

**CBSE TEST PAPER-01**  
**Class - 12 English Core (My mother at sixty six)**

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**General Instruction: -**

- Question No. 1 to 3 carry Four marks,
  - Question No. 4 to 10 carry Three marks.
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1. ... and looked but soon

Put that thought away, and looked out at young  
Trees sprinting, the merry children spilling  
Out of their homes

- a. Name the poet.
- b. What thought did the poet drive away from her mind?
- c. Why are the trees described as 'sprinting'?
- d. What do the 'sprinting trees' signify?

2. I saw my mother,

beside me,  
doze, open mouthed, her face  
ashen like that  
of a corpse and realized with pain

- a. Who is 'I' referred to here?
- b. What did 'I' realize with pain?
- c. Why was the realization painful?
- d. What is the figure of speech used in these lines?

3. ....and felt that old

familiar ache, my childhood's fear,  
But all I said was, see you soon, Amma,  
All I did was smile and smile and smile

- a. What was the childhood fear that now troubled the poet?
- b. What do the poet's parting words suggest?
- c. Why did the poet smile and smile?
- d. Explain, "the old familiar ache".

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4. Why has the mother been compared to the 'late winter's moon'?
  5. What different images does the poet use to convey the idea of her mother's old age?
  6. What were the poet's feelings at the airport? How did she hide them?
  7. What does the poet mean by 'all I did was smile and smile and smile...'
  8. Explain the contrasting situations in the poem. Why does the poet do so?
  9. What does Kamala Das do after the security check up? What does she notice?
  10. What is the kind of pain and ache that the poet feels?

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**Answers**

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1.
  - a. Kamala Das is the poet of the given lines.
  - b. She drove away the painful thought that her mother was getting old and she might die at any time.
  - c. As the car moved on, the young trees appeared to be moving fast in the opposite direction. So they are personified and described to be sprinting.
  - d. The 'sprinting trees' signify the vitality of youth.
2.
  - a. 'I' is the poet, Kamala Das.
  - b. Kamala Das realized with pain that her mother was as old as she looked.
  - c. It was painful because it brought another painful thought that her mother was nearing her death which would separate the poet from her mother.
  - d. Simile is used in the above lines.
3.
  - a. As a child, the poet had the fear of losing her mother and the same fear of separation has troubled her now.
  - b. The parting words of the poet reveal hope, fear and assurance. The poet hides her real fear and assures her mother that they will meet again soon.
  - c. The poet wanted to hide her fears from her mother. That is why she smiled and smiled.
  - d. "The old familiar ache" refers to the agony of separation from her mother that the poet felt in her childhood.
4. The late winter moon lacks luster and brightness. Similarly, the poet's mother, who is sixty six, lacks vitality and loses strength of her youth. Moreover, the late winter moon suggests the end of season and the mother too is nearing the end of her life, therefore the poet compares her with 'the late winter's moon'.
5. The poet uses the image of 'corpse' to describe her mother's pale and wrinkled face, 'late winter's moon' to suggest that her mother is nearing the end of her life. The image of 'sprinting trees and merry children playing' is contrasted with the old, weak and pale mother of the poet.
6. The poet experienced two opposite and contrasting feelings at the airport. The ashen and pale face of her mother brought an image of decay and death. But she immediately hid

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her real feelings. She tried to look normal. She smiled continuously to assure her mother that they would meet again soon.

7. After the airport's security check, the poet stood a few yards away, and looked at her mother to say goodbye. At that time the poet felt her old familiar ache-the ache of separating from her mother. It was her childhood fear that she experienced again. She was trying to conceal her true emotions by smiling and smiling.
8. Kamala Das has used the image of young trees sprinting and merry children spilling out of their homes to bring a contrast between the old age and the childhood. Her mother's ashen and corpse like face stands for old age whereas the merry children symbolize the spring of life. They also symbolize the spontaneity of life in contrast to the passive and inactive life of her aged mother.
9. After the security check up, the poet stands a few yards away from her mother and gazes at her. She notices the declining age of her mother and finds that she is pale and worn out than ever before.
10. The poet, Kamala Das, while driving back from her parent's home to Cochin observed her mother as she looked at her mother seated beside her. She realized with pain that her mother was as old as she looked. She noticed her mother while she was taking a nap. Her mouth was open and her face was pale like that of a dead body. The poet felt terrified and agonized at the thought of her mother growing old and was nearing her death which would separate the poet from her mother. She tried to shift away her thoughts.