

NCERT Solutions for Class 12

English Kaliedoscope

POETRY - Blood

Responding to the Poem

1. What makes the depiction of a crumbling village house so authentic in the poem? Is this a common feature of most village houses in the context of rapid urbanisation? Is the poet speaking from actual experience?

Ans: The Poet Kamala Das has beautifully selected the words and pattern of the poem, which connects the readers from mind & heart both. This poem gives information about a little girl's heart and shows how this fast-moving world casts her into a grown-up lady. Kamala Das, in her writings, shares her own experience, which connects the readers, and this in context with the poem shows the authenticity of old falling apart village house. To compete with this rapid moving urbanization and modernization are required & it's a common feature of most village houses. The presence of old houses shows the Heritage and rich culture of India, which has emotional affection to the people. Still, to compete with this world, change is essential.

2. What aspects of Indian society and history get highlighted in the poem?

Ans: Aspects of Indian society & history highlighted in this poem are: - It shows that two women can understand each other and get attached emotionally at the personal level; maybe that's why Kamala Das could share her feelings with her grandmother much. The great-grandmother of Kamala Das had a very royal and cheerful life before the death of his better half. Still, after that, sudden loneliness took all her happiness & converted her better life into a pathetic one. This shows the situation of women in our society after losing their partners for life. People are used to sticking to their heritage. As the house of the 300-year-old Poet, he has an infinite connection to his great-grandmother.

3. Does the poem bring out the contrast between tradition and modernity? Illustrate your answer with examples from the poem

Ans: Yes, Poet beautifully brings out a contrast between tradition and modernity. Tradition refers to the cultural values, beliefs & activities that are passed on from one generation to the other. And modernity refers to applying the new rules of the world to our own life. It is fresh and modern people who

refuse native thinking. In the poem, the Poet tells how her great grandmother is attached to her husband and dies with her husband; lines from the poem show are - "God is her only feast; worldly pleasures become mere condiments to her afterward." This shows that traditional women were so attached to their life partners. Their world revolves around one & only one person, which is impossible in this modern world as people now believe in move on policy & not living their whole life in sadness & sorrow. The feeling of belongingness toward non-living things such as a house is depicted in the poem. Ancestral 300 years old house shared a beautiful relationship with the grandmother. The poem also tells how the Poet's great-grandmother had pride over her blood, which she carries to her grave.

4. While the poet respected her grandmother's sentiments of royal grandeur, we can also see that she revolts against it. Identify the lines which bring this out.

Ans: Kamala Das is a woman full of respect, cultural values, beliefs, love & peace. Her grandmother taught her to love, forgive and devote her own life to the service of others & think very less of her own. She could empathize with the struggles of every woman, and it can be easily seen in her work. Poet could feel the presence of her grandmother, so she promises herself to save the royal inherited Heritage 300-year-old house for her grandmother. But in reality, she realizes that it is not possible because the old house was breaking down, white ants were climbing, and rats were running fearlessly here & there. Then she asks for forgiveness as she was not capable of renovating the house. She felt guilty for not completing her promise to her grandmother and flung it into death's pyre. But still, she is proud of her old royal blood even though she is not powerful enough to protect or restore the old house that her great grandmother loved. Her great-grandmother liked it. The line "I have left again... Arabian Seaport". Although she respected her grandmother and promised her to go to another city, she still showed this.

5. Which lines reveal the poet's criticism of class distinctions?

Ans: "A blood thin and clear and fine While in the veins of the always poor And in the veins Of the new-rich men Flowed a blood thick as gruel And muddy as a ditch." The above lines reveal Poet's criticism of class distinctions as she states that the blood of the poor is clear, thin, and fine, which means that there exists selfless and genuine love among the poor section of the society.

Still, in the royal section of the society, the real feeling of love is missing and mostly controlled by the profit and loss of money.

6. Is it 'selfishness' and 'callousness' that makes the poet break her childhood promise to her grandmother of renovating the house? Why does she do nothing about rebuilding the house?

Ans: Poet could feel the presence of her grandmother, so she promises herself to save the royal inherited Heritage 300- year-old house for her grandmother. But in fact, he realized that it was impossible because the old house was collapsing, white ants were crawling, and rats were running without fear, and then he apologized because he could not renovate the house. Incompetence should not be confused with selfishness or coldness.

7. What do you understand of the conflict in the poet's conscience?

Ans: Poet observes the nature and thought of her fantasies in the sand as she plays with her brother. Along with these beautiful moments, she also comes to experience her concern, fear, and the pain of her great old grandmother for their ancestral house, which is in a dreadful condition. The conflict between the satisfying fantasies of a child and the bitter realities that money-making is not easy & led to the defeat of her promise made to her great grandmother that she will keep the house as it is. These are the conflicts that show things, and situations should be dealt with the reality. We should always accept the bitter truth of life while moving forward in it.

Language Study

Comment on the changes in poetic expression in English from the time of Donne to that of Kamala Das with reference to

- prosodic features (rhyme, rhythm and metre)
- vocabulary
- language
- themes.

Ans:

Kamala Das is an eminent poet. She is best known for her feminist writings. She focuses on womanhood. She started a new genre when she started depiction of village side in her poetry. But her poetry is quite different from that of Donne.

Prosodic Features-In the time of Donne, poetry was written on set patterns and rhyming scheme. It was formal in nature. Donne reached the heights of his poetic career because of his extraordinary use of special effects in meter and length. He uses an extra 'e' in his poetry like sunne and noone. But Kamala Das does not follow such patterns or poetic devices. Generally she uses free verse in her poetry.

Vocabulary-Donne's use of vocabulary is very formal. He uses so many obsolete words and phrases. He uses formal vocabulary with less description of things and places while more suggestions to follow. But Kamala Das is free from such characterisation. She uses the words in an elaborating manner to describe nature. Her words are simple and descriptions are long.

Language-Donne's language is full of passion and emotions. He speaks according to his own mood and mind. He uses a concise language full of Similes and Metaphors but Kamala Das uses a simple language which can be understood by even a simple man. She uses the words from common language which are spoken in ordinary life.

Themes-Doone's poems depict the idea in different aspects. His poetry lacks in imagination and music. The theme of his poetry is gorgeous full of fantasy. His favourite theme is love which he presents in numerous different ways. Kamala Das has depicted different social themes in her poetry. She presents social discrimination, weariness and fret, solitude. Her poetry portrays the condition of women in society. Her favourite theme is her mother and grandmother.