

# Once upon a Time-*Gabriel Okara*

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## Poetry

### Comprehension

Q.1)The poem is called 'once upon a time.' The poet has done this (say whether true 'T' or false 'F')

- to show that the poem is fairy tale. (F)
- to express his nostalgic feelings for the past when people were genuine and honest. (T)
- to show the contrast between the people in the past and in the modern time. (T)
- to highlight the poet's regret at the changing human behavior.(T)
- to express the poet's admiration for the modern man's ability to hide his true feelings.(F)

Q.2)The poet expresses a desire to teach his son how to smile as he used to do in the past. Pick up the lines from the poem that expresses this wish.

This also shows that the poet (Tick the right answer)

- has also changed like those around him.
- is happy with the changes in his personality.
- is upset with the changes he observes in himself.
- is not happy with the superficiality that has crept into human relationships.

Ans: So show me, on Now to laugh;

- has also changed like those around him.
- is upset with the changes he observes in himself.
- is not happy with the superficiality that has crept into human relationships.

Reference to the context

Q.1).....but now they only laugh with their teeth,  
While their ice-block-cold eyes  
Search behind my shadow.....

(a) Why have the eyes of the modern man been compared block of ice?

Ans: The eyes of the modern man have been compared to a block ice because they don't shine while

laughing. They seem to be lifeless. Their eyes do not confirm the laugh.

(b) How does one laugh with the teeth?

Ans: One laughs with the teeth by protecting his teeth to show that he is laughing. This indicates artificial and mechanical laugh.

(c) What is the poetic device used here?

Ans: Metaphor is used here.

Q.2) 'Feel at home, ' 'comes again, '  
They say, and when I come  
Again feel  
At home, once, twice,  
there will be no thrice .....

(a) Who is being asked to come again?

Ans: The poet is being asked to come again.

(b) Where is he being invited to?

Ans: He is being invited to their houses.

(c) What is meant by 'feel at home'?

Ans: 'Feel at home' means to feel at ease.

(d) What is ironical about this invitation?

Ans: This invitation is mechanical, not hearty.

Q.3).....I want to unlearn all these muting things.....,

(a) Who is the 'I' in these lines?

Ans: The poet, who is the speaker is the 'I' here.

(b) What are the 'muting' things referred to here?

Ans: Artificial and mechanical behaviours of modern man are the 'muting' things referred to here.

(c) Why does he want to unlearn them?

Ans: He wants to unlearn them because these are artificial in nature. He wants to be what he is. He wants to learn again the behavioural pattern that he used in the past. By living in the artificial and mechanical world he has lost his peace of mind.

(d) Who does he appeal to for help?

Ans: He appeals to his son for help.