



**I. Reference to context: Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow.**

1. *“A thing of beauty is a joy forever  
Its loveliness increases, it will never  
Pass into nothingness; but will keep  
A bower quiet for us and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams and health and quiet breathing.”*

- (a) How does a thing of beauty remain a joy forever?  
(b) Mention any two sources of joy which a thing, of beauty provides to us.  
(c) Explain, “never pass into nothingness.”  
(d) What is meant by ‘bower’?

- (a) A thing of beauty provides eternal and everlasting joy to us. Whenever we are in a pensive mood we can relive the joyful experience and happiness it gave us.  
(b) A thing of beauty gives us a quiet bower to rest peacefully, and a blissful sleep full of pleasant dreams.  
(c) The joy that a thing of beauty give us is eternal. It never loses its importance, but it only increases with time.  
(d) A ‘bower’ refers to a peaceful, quiet place under the shade of trees.

2. *“Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the Earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o’er-darkened ways  
Made for our searching:”*

- (a) What are the flowery bands that bind us to the Earth?  
(b) What message do the above lines convey?  
(c) Why is there an “inhuman dearth of noble natures”?  
(d) What do you understand by “unhealthy and o’er-darkened ways”?

- (a) Here beautiful and pleasant things have been referred to as flowery bands. It is only those things which have beauty of some or the other kind that bind us to this Earth, or in a way, keep us going. The memory of our beautiful experiences helps us strengthen our bond with the Earth.  
(b) The message that these lines convey is that the world is full of sorrow, sadness and depression. People have become disheartened and selfish, -and there is a scarcity of noble people. Despite this, life is possible because there are some beautiful things around, which help us to look towards the positive side of life. It is the beauty of these things which brings a smile on our face and gives us happiness in our lives.  
(c) Today, there are few people who can rise above petty differences and be generous towards

others. These days people are mostly selfish and do not think about others.

(d) The unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways refer to the difficulties and misfortunes in our life, and the dishonest and unfair means people adopt to achieve their goals.

**3. "Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
From our dark spirits,"**

**(a) How does beauty help us when we are burdened with grief?**

**(b) Explain; "Some shape of beauty."**

**(c) Identify the figure of speech in the above lines.**

**(d) Why are our spirits referred to as 'dark'?**

(a) Whenever we look at a beautiful object, we are filled with comfort and joy. When we are burdened with grief, a thing of beauty comes as a ray of hope, and makes us forget our sorrow and suffering at least for some time.

(b) Beauty is an abstract idea and has no specific shape. The poet here means beauty in some form or some beautiful object which pleases us.

(c) The above lines present an example of metaphor. Our souls are filled in sadness and disappointment which are compared to a pall or shroud covering the dead.

(d) Our spirits are dejected due to extreme sadness and disappointment which may be the result of our own evil or bad actions. So, the poet refers to them as dark, because of the hopelessness we feel.

**4. "Such the Sun, the Moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in; and clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season."**

**(a) Name the poem and the poet.**

**(b) List the things that give us joy. Which of these provide respite in the hot season?**

**(c) Describe the role of daffodils and clear rills.**

**(d) What does the word, 'sprinkling' mean?**

(a) The poem is 'A Thing of Beauty' written by the poet John Keats.

(b) The various objects of nature, like the sun, the moon, old and young trees in forests, daffodils and clear water streams give us joy. Clear water streams, green surroundings and the shade of trees in forests gives us respite from the heat.

(c) Daffodils bloom in green surroundings. Clear rills are small streams which make a cooling shelter for us.

(d) The word 'sprinkling' means spreading of fragrance.

**5. "And such too is the grandeur of the dooms  
We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read;  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from heaven's brink"**

**(a) Who are the 'mighty dead'? How do we know about them?**

**(b) What images does the poet use to convey that beauty is everlasting?**

**(c) What is the effect of the immortal drink?**

**(d) Write the words from the extract which mean**

**(i) stories**

**(ii) magnificence**

(a) Our ancestors, who were great in their own ways and the dead emperors have been referred to as the mighty dead. We come to know about them by reading or hearing valorous tales, which speak of their innumerable sacrifices. They are a source of motivation for all who go through them.

(b) 'Endless fountain' of joy is the image that has been used to convey that beauty is everlasting. Things of beauty are an eternal source of motivation, a precious gift from heaven which give us infinite pleasure and delight.

(c) The immortal drink that nature's endless fountain pours on us gives us immense joy and pleasure.

(d) (i) tales

(ii) grandeur

## **II. Short Answer Type Questions (30-40 Words)**

**1. How do beautiful things help us to live a happy life?**

**Answer.** We derive comfort and happiness when we look at objects of beauty, and the lasting impression they leave on our minds is a source of permanent joy. Beautiful things bind us to the Earth and help us strengthen our relationship with nature. They provide us relief from our everyday trials and tribulations and help us live a happy life.

**2. What does Keats consider an endless fountain of immortal drink and why does he call its drink immortal?**

**Answer.** Keats considers nature's beauty as an endless fountain of immortal drink. He calls this drink immortal as the pleasure and delight given by it never passes into nothingness. It only increases with time.

**3. According to Keats, what spreads the pall of despondence over our dark spirits? How is it removed?**

**Answer.** John Keats says that pain and suffering are a part of life. These bring us sadness and despondence. But still, we can find hope. The hope and motivation come from nature and remove the pall of despondence from our spirits. The beautiful sights give us inspiration to continue the journey of life.

**4. How does a thing of beauty provide shelter and comfort?**

**Answer.** A thing of beauty provides shelter and comfort in many ways. It is like a bower, a place under the shade of a tree where we can rest. It gives us a sleep filled with sweet dreams. The streams and forests provide a cooling covert for us in the hot weather.

**5. How is a thing of beauty a joy forever?**

**Answer.** A thing of beauty is a joy forever because it is a permanent source of joy and inspiration and leaves a lasting impression on us. The pleasure and happiness given by it never fades away but keeps on increasing.

**6. What makes human beings love life in spite of troubles and sufferings? Answer.** Human beings suffer from hopelessness and sadness. Our style/way of living often makes us hopeless and grim. We at times also, suffer due to the self-centered and wicked nature of others. In spite of all our troubles and sufferings, we are able to derive pleasure from our surroundings. The beautiful objects from nature help us shed our gloom, give us a glimmer of hope, and make us love life amidst all troubles.

**7. Why is ‘grandeur’ associated with the mighty dead?**

**Answer.** The mighty dead are those who have laid down their lives for a great or noble cause. Their death is replete with intellectual and spiritual beauty. Birth, growth and decay, all are inseparable. Each has its own beauty. Their death is grand or beautiful because it makes them immortal through the grand tombs and memorials erected in their honour.

**8. What is the message of the poem, ‘A thing of beauty’?**

**Answer.** The message of the poem ‘A thing of beauty’ is that beautiful things are a source of constant joy and inspiration. They give us eternal pleasure and leave an indelible image on our minds and, therefore, every beautiful thing and aspect is worth being treasured.

**9. What is the ‘endless fountain’ and what is its effect?**

**Answer.** Here beauty has been referred to as an ‘endless fountain’, which is an eternal source of motivation, an elixir of life and a precious gift from heaven. It gives us infinite pleasure and delight, and motivates us to continue our journey of life.

**10. What images does the poet use to describe the beautiful bounty of the Earth?**

**Answer.** The poet uses the image of an ‘endless fountain’, which showers bounties on Earth. He calls this an ‘immortal drink’ from heaven. The sun, the moon, the trees, the daffodils, the lush green forests and streams, all reflect the beautiful bounties which God has given us.

### **III. Long Answer Type Questions**

**1. Analyse the myth of Endymion in the context of the poem.**

**Answer:** The poem is an excerpt from John Keats’ first epic poem ‘Endymion’, which was published in 1818. The title of this poem is taken from the very first lines of Endymion. According to Greek mythology, Endymion was a handsome young shepherd who lived on Mount Latmos of Asia Minor. He was in love with the moon goddess Cynthia. The enchanted shepherd resolved to seek her in his admiration. This poem echoes the pleasure of the shepherd as he wanders through the forests and finds pleasure in beholding the beautiful sights of nature. That beauty can create joy in the soul that will last forever, is what is conveyed in the poem. The nature with its beauty, the sun, the moon and daffodils gives to life a new meaning and significance.

**2. Explain ‘An endless fountain of immortal drink’.**

**Answer:** This line is taken from John Keats’ poem, ‘A Thing of Beauty’. That beauty is everlasting, as it creates an eternal joy in the beholder. It is an endless fountain of joy that is immortal as a drink pouring down on us, as a water of joy from the edge of heaven’s cliff. The eternal joy is like a bliss of heaven on Earth. The poet here says these words in order to explain the nature of the pleasure and joy that is created when a beautiful object is seen by a beholder. The poet here affirms the truth that beauty is not ephemeral, but eternal. The pleasure we receive

in perceiving a beautiful object is a gift that is worth treasuring, as the joy soothes the gloom in our minds.

**3. Explain 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever'.**

**Answer:** It is the first line of John Keats' first epic poem, 'Endymion: A Poetic Romance' and of the poem 'A Thing of Beauty.' This line is dramatically very significant because it is multi-layered in its meaning. It explains the effect of beauty on the soul. Beauty heals the negative impulses of our life. It relieves us from being weighed down by worldly worries. Keats, as a romantic poet, brings out the belief in the power of nature to heal and give happiness. A beautiful thing is an object of joy because it gives us mental peace and makes us happy. Its value lies in its effect on us and it never breeds a sense of nothingness. It will not diminish with the passage of time.

**4. 'A thing of beauty is a joy forever.' This is what John Keats says in the poem. Do you think in the present times of acute stress and violence, proximity to beautiful things can lead man to everlasting happiness? Discuss.**

**Answer:** A thing of beauty gives us permanent happiness. When we look at objects of beauty, we feel happy, and the lasting impression that such objects leave on our mind continues to give us pleasure even when they are no longer in our sight.

In the present times of acute stress and violence, the objects of beauty attain even greater significance. When our mind is anxious and troubled, the very sight of beautiful things often comes as a relief and provides us comfort and happiness for the moment. Appreciating beautiful things is like appreciating God, who has bestowed them upon mankind as a gift so that we can derive happiness and solace from them. Proximity to beautiful things brings us closer to the creator, in whom lies the ultimate power to grant us relief from all anxieties and troubles. Therefore, it is sure to bring everlasting happiness at all times.

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