



STEPPING STONE
SCHOOL (HIGH)

CLASS : IX

Subject: English
Topic: Poem 2

Date: 12/06/20
Time Limit:30 mins

Worksheet No. : 18

COPY THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS NEATLY AND CORRECTLY ON A SHEET OF PAPER DATEWISE. KEEP THE PAGES READY IN A FILE TO BE SUBMITTED ON THE OPENING DAY.

1/ Explain the expression, 'in bleak and bitter cold'

In this line the poet talks about the lack of true human feelings that are fast ending. Six humans are gripped under an extreme cold happenstance. The adjectives bleak and bitter define the word cold. The coldness outside is comparable to the coldness within the hearts of these six characters as they are not warm or friendly with each other. Bleak denotes hopelessness.

2/ What does happenstance mean?

Happenstance means an event that might have been arranged although it is accidental. Happenstance is a coincidence. The six humans mentioned in the poem were assembled at a place by mere force of coincidence.

3/What is suggested by the use of the word 'trapped'?

The word trapped suggests that they do not want to be in the situation, but they cannot escape.

4/ Explain the symbolism used by the poet in the first stanza.

The poet uses symbolism to show that it was the coldness of their hearts which extinguished the fire of life. Fire, which symbolized hope and acceptance, might have saved the characters but they refused to shun their prejudices and let it die which resulted in their own downfall.

5/ How did the first human react?

The first human was a white lady. She was a racist. She wasn't ready to sacrifice her log into the extinguishing fire as she noticed that one among her fellow beings was black. She was too stubborn and adamant enough not to save the life of a black.

6/ Why do you think the second one declined his stick?

The second human too declined his stick into the fire because as he was looking across, he found one among his group doesn't practice the faith he does. So, it was difficult for him to save a man who doesn't belong to his church.

7/How did the poor man react?

The poor man hated rich and their idle nature. He was not willing to spend his hard-earned possession to save the life of a rich man who never thinks about the poor.

8/ How was the rich man in helping others?

The rich man was thinking about his wealth and how to save it from the lazy, poor people. He, therefore refused to give his log.

9/Why did the black man's face bespeak revenge?

The black man's face bespoke revenge because he has been a victim of racism by the whites. He wanted to show his protest for the age-long exploitation as well. He needed to avenge the whites. Hence, he was not ready to use his stick to save a white. Instead, he used it as a sign of protest .

10/ What does the poem tell us about the last man?

The last man was cunningly calculative. He always looked for profit. He would only give someone help if it is given back to him. Here he saw no such prospects. He, therefore couldn't offer his stick to the fire.

11/ Explain the phrase 'forlorn group'.

The phrase 'forlorn group', an oxymoron, is ironical as it refers to six people, who, inspite of sitting together in a group, were sad and lonely.