

MODULE IV

IVR

- **4.2.2 Understanding the poem: (Night of the Scorpion)**

1. Say whether the following statements are true or false

a) The scorpion hid under a sack of rice.

✓ **True**

b) Flies swarmed around their house.

✓ **False**

c)The villagers found and killed the scorpion.

✓ **False**

d)The holy man stopped the poison from spreading.

✓ **False**

e) The father set the mother's bitten toe on fire.

✓ **True**

2. Find out lines from the poem that mean the same as the statements given below.

a) The villagers were disappointed that they couldn't find the evil scorpion.

They searched for him; he was not found.

They clicked their tongues.

- b) They sat peacefully accepting that the poison would purify the mother and that she deserved it.

May the poison purify your flesh

of desire, and your spirit of ambition,

they said, and they sat around

on the floor with my mother in the centre,

the peace of understanding on each face.

- c) Hearing of the mother's plight, the villagers gathered at the house.

The peasants came like swarms of flies

- d) To relieve mother's pain, the father tried using different types of powder, mixture etc.

My father, sceptic, rationalist,

trying every curse and blessing,

powder, mixture, herb and hybrid.

- e) The mother got relief from pain after twenty hours.

After twenty hours

it lost its sting.

- f) The father tried to burn the toe on which the mother was bitten.

He even poured a little paraffin

upon the bitten toe and put a match to it.

- g) The child saw fire eating (burning) away his mother's toe.

I watched the flame feeding on my mother.

3. Answer the following questions

- a) Where is the poem set in?

❖ **The poem is set in an Indian village. It was night and it rained**

continuously for ten hours.

- b) What is the figure of speech used in the line "The peasants came like swarms of flies"?

❖ **Simile.**

- c) Why do you think the villagers searched for the 'evil one'?

❖ **The peasants searched for the scorpion because they believed that every**

movement the scorpion made caused the poison to move in the mother's

blood. Maybe they wanted to kill the scorpion to stop it from moving

further.

- d) "They clicked their tongues"

"May he sit still, they said".

i. In these lines 'They' refers to

❖ the peasants

ii. He refers to -----

❖ the scorpion

e) Does the father in the poem resort to superstition too? Is he successful in relieving her pain?

❖ **The poet's father is rational. He pours paraffin on the bitten toe and puts**

a match to it. We cannot say he is successful in relieving her pain. In the poem it is said, after twenty hours, it lost its sting. This seems to have happened naturally, not by anybody's intervention.

4.2.3 Extended Activity:

1. What do the last lines tell us about the mother?

- **After suffering for 20 hours, the mother's only response at the end of it all is her relief at the thought that the scorpion picked on her and spared her children. Even while going through so much pain, she is unable to think as an individual who endures it. Instead, she thinks in terms of her role as a mother.**

2. Pick out the lines from the poem that employ alliteration.

- **Alliteration is the repetition of identical initial consonant sounds within a group of words. Pick out lines from the poem that employ alliteration.**
- **Parting with his poison**

- **he risked the rain again**
- **May the poison purify your flesh**
- **powder, mixture, herb and hybrid**
- **I watched the flame feeding on my mother**
- **More candles, more lanterns, more neighbours**

3. Point out the images used in the poem relating to religion, evil and darkness.

- **Religion: buzzed the name of God a hundred times, the holy man performing his rites**
- **Evil: Parting with his poison, flash of diabolic tail**
- **Darkness: throwing giant scorpion shadows on the mud baked wall**

4. What are the themes in the poem

- **The poem suggests such themes as helplessness of humankind, our essentially social existence, superstitious beliefs, rational thought, religious faith, presence of evil, fear, motherhood etc.**

4.2.4 Complete the summary of 'Night of the Scorpion' with the help of the clues given in brackets.

The poet tells us the story of a child who could only watch in horror the incidents that take place afterthe child's mother gets stung by a scorpion one night..... (Night, mother, scorpion, sting). The superstitious and illiterate villagers come in large numbers, in spite of the rain, uttering God's name to stop the 'evil one'. They see the scorpion as symbolic of the Devil and the men search

for it believing that killing it wouldstop the poison from spreading..... (stop, poison, spread). The women sit around the mother praying and hoping that herpain would purify her of her past sins and reduce the misfortunes of her future..... (Pain, purify, past, sin, reduce, misfortune, future). They also believe that the poison will make her pure of body and soul. Though they have an understanding look on their faces they never really understand the pain she is in and do nothing to ease it. The father, who prides himself on being a sceptic and rationalist, behaves just like the superstitious villagers. He sets her bitten toe on fire when he sees that nopowder, mixture herb or hybrid he used could cure her..... (Herb, hybrid, mixture, cure). We also see the holy man whotries to control the action of the poison with an incantation..... (Poison, control, incantation). None of them think of going to or getting a doctor to treat the mother. Instead, they resort to prayers, incantation, fire etc. In the end, after 20 agonising hours, the motherrecovers from the sting of the scorpion..... (Recover, scorpion, sting). All she can think of is how thankful she is that the scorpion stung only her and spared her children.

- a. scorpion stinging his mother at night.
- b. stop spreading poison
- c. pain would purify past sin and reduce her sins of her next birth
- d. herb, mixture and hybrid he used could cure her
- e. control poison through incantation
- f. recovered from scorpion sting

4.2.5 Onomatopoeic words

Words that imitate or resemble the sound that it describes are called Onomatopoeic words.

For example, sizzle, beep and thud.

E.g., She gasped. 'You tried to kill!'(An Astrologer's Day)

Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet. (The Gift of the Magi)

"The peasants came like swarms of flies
and buzzed the name of God"

Pick out more lines from the poem that have onomatopoeic words.

Buzzed the name of God

They clicked their tongues

groaning on a mat

4.2.6 Look at the sets of words given below and pick out from the poem, words that are similar in meaning to them.

- ❖ *critic *non- believer *radical *rationalist
sceptic
- ❖ *evil *wicked *unholy *devilish
diabolic
- ❖ *decrease *reduce *subside *weaken
lost (its sting)
- ❖ *aspiration *calling *vocation *intent
desire, ambition

4.2.7 Sensory images are word pictures that relate to the five human senses, namely sight, sound, taste, touch and smell.

Given below are some lines from the poem that appeal to our different senses and evoke certain emotions in us. Categorise them under the different heads given below.

- a. '...my father pouring paraffin on the bitten toe'
- b. '...clicked their tongues'
- c. '...crawled beneath a sack of rice'
- d. '.... giant scorpion shadows....'
- e. '.... buzzed the name of God'
- f. '...watched the flame feeding on my mother'
- g. '.... twisted through and through groaning'

1. Visual (see)

c,d,f

2. Tactile (touch)

a

3. Auditory (hear)

b,e,g

4. Emotions (feel)

b,g

4.2.8 Given below are certain events from the poem but they are not in the right order.

Arrange them in the right sequence.

1. Father tries to relieve the mother's pain by setting her bitten toe on fire.
2. The peasants come like 'swarms of flies'.
3. Mother feels relieved that the scorpion stung her and not her children.
4. The scorpion stings the mother.
5. The child watches the mother groaning with pain on the mat.

- ❖ **The scorpion stings the mother.**
- ❖ **The peasants come like ‘swarms of flies’.**
- ❖ **The child watches the mother groaning with pain on the mat.**
- ❖ **Father tries to relieve the mother’s pain by setting her bitten toe on fire.**
- ❖ **Mother feels relieved that the scorpion stung her and not her children.**

4.2.9 Pick out the appropriate meaning of the words given in bold from the choices given and write it down in the space provided. You can also note down the clue words that helped you.

1. The grief of **parting** from one's family is too hard to bear. Nobody should have to go through it.

- ❖ **Part** means: **separate**, doubt, surprise, side

Clue words are grief, hard to bear

2. My aunt’s funeral **rites** were over by the time I reached the cemetery and very few were left.

- ❖ **Rite** means: document, curious, remark, **ceremony**

Clue words are funeral, were over

3. The use of certain drugs during surgeries **paralyze** the patient temporarily so that they won’t move at all.

- ❖ **Paralyze** means: teach, expand, **render immobile**, realize

Clue words are won’t move at all

4. Protesters were **swarming** into the building like a herd of cattle

- ❖ **Swarm** means: swim, **crowd**, scare, defeat

Clue words are like a herd of cattle

4.4 Reported Speech

I asked my friends...**a**..... Shyam said**b**.....
Riya told us**c**..... Ann felt that**d**.....

- a.** what they thought about each character in the poem.
- b.** the farmers were superstitious.
- c.** that the mother was a symbol of selfless love.
- d.** the father was a rational man.

4.4.2 Pick out from the options given, the correct way to report what each of these characters say

1. The son said, “I remember the night my mother was stung by a scorpion”.

- a) The son said that I remember the night my mother was stung by a scorpion.
- b) The son said “he remembered the night his mother was stung by a scorpion.”
- c) The son said that he remembered the night his mother had been stung by a scorpion.**

2. The farmers said to the mother, “The sins of your previous birth will be burned away tonight”.

- a) The farmers said to the mother that the sins of your previous birth would be burned away tonight.
- b) The farmers said to the mother that the sins of her previous birth would be burned away that night.**
- c) The farmers said to the mother that the sins of her previous birth would be burned away tonight.

3. The farmers asked, “Where is the scorpion”?

- a) The farmers asked where the scorpion was.**
- b) The farmers asked that where the scorpion was.
- c) The farmers asked where was the scorpion.

4. The father said to the mother, “Please lie still”.

- a) The father said to the mother that please lie still.
- b) The father requested the mother to lie still.**
- c) The father requested the mother to please lie still.

5. The father said to the farmers, “Don’t be superstitious”.

a) The father asked the farmers not to be superstitious.

b) The father said to the farmers that they should not be superstitious.

c) The father said to the farmers don't be superstitious.

6. The mother asked, "Are my children safe?"

a) The mother asked were my children safe

b) The mother asked that if her children were safe

c) The mother asked if her children were safe.

4.4.3 Complete the following sentences picking out the correct word from the options given.

1. The supervisor said (to/**that**) the machine had to be repaired.

2. The customer asked (that/**if**) the product could be delivered in two days.

3. The manager asked me (what/**if**) I had checked the ball bearing unit.

4. I advised the customer (**to**/that) apply the lubricant once a week.

5. The mechanic asked the customer (**if**/to) he had brought the car to the workshop.

6. The instructor advised us (**not to**/that) leave running machinery unattended.

4.4.4 Report the following sentences correctly choosing the right option from the brackets.

1. The town planner said, "The place is suitable to build the shopping complex."

The town planner said that the place ...**was**..... (is/was) suitable to build the shopping complex.

2. The electrician said, "The resistor has to be changed"

The electrician said that the resistor...**had**..... (has/had) to be changed.

3. I asked the customer, "Can you come tomorrow?"

I asked the customer ...**if**.... (if/that) he ...**could**.... (can/could) come...**the next day**..... (the previous day/the next day).

4. Manoj said to Ram, "I am going to the workshop now"

Manoj said to Ram that**he**.... (he/she) ...**was going**..... (was going/were going/is going) to the workshop.....**then**..... (now/then).

5. The mechanic asked Vishakh, "How can I reach your home?"

The mechanic asked Vishakh how...**he could**... (could he/he could) reach ...**his**. (my/his) home.

6. Hari asked the client, "When should I come to check your refrigerator?"

Hari asked the client when **he should**..... (Should he/he should) come to check **his**... (his/your) refrigerator.

4.4.5 Read the conversation between Manu and his friend regarding planer machines (refer page number 139) and try to complete the conversation reported below.

Manu asked his instructor what ... **planer machine was**..... His instructor replied ... **it was a machine**..... used to make flat surfaces out of heavy objects. Manu then wanted to know ... **whether it was**like a shaper. The instructor said that **it was**,..... but larger in size. Manu asked him what ... **its parts were**..... to which the instructor replied that it **had a bed**.....Manu said that he would like to operate it. The instructor told him that ... **he could**,... but advised him to be careful when he operated it.

4.4.6 Read what Joseph, an Engineering researcher interested in sustainable energy, has to say about his recent invention – a green energy power converter (refer page number 140). Now report the conversation you read about green electrical energy to your friend.

o The reporter asked whether the green energy power converter was a new system.

Joseph replied that it was an innovative one. Then the reporter asked him from where it got the energy to power it. Joseph told him that it accepted power simultaneously from different power sources and it then converted the power so that it could be used in the electrical grid system. The reporter further asked him whether there was anyone else associated with that innovation. Joseph told him that his professor Juan Balda had helped him a lot. The reporter congratulated him on receiving the patent and Joseph thanked him.

4.5.1 Look at a few more structures and use them in a conversation with your friend on the best way to combat the spread of Covid-19. You may use as many as you want from the ones given below.

True enough
That's right

I'm not sure about that
I see things rather differently

I totally agree with you
I feel the same
That's a good point
Absolutely/Definitely/Exactly

I don't entirely agree with you
I'm afraid I disagree
I don't think so

○ o Sonali: Hi Monali! How are you?

Monali: I am good, how about you?

Sonali: I am good. What are you doing?

Monali: I am watching the news about COVID 19. It is quite important to gather information about the virus and how to combat it.

Sonali: True enough. Can you tell me the ways to combat the virus?

Monali: Yes of course. We should always wear masks and also wash our hands.

Sonali: That's right. Also, we need to use sanitizer.

Monali: Definitely. And we should stay home if we have symptoms and seek medical care at the earliest.

Sonali: That's a good point. Thank you very much for the information..

Monali: It's my pleasure.

Sonali: Thank you. Good bye.

Monali: Bye.

4.6.2

1. Indian brands are**more original**.....than Chinese brands. (original)
2. The lab is ...**closer**..... to our house than the hospital. (close)
3. Self-driving cars are **more capable**..... of moving safely than our present variants. (capable)
4. The rocket went... **higher**..... than the intended distance. (high)

5. Bitcoin is a ...**more popular**..... kind of digital currency than Ethereum. (popular)

4.6.3 Find synonyms for the words and phrases in italics.

1. Mr E Sreedharan took steps to *accelerate* work on the Kochi metro.
... **speed up, quicken**.....
2. There has been much *controversy* surrounding UFO sighting claims.
.... **disagreement, dispute, argument, debate**.....
3. Our company imports *parts* from Korea and assembles them in Gujarat.
...**components, constituents**.....
4. The new town plan *demonstrates* great environmental awareness.
...**exhibit, display, show, illustrate**.....
5. Gatherings have been *prohibited* under the present circumstances.
.... **forbidden, banned, disallowed, restrained**.....
6. Development has been *confined* to the urban areas.
...**restricted, limited**.....
7. Present *figures* show a steep rise in COVID cases.
..... **statistics, numbers**.....
8. None can *challenge* the originality of Rowling's writings.
.....**question, dispute**....