

CBSE Class 9 English Language and Literature
Beehive Poem Chapter-8 On killing a Tree
Test Paper-03

1. No,
The root is to be pulled out —
Out of the anchoring earth;
It is to be roped, tied,
And pulled out — snapped out
 - a. Why does the poet ask us to pull the root out?
 - b. Why the tree needs to be tied and pulled out?
 - c. What is the meaning of ‘snapped out’?
 - d. What is anchoring earth?
2. Or pulled out entirely,
Out from the earth-cave,
And the strength of the tree exposed
The source, white and wet,
The most sensitive, hidden
For years inside the earth.
 - a. What is earth cave?
 - b. What is the source of strength for a tree?
 - c. Explain ‘For years inside the earth’.
 - d. What is the most sensitive part?
3. The poet says “No” in the beginning of the third stanza. What does he mean by this?
4. What is the meaning of “bleeding bark”? What makes it bleed?
5. What does he mean by “the strength of the tree exposed”?
6. What finally kills the tree?
7. “The bleeding bark will heal” – How?
8. What is the meaning of “bleeding bark”? What makes it bleed?
9. Give the substance of the poem “On Killing a Tree”. (100 words)
10. How does the tree heal itself? (100 words)

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Answers

1.
 - a. the poet asks us to pull the root out because the tree will not get nourishment or food without root.
 - b. The tree needs to be tied and pulled out because a jab of knife or blows of axe wouldn't kill it.
 - c. of 'snapped out' means to take out from its anchor.
 - d. Anchoring earth is like a mother's womb that protects the baby before its birth. However, in this case it protects the roots of a tree.
2.
 - a. Earth cave is the house that provides shelter to the roots.
 - b. The source of strength for a tree is its roots that help it in preparing its food with the help of other parts like leaves, stem and branches.
 - c. For years inside the earth, symbolizes the bond of the tree with the earth.
 - d. The most sensitive part of the tree is its roots that are soft, supple, wet and full of sap.
3. In the beginning of the third stanza, the poet has said "No" to lay emphasis on the fact that mere chopping of the tree would not kill it. The tree would grow again and retain its original size.
4. 'Bleeding bark' refers to the area on the tree trunk where it has been hit with the axe. It bleeds because the wood cutter has wounded the tree by cutting and chopping it.
5. The strength of the tree lies in its roots, which the poet asks to snap out to kill the tree. Thus, the phrase "the strength of the tree exposed" refers to the roots of the tree being exposed to sunlight and air.
6. The tree is finally killed when its roots are uprooted, and it scorches and chokes in sunlight and air. This process leads to the browning, hardening, twisting and thereby, withering of the roots.
7. In the poem 'On Killing a Tree' Gieve Patel says that a woodcutter may cut a tree with his repeated blow. But this alone will not be able to kill a tree. The affected tree does not seem to express its pain because its bleeding bark will heal its pain all the time. 'Curled green twigs' of the tree closely attached to earth will grow from the miniature boughs.

The strength of the tree lies in the roots. If these roots are not completely uprooted, they will expand and become a full-grown tree again.

8. 'Bleeding bark' refers to the area on the tree trunk where it has been hit with the axe. It bleeds because the wood cutter has wounded the tree by cutting and chopping it.
9. 'On Killing a Tree' is a satirical poem about man's indiscriminate destruction of trees. The tree is presented as an enemy to man. Man is presented as a murderer. The poem begins ironically, describing the crime committed by the tree i.e. for years, it has consumed the earth's crust, it has absorbed the sunlight, air and water. It has grown in to a giant. Therefore, it must be killed. But it is not an easy task. A simple jab of knife will not do it. From close to the ground it will grow again. The tree should be tied with a rope and pulled out entirely. Its white bleeding root should be exposed. Then it should be browned, hardened and withered.
10. Nature forestalls killing of a tree. A tree deserves to live on without any danger. The tree is equipped with the power to heal itself. One may try to kill a tree by cutting it, but in vain. The bark of the tree that looks like a leper's hide allows twigs to sprout from its wounded part. These twigs again grow into a big tree if their growth is not checked. These sprouts from the wounded bark allow the tree to attain its original form over a period. From close to the ground curled green twigs mushroom. Miniature boughs expand again to former size.