

1. Read the given stanza and answer the questions :

[10]

I cannot remember my mother  
only sometimes in the midst of my play  
a tune seems to hover over my playthings,

I. Complete the following sentence appropriately.

The poet is reminded of his mother during his \_\_\_\_\_.

II. What is the primary emotion conveyed by the line 'a tune seems to hover over my playthings'?

- A. It enhances the joy of play.
- B. It disrupts the playtime atmosphere.
- C. It activates memories of the mother.
- D. It symbolises the carefree nature of childhood.

III. In the context of the poem, what role does the hovering tune play during the speaker's playtime?

IV. State whether the following sentence is true or false.

The poet experiences the tune lingering over playthings only occasionally during playtime.

V. How could the poet feel his mother's presence, even though she isn't there?

**Ans. :** 1. playtime

2. (C) It activates memories of the mother.

3. The hovering tune reminds the poet of the lullaby his mother used to sing and brings back memories of her during playtime.

4. True

5. The poet feels his mother's presence through memories such as the tune of the lullaby, the smell of shiuli flowers, and the calm blue sky.

I feel that the stillness of  
my mother's gaze on my face  
has spread all over the sky.

VI. What does the poet suggest about the stillness of his mother's gaze spreading over the sky?

- A. The mother's gaze is physically present in the sky.
- B. The sky is a symbolic extension of the mother's presence.
- C. The sky mirrors the mother's emotions.
- D. The stillness is fleeting and unrelated to the mother.

VII. What emotion does the poet associate with the 'stillness' of his mother's gaze?

- A. a sense of grief
- B. a sense of anticipation
- C. a sense of nostalgia



D. a sense of serenity

VIII. State whether the following sentence is true or false.

The poet suggests that the mother's gaze has a tangible and visual effect on the sky.

IX. What is the purpose of likening the mother's gaze to the sky?

X. Complete the sentence appropriately.

The tone of the poet in the given extract is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

**Ans. :** 1. (B) The sky is a symbolic extension of the mother's presence.

2. (D) a sense of serenity

3. False

4. The poet compares his mother's gaze to the sky to show that her love and presence feel vast, calm, and always surrounding him.

5. The tone of the poet in the given extract is nostalgic and peaceful because he lovingly remembers his mother and feels her presence in nature.

2. Answer the following six questions in about 40- 50 words each :

[24]

I. The poem "I Cannot Remember My Mother" uses imagery extensively. Explain.

**Ans. :** By describing sounds, smells, and sights such as the tune of a song, the smell of shiuli flowers, and the blue sky to create clear pictures and feelings in the reader's mind.

II. What is the tone of the poet? Why do you say so? In the poem "I Cannot Remember My Mother".

**Ans. :** The tone of the poet is **nostalgic and emotional** because he remembers his mother with love and longing.

III. What impact does the title of the poem "I Cannot Remember My Mother" have on the overall mood of the poem?

**Ans. :** The title "*I Cannot Remember My Mother*" immediately creates a mood of sadness and longing. It suggests a sense of loss and emotional distance, making the reader expect a deeply personal and reflective poem. As the poem unfolds, this feeling continues, but it is softened by the child's memories through sights, sounds, and emotions. Overall, the title sets a melancholic tone while also highlighting how love and memories can keep someone close, even when they are no longer present.

IV. The poet uses symbolism to indicate the memory of his mother's presence. Identify the symbols used in the poem I Cannot Remember My Mother.

**Ans. :** In "*I Cannot Remember My Mother*," the poet uses gentle symbols to suggest the mother's presence through memories rather than direct recollection. Some key symbols include:

- **The fragrance of shiuli (night-flowering jasmine) flowers** – represents the mother's love and comforting presence, especially linked with early morning memories.



- **The sound of devotional songs or prayers** – symbolizes the mother’s care, warmth, and spiritual connection with the child.
- **Autumn mornings and natural surroundings** – reflect calmness, purity, and the lingering presence of the mother in everyday life.

These symbols show that even though the child cannot clearly remember the mother, her presence lives on through familiar sights, sounds, and feelings.

V. What is the emotional impact of the refrain, ‘I cannot remember my mother’?

**Ans. :** The refrain creates a strong feeling of sadness and longing. It shows that the poet cannot clearly remember his mother’s face or presence because he was very young when she was gone. However, the repetition also highlights how deeply he still feels connected to her through small memories and experiences. Each time the line appears, it reminds the reader of the poet’s loss while also showing that his mother’s love still lives in his heart.

VI. Interpret the connection between the poet’s mother and the following : In the poem "I Cannot Remember My Mother".

- shiuli flowers
- humming tune

**Ans. : 1. Shiuli flowers:** The fragrance of shiuli flowers in the autumn morning reminds the poet of his mother. Their gentle and pleasant scent symbolises the warmth, purity, and love associated with her memory.

**2. Humming tune:** The humming tune reminds the poet of the lullaby his mother used to sing while rocking his cradle. Even though he cannot remember her clearly, the melody brings back feelings of comfort, care, and affection.

VII. What role does nature play in the poet’s description of the memory of his mother? In the poem "I Cannot Remember My Mother".

**Ans. :** Nature plays an important role in helping the poet remember his mother. Natural elements such as the scent of shiuli flowers, the peaceful morning atmosphere, and the vast blue sky remind him of her presence. These elements symbolise the love, calmness, and warmth he associates with his mother. Through nature, the poet feels that his mother’s memory surrounds him, making her presence feel gentle and everlasting.

VIII. What can be inferred about the poet’s perception of the mother-child relationship? In the poem **I Cannot Remember My Mother**.

**Ans. :** The poet sees the mother-child relationship as deeply loving and lasting. Even though he cannot clearly remember his mother, small experiences still bring back feelings connected to her. This shows that a mother’s love remains strong even after she is gone. The poem suggests that the bond between a mother and child is emotional, comforting, and permanent, and that memories of a mother continue to guide and protect the child.

