

Short-Answer Questions

Q. 1. In the poem 'Keeping Quiet', what is the appeal made by the poet?

[CBSE (AI) 2011]

Ans. The poet appeals the people to keep quiet for a short time. This would help them take stock of their mindless activities and conduct self-analysis. All this will help save mankind from its imminent doom.

Q.2. "Under the apparent stillness there is life."

Justify this statement giving an example from the poem, 'Keeping Quiet'.

[CBSE (F) 2010]

Ans. The poet says that just as there will be life below the snow once it melts, similarly, there will be life even in the apparent stillness.

Q.3. What are the different kinds of wars mentioned in the poem? What is Neruda's attitude towards these wars?

[CBSE (AI) 2013]

Ans. Green wars – cutting the trees, war with environment; war with gas—chemical or nuclear; war with fire, and war with ammunition. Every type of war is useless and must be given up. Whenever there is victory after a war, there are no survivors. War is only destructive.

Q.4. When everything seems dead, what remains alive?

Ans. When everything seems to be dead, only the earth remains alive.

Q.5. What is 'the fisherman' symbolic of?

Ans. The fisherman symbolises man's indiscriminate exploitation of nature for his vested interests.

Q.6. How can suspension of activities help?

[CBSE (AI) 2012]

Ans. The poet believes that suspension of activities will allow men to introspect, which can help them by solving many of the problems based on caste, religion and nationality.

Q.7. According to the poet, what is that human beings can learn from nature?

[CBSE (AI) 2010]

Ans. Life under apparent stillness in attitude is important. Just like nature carries on its work even when there is stillness all around, similarly stillness in attitude will help in retrospection.

Q.8. What will counting upto twelve and keeping still help us achieve?

[CBSE Delhi 2015]

Ans. Counting upto twelve will give us time for introspection. It will also help us save the world from disasters and wars.

Q.9. 'Life is what it is all about; . . .' How is keeping quiet related to life?

[CBSE (AI) 2015]

Ans. Keeping quiet helps people pursue their goals single-mindedly. They need to understand that silence is productive and stillness is progress.

Q.10. Why does one feel 'a sudden strangeness' on counting to twelve and keeping quiet?

[CBSE (AI) 2015]

Ans. The absence of hustle and bustle of life would create feeling of peace and quietness, which would make us united in our natural commitment. It will create a strange feeling of universal brotherhood.

Q.11. How will 'keeping quiet' protect our environment?

[CBSE (AI) 2015]

Ans. Keeping quiet will stop man's indiscriminate exploitation of nature for his vested interests. In this moment of inactivity, fishermen will not harm the whales. Indirectly, he would also help himself (e.g. no green wars, no wars with gases, etc.).