

## Chapter 10

### Kathmandu

#### A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal - Thinking about the Poem

**Q.1** “A slumber did my spirit seal,” says the poet. That is, a deep sleep ‘closed off’ his soul (or Mind). How does the poet react to his loved one’s death? Does he feel bitter grief? Or does he feel a great peace?

**Ans.:**

Although the death of his loved one has left the poet paralyzed and without any human fears, his reaction cannot be termed ‘bitter grief’ as towards the end of the poem it has been observed that the poet feels her presence in the earth’s nature i.e. rolled round in earth’s diurnal course with rocks, stones and trees. However, it can also not be said that the poet is experiencing great peace of mind. Thus, the poet’s feelings seem to be uncertain in this situation.

**Q.2** The passing of time will no longer affect her, says the poet. Which lines of the poem say this?

**Ans.:** Though the poet’s beloved has died yet the passage of the time will have no effect on her. The following lines represent this perspective of the poet:

"She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years."

**Q.3** How does the poet imagine her to be, after death? Does he think of her as a person living in a very happy state (a ‘heaven’)? Or does he see her now as a part of nature? In which lines of the poem do you find your answer?

**Ans.:** The poet imagines his beloved to be immortal even after death because he can sense her presence in the earth’s nature. He feels that she is travelling round in earth’s diurnal course and goes on revolving with the rocks, stones and the trees.

The following lines express this view of the poet:

“She neither hears nor sees,  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course  
With rocks and stones and trees.”

### **Speaking**

**Q. 1** Discuss in class the shrines you have visited or know about. Speak about one of them.

**Ans.:** Maa Ganga ji Temple stands on the Pauri of Mahadev in Haridwar. People of all castes take a dip in the holy water. This place attracts a large crowd on a daily basis in the evenings when people also make their offerings to the Holy Ganges. People also distribute alms to the poor and the needy. Everyone celebrates and enjoys the atmosphere with great enthusiasm.

NOTE – The above given answers are just an example. Students can share their experiences and write more regarding the same.



**Q.2** Imagine you are giving an eyewitness account or a running commentary of one of the following:

- (i) a game of foot-ball, cricket or hockey, or some sports event
- (ii) a parade (e.g., Republic Day) or some other national event

Speak a few sentences narrating what you see and hear. Use the simple present and the present continuous tenses. For example:

- He passes the ball but Ben gets in the way...
- These brave soldiers guard our frontiers. They display their skills here...

**Ans.:** (2) These brave soldiers guard our frontiers. They display their skills and protect us at the risk of their lives. In spite of facing extreme conditions and atmospheric troubles, they fulfill their duties with utmost responsibility and dedication and prove their worth each time.

**NOTE** – The above given answers are just an example. Students can share their experiences and write more regarding the same.

## Thinking about Language

**Q. 1** Read the following sentences carefully to understand the meaning of the italicized phrases. Then match the phrasal verbs in column A with their meanings in column B.

1. A communal war broke out when the princess was abducted by the neighbouring prince.
2. The cockpit broke off from the plane during the plane crash.
3. The car broke down on the way and we were left stranded in the jungle.
4. The dacoit broke away from the police as they took him to court.



5. The brothers broke up after the death of the father.

6. The thief broke into our house when we were away.

Column A	Column B
(i) break out	(a) to come apart due to force.
(ii) break off	(b) end a relationship
(iii) break down	(c) break and enter illegally, unlawful trespassing
(iv) break away ( from someone)	(d) of start suddenly, usually a fight, a war or a disease (e) to escape from someone's grip
(v) break up	(f) stop working
(vi) break up	

**Answer :**

Column A	Column B
(i) break out	(d) of start suddenly, usually a fight, a war or a disease Eg. - The first World war broke out in july 1914.
(ii) break off	(a) to come apart due to force. Eg. The sensor break off due to the pressure it was subjected to.
(iii) break down	(f) stop working



(iv) break away ( from someone)	Eg. Our car abruptly broke down in in the middle of the road.  (e) to escape from someone's grip Eg. The thief broke away from the police jeep.
(v) break up	(b) end a relationship Eg. break up has a become very easy way of walking away from a relationship.
(vi) break up	(c) break and enter illegally, unlawful travelling Eg. The terrorists broke into the shopping centre.

**Q. 2 A** Use the suffixes -ion or -tion to form nouns from the following verbs. Make the necessary changes in the spellings of the words.

**Example:** proclaim – proclamation

cremate ---- act -----

exhaust ---- invent-----

tempt----- immigrate----

direct ----- meditate -----

imagine ----- dislocate -----

associate----- dedicate-----

**Ans.:**

Cremate – Cremation act – action

exhaust – exhaustion invent – invention

tempt – temptation immigrate – immigration

direct – direction meditate – meditation

imagine – imagination dislocate – dislocation

associate – association dedicate – dedication

**Q. 2 B** Now fill in the blanks with suitable words from the ones that you have formed.

(i) Mass literacy was possible only after the ----- of the printing machine.

(ii) Ramesh is unable to tackle the situation as he lacks-----.

(iii) I could not resist the----- to open the letter.

(iv) Hardwork and ----- are the main keys to success.

(v) The children were almost fainting with ----- after being made to stand in the sun.

**Ans.:**

(i) Mass literacy was possible only after the invention of the printing machine.

(ii) Ramesh is unable to tackle the situation as he lacks direction.

(iii) I could not resist the temptation to open the letter.

(iv) Hardwork and dedication are the main keys to success.

(v) The children were almost fainting with exhaustion after being made to stand in the sun.

**Q. 3** Use capital letters, full stops, question marks, commas and inverted commas wherever necessary in the following paragraph:

an arrogant lion was wandering through the jungle one day he asked the tiger who is stronger than you you O lion replied the tiger who is more fierce than a leopard asked the lion you sir replied the leopard he marched upto an elephant and asked the same question the elephant picked him up in his trunk swung him in the air and threw him down look said the lion there is no need to get mad just because you don't know the answer.

**Ans.:** An arrogant lion was wandering through the jungle. One day, he asked the tiger, "Who is stronger than you?" "You, O lion!" replied the



tiger. "Who is more fierce than a leopard?" asked the lion. "You sir," replied the leopard. He marched up to an elephant and asked the same question. The elephant picked him up in his trunk, swung him in the air, and threw him down. "Look," said the lion, "there is no need to get mad just because you don't know the answer."

**Q. 4** Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. The heart is a pump that ----- (send) the blood circulating through our body. The pumping action ----- (take place) when the left ventricle of the heart ----- (contract). This ----- (force) the blood out into the arteries, which ----- (expand) to receive the oncoming blood.

2. The African lungfish can live without water for up to four years. During a drought it ----- (dig) a pit and ----- (enclose) itself in a capsule of slime and earth, leaving a tiny opening for air. The capsule --- ---- (dry) and ----- (harden), but when rain ----- (come), the mud ----- (dissolve) and the lungfish ----- (swim) away.

3. Mahesh: We have to organize a class party for our teacher. -----  
(Do) anyone play an instrument?

Vipul: Rohit ----- (play) the flute.

Mahesh: ----- (Do) he also act?

Vipul: No. He ----- (compose) music.

Mahesh: That's wonderful!

**Answer :**

1. The heart is a pump that sends the blood circulating through our body. The pumping action takes place when the left ventricle of the heart





contracts. This forces the blood out into the arteries, which expands to receive the oncoming blood.

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3. Mahesh: We have to organize a class party for our teacher. Does anyone play an instrument?

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## Thinking about the Text

**Q. 1** On the following map mark out the route, which the author thought of, but did not take, to Delhi.



**Ans.:** The route the author had thought of, but did not take is:

From Kathmandu to Patna (Bihar) via bus and train then sail up the Ganges to Allahabad followed by Agra and then finally reaching Delhi.

**Q. 2** Find out the possible routes (by rail, road or air) from Kathmandu to New Delhi/ Mumbai/Kolkata/Chennai.

**Ans.:**

The route that author decided to take but could not is given as:

Kathmandu → Patna → Varanasi → Allahabad → Agra → Delhi

Other possible routes are :

Kathmandu → Birgunj → Raxual Junction → Nizamuddin Railway Station (Delhi)

Kathmandu → Kasauli (Nepal) → Sonauli → Gorakhpur → Delhi

Kathmandu → Birgunj → Raxual Junction → Chennai Central Railway Station.

Consult a geography book to find other routes.

**Q. 1 A** Answer these questions in one or two words or in short phrases:

Name the two temples the author visited in Kathmandu.

**Ans.:** The author visited the Pashupatinath Temple and the Baudhnath Stupa in Kathmandu.

**Q.1 B** Answer these questions in one or two words or in short phrases:

The writer says, “All this I wash down with Coca Cola.” What does ‘all this’ refer to?

**Ans.:** ‘All this’ in the above sentence refers to a bar of marzipan and a corn-on-the-cob roasted in a charcoal brazier- rubbed with salt, chilli powder and lemon coupled with love story comics and a reader’s digest.

**Q. 1 C** Answer these questions in one or two words or in short phrases:

What does Vikram Seth compare to the quills of a porcupine?

**Ans.:** Vikram Seth compares the quills of a porcupine to the pole of the flute seller with fifty or sixty bansuris protruding in all directions.

**Q.1D** Answer these questions in one or two words or in short phrases:

Name five kinds of flutes.

**Ans.:** The five kinds of flutes mentioned in text include the following:

1. The Reed neh
2. The Japanese shakuhachi
3. The Deep Bansuri of Hindustani Classical Music
4. The clear or breathy flutes of South America
5. The high-pitched flutes of China

**Q. 2 A** Answer each question in a short paragraph:

What difference does the author note between the flute-seller and the other hawkers?

**Ans.:** In Kathmandu bazaar, the author hears film songs blaring out from the radios, the sounds of the car horns, the ringing of the bicycle bells and

the vendors shouting out their wares. However, the flute-seller from time-to-time selects a flute and plays for a few minutes. He plays slowly, meditatively and without excessive display which indeed was very much in contrast to the other hawkers.

**Q. 2 B** Answer each question in a short paragraph:

What is the belief at Pashupatinath about the end of Kaliyug?

**Ans.:** At the Pashupatinath temple, there was a small shrine protruding from the stone platform on the river bank of the Holy Bagmati. As the author mentions, it was believed that when that shrine would emerge fully, the goddess inside would escape and the evil period of Kaliyug would come to an end on the earth.

**Q. 2 C** Answer each question in a short paragraph:

The author has drawn powerful images and pictures. Pick out three examples each of:

(i) The atmosphere of 'febrile confusion' outside the temple of Pashupatinath (for example: some people trying to get the priest's attention are elbowed aside...)

(ii) The things he sees

(iii) The sounds he hears.

**Ans.:** (i) The author has captured powerful images about the atmosphere of 'febrile confusion' outside the temple of Pashupatinath in Kathmandu. Apart from the example already given, the author observed a group of Westerners who were struggling to enter via the main gate as only the Hindus were allowed inside along with a fight that broke out between the two monkeys. In addition to this, he also saw people bowing down and making way for the Royal Nepalese Princess entering the temple.

(ii) The author saw many things in and around the Boudhanath Stupa in Kathmandu. The stillness he observed here in contrast to the febrile confusion outside the Pashupatinath temple along with the immense white dome ringed by a road were among the most fascinating. In addition to this, he saw small shops standing on its outer edge selling felt bags, Tibetan prints and silver jewellery. On the narrow and busy streets, he saw fruit sellers, flute sellers, hawkers of postcards, sellers of Western cosmetics, film rolls and chocolates, copper utensils and the Nepalese antiques.

(iii) The sounds the author could hear included film songs blaring out from the radios, car horns, the ringing of the bicycle bells and the vendors shouting out their wares. Additionally, he also observed the soft music of the flute seller standing in a corner near the hotel.

**Q. 3A** Answer the following questions in not more than 100 - 150 words each:

Compare and contrast the atmosphere in and around the Baudhnath shrine with the Pashupatinath Temple.

**Ans.:** There is a marked difference between the atmosphere in and around Baudhnath Shrine and that of the Pashupatinath Temple.

In and around the Pashupatinath Temple, the author observed an atmosphere of febrile confusion. There were large crowds of worshippers, elbowing each other in trying to get the priest's attention or pushing to make their way to the front. There were the policemen at entrance gate to keep a track on the saffron-clad Westerners and others because only the Hindus were allowed to enter the temple. In addition, at the banks of the Holy Bagmati, a corpse was being cremated, washerwomen were at their work, and children were bathing along with the offerings that were being dropped in the river.



On the other hand, the atmosphere in the Baudhnath Shrine was that of peace and tranquility. There was a sense of stillness that the author felt. However, it was surrounded by narrow and busy streets comprising of small shops on the outer edge selling felt bags, Tibetan prints and silver jewellery. In all, there was no crowd inside and the author considered it to be a haven of quietness surrounded by the hustle bustle outside.

**Q. 3 B** Answer the following questions in not more than 100 - 150 words each: How does the author describe Kathmandu's busiest streets?

**Ans.:** The author gives a vivid description of Kathmandu streets comprising of small shrines and flower-adorned deities. Apart from the religious places, he describes the narrow and busy streets of Kathmandu observing the fruit sellers, flute sellers, hawkers of postcards, shops selling Western cosmetics, film rolls, chocolates, and those selling copper utensils and Nepalese antiques.

The author also describes the film songs blaring out from the radios, the sound of the car horns, ringing of the bicycle bells and the sounds of the vendors shouting out their wares and the stray cows roaming about the streets.

The author, however, seems to be most fascinated by the flute seller with a large amount of bansuris protruding from his pole. Away from the hustle bustle of the streets, he feels that the soothing sound of the flute is much clearer than all the other sounds.

**Q. 3C** Answer the following questions in not more than 100 - 150 words each:

"To hear any flute is to be drawn to the commonalty of all mankind." Why does the author say this?



**Ans.:** The author makes an attempt to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that flute is a musical instrument of the masses. It is one of the most universal and particular of sounds. We can say so because; the author mentions that there is no culture that does not have its flute. The Japanese call it Shakuhachi, the deep Bansuri of the Hindustani classical music, the breathy flutes of South America and the high-pitched Chinese flutes. Although each of these may have their own specific fingering and compass along with its associations, yet the author feels that the soothing music of any flute draws an individual towards the commonality of all mankind. The author thus conveys the message of shared attributes among humans irrespective of their social identities across the globe which connects the human voice and soul together everywhere.

## Writing

**Q. 1** The text you read is a travelogue where the author, Vikram Seth, talks about his visit to two sacred places in Kathmandu.

Imagine that you were with Vikram Seth on his visit to Pashupatinath temple, and you were noting down all that you saw and did there, so that you could write a travelogue later.

Record in point form:

- What you see when you reach the Pashupatinath temple
- What you see happening inside the temple
- What you do when inside the temple.
- What you see outside the temple
- What your impressions are about the place.

**Ans:**



2 March 2017

Today I feel much elated after witnessing the spectacular Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu. It is truly a wondrous piece of art. Since only the Hindus had an access to the visit the shrine, it was totally a chaotic situation outside. Inside the temple, I could see thousands and thousands of worshippers trying to elbow and push each other in their way to reach the front and attract the attention of the priest. The shrine was surrounded by priests, hawkers, devotees, tourists, monkeys, cows, pigeons and dogs roaming about here and there. I feel that this beautiful shrine should be made open for all.

NOTE- This is only a small example. A diary entry is a piece of writing where in the writer includes informal details and a much deeper experience of his or her surroundings. Students can accordingly add more details to this

**Q. 2** Here is your diary entry when you visited Agra. Read the points and try to write a travelogue describing your visit to Agra and the Taj Mahal. You may add more details.

January 2003 - rise before dawn - take the Shatabdi Express at 6.15 am from Delhi- meet a newly married couple on train - talk about Himachal Pradesh - get off the train - enter the once-grand city, Agra - twisted alleys - traffic dense-rickshaws, cars, people - vendors selling religious artifacts, plastic toys, spices and sweets - go to the Taj Mahal - constructed entirely of white marble - magical quality - colour changes with varying of light and shadow - marble with gemstones inside - reflection of the Taj Mahal in the pond - school-children, tourists - tourist guides following people.

**Ans.:** 5 January 2017





I rose before dawn and proceeded to the New Delhi Railway Station to catch the Shatabdi Express at 6:15 a.m. It was a quite comfortable journey during which I also came across a newly married couple. We had a constructive conversation about the beauty of Himachal Pradesh and shared our both positive and negative experiences. After reaching Agra, I came across the busy roads which were traffic dense and all I could see around me included rickshaws, cars, various vendors selling religious artifacts, plastic toys, spices and sweets. Then finally that moment arrived when I reached the Taj Mahal. This monument constructed entirely of the magical white marble is truly a wonder in itself. I also observed something wonderful about this monument i.e. the colour of its marble changed according to the light and shadow. I also observed the marble which was beautifully decorated with gemstones along with the serene reflection of the Taj Mahal in the pond which grabbed much attraction of the spectators including tourists, tourist guides and school children.

