

MIRROR

Poem at a Glance

The mirror describes itself.
It is silver-coloured and exact.
It doesn't suffer from pre-conceived notions or pre-thoughts.
It is not affected by love, hate or other emotions.
The mirror reflects, whatever it sees, faithfully and objectively.
The mirror meditates on the opposite wall most of the times.
Another form of the mirror is a lake.
A woman bends over it searching for her youth and beauty.
The woman sees her face in the mirror everyday and day by day she grows older.
She realizes that she has lost her beauty and youth.
The turns to candles and the moon who are just liar and never present exact and true images.
The mirror never deceives. The woman feels agitated when reality bites her.
She is quite restless to realize that she is no more young and beautiful.
She feels terrible as a fish feels when it is out of water.

Literary Devices in the poem

(I) Personification

I (mirror has been imaged as a person)

(II) Metaphor

I am a lake.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**(2 Marks)****(To be answered in not more than 30-40 words each)****1. The mirror says- 'I am not cruel, only truthful' Discuss.**

Ans. The mirror says that it has no personal feelings. It is neither cruel nor hard-hearted. It is only truthful. It reflects or shows whatever it sees in all its exactness. It does not hide, twist or distort anything. In other words, it accepts the reality as it is. In this sense the mirror is 'the eye of a little god'. Its four corners include the entire world. It looks at things from all the corners. Its observation is impartial.

2. What makes the woman sad and tearful?

Ans. The woman looks into the water of the lake to see how she really looks. The mirror says that the candles and the moon are liars. They do not depict the true reality of a person. The mirror reflects her picture in true colours. Time and ageing have spoiled her beauty. She is no longer young and charming.

3. What lesson does the mirror convey?

Ans. The mirror conveys that human beings are unable to accept decay and ageing. They long for the simple and undeniable fact that youth and beauty cannot last long. The mirror is a constant reminder of this harsh fact.

4. Who is the woman in the poem 'Mirror'? Why does she feel like a terrible fish trapped in the lake of life?

Ans. The woman in the poem 'Mirror' is an old woman who once was young, beautiful and charming. She looks into the mirror and finds that she is becoming older and older day after day. There are wrinkles on her face. The process of ageing has left its marks on the face of the woman. She is unwilling to accept the reality of life. She is full of tears and agitation.

5. How does the mirror become 'the eye of a little god'?

Ans. The mirror says that it has no preconceptions. It is silver and exact. It reflects what it sees. There is no twist or distortion in its reflecting the thing or a person. It is like 'the eye of a little god'. It watches everything in an impartial manner. Thus it becomes the eye of little god.'

VALUED BASED QUESTIONS**(4 Marks)****(To be answered in not more than 100 words)****1. "The poem 'Mirror' is like a lake of water". Discuss the statement with reference to the following extract.****'I and silver and exact, it have no preconceptions.****Whatever I see I swallow immediately****Just as it is, un-misted by love or dislike.**

Ans. The poem is very suggestive and meaningful. It truly reflects what is before it. It is free from prejudices. The reflection is neither twisted nor distorted. It describes its true nature and function. It gives an exact image of whatever appears before it. It accepts everything as it sees and remains unaffected by any feelings of love or hatred.

The poet compares the mirror to a lake. The water in the lake also reflects objects and the human being in all their reality. A woman comes and looks into the water of the lake to see how she looks. Then she turns to look at the reflection of the candles and the moon in the lake. The mirror says that the candles and the moon are liars. They do not depict the reality of a person. It is only the mirror that reflects the picture in its true colour. The fact is that the woman has grown old. Time and ageing have spoiled her beauty and

charm. There are wrinkles on her face. This brings tears into her eyes. She feels sad and sorrowful.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

(Reference to Context)

(1) Read the extracts and answer the following question by choosing the appropriate option:

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.

Whatever I see I swallow immediately

Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.

I am not cruel, only truthful.

(i) 'I' here refers to

- (a) The poet
- (b) The mirror
- (c) A woman
- (d) A god.

(ii) When the poet says that the mirror has no preconceptions it means.

- (a) It reflects your image objectively.
- (b) It gives a biased view of the person.
- (c) It is emotionally involved with the person whose image it reflects.
- (d) It does not care what the other person thinks of it.

(iii) 'I am not cruel, only truthful' reveals that the mirror is

- (a) Not liked by all people.
- (b) Not liked by some.
- (c) Hated by some
- (d) Avoided by some.

Answer

(i) (b) (ii) (a) (iii) (d)

(2)

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,

Searching my reaches for what she really is.

Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.

I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.

She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.

(i) Which poetic device has been used in the first line?

- (a) Metaphor
- (b) Simile
- (c) Alliteration
- (d) Repetition

(ii) The woman turns away from the mirror as she is unable to face

- (a) The mirror
- (b) Others
- (c) The reality
- (d) Herself in the mirror

(iii) The woman is searching for

- (a) Her real self
- (b) Her lost purse
- (c) Her old self
- (d) Her lost youth

ANSWER: (i) (a) (ii) (c) (iii) (d)

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Read the following extracts and answer the questions:

(1)

I am important to her. She comes and goes.

Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.

In me she has drowned a young girl. And in me an old woman

Rises toward her day after day like a terrible fish.

- (i) **Since when has the woman been coming to the mirror?**
- (ii) **What is the 'terrible fish' symbolic of?**
- (iii) **'In me she has drowned a young girl.' What does it refer to?**

ANSWER

- (i) The woman has been coming to the mirror since her youthful days.
- (ii) The 'terrible fish' is symbolic of the lady's terrible old age.
- (iii) It refers to the loss of youth and beauty.