



STEPPING STONE
SCHOOL (HIGH)

CLASS :VI

Subject: English

Date:8/5/20

Topic: Explanation of the poem :Piano

DH Lawrence's 'Piano' is a poem that beautifully captures a sense of nostalgia, a longing for the past. Below you'll find the poem and a set of detailed annotations that cover its key concepts and techniques — use these points for further analysis

STORY/SUMMARY

Stanza 1: A woman is singing to the speaker, he is playing the piano — the setting is 'dusk', a dark space between day and night. The music and singing take him back in memory to a point where he sees a child sitting under the piano, pressing the feet of his mother who is singing and smiling. We assume he is the child and that this is a childhood memory.

Stanza 2: The music makes him feel strongly nostalgic, he wants to go back to the time when he spent Sunday evenings in winter with his family, listening to them singing hymns in the parlour room with the piano's music guiding them.

Stanza 3: He seems irritated by the current singer and piano because they are a reminder of his past without being as good as his memories, it is as if he feels that both the piano and singer are singing vainly to amuse or impress themselves, rather than for a communal or spiritual reason, as in his memories. He feels stripped of the pressure and expectations of being an adult, and instead feels young and vulnerable like a child as he strongly misses his past.

Other notes:-

- Quatrain poetry is a poem of four lines that alternate in rhyme. So, the first and third lines have a word rhyming with each other at the end, as do the second and fourth

lines. The quatrain poem can also be written with two different rhythms, either 1,2,1,2 or as 1,1,2,2

Here the rhyming scheme is 1,1,2,2
Therefore it is a quatrain.

Figures of speech.:-

- Metaphor-word or phrase used in an imaginative way to represent or stand for something else.
Down in the flood of remembrance.
- Simile- it directly compares two things using connecting words such as like, as I weep like a child.....
- Personification-where human qualities are given to animals, objects or ideas., the tinkling piano our guide.
- Alliteration- the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of the words that are next to or close to each other.
Softly in the dark, a woman singing..

However, there are other examples of the above mentioned figures of speech in this poem. These were just a few examples.

Work sheet:-11

Find the difficult words from the poem 'piano' and write their meanings.

."Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see"

- a) Who is the singer?
 - An unfamiliar woman is the singer.
- b) To whom does the 'woman' refer?
 - The woman refers to an unfamiliar singer.
- c) What does the word 'Vista' mean?
 - Vista means mental view of events.
- d) When is the woman singing to the young poet?
 - The woman is singing to the young poet in the dusk (sunset).
- e) To whom does the word 'me' refer?
 - 'me' refers to the poet D.H.Lawrence.
- f) What is the woman doing?
 - The woman is singing a song.
- g) What impact does the woman's singing have on the poet?
 - Hearing the woman singing, the poet is at once transported down the memory lane to his childhood years.

h) What does vista of years mean?

➤ "Vista of years" means the memory lane.

i) What is meant by 'vista of years'?

➤ Vista of years meant happy incidents in the past (childhood) years.

2. "A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings"

a) Who is 'the child' referred to here?

• The child is the poet D.H.Lawrence.

b) Who is the child, sitting under the piano?

• The poet is the child sitting under the piano.

c) What emotion does the mother display?

• The mother shows her happiness.

d) Whom does 'she' refer to?

• 'She' refers to the poet's mother.

e) What was the child doing?

• The child was pressing his mother's feet with his tiny hands.

f) What was the mother doing?

• Mother smiled as she sang and played the piano.

3. "In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of
song Betrays me back, till the heart of me
weeps to belong"

a) Whose heart weeps to belong to the past?

❖ The poet D.H.Lawrence's heart weeps belong to the past.

b) What does the phrase 'in spite of me' suggest?

❖ The phrase suggests that though he has grown up and has matured, he cannot help surrendering himself to the emotions and sentiments brought about by his childhood memories.

4. "To the old Sunday evenings at home, with
winter outside And hymns in the cosy parlour,
the tinkling piano our guide"

a) Describe the situation at home, then.?

- * On cold winter Sunday evenings, they sang hymns in the parlour.

b) Explain 'cosy parlour'?

- * Cosy is comfortable. Parlour is sitting room, So, it is Comfortable sitting room.

c) Who is their guide?

- * The Piano.

d) What are hymns?

- * Hymns are the songs in praise of God.

e) Mention the things the poet is reminded of?

- * The poet recalls his Sunday evenings at home, the snowfall outside, his mother playing the piano and the hymns they sang in the parlour.

f) Why was the parlour cosy?

- * It was comfortable in the parlour because it kept them warm. It protected them from the freezing winter winds that blew outside.

5. "Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past"

a) Who weeps like a child?

- ✓ The poet D.H. Lawrence weeps like a child.

b) Who is the child in this poem?

- ✓ The poet D.H. Lawrence is the child in this poem.

c) Is the speaker a child or an adult?

- ✓ The speaker is an adult.

d) What does he weep for?

- ✓ The poet D.H. Lawrence, weeps for his innocent childhood days.

e) What do his childhood memories do to him even now?

- ✓ The poet's childhood memories bring to him his happy days of the past

Try Writing The Answers Of Some Other

Questions:-

1. The child mentioned by the poet is.....

a) the poet's child b) a child on the roadside c) the poet himself d) the singer's child

Ans:.....

2. The poet had spent his Sundays.....

a) Playing games b) singing d) weeping
hymns c) sleeping

Ans:.....

3. What is the poet reminded of on hearing the

woman's song? Ans:.....

4. What does the poet relish more - his manhood days or his

childhood days? Ans:.....

5. Identify the rhyme scheme of the poem?

Ans:.....

6. Which tense is used frequently in the poem? What effect is brought out by this technique?

Ans:.....

7. Pick out two onomatopoeic words from the poem. Ans:.....

8. Pick out a line which contains an

alliteration. Ans:.....

9. '.....my manhood is cast down in the flood of remembrance'.

10. The figure of speech in this line is a) simile b) metaphor
c) personification

Ans:.....

