



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

CLASS – IX	DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH	2026-2027
QUESTION BANK	TOPIC- THE GIFTS OF GRACE: HONOURING OUR VOCATIONS	

About the Poem

Source: Kaveri (Class 9 English, CBSE New Curriculum)

Form: Free Verse, Theme: Dignity of Labour, Vocational Identity, National Pride

Vocations featured: Craftsperson, Artisans/Musicians, Carpenters, Electricians, Boatmen, Shoemakers, Cooks, Designers, Masons

Summary of *Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations*

The poem is a tribute to the hardworking people of Bharat and celebrates the dignity and value of every vocation. The poet imagines the entire nation joyfully honouring the diverse occupations that enrich society. Through vivid descriptions, the poem highlights the skill, dedication, and creativity of workers such as craftspersons, artisans, carpenters, electricians, boatmen, shoemakers, cooks, designers, and masons. Each one performs their work with pride and excellence, making a unique contribution to others' lives.

The poet presents every profession as a form of art. Craftspersons weave beautiful patterns with colourful threads, artisans express emotions through music, carpenters shape wood with mathematical precision, and electricians brighten lives through their expertise. Boatmen work cheerfully as they sail and return with stories from the sea, while shoemakers create sturdy footwear that supports people in their daily activities. The cook, designer, and mason also carry out their work with dedication and creativity, showing that every vocation has its own rhythm and beauty.

The central idea of the poem is expressed in the line, "The voice of their vocation is the voice of their identity." The poet suggests that a person's work reflects their character, skill, and individuality. Every honest profession deserves equal respect because each contributes to the progress, culture, and well-being of the nation. By repeating the refrain, "I hear Bharat celebrating," the poet creates a joyful atmosphere and conveys that India's true strength lies in the diversity of its people and their occupations.

LITERARY DEVICES:

1. Metaphor

- **Explanation:** Compares two distinct things directly to transfer qualities from one to the other without using "like" or "as."
- **Quotes:**

- *“The delicious singing of the cook”* (Equates the sensory joy and aroma of cooking to a beautiful song).
- *“The voice of their vocation is the voice of their identity”* (Directly connects a person’s occupation to who they are).

2. Sensory Imagery

- **Explanation:** Uses descriptive language that appeals to the physical senses to help the reader visualise and hear the scenes of work.
- **Quotes:**
 - **Visual:** *“Woven with colours and myriad hues”*
 - **Auditory:** *“I hear Bharat celebrating...”* and electricians *“humming”* as they repair lines.
 - **Kinaesthetic:** *“Gathering nets, sailing, and singing”* (Evokes physical motion).

3. Alliteration

- **Explanation:** Repeats identical consonant sounds at the start of neighbouring words to create rhythm and melody.
- **Quotes:**
 - *“carpenters celebrating”* (Repetition of the /k/ sound).
 - *“varied vocations”* (Repetition of the /v/ sound).
 - *“form the feet”* (Repetition of the /f/ sound).
 - *“sailing and singing”* (Repetition of the /s/ sound).
- **Quote:** *“walk, dance, run, jump, return home”* (The prominent /t/ sound creates crisp, abrupt breaks that mimic footsteps).

4. Refrain / Repetition

- **Explanation:** Repeating a core phrase throughout the poem to emphasize the main theme and unify the structure.
- **Quote:** *“I hear Bharat celebrating...”*
- **Impact:** Reappears across stanzas to remind the reader that the nation's progress relies on everyday workers.

5. Enumeration (Asyndeton)

- **Explanation:** Listing items, actions, or details in rapid succession without using conjunctions like "and."
- **Quote:** *“...for the feet that walk, dance, run, jump, return home.”*
- **Impact:** Demonstrates the wide variety of movements and functions served by the shoemaker's craft.

6. Synesthesia

- **Explanation:** Blending two different physical senses into a single expression.

- **Quote:** “*The delicious singing of the cook*”
- **Impact:** Merges the sense of taste (*delicious*) with the sense of hearing (*singing*).

7. Onomatopoeia

- **Explanation:** Words that imitate the natural sound associated with the action they describe.
- **Quote:** “*Humming*”
- **Impact:** Mimics the actual soft, continuous sound made by working electricians.

8. Anaphora

- **Explanation:** Repeating a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences.
- **Quote:** The repeated structure of listing professions at the start of lines (e.g., “*The shoemaker... / The carpenter... / The cook...*”).
- **Impact:** Creates a steady, rhythmic drumbeat that celebrates each worker equally.

9. Free Verse

- **Explanation:** The poem lacks a formal rhyme scheme or fixed, regular meter.
- **Impact:** Mirroring natural speech patterns allows the poet to comfortably capture the organic, diverse rhythm of daily labour.

Multiple Choice Questions.

Q1. The poem opens with the speaker saying 'I hear Bharat celebrating'. What does 'Bharat' represent in this context?

- A) A specific city in India B) The ancient name for India and its diverse, working people
C) A character in the poem D) A river in South India

✓ Answer: B) The ancient name for India and its diverse, working people

Q2. How are the carpenters described in the poem?

- A) As working carelessly and quickly B) As working with mathematical precision C) As working only at night D) As using modern machines

✓ Answer: B) As working with mathematical precision

Q3. What do the electricians do in the poem that reflects their importance?

- A) They fix ships and boats B) They hum while getting ready for work and light up lives
C) They sing songs to farmers D) They weave colourful fabric

✓ Answer: B) They hum while getting ready for work and light up lives

Q4. The phrase 'delicious singing of the cook' is an example of which literary device?

- A) Simile B) Alliteration C) Synesthesia (a form of metaphor) D) Personification

✓ Answer: C) Synesthesia (a form of metaphor)

Q5. What do the boatmen do after their work on the water?

- A) They sell fish at the market B) They return to the shore and share tales of life at sea
C) They repair their boats in silence D) They teach others to fish

✓ Answer: B) They return to the shore and share tales of life at sea

Q6. What does the shoemaker 'affirm' in the poem?

- A) The price of the shoes B) The quality of their work — footwear for those who walk, dance, run, and jump C) Their loyalty to the nation D) The design of their shop

✓ Answer: B) The quality of their work — footwear for those who walk, dance, run, and jump

Q7. The tone of the poem is best described as:

- A) Melancholic and sorrowful B) Celebratory and reverential C) Critical and argumentative D) Fearful and anxious

✓ Answer: B) Celebratory and reverential

Q8. The central theme of the poem is:

- A) The beauty of nature B) The dignity of labour and honouring every vocation's contribution to Bharat C) The history of ancient India D) The importance of formal education

✓ Answer: B) The dignity of labour and honouring every vocation's contribution to Bharat

Q9. The craftspersons in the poem celebrate their craft through:

- A) Using only machines B) Weaving with colours and myriad hues C) Writing poetry and songs D) Building tall buildings

✓ Answer: B) Weaving with colours and myriad hues

Q10. The artisans in the poem use lutes to:

- A) Earn money by performing B) Hail varied emotions and celebrate their dreams C) Teach music to children D) Entertain tourists

✓ Answer: B) Hail varied emotions and celebrate their dreams

Q11. The poem is written in:

- A) Sonnet form with a strict rhyme scheme B) Free verse with no fixed rhyme scheme C) Ballad form D) Haiku form

✓ Answer: B) Free verse with no fixed rhyme scheme

Q12. In the final stanza, a worker's 'voice of vocation' is equated to their:

- A) Salary B) Identity C) Family D) Tools

✓ Answer: B) Identity

Q13. The poem personifies vocations by:

- A) Showing them as lifeless objects B) Attributing to them the capacity to celebrate and express identity C) Comparing them to animals D) Describing them as evil

✓ Answer: B) Attributing to them the capacity to celebrate and express identity

Reference to Context

1. Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

*"I hear Bharat celebrating
the grace of every vocation."*

a. What does the poet mean by "celebrating the grace of every vocation"?

Answer: The poet means that every honest profession is worthy of respect and appreciation because each contributes to society.

b. What literary device is used in the phrase "I hear Bharat celebrating"?

Answer: Personification, as Bharat (India) is given the human ability to celebrate.

c. What is the central idea conveyed through these lines?

Answer: Every vocation has dignity and deserves equal honour.

2. Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

*"The voice of their vocation
is the voice of their identity."*

a. What does "voice of their identity" mean?

Answer: It means that a person's work reflects who they are, their skills, values, and contribution to society.

b. Which poetic device is used in these lines?

Answer: Metaphor, as vocation is compared to a person's identity.

c. What message does the poet convey through these lines?

Answer: A person's profession gives meaning and purpose to life and deserves respect.

3.Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

*"Craftspersons weave
colourful patterns with graceful hands."*

a. What is being described in these lines?

Answer: The skill and creativity of craftspersons in producing beautiful handmade work.

b. What quality of the craftsperson is highlighted?

Answer: Their creativity, patience, and craftsmanship.

c. Why does the poet admire their work?

Answer: Because they transform simple materials into beautiful creations through dedication and skill.

4.Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

*"Carpenters measure with precision
and shape dreams from wood."*

a. What does the expression "shape dreams from wood" suggest?

Answer: It means carpenters use their skill to create useful and beautiful objects that fulfil people's needs and aspirations.

b. Which literary device is used in this expression?

Answer: Metaphor.

c. Which quality of carpenters is emphasised?

Answer: Accuracy, craftsmanship, and creativity.

5.Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

*"Boatmen return with stories
carried by the waves."*

a. What does this line suggest about the lives of boatmen?

Answer: Their work is adventurous and filled with varied experiences.

b. Which poetic device is used in the phrase "stories carried by the waves"?

Answer: Personification, as waves are imagined to carry stories.

c. What feeling does this image create?

Answer: A sense of adventure, wonder, and connection with nature.

6.Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

*"Electricians brighten lives
with their skilled hands."*

a. What does "brighten lives" mean?

Answer: It means electricians improve people's lives by providing light, safety, and comfort.

b. Is the expression used literally or figuratively? Explain.

Answer: It is used figuratively, as it also refers to improving people's quality of life.

c. What value is highlighted in these lines?

Answer: The importance of skilled labour and service to society.

SECTION B — Short Answer Questions

Q1. Why does the poet use the phrase 'I hear Bharat celebrating'? What effect does this create?

Ans. The poet uses this phrase to make the act of recognition collective and national. By saying 'I hear Bharat', the speaker positions themselves as a voice of the entire nation — listening to, acknowledging, and celebrating its workers. This creates a sense of unity and patriotic pride without being narrow. The phrase elevates ordinary labour to a national celebration, suggesting that every worker's contribution is part of Bharat's larger song of life and progress.

Q2. How does the poem portray the carpenters? What does the phrase 'mathematical precision' convey about their work?

Ans. 'Mathematical precision' conveys that carpentry is not mere manual labour but a disciplined, intellectual skill. The carpenters use exact measurements and careful logic to transform raw wood into anything they or their clients envision. This phrase counters any notion that skilled trades are inferior to intellectual professions. It presents the carpenter as a craftsman who combines mind and hand — someone whose work demands both creativity and accuracy.

Q3. What literary device is used in 'delicious singing of the cook'? Explain how it works.

Ans. This is an example of synesthesia — a literary device (a form of metaphor) where one sense is described in terms of another. Here, 'singing' (a sound/auditory experience) is described as 'delicious' (a word associated with taste/gustatory experience). The device suggests that the cook's joy in their work is so rich and pleasurable that it transcends a single sense. It beautifully captures how vocational passion can overflow into a multi-sensory experience of life.

Q4. What do the boatmen represent in the poem? Why are their stories after work significant?

Ans. The boatmen represent those who labour with nature — on unpredictable waters — and return with not just a catch but with wisdom, experience, and stories. Their tales of life at sea are significant because they show that vocations are not just about productivity; they are experiences that shape a person's identity and worldview. The boatmen are storytellers as much as fishermen, and the poem honours both aspects of their work.

Q5. How does the poem connect individual vocations to the identity of the nation?

Ans. The poem connects individual workers to Bharat's identity by presenting their collective voices as the nation's own. Each vocation — craftsperson, carpenter, boatman, shoemaker, cook — contributes a thread to the tapestry of Bharat. In the final stanza, the 'voice of vocation' is equated to personal identity, and collectively these identities make up the identity of Bharat. The poem argues that a nation is not its rulers or monuments, but its workers and their skilled, daily labour.

Q6. Why does the poem not follow a strict rhyme scheme? How does the free verse form suit the subject matter?

Ans. The poem's free verse form mirrors the diversity and freedom of the vocations it celebrates. Just as no two workers perform their craft in the same way, no two lines in the poem follow the same pattern. Free verse prevents monotony and gives the poem a conversational, inclusive tone — as if the speaker is genuinely observing and reporting rather than imposing a rigid structure. The varying line lengths also reflect the varying nature of each profession's contribution.

Q7. How does the poem promote the value of the 'dignity of labour'?

Ans. The poem promotes dignity of labour by presenting every profession — whether a craftsperson, an electrician, or a shoemaker — with the same tone of reverence and celebration. No worker is ranked above another. Each is described with care and specificity, showing that their skill

is unique and irreplaceable. By using the word 'celebrating' repeatedly, the poet implies that work is not a burden but a source of pride, identity, and joy — which is the essence of the dignity of labour.

Q8. What does the craftsperson's use of 'colours and myriad hues' suggest about their work?

Ans. The phrase suggests that the craftsperson's work is artistic, creative, and vibrant. 'Myriad hues' indicates a rich variety of colours, reflecting the diversity and richness of Indian craft traditions. It also symbolises the breadth of life and culture that crafts represent. The image of weaving with colours is metaphorical too — it stands for the weaving together of traditions, skills, and identities that together form the colourful fabric of Bharat.

Q9. Identify and explain any two examples of auditory imagery in the poem.

Ans. 1. 'The electricians humming': This image uses sound — humming — to characterise the electrician's joyful readiness for work. It makes the character vivid and relatable. 2. 'Artisans with lutes... echoing in the streets': This auditory image of music echoing through streets gives the poem a vibrant, urban soundscape, suggesting that the voices of workers literally and metaphorically fill the nation's streets with life and meaning.

Q10. What does the shoemaker's declaration about the quality of their work tell us about vocational pride?

Ans. By 'affirming' the quality of their work, the shoemaker demonstrates vocational pride — a deep, personal investment in the excellence of what they create. The shoemaker does not merely make shoes; they make footwear for people who walk, dance, run, jump, and return home safely. This detail shows that the shoemaker understands the purpose and impact of their craft on real human lives. Vocational pride, the poem suggests, comes from knowing that your work matters to others.

Q11. How does the poet use repetition in the poem, and what effect does it create?

Ans. The word 'celebrating' is used repeatedly throughout the poem — 'I hear Bharat celebrating', 'carpenters celebrating', 'craftspersons celebrating'. This repetition creates a rhythmic, almost chant-like quality that reinforces the poem's central idea: that work across all vocations is a form of celebration. The repetition also creates solidarity among the workers — each one, regardless of their trade, participates in the same act of joyful, dignified labour.

Q12. Who is the speaker in the poem, and what is their role?

Ans. The speaker is an attentive observer and chronicler — possibly the poet or any aware citizen of Bharat. The speaker's role is not to judge or rank but to listen, observe, and celebrate. They are a witness who gives voice to the collective labour of the nation, ensuring that workers who are often unseen and unheard are recognised and honoured. The speaker embodies the ideal citizen: one who sees and values the contribution of every hand that builds the nation.

Q13. What does the phrase 'each celebrating what belongs to them and to none else' signify?

Ans. This phrase highlights the unique, exclusive identity that each vocation gives to its practitioner. No one else can truly know or own the carpenter's skill, the boatman's stories, or the cook's joy — these belong entirely to the worker. The phrase also promotes the idea that no vocation should be ashamed of what it is; its uniqueness is its dignity. It counters the tendency to compare and rank professions by asserting that each has an irreplaceable value.

Q14. How does the poem reflect India's unity in diversity?

Ans. The poem lists workers from vastly different fields — artisans, musicians, carpenters, electricians, boatmen, shoemakers, cooks, designers, and masons — representing different communities, regions, and skills. Together, they create a mosaic of the Indian workforce. The poet does not privilege any one group; all are presented with equal reverence. This reflects India's unity in diversity: people of different backgrounds and skills, united by their common contribution to the nation of Bharat.

Q15. What message does the poem convey to students about choosing a vocation in life?

Ans. The poem conveys that no vocation is superior or inferior to another — every skilled, honest profession deserves respect and brings dignity to the person who practises it. For students, the message is liberating: your identity is not determined by whether you become a doctor or a carpenter, but by the pride, passion, and precision you bring to your chosen work. The poem encourages

students to find their calling and pursue it joyfully, knowing that every honest vocation is a 'gift of grace' to society.

Long Answer / Analytical Questions

Q1. Critically analyse the poem 'Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations' with reference to its theme, structure, literary devices, and the values it promotes. (150–200 words)

Ans.

'Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations' is a celebratory ode to the working people of Bharat — craftspersons, carpenters, electricians, boatmen, shoemakers, cooks, and more — written in free verse. Its central theme is the dignity of labour: the idea that every honest vocation deserves recognition, respect, and celebration as a contribution to the nation.

Structurally, the poem is built on a recurring pattern — naming a vocation, then describing what makes it unique and admirable. This creates both rhythm and inclusivity. The free verse form mirrors the very diversity it celebrates: just as no two professions are alike, no two lines follow the same pattern.

The poem employs rich literary devices. Synaesthesia is used in 'delicious singing of the cook', blending taste and sound to capture multi-sensory joy. Auditory imagery (humming electricians, echoing lutes) makes the poem vivid and alive. Personification gives each vocation a voice and identity. The repetition of 'celebrating' creates a chant-like solidarity.

The values the poem promotes are profound and relevant: dignity of labour, national pride, equality of professions, and vocational identity. By ending with the declaration that each worker's voice is their identity, the poet affirms that what one does is inseparable from who one is. The poem is, ultimately, both a tribute to workers and a manifesto for a more equitable view of human contribution.

Q2. Discuss the theme of 'identity through vocation' in the poem. How does the poet argue that a person's work defines who they are? Support your answer with references to specific vocations in the poem. (150–200 words)

Ans.

One of the most powerful ideas in 'Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations' is that a person's vocation is not merely what they do — it is who they are. The final stanza, where the 'voice of vocation' is equated to the worker's identity, is the poem's philosophical climax, but this idea is woven throughout.

Consider the carpenter: described as working with 'mathematical precision', the carpenter is not just someone who cuts wood but someone whose entire way of thinking — logical, precise, imaginative — is shaped by their craft. The carpenter's identity is inseparable from the wood they shape.

Similarly, the boatmen are not merely fishermen — they are storytellers and adventurers, shaped by the sea. Their tales of life at sea are part of who they are. The craftsperson's identity is expressed in the 'colours and myriad hues' they weave; to take away their craft would be to take away a part of themselves.

The shoemaker who 'affirms the quality of their work' is expressing pride — a sense of self-worth rooted in what they create. This is identity: the confident ownership of one's contribution to the world.

By presenting identity as vocationally grounded, the poet makes a democratic and empowering argument: you do not need fame, power, or wealth to have a meaningful identity. The skill you practise with passion and precision is enough to make you irreplaceable.

Q3. How does the poem 'Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations' promote national unity? Discuss the role of each vocation in building the nation of Bharat, with reference to the poem's imagery and structure. (150–200 words)

Ans.

The poem presents Bharat not as a geographical entity but as a living chorus of its workers' voices. Every vocation the poet describes — from the craftsperson's weaving to the boatman's sailing — adds a unique strand to the nation's fabric. Together, they create what the poem calls 'Bharat celebrating'.

The structure of the poem itself enacts national unity: each stanza or section introduces a new worker, as if the poem is a parliament of professions. No one worker is more important than another; each receives equal attention and equal reverence. This structural equality mirrors a socially equitable vision of nationhood.

The craftspersons represent India's ancient heritage of art and craft — the 'colours and myriad hues' echo the diversity of Indian textiles, pottery, and visual traditions. The boatmen represent coastal and riverine India. The carpenters and masons represent the hands that build India's homes and infrastructure. The electricians represent the modern, technological Bharat that lights up homes and lives. The cooks represent India's culinary diversity and the nourishment that sustains communities.

Together, these workers represent a Bharat that is unified not despite its diversity but through it. The poem argues that national pride does not come from monuments or armies, but from the daily, dignified labour of its millions of workers — each singing their own song, all together forming one great celebration.

Q4. Write a detailed note on the literary devices used in 'Gifts of Grace: Honouring Our Vocations'. Explain how each device contributes to the poem's meaning and effect. (150–200 words)

Ans.

The poem employs a rich array of literary devices, each deepening its celebration of vocational life in Bharat.

Synaesthesia: The most striking device appears in 'the delicious singing of the cook', where the sense of taste ('delicious') is applied to sound ('singing'). This cross-sensory image captures the overflowing joy of the cook — their happiness in work is so complete it transcends any single sense. It also metaphorically links the cook's song to the quality of their food.

Auditory Imagery: The poem is alive with sound — electricians humming, artisans playing lutes echoing in the streets, boatmen singing as they sail. This makes the poem feel vibrant and communal, filling the reader's imagination with the sounds of a working nation.

Personification: Vocations are given human voices — they 'celebrate', they 'hail emotions', they 'affirm'. This device elevates professions to conscious, proud participants in national life.

Repetition: 'Celebrating' appears multiple times, creating a unifying refrain that gives the poem its joyful, hymn-like quality.

Free Verse: The absence of a fixed rhyme scheme or metre itself functions as a device — it reflects the organic, unregulated diversity of human vocations.

Alliteration: Subtle alliterative patterns (e.g. 'celebrating their craft') create musicality without imposing rigidity.

Together, these devices transform what could have been a simple list of occupations into a richly layered poem that is both a work of art and a social statement.