Laureate, difficult childhood in foster care) since short questions in the poem group often test factual recall about the poet alongside the poem's content.
- Memorise the literary device definitions together with the short quoted phrases associated with them — imagery ('blueblack cold'), symbolism (winter vs fire), and the closing metaphor ('austere and lonely offices') — as examiners often ask you to identify the device from a quoted phrase.
- Practise paraphrasing the poem in your own words, since the textbook itself sets this as a specific writing task for this unit.



Unit 12: The Impact of AI on Society, Human Relationships, and Ethics

This unit presents the essay 'The Impact of AI on Society, Human Relationships, and Ethics', as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The essay is an argumentative/informative piece explaining what Artificial Intelligence (AI) is, how it has transformed sectors such as healthcare, education, and finance, how it has reshaped human relationships and communication, and the ethical concerns -- privacy, bias, accountability -- that arise from its widespread use, before closing with principles for its responsible use.

These notes summarise the essay's content and structure strictly based on the textbook's presentation, and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit. Note: this unit is not part of the current PECTAA examinable pairing scheme for this session, but is included here for complete coverage of the book.

Learning Objectives

- Engage in extended discussions and critiques, considering other speakers' viewpoints and presenting one's own with clarity.
- Link new facts, terms, and concepts with prior knowledge.
- Read to analyse descriptive, argumentative, and persuasive essays.
- Change tense in indirect/direct speech (present, past, perfect, future, modals, questions, orders, requests, suggestions, advice) in narrative paragraphs.
- Write multi-paragraph essays, stories, poems, or playscripts using correct writing mechanics.



Key Concepts

What is Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a branch of computer science and technology that enables machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as learning, problem-solving, decision-making, language processing, and visual recognition.

In recent decades, AI has become a central technology across sectors including healthcare, education, finance, and entertainment, transforming how people live, work, and interact with one another and with technology.

AI's Influence on Society

AI has brought remarkable improvements to society, making daily tasks faster, more accurate, and more convenient. In healthcare, AI-powered diagnostic tools such as image recognition software can identify diseases like cancer at an early stage, improving patient outcomes, while robotic surgery and outcome-prediction systems assist doctors directly.

In education, intelligent tutoring systems adapt lessons to each student's learning pace, offering personalised lessons and automated assessments. In finance, AI is used for fraud detection, customer service chatbots, and automated trading, ensuring faster and more accurate transactions. Businesses more broadly use AI to automate inventory management, transaction processing, and customer-data analysis, reducing human error and increasing efficiency.

However, this progress brings a major challenge: job displacement. As AI becomes capable of performing repetitive or even skilled tasks -- such as supermarket self-checkout replacing cashiers, or chatbots replacing customer support agents, or factory robots performing assembly work -- many jobs are at risk. Society must respond through re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce, and by supporting those who lose employment to automation.



AI and Human Relationships

AI has transformed how people communicate and interact. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok use AI algorithms to personalise content, helping people connect with others who share similar interests, while virtual assistants like Siri, Google Assistant, and Alexa make everyday communication faster and more convenient.

However, this convenience carries a risk: excessive reliance on digital communication can reduce face-to-face interaction, and young people in particular may spend more time with devices than with family and friends, leading to social isolation.

AI has also enabled virtual companions and chatbots -- such as Replika -- that simulate human conversation and offer emotional support. Although helpful in some ways, these systems lack genuine emotion and understanding, and overreliance on them can reduce users' empathy and emotional intelligence, making some people more comfortable interacting with machines than with real people.

Ethical Considerations in AI

AI systems require large amounts of data to function, which raises serious privacy concerns -- for example, facial recognition systems used in public spaces can identify individuals without their explicit consent, and their data may be stored, shared, or misused.

AI systems also learn from data, and if that data contains biases, the AI inherits them. For instance, a recruitment tool trained on historically biased hiring data may unfairly favour male candidates, and facial recognition systems may perform less accurately on certain racial groups, leading to unfair treatment in security and law enforcement.

Accountability is another major concern: when an AI system makes a harmful decision -- such as an autonomous vehicle causing an accident -- it can be unclear whether the manufacturer, the software developer, or the user is responsible, making justice difficult to ensure without clear guidelines. AI can also be misused to create deepfakes and other misleading content that



manipulates public opinion or damages reputations, and current detection technology is not always effective at stopping this.

The Need for Responsible Use of AI

To maximise AI's benefits while minimising its risks, governments, organisations, and individuals must work together to establish ethical guidelines for its design, development, and deployment. The essay identifies four key principles: transparency (users should be able to understand how AI systems work and make decisions), fairness (systems should be trained on diverse, unbiased data), privacy protection (user data must be securely stored and processed only with consent), and accountability (clear rules should define who is responsible for an AI system's actions), alongside continuous monitoring to ensure systems keep operating ethically and efficiently.

By following these principles, the essay argues, society can harness AI's power for good while avoiding its potential harms -- making a sustained commitment to ethical AI development essential as the technology continues to advance.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

assembly

the process of putting together the parts of something such as a vehicle or piece of furniture

automate

to use machines and computers instead of people to do a job or task

companionship

the pleasant feeling that you have when you have a friendly relationship with somebody and are not alone

displacement

the act of forcing somebody/something away from their home or position

excessive

greater than what seems reasonable or appropriate

interaction



the act of communicating with somebody, especially while you work, play, or spend time with them

isolation

the act of separating somebody/something; the state of being separate

reliance

the state of needing somebody/something in order to survive, be successful, etc.;
the fact of being able to rely on somebody/something

transform

to change the form of something; to change in form

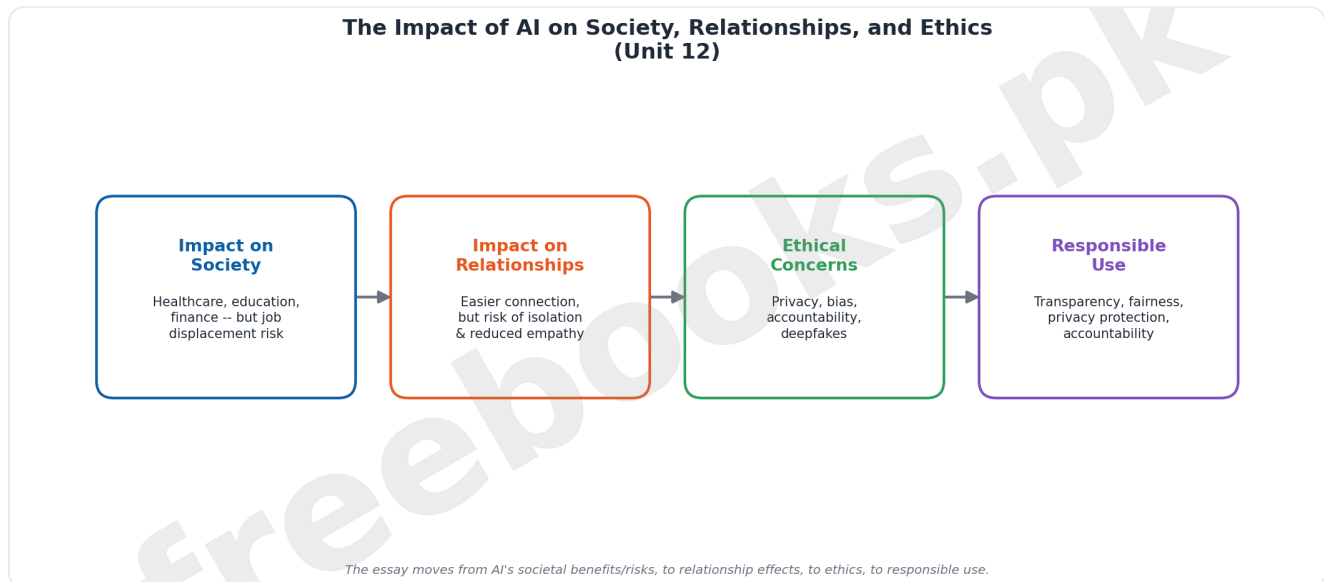
Essay at a Glance

Aspect	Key Fact
Essay type	Argumentative/informative essay on the impact of Artificial Intelligence.
Sectors discussed	Healthcare, education, finance, and entertainment.
Main risk to society	Job displacement from automation (e.g. self-checkout, chatbots, factory robots).
Main risk to relationships	Excessive reliance on digital communication, leading to social isolation.
Example AI companion	Replika -- an AI chatbot offering simulated emotional support.
Key ethical concerns	Privacy, algorithmic bias, accountability, and deepfakes/misinformation.
Four responsible-use principles	Transparency, Fairness, Privacy Protection, and Accountability.
Essay's overall stance	AI should be developed and used responsibly to maximise benefits and minimise harm.



Diagram

AI's Impact Across Four Areas: A sequential flow diagram tracing the essay's structure: AI's impact on society (benefits and job displacement), on human relationships (connection versus isolation), the ethical concerns it raises, and the principles needed for its responsible use.



AI's Impact Across Four Areas

Short Questions & Answers

What is Artificial Intelligence, according to the essay?

AI is a branch of computer science that enables machines to perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence, such as learning, problem-solving, decision-making, language processing, and visual recognition.

How does AI assist doctors, according to the essay?

AI-powered systems assist doctors in diagnosing diseases (e.g. identifying cancer early through image recognition), predicting patient outcomes, and even performing robotic surgeries.

What is one major risk AI poses to employment?

AI poses the risk of job displacement, as it becomes capable of performing repetitive or even skilled tasks -- for example, self-checkout systems replacing cashiers and chatbots replacing customer support agents.



How can excessive reliance on AI communication tools affect relationships?

It can reduce face-to-face interaction and lead to social isolation, particularly among young people who may spend more time with devices than with family and friends.

Why might an AI system be biased, according to the essay?

An AI system can inherit biases present in the data used to train it -- for example, a recruitment tool trained on historically biased hiring data may unfairly favour one group of candidates over another.

Why is accountability a challenge with AI systems?

When an AI system makes a harmful decision, such as an autonomous vehicle causing an accident, it can be unclear whether the manufacturer, developer, or user is responsible, making it difficult to ensure justice without clear guidelines.

What are deepfakes, and why are they a concern?

Deepfakes are AI-generated fake or misleading content, such as manipulated videos, that can distort public opinion or damage an individual's reputation; detection technology is not always effective at stopping them.

What four principles does the essay recommend for responsible AI use?

The essay recommends transparency, fairness, privacy protection, and accountability, along with continuous monitoring of AI systems.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss the impact of AI on society and human relationships as presented in the essay.

What benefits does AI bring to society?

AI improves healthcare through early disease diagnosis and robotic surgery, personalises education through adaptive tutoring systems, and increases business efficiency through automation of inventory, transactions, and data analysis.



What is the main societal risk of AI, according to the essay?

The main risk is job displacement, as AI increasingly performs tasks once done by humans, such as cashier work, customer support, and factory assembly, requiring workers to re-skill for a technology-driven future.

How does AI affect human communication and connection?

AI-powered tools like social media algorithms and virtual assistants make communication faster and help people connect with shared interests, but excessive reliance on them can reduce face-to-face interaction and lead to social isolation.

What risk do AI companions like Replika pose to emotional wellbeing?

Because such systems lack genuine emotion and understanding, overreliance on them for social interaction can reduce users' empathy and emotional intelligence, making some people more comfortable with machines than with real people.

Explain the ethical concerns raised by AI and the principles needed for its responsible use.

What privacy concerns does AI raise?

AI systems, such as facial recognition used in public spaces, require large amounts of personal data and can identify individuals without explicit consent, raising concerns about how that data is stored, shared, or potentially misused.

How can AI systems become biased?

AI systems learn from the data they are trained on, so if that data reflects existing biases -- such as gender bias in past hiring records -- the AI can inherit and replicate those biases in its decisions.



Why is accountability difficult to establish for AI-related harm?

Because multiple parties -- manufacturers, developers, and users -- may all play a role in an AI system's actions, it can be unclear who is responsible when something goes wrong, such as an autonomous vehicle accident.

What principles does the essay propose for responsible AI use?

The essay proposes transparency (understandable decision-making), fairness (unbiased training data), privacy protection (secure, consent-based data use), and accountability (clear responsibility rules), supported by continuous monitoring.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

What is Artificial Intelligence, according to the essay?

- A. A type of computer hardware
- B. A branch of technology enabling machines to perform tasks requiring human intelligence
- C. A social media platform
- D. A type of robot used only in factories

Answer: B. A branch of technology enabling machines to perform tasks requiring human intelligence

Explanation: AI is defined as a branch of technology/computer science that enables machines to perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence.

Which sector does the essay NOT mention as being transformed by AI?

- A. Healthcare
- B. Education
- C. Finance
- D. Agriculture

Answer: D. Agriculture

Explanation: The essay discusses healthcare, education, finance, and entertainment -- agriculture is not mentioned.

What is one of the main concerns associated with the widespread use of AI?



- A. Improved job security
- B. Job displacement
- C. Reduced healthcare costs
- D. Increased human connection

Answer: B. Job displacement

Explanation: The essay identifies job displacement as one of the most pressing concerns of widespread AI use.

What example does the essay give of an AI-powered virtual companion?

- A. Siri
- B. Alexa
- C. Replika
- D. Google Assistant

Answer: C. Replika

Explanation: Replika is given as an example of an AI-powered chatbot designed to provide emotional support and companionship.

What can cause an AI system to become biased?

- A. Using too much computing power
- B. Training on data that reflects existing biases
- C. Having too many users
- D. Being too transparent

Answer: B. Training on data that reflects existing biases

Explanation: AI systems can inherit biases present in the data used to train them, such as historical gender bias in hiring records.

What ethical issue does facial recognition technology raise, according to the essay?

- A. Increased efficiency only
- B. Privacy concerns
- C. Lower costs
- D. Faster internet speeds

Answer: B. Privacy concerns

Explanation: Facial recognition raises privacy concerns, as individuals may be monitored and their data stored or shared without consent.

According to the essay, who might be held responsible when an autonomous vehicle causes an accident?



- A. Only the vehicle owner
- B. The manufacturer, developer, or user -- responsibility is unclear
- C. No one, since AI cannot be at fault
- D. Only the government

Answer: B. The manufacturer, developer, or user -- responsibility is unclear

Explanation: The essay notes that without clear guidelines, it can be difficult to determine whether the manufacturer, developer, or user is responsible.

What are deepfakes used for, according to the essay?

- A. Improving healthcare diagnostics
- B. Creating fake or misleading content that can manipulate opinion
- C. Automating financial trading
- D. Personalising education

Answer: B. Creating fake or misleading content that can manipulate opinion

Explanation: Deepfakes are AI-generated fake or misleading content that can manipulate public opinion or damage reputations.

Which of the following is NOT one of the essay's four principles for responsible AI use?

- A. Transparency
- B. Fairness
- C. Profitability
- D. Accountability

Answer: C. Profitability

Explanation: The essay's four principles are transparency, fairness, privacy protection, and accountability -- profitability is not one of them.

What does the essay suggest society should do in response to AI-driven job displacement?

- A. Ban all AI technology
- B. Focus on re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce
- C. Ignore the issue
- D. Reduce access to education

Answer: B. Focus on re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce

Explanation: The essay suggests that governments and educational institutions must focus on re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce.



Quick Revision Summary

- AI is a branch of technology that enables machines to perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence.
- AI benefits healthcare (diagnosis, robotic surgery), education (personalised learning), and finance (fraud detection, automated trading).
- A major societal risk of AI is job displacement, as automation replaces repetitive or skilled human tasks.
- Society must respond to job displacement through re-skilling and up-skilling the workforce.
- AI-powered communication tools help people connect but risk reducing face-to-face interaction and causing social isolation.
- AI companions like Replika simulate conversation but lack genuine emotion, risking reduced empathy in overreliant users.
- Key ethical concerns include privacy (e.g. facial recognition), bias in training data, and accountability for AI decisions.
- AI can be misused to create deepfakes that spread misinformation or damage reputations.
- The essay proposes four principles for responsible AI use: transparency, fairness, privacy protection, and accountability.
- Continuous monitoring of AI systems is needed to ensure they keep operating ethically and efficiently.

Exam Tips

- This unit ('The Impact of AI on Society, Human Relationships, and Ethics') is not part of the current PECTAA examinable pairing scheme for this session, but is included here for complete book coverage.
- Even though not currently examinable, the essay's structure (society -> relationships -> ethics -> responsible use) is a useful model for how argumentative/informative essays are typically organised in this course.
- Focus revision time on units confirmed in the current year's pairing scheme; treat this unit as supplementary reading if time allows.
- If this unit becomes examinable in a future year, the four responsible-use principles (transparency, fairness, privacy protection, accountability) are the most quotable, specific facts to memorise.



- Practise the indirect-to-direct speech conversion rules taught alongside this unit, as grammar rules are tested independently of which reading units are examinable.
- Understand the difference between AI's societal benefits and its societal risks, since this contrast is the essay's central organising idea.



Unit 13: Ruba'iyat

This unit presents 'Ruba'iyat' (quatrains) by Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

The poem consists of three quatrains (twelve lines in total) in which Iqbal reflects on the nature of true faith, contrasts the spiritual vitality of Islamic civilisation with what he saw as the spiritual emptiness of modern Europe, and laments the decline of passionate devotion among Muslims of his own time.

These notes summarise the poem's content, structure, and meaning strictly based on the textbook's presentation, and provide a stanza-by-stanza paraphrase and explanation (the specific skill tested in the exam question 'explain the given stanza with reference to context'), literary devices, comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit. As this translation's copyright status could not be confirmed, its text is paraphrased throughout rather than quoted in full, with only brief quoted fragments used for reference.

Learning Objectives

- Respond to texts through arguments and discussions.
- Identify rhyme schemes and figurative language in poems.
- Change tense in indirect/direct speech (present, past and perfect tenses, future, modals, time and questions, orders, requests, suggestions and advice) in narrative paragraphs.
- Write a descriptive composition (physical description and characteristics/traits of a person, object, or place, moving from general to specific) using correct punctuation and spelling, through brainstorming, mind mapping, and drafting.



Key Concepts

About the Poet: Allama Muhammad Iqbal

Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) is regarded as the visionary philosopher-poet of Pakistan, known for his revolutionary intellectual legacy expressed through Persian and Urdu works. Central to his philosophy was the concept of Khudi (selfhood) -- a call for Muslims to awaken from colonial subjugation and materialist decline by rediscovering their Islamic identity.

Iqbal offered sharp critiques of Western civilisation, which he viewed as spiritually hollow despite its material progress, contrasting it with what he saw as Islam's transcendent unity. For Iqbal, true faith was neither passive nor merely ritualistic, but a dynamic, passionate force capable of transforming both individuals and societies. His poetry thus serves both as a mirror exposing Muslim decline and as a roadmap for revival through self-realisation and spiritual vigour.

Background and Context of the Poem

Iqbal's Ruba'iyat (quatrains) reflect his deep concern about the spiritual and moral decline of Muslims during the early 20th century. Written originally in Persian and Urdu, these verses critique both Western materialism and the weakening faith of Muslim societies of his time.

The poem draws on Islamic history -- particularly the example of Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) unshakable faith -- to contrast true devotion with what Iqbal saw as the hollow pursuits of modernity. He also highlights the cultural and spiritual disconnect he perceived between Islam and Europe, mourning the loss of passionate devotion among Muslims of his era.

What the Poem Conveys

The poem opens by defining true faith through the example of Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) trial by fire: faith, for Iqbal, is a matter of dignity and complete devotion to Allah, and to live without it is a condition he considers worse than slavery.



It then turns to a civilisational contrast, presenting Islam's spiritual vitality as the source of the Muslim nation's harmony, set against a Europe that Iqbal describes as spiritually empty despite its material achievements, refusing any submission to divine guidance.

The poem closes on a note of lament, mourning that the passionate devotion that once defined Muslim faith has faded, leaving weakened resolve, broken unity, and prayers performed without genuine feeling.

Central Themes

Nature of true faith: the poem presents faith as an active, all-consuming devotion to Allah, exemplified by Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) willingness to face the fire, and argues that a life without such faith is worse than slavery.

Clash of civilisations: the poem contrasts Islamic civilisation's spiritual harmony, drawn from divine inspiration, with a European civilisation that Iqbal portrays as materially advanced yet spiritually hollow and disconnected.

Lament for Muslim decline: the poem mourns the loss of passionate religious devotion among Muslims, portraying their spiritual condition as reduced to superficial, unfeeling ritual.

Structure and Poetic Devices

The poem follows the classical ruba'i (quatrain) form -- a Persian poetic structure of three stanzas, each with four lines, totalling twelve lines -- using a modified AABA rhyme scheme typical of ruba'iyat.

Key literary devices include metaphor and symbolism (faith compared to Hazrat Ibrahim's trial by fire; a physiological image for Muslims' weakened spiritual vitality); paradox and oxymoron (faith described through a term pairing intoxication with divine devotion, and religious fervour reframed as a form of sacred passion); juxtaposition and contrast (Europe's spiritual emptiness set against Islam's harmony, and the warmth of sincere worship set against cold, hollow ritual); personification and apostrophe (the reader addressed directly, and the pull of the modern age personified as a seductive force); and sensory/thermal



imagery (touch used to convey superficiality, and fire versus cold used to map spiritual states).

The poem also draws on Islamic allusion and intertextuality, grounding itself in the Qur'anic account of Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) sacrifice, and using Makkah as a symbol of submission to Allah, in contrast to Europe's refusal to submit.

Stanza-wise Paraphrase and Explanation

This translation's copyright status could not be confirmed, so it is not reproduced in full here. Each stanza is explained below in original, paraphrased words, with only short quoted phrases used for reference.

Stanza 1

The first quatrain opens with Iqbal's central definition of true faith: he compares it to the trial Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) faced when cast into the fire, presenting faith as a matter of dignity and total, wholehearted devotion to Allah -- a state the poet describes using the striking term "God-drunk", pairing the language of intoxication with sacred devotion. Addressing the reader directly, the poet warns those charmed by the fashions of the modern age that a life lived without faith is a condition "worse than slavery".

Stanza 2

The second quatrain shifts to a civilisational contrast. Iqbal presents Islam's spiritual vitality -- its "fire" -- as the source of harmony and unity for the Muslim nation, blending even with the music of distant lands. Against this, he sets Europe, whose soul he calls "empty of concord": for all its material progress, its civilisation, in his view, "to no Makkah bends", refusing any submission to divine guidance.

Stanza 3

The final quatrain turns to lament the spiritual condition of Muslims themselves in Iqbal's own time. He mourns that "Love's madness" -- the passionate, all-consuming devotion that once defined true faith -- has departed, leaving weakened resolve as "the blood runs thin", broken ranks, troubled hearts, and



prayers grown cold, so that religious feeling survives "no feeling deeper than the skin".

Important Definitions (Glossary)

bends

submits or bows (here, Europe's civilisation refuses to submit to any spiritual authority)

captivate

to charm or dominate someone's attention

concord

harmony or agreement; unity of hearts and purpose

God-drunk

intoxicated with divine love; completely absorbed in devotion to Allah

madness

intense passion or zeal (in this context, religious fervour)

perplexed

confused or deeply troubled

ranks

ordered lines or unity (metaphor for Muslim solidarity)

Ruba'iyat

a poetic form consisting of quatrains (four-line stanzas), originating from Persian literature

self-honouring

maintaining one's dignity and self-respect through noble principles

stake

a post for execution; refers to the fire prepared for Hazrat Ibrahim (AS)



Poem at a Glance

Aspect	Key Fact
Poet	Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), philosopher-poet of Pakistan.
Form	Classical ruba'i (quatrain) form -- three stanzas of four lines each, twelve lines total.
Rhyme scheme	A modified AABA rhyme scheme, typical of ruba'iyat.
Central concept	Khudi (selfhood) -- Iqbal's philosophy of awakening Muslim identity and spiritual vigour.
Key allusion	Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) trial by fire (Qur'an 37:97-113), symbolising unwavering faith.
Key symbol	Makkah -- symbolises submission to Allah, contrasted with Europe's refusal to "bend".
Central contrast	Islamic civilisation's spiritual harmony vs. Europe's material progress and spiritual emptiness.
Poem's lament	The loss of "Love's madness" (passionate devotion) among Muslims of Iqbal's era.

Diagram

Argument of the Poem: A sequential flow diagram of three connected boxes, one per stanza, tracing the poem's movement from Iqbal's definition of true faith, through his contrast between Islamic and European civilisation, to his closing lament for Muslims' lost spiritual passion.



Argument of Iqbal's Ruba'iyat (Unit 13, Three Quatrains)



The poem moves from defining true faith, to contrasting civilisations, to lamenting Muslim decline.

Argument of the Poem

Short Questions & Answers

What does Iqbal mean by describing faith as being 'God-drunk'?

He means a state of faith so complete and passionate that it resembles intoxication -- total, wholehearted absorption in devotion to Allah, beyond mere ritual observance.

Why does the poet claim that having no faith is worse than slavery?

For Iqbal, faith gives a person dignity, purpose, and spiritual freedom; without it, a person is bound by material and worldly forces alone, which he considers a deeper form of bondage than physical slavery.

How does Iqbal contrast 'music of strange lands' with 'Islam's fire'?

He suggests that Islam's spiritual vitality ('fire') is strong enough to blend with and give meaning even to the music of distant, unfamiliar lands, positioning Islamic faith as a unifying spiritual force.

What phrases show Iqbal's view of European civilisation as spiritually empty?

Phrases such as 'empty of concord' and 'to no Makkah bends' show his view that Europe, despite material progress, lacks spiritual harmony and refuses to submit to divine guidance.



How does the poet portray the spiritual condition of contemporary Muslims?

He portrays it as weakened and superficial -- passionate devotion has faded, unity is broken, hearts are troubled, prayers are offered without real feeling, and faith survives 'no feeling deeper than the skin'.

Identify one metaphor used to describe Muslim spiritual decline.

The image of 'the blood runs thin' is a physiological metaphor representing the weakening of Muslims' spiritual vitality and passionate devotion.

How does the concept of 'Love's madness' relate to Iqbal's idea of Khudi?

'Love's madness' represents the passionate, self-affirming devotion that Iqbal saw as central to Khudi (selfhood) -- true faith as an active, transformative force rather than passive ritual; its loss signals a loss of true selfhood.

What does the reference to Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) 'at the stake' represent in the poem?

It represents unwavering faith and willingness to endure trial and hardship for the sake of devotion to Allah, setting the standard against which the poem measures true faith.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how Iqbal develops his argument about faith and civilisation across the three quatrains of the poem.

How does the first quatrain define true faith?

The first quatrain defines true faith through the example of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) at the fire, presenting faith as dignified, total devotion to Allah -- a 'God-drunk' state -- and warns that a life without such faith is 'worse than slavery.'

How does the second quatrain contrast civilisations?

The second quatrain contrasts Islam's spiritual vitality, which gives the Muslim nation harmony, with Europe's soul, which the poet calls 'empty of concord' and unwilling to submit to divine guidance, despite its material progress.



How does the third quatrain lament Muslim decline?

The third quatrain mourns the departure of 'Love's madness' among Muslims, describing weakened resolve, broken unity, troubled hearts, and prayers performed without genuine feeling.

What overall message does the poem build towards?

The poem builds towards a call for spiritual revival -- by defining true faith, exposing civilisational spiritual imbalance, and lamenting present decline, Iqbal urges Muslims to reclaim the passionate devotion and Khudi (selfhood) they have lost.

Explain the literary devices used in Iqbal's Ruba'iyat and how they contribute to its meaning.

How does metaphor contribute to the poem's meaning?

Metaphors such as comparing faith to Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) trial by fire, and describing weakened faith as 'blood runs thin', give abstract spiritual ideas a vivid, physical form that makes the poem's arguments memorable and emotionally resonant.

What effect does the paradox 'God-drunk' create?

By pairing intoxication (typically viewed negatively) with divine devotion (positive), the phrase captures the totality and intensity of true faith, suggesting a complete absorption that goes beyond ordinary religious observance.

How does juxtaposition strengthen the poem's civilisational contrast?

By placing Europe's 'empty concord' directly against Islam's harmony, and 'prayers cold' against the warmth of sincere worship, the poem sharpens its critique through direct, memorable contrasts rather than lengthy explanation.

What role does Islamic allusion play in the poem?

References to Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) sacrifice and to Makkah ground the poem's arguments in Islamic tradition and scripture, lending the poet's critique of both



Europe and contemporary Muslims a foundation of shared religious history and symbolism.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who is the poet of the Ruba'iyat presented in this unit?

- A. Robert Hayden
- B. Allama Muhammad Iqbal
- C. William Blake
- D. Langston Hughes

Answer: B. Allama Muhammad Iqbal

Explanation: This unit's Ruba'iyat (quatrains) was written by Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938).

What central philosophical concept is associated with Iqbal's work?

- A. Democracy
- B. Khudi (selfhood)
- C. Colonialism
- D. Materialism

Answer: B. Khudi (selfhood)

Explanation: Khudi (selfhood) is central to Iqbal's philosophy -- a call for Muslims to rediscover their Islamic identity and spiritual vigour.

What poetic form does the poem follow?

- A. Sonnet
- B. Free verse
- C. Ruba'i (quatrain) form -- three four-line stanzas
- D. Limerick

Answer: C. Ruba'i (quatrain) form -- three four-line stanzas

Explanation: The poem follows the classical ruba'i (quatrain) form: three stanzas, each with four lines, twelve lines total.

What rhyme scheme is typical of ruba'iyat, as used in this poem?

- A. ABAB
- B. A modified AABA scheme
- C. Free verse with no rhyme
- D. Couplets (AABB)



Answer: B. A modified AABA scheme

Explanation: The poem uses a modified AABA rhyme scheme, typical of ruba'iyat.

Whose trial by fire does the poet use to define true faith?

- A. Hazrat Ibrahim (AS)
- B. Hazrat Musa (AS)
- C. Hazrat Isa (AS)
- D. Hazrat Nuh (AS)

Answer: A. Hazrat Ibrahim (AS)

Explanation: The poet compares faith to Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) willingness to endure the fire for Allah.

What does the phrase 'God-drunk' suggest about faith?

- A. Literal drunkenness
- B. Total, passionate absorption in devotion to Allah
- C. Criticism of religious practice
- D. A medical condition

Answer: B. Total, passionate absorption in devotion to Allah

Explanation: 'God-drunk' is a paradox suggesting complete, passionate absorption in divine devotion.

What does the poet suggest about Europe's civilisation?

- A. It fully submits to divine guidance
- B. It is spiritually empty despite material progress
- C. It has no material achievements
- D. It shares Islam's spiritual harmony

Answer: B. It is spiritually empty despite material progress

Explanation: The poet describes Europe's soul as 'empty of concord', spiritually hollow despite material progress.

What does 'the blood runs thin' metaphorically represent?

- A. Physical illness
- B. Loss of spiritual vitality and passionate devotion
- C. Old age
- D. Poverty

Answer: B. Loss of spiritual vitality and passionate devotion



Explanation: This physiological metaphor represents the weakening of Muslims' spiritual vitality and passionate devotion.

What does the phrase 'no feeling deeper than the skin' suggest?

- A. Deep, sincere devotion
- B. Superficial, unfeeling religious practice
- C. Physical strength
- D. Emotional intelligence

Answer: B. Superficial, unfeeling religious practice

Explanation: This phrase suggests that religious practice has become superficial, lacking genuine inner feeling.

What is the overall central theme of the poem?

- A. The beauty of nature
- B. True faith, civilisational contrast, and the lament for Muslim spiritual decline
- C. The history of Europe
- D. A celebration of modern technology

Answer: B. True faith, civilisational contrast, and the lament for Muslim spiritual decline

Explanation: The poem's central themes are the nature of true faith, the contrast between Islamic and European civilisation, and lament for Muslims' spiritual decline.

Quick Revision Summary

- The poem 'Ruba'iyat' was written by Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), Pakistan's philosopher-poet.
- It follows the classical ruba'i form: three quatrains (four-line stanzas), twelve lines total, with a modified AABA rhyme scheme.
- Stanza 1 defines true faith through Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) trial by fire and the term 'God-drunk'.
- Stanza 1 also states that a life without faith is 'worse than slavery'.
- Stanza 2 contrasts Islam's spiritual harmony with Europe's 'empty of concord' civilisation, which 'to no Makkah bends'.
- Stanza 3 laments the departure of 'Love's madness' and the weakening of Muslim spiritual passion ('blood runs thin').



- Central concept: Khudi (selfhood) -- Iqbal's call for Muslims to rediscover Islamic identity and spiritual vigour.
- Key literary devices: metaphor, paradox/oxymoron ('God-drunk', 'Love's madness'), juxtaposition, personification, and Islamic allusion.
- The poem draws on the Qur'anic account of Hazrat Ibrahim's (AS) sacrifice (37:97-113) and uses Makkah as a symbol of submission.
- Overall theme: true faith is active devotion, and Iqbal contrasts this with both European spiritual emptiness and Muslim decline.

Exam Tips

- This unit belongs to PECTAA's 'poem group' (Units 3, 6, 11, 13), which under the current paper pattern carries lighter weight — 3 synonym questions and 2 MCQs are drawn from these poem units, and only 5 of 8 short questions from this group need to be attempted.
- The poem group is specifically and reliably tested with the question 'Explain the given stanza with reference to context' (5 marks) — practise explaining each stanza in your own words (paraphrase), focusing on meaning, imagery, and how the stanza fits the poem's overall argument.
- Make sure you can explain all three stanzas individually, since any one could be set for a reference-to-context question — the stanza-wise section in these notes covers every stanza in full.
- Learn the poet's background facts (Allama Muhammad Iqbal, philosopher-poet of Pakistan, the concept of Khudi) since short questions in the poem group often test factual recall about the poet alongside the poem's content.
- Memorise the literary device definitions together with the short quoted phrases associated with them — paradox ('God-drunk'), metaphor ('blood runs thin'), and juxtaposition (Europe's 'empty concord' vs. Islam's harmony) — as examiners often ask you to identify the device from a quoted phrase.
- Be ready to explain the poem's central contrast (Islamic civilisation vs. European civilisation) and its closing lament (Muslim spiritual decline), as these are the two ideas most likely to appear in short-answer and long-answer questions.



Unit 14: The End of the Beginning

This unit presents 'The End of the Beginning', a one-act farcical comedy by the Irish playwright Sean O'Casey (1880-1964), as given in the Class 11 English textbook of the PECTAA Board under the Updated National Curriculum of Pakistan 2023.

Set in a rural Irish cottage in the early 20th century, the play uses exaggerated comic situations to explore gender roles and the value of domestic work, following an overconfident husband who insists housework is easy -- until he is left to prove it.

These notes summarise the play's characters, setting, plot, and theme strictly based on the textbook's presentation, and provide comprehension questions, vocabulary, and exam-oriented material for this unit. As the play remains under copyright, its dialogue is not reproduced at length; the summary below is written in original words.

Learning Objectives

- Establish characters, roles, and apply dramatic techniques such as plot development and closure, with confidence, in a two- to three-act play.
- Choose words and phrases for effect.
- Read, view, and analyse grade-appropriate and high-interest drama (play scripts) from print and non-print sources.
- Verify the preliminary meaning of a word or phrase by checking inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary.
- Apply editing and proofreading skills to a wide range of texts and contexts.

Key Concepts

About the Playwright: Sean O'Casey

Sean O'Casey (1880-1964) was an Irish dramatist known for his powerful plays depicting Irish life, often blending humour with social commentary. 'The End of



the Beginning' is a one-act farce that humorously questions assumptions about gender roles and domestic competence.

Characters and Setting

The play has three characters: Darry Berrill, a middle-aged, overconfident farmer who underestimates the challenges of household chores; Lizzie Berrill, Darry's practical and competent wife, who efficiently manages both domestic and farm duties; and Barry Derrill, Darry's well-meaning but inept and near-sighted friend, whose involvement only deepens the household chaos.

The action takes place in a single evening in a big, comfortably furnished kitchen of a simple, modest rural Irish cottage, in the early 20th century -- a setting that keeps the farce contained to one chaotic space as the evening's disasters unfold.

Plot Summary

The play opens with Darry complaining about his workload and dismissing Lizzie's housework as easy, boasting that he could finish it all with time to spare. Provoked, Lizzie challenges him to prove it: she will go and mow the meadow herself while Darry stays behind and manages the house for the evening. Darry accepts the challenge with bravado, and Lizzie leaves, warning him half-seriously that she hopes to find the house still standing when she returns.

Left alone, Darry immediately gets distracted: he accidentally breaks the mechanism of a stopped clock while trying to wind it, then discovers a gramophone record of physical exercises and spends time performing calisthenics on the floor instead of starting his chores. His friend Barry Derrill arrives, mandolin in hand, to rehearse a song for an upcoming concert, and Darry persuades him to join the exercises first -- leading to a long comic sequence of the two men struggling to keep time with the gramophone's instructions, followed by a mismatched rehearsal of their concert song and dance steps.

Only when the distant Town Hall clock strikes and Darry hears Lizzie's mowing machine does he realise how much time has been wasted, and he rushes to begin the housework in earnest, blaming Barry for the delay. What follows is an escalating chain of farcical mishaps: the near-sighted Barry breaks crockery and cuts his fingers while helping wash dishes, smashes a windowpane with a broom



handle while sweeping, and Darry injures his own nose running into a low doorway while feeding the animals.

The chaos intensifies further as the pair try to rig a rope from a heifer grazing on a bank outside, run it down the chimney, and tie it to a chair so they can monitor the animal's movements from inside -- all while also dealing with a failed light bulb, a blown fuse, and Barry falling from a shelf while fetching an oil lamp from a dark shed, breaking his spectacles in the process.

In the play's climactic farcical moment, as Darry manages a leaking oil drum and the rope-tied chair suddenly lurches (signalling the heifer has wandered), Darry ties the rope around himself for a firmer grip -- only to be hauled up the chimney just as Lizzie, returning from the meadow, unties the rope from the heifer outside without realising Darry is on the other end. Darry comes crashing back down the chimney in a shower of soot at the exact moment Lizzie walks back in, and the play ends on this reversal, with Darry indignantly blaming her for not warning him.

Theme

The play primarily explores gender roles and stereotypes, using farce to challenge traditional assumptions about domestic work. Darry's overconfidence -- his belief that housework is simple and that he could manage it better than his wife -- quickly collapses into chaos when he is actually left to do it, exposing his ignorance and lack of experience.

Through this comic disaster, the play affirms the real value and skill involved in domestic work and traces Darry's journey from arrogance to humility. O'Casey's farcical technique -- exaggerated situations and escalating clumsy mistakes -- delivers this message in an entertaining way, ultimately suggesting that competence comes from experience and effort, not gender.

Important Definitions (Glossary)

agony

extreme physical or mental pain

aimlessly



in a way that shows no direction or plan

anxiously

in a worried or nervous way

brood

to think a lot about something that makes you annoyed, anxious, or upset

callisthenics

physical exercises intended to develop a strong and attractive body

clasp

to hold something tightly in your hand

crockery

plates, cups, dishes, etc.

debris

pieces of wood, metal, building materials, etc. left after something has been destroyed

dejectedly

in an unhappy and disappointed way

emphatically

in a very clear way that involves speaking with force

expedite

to make a process happen more quickly

gingerly

in a careful way, because you are afraid of being hurt, of making a noise, etc.

goad

to keep annoying somebody/something until they react

limber

flexible; able to bend or move easily

magnanimous

kind, generous, and forgiving, especially towards an enemy or competitor

modest

not very large, expensive, important, etc.



reluctantly

hesitating before doing something because you do not want to do it or are not sure it is right

sighing

taking and letting out a long, deep, audible breath to show disappointment, sadness, or tiredness

slumber

sleep; a time when somebody is sleeping

Play at a Glance

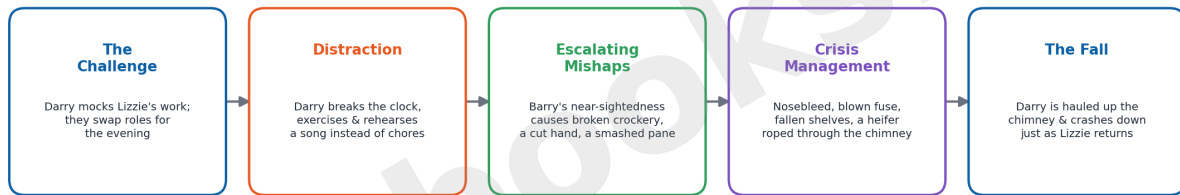
Aspect	Key Fact
Playwright	Sean O'Casey (1880-1964), Irish dramatist.
Genre	One-act farcical comedy.
Setting	A rural Irish cottage kitchen, early 20th century, one evening.
Main characters	Darry Berrill, Lizzie Berrill, and Barry Derrill.
Central conflict	Darry claims housework is easy; Lizzie challenges him to do it himself.
Literary technique	Farce -- exaggerated situations and escalating comic mishaps.
Central theme	Gender roles and stereotypes in domestic work; overconfidence turning to humility.
Closing irony	Darry, hauled up the chimney by the heifer's rope, falls back down just as Lizzie returns.

Diagram

Escalating Chaos in the Play: A sequential flow diagram tracing the play's five-stage comic escalation: the initial challenge, Darry's early distractions, mounting mishaps caused by Barry's near-sightedness, a crisis-management sequence of disasters, and Darry's final fall down the chimney as Lizzie returns.



Escalating Chaos in "The End of the Beginning" (Unit 14, Seán O'Casey)



Darry's overconfidence about housework unravels into farcical disaster, ending in humility.

Escalating Chaos in the Play

Short Questions & Answers

What challenge does Lizzie set for Darry at the start of the play?

Lizzie challenges Darry to manage the housework himself for the evening while she goes to mow the meadow, since he had been dismissing her domestic work as easy.

How does Darry get distracted after Lizzie leaves?

Instead of starting the housework, Darry accidentally breaks the mechanism of a stopped clock, then spends time performing exercises to a gramophone record and rehearsing a concert song with his friend Barry.

What role does Barry Derrill's near-sightedness play in the plot?

Barry's poor eyesight causes several of the play's comic mishaps, including breaking crockery, cutting his fingers, and smashing a windowpane with a broom handle while trying to help Darry.

Why do Darry and Barry rig a rope through the chimney?

They tie a rope from the grazing heifer outside, down the chimney, and to a chair inside so they can monitor from the kitchen whether the heifer wanders too close to the edge of the bank.

How does the play end?

As the heifer's rope suddenly moves, Darry ties it around himself for a firmer grip and is hauled up the chimney; when Lizzie returns and unties the rope outside



without knowing he is attached, Darry falls back down the chimney just as she walks in.

What is the central theme of the play?

The play explores gender roles and stereotypes around domestic work, using farce to show that competence comes from experience and effort, not gender, as Darry's overconfidence collapses into humbling chaos.

How does the play use farce to deliver its message?

Through exaggerated, escalating comic mishaps -- broken crockery, a nosebleed, a blown fuse, a chimney fall -- the play makes a serious point about gender and competence in an entertaining, memorable way.

What is ironic about the play's final moment?

It is ironic that Darry, who confidently mocked Lizzie's work as simple, ends the play literally falling down the chimney in a shower of soot at the exact moment she returns, having accomplished none of the housework properly.

Long Questions & Answers

Discuss how Sean O'Casey uses farce to explore the theme of gender roles in 'The End of the Beginning'.

How does the play's opening establish Darry's overconfidence?

The play opens with Darry dismissing Lizzie's housework as simple and boasting he could do it easily, prompting Lizzie to challenge him to prove it by swapping roles for the evening.

How do the early scenes show Darry avoiding real work?

Rather than beginning the housework, Darry becomes distracted by exercising to a gramophone record and rehearsing a song with Barry, foreshadowing his failure to manage his time and responsibilities.

How does the escalating chaos reveal Darry's incompetence?

As the evening progresses, a chain of mishaps -- broken crockery, an injured nose, a blown fuse, a chimney rope disaster -- shows that Darry, for all his



confidence, lacks the practical skill and patience that housework actually requires.

What does the play's ending suggest about gender and competence?

By ending with Darry literally crashing down the chimney in humiliation just as Lizzie returns, the play affirms that domestic competence comes from experience and effort rather than gender, undercutting Darry's earlier boasts.

Explain the role of the two supporting devices -- farce and irony -- in shaping the play's comic and thematic effect.

What is farce, and how is it used in the play?

Farce relies on exaggerated situations and physical comedy; in this play, it appears through escalating mishaps like broken crockery, a nosebleed, and a chimney fall, all triggered by Darry's and Barry's incompetence.

How does Barry's near-sightedness contribute to the farcical tone?

Barry's poor eyesight repeatedly causes him to damage things he cannot see clearly, adding a layer of physical comedy that escalates the household's chaos beyond Darry's own mistakes.

Where is irony most evident in the play?

Irony is most evident in the ending, where Darry -- who confidently mocked Lizzie's competence -- ends up literally falling down the chimney in soot-covered defeat at the very moment she returns.

How do farce and irony work together to deliver the play's message?

The farcical mishaps build up comic tension, while the ironic ending delivers the play's underlying point with maximum impact, using humour to make a serious statement about gender and competence memorable and effective.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Who wrote 'The End of the Beginning'?



- A. Robert Hayden
- B. Sean O'Casey
- C. Allama Muhammad Iqbal
- D. Langston Hughes

Answer: B. Sean O'Casey

Explanation: 'The End of the Beginning' is a one-act farce written by the Irish dramatist Sean O'Casey (1880-1964).

What genre does the play belong to?

- A. Tragedy
- B. One-act farcical comedy
- C. Epic poem
- D. Historical drama

Answer: B. One-act farcical comedy

Explanation: The play is a one-act farcical comedy.

What challenge does Lizzie set for Darry?

- A. To cook a large meal
- B. To manage the housework while she mows the meadow
- C. To repair the roof
- D. To travel to town

Answer: B. To manage the housework while she mows the meadow

Explanation: Lizzie challenges Darry to manage the housework for the evening while she goes to mow the meadow.

What does Darry accidentally break early in the play, while alone?

- A. A window
- B. The mechanism of a stopped clock
- C. A mandolin
- D. The gramophone

Answer: B. The mechanism of a stopped clock

Explanation: Darry accidentally breaks the mechanism of a stopped clock while trying to wind it.

What activity distracts Darry and Barry instead of housework?

- A. Fishing
- B. Exercising to a gramophone record and rehearsing a song
- C. Cooking a feast



D. Painting the cottage

Answer: B. Exercising to a gramophone record and rehearsing a song

Explanation: Darry and Barry are distracted by performing calisthenics to a gramophone record and rehearsing a concert song.

What physical trait of Barry Derrill causes several comic accidents?

A. His height

B. His near-sightedness

C. His strength

D. His deafness

Answer: B. His near-sightedness

Explanation: Barry's near-sightedness causes him to break crockery, cut his fingers, and smash a windowpane.

Why do Darry and Barry rig a rope through the chimney?

A. To dry laundry

B. To monitor the grazing heifer from inside the house

C. To ring a bell

D. To hang decorations

Answer: B. To monitor the grazing heifer from inside the house

Explanation: They tie a rope from the heifer to a chair inside, running it down the chimney, to monitor if the heifer wanders too far.

How does the play end?

A. Lizzie praises Darry's work

B. Darry falls down the chimney just as Lizzie returns

C. Barry finishes all the housework alone

D. The house catches fire

Answer: B. Darry falls down the chimney just as Lizzie returns

Explanation: The play ends with Darry falling down the chimney in a shower of soot just as Lizzie returns.

What is the central theme of the play?

A. The importance of farming

B. Gender roles and stereotypes around domestic work

C. The history of Ireland

D. The value of music

Answer: B. Gender roles and stereotypes around domestic work



Explanation: The play's central theme is gender roles and stereotypes, using farce to show that competence comes from experience, not gender.

What literary technique does the play primarily rely on for comic effect?

- A. Tragic irony
- B. Farce
- C. Allegory
- D. Soliloquy

Answer: B. Farce

Explanation: The play relies on farce -- exaggerated situations and escalating comic mishaps -- for its comic effect.

Quick Revision Summary

- 'The End of the Beginning' is a one-act farcical comedy by Sean O'Casey (1880-1964).
- The three characters are Darry Berrill (overconfident husband), Lizzie Berrill (practical wife), and Barry Derrill (well-meaning, near-sighted friend).
- The play is set in a rural Irish cottage kitchen, early 20th century, over one evening.
- Darry dismisses housework as easy, prompting Lizzie to challenge him to do it while she mows the meadow.
- Darry gets distracted by exercising and rehearsing a song instead of starting the housework.
- A chain of farcical mishaps follows: broken crockery, a cut hand, a smashed window, a nosebleed, a blown fuse.
- Darry and Barry rig a rope from a grazing heifer, down the chimney, to a chair, to monitor the animal.
- The play ends with Darry hauled up the chimney and then falling back down just as Lizzie returns.
- Central theme: gender roles and stereotypes in domestic work; competence comes from experience, not gender.
- The play uses farce -- exaggerated, escalating comic mishaps -- to deliver this theme in an entertaining way.



Exam Tips

- This unit is the book's drama unit and is treated separately from the prose and poem groups in the current PECTAA paper pattern -- confirm the exact weightage for this unit with your teacher or latest past papers.
- Focus on being able to summarise the plot in sequence (challenge -> distraction -> escalating mishaps -> the chimney fall) since drama questions often test overall plot and character understanding.
- Know the three characters' personalities well -- Darry (overconfident but incompetent), Lizzie (practical and sharp), Barry (well-meaning but accident-prone) -- as character-based questions are common for drama units.
- Be ready to explain the play's central theme (gender roles and domestic competence) and how farce is used to deliver it, since this is the question type most likely to be set for this unit.
- Since the unit's writing-skills section focuses on dialogue writing, practise writing short, realistic dialogue exchanges between the three characters in the play's farcical, humorous tone.
- Review the sentence-types grammar content (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory) taught alongside this unit, as grammar is tested independently of the reading content.

