

Rain on the Roof

Introduction

This poem has been written by Coates Kinney, an American poet. The poem, as prescribed in syllabus, is not complete. Only the first three stanzas are given whereas the original poem contains six stanzas. It describes the poet's feelings and memories when the rain falls.

Summary

The poet says that when dark clouds covers the starry sky at night and it starts to rain then there is nothing better to lie in bed and listen to the patter of the rain falling on the cottage's rooftop. The poet says that each drop of rain that falls is accompanied by his heartbeat and a thousand memories flood his mind. These memories are entwined with each other as the poet continues to listen to the sound of raindrops. Slowly, the poet says, that his memories clear and he can see his mother as she used to come to tuck in his brothers, sisters and himself when they were small. The poet says that even as they slept, she used to gaze on them lovingly, aware that she would now see them only in the morning. The poet says that he could feel her loving gaze on him as the rain continues to fall.

Message

The poet wants to convey the message that it is the simple things in life that matter the most. Our memories are triggered not by materialistic things but by natural elements.



Extract Based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow:

1. When the humid shadows hover

Over all the starry spheres
And the melancholy darkness
Gently weeps in rainy tears,
What a bliss to press the pillow
Of a cottage-chamber bed
And lie listening to the patter
Of the soft rain overhead!

(a) 'Starry spheres' in this extract means

(b) The poet is comparing the raindrops to

(c) 'Shadows' here refers to:

- (i) human shadow
- (ii) moisture laden clouds casting shadow on the Earth
- (iii) rain shadow
- (iv) shadow of buildings

(d) The word 'melancholy' means the same as

Answers

(a) sky full of stars

(b) tears

(c) (ii) moisture laden clouds casting shadow on the Earth

(d) sadness

2. Every tinkle on the shingles

Has an echo in the heart;

And a thousand dreamy fancies

Into busy being start,

And a thousand recollections

Weave their air-threads into woof,

As I listen to the patter

Of the rain upon the roof.

(a) 'Busy being' here means

(b) As the poet listens to the patter of the rain upon the roof, come as dreams in his mind.

(c) 'Every tinkle on the shingles' here refers to:

- (i) every heartbeat
- (ii) every dream in mind
- (iii) every raindrop falling on the rooftop
- (iv) every imagination of the world



- (d) Complete the analogy with a word from the extract.
recollections : memories : : fantasies :

Answers

- (a) human beings
(b) memories of the past
(c) (iii) every raindrop falling on the rooftop
(d) fancies
3. Now in memory comes my mother,
As she used in years ago,
To regard the darling dreamers
Ere she left them till the dawn:
O! I feel her fond look on me
As I list to this refrain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.
- (a) comes in the memory of the poet.
(b) State whether the given statement is True or False.
The poet doesn't like listening to the patter of the rain falling on the rooftop.
(c) Poet's mother used to consider him as a:
(i) daydreamer (ii) darling
(iii) woof (iv) busy being
(d) The word opposite in meaning to the word 'dawn' is

Answers

- (a) Poet's mother
(b) False
(c) (ii) darling
(d) dusk

Short Answer Type Questions

Q 1. What is the condition of the sky when it starts raining?

Ans. The sky gets covered with dark clouds when it starts raining. The clouds cover the stars also and a darkness sets in.

Q 2. What does the poet considers to be a bliss when it rains?

Or

What does the poet like to do when it rains?

Ans. The poet thinks that it is a bliss to lie down on bed in a small cottage and listen to the sound of raindrops falling on the roof.

Q 3. When does the poet remember his mother? What does this show?

Or

How can you say that the poet loved his mother?

Ans. The poet remembers his mother when he listens to the sound of the raindrops falling on the roof of his little cottage. He remembers how his mother used to gaze lovingly at them before going to sleep. This shows that the poet greatly loved his mother.

Q 4. What thoughts occur in poet's mind when it rains?

Or

What thoughts flashed through the poet's mind as he hears the sound of rain?

Ans. When it rains, the poet's mind is flooded with a thousand thoughts and memories. At first, these thoughts and memories are not clear but are entwined with each other. But slowly these thoughts clear and the poet thinks of his mother and his childhood.

Q 5. Explain the phrase, 'Weave their air-threads into woof.'

Ans. While listening to the sound of the rain, thousands of remembrances weave a weft in poet's memory. The poet wants to say that his memories are not clear. They are interwoven in the manner as threads are interwoven in a piece of cloth.

Long Answer Type Questions

Q 1. What does the poet like to do when rain starts to fall on the roof? What ideas come to his mind?

Ans. The poet says that when dark clouds cover the starry sky, it starts raining. The poet considers it a great bliss to lie down on a bed and listen to the sound made by the rain. This sound has an echo in the poet's heart. He says that every sound made by a raindrop is followed by his heartbeat. He recollects many thoughts and memories. These memories are like a weft of a cloth to be woven. These are not clear but are entwined with each other. Finally, the poet's mind goes to his mother. He starts recollecting her sweet memories. She used to come and tuck in the poet and his siblings when they were small. The poet says that even after they slept, their mother used to gaze lovingly at them. The poet feels her fond look on him as he listens to the music of the rain falling on the roof top. Thus, in this poem the poet shows love for his mother when it rains.

Q 2. Explain how can the sweet moments of life help us.

Ans. When we remember the sweet moments of life, we forget every pain. Riches have no meaning. We can feel pleasure even in a cottage. In fact, when there is no peace in our heart, we cannot lead a happy life even if we are rich. Sweet moments refresh our brain and fill us with energy. So, the sweet moments of life are the true treasures of our life. These memories bind us to our roots. We feel joy and happiness when we recollect these memories. They fill us with a renewed energy and help us to face the hardships of life.