



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: VIII	Department: ENGLISH	Date of submission: MAY 2022
Question Bank	Topic: When You Are Old	Note: To be written in the notebook

A1. Answer these Questions.

1. Who is the poet addressing his poem to? Describe the person.

Ans- The poet is addressing his love, Maud Gonne, English heiress and Irish revolutionary. She has soft, deep eyes and some sorrow in her face. She is graceful.

2. How can we say that the person being addressed had many admirers? Did everyone love the person truly?

Ans- We can say that the person being addressed has many admirers because of the line 'how many loved your moments of glad grace' but we can tell that not all of them loved her truly because of the line 'and loved your beauty with love false or true'.

3. Explain the phrase, 'your changing face'.

Ans- The phrase, 'your changing face' refers to the way in which a face alters with age.

4. Comment on the relevance of the title of the poem. Suggest an alternate title.

Ans- The title of the poem, '*When you are old*', is apt and refers to a time in the future when the person addressed can reflect on the days of her youth. Suggestions for an alternate title must sum up the feeling of the poem e.g. 'Love and Loss', 'Eternal Love' etc.

5. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem, *when you are old*?

Ans- The rhyme scheme of the poem is ABBA, CDDC, EFFE.

A2. Answer these questions with reference to the context.

*1. How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And your loved beauty with love false and true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face....*

a. How can we say that the person being addressed was once beautiful?

Ans- We can say that the person being addressed was once beautiful because the poet says that many people loved (which is in the past tense) her grace and her beauty.

b. Who was the 'one man' the poet is talking about?

Ans-The one man the poet is talking about is himself.

WHEN YOU ARE OLD

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

William Butlet Yeats

c. Explain the phrase, ‘the pilgrim soul in you’.

Ans-The phrase ‘the pilgrim soul in you’ refers to the fact that she is an English heiress but has travelled to Ireland to fight for its cause here. Yeats wants to convey to Maud Gonne that he and she are kindred spirits. He loves her for what she is and not for her physical beauty.

2. *And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.*

a. Why would the person being addressed ‘murmur, a little sadly’?

Ans- The person being addressed would ‘murmur, a little sadly’ because her love is no longer with her but is traveling in the mountains.

b. Name the figure of speech used in the above lines. Quote the lines.

Ans- The figure of speech used is personification of Love “how Love fled...And hid his face”.

c. How can we say that the love was lost forever?

Ans- We can say that the love is lost forever because it has run to the mountaintop to be distant from the loved one and was unfathomable hidden between the crowds of stars.

A3. Think and Answer.

1. Think of all the images that came to your mind while reading the poem, *When you are old*. Write a note on the imagery used in the poem.

Examples of **imagery** in the poem include:

‘**full of sleep**’ which conveys a sense of tiredness.

‘**nodding by the fire**’ represents someone sitting on a rocking chair and thinking

‘**slowly read**’ conveys that the person reading the poem should pause and think /reflect on the lines written in the poem

‘**dream**’ conveys a sense of reverie (memories and images that comes to one mind while thinking about the past)

The word ‘and’ has been used several times, in order to keep the rhythm intact.

2. What is the mood of the poem? What emotion did you have while reading the poem?

The **mood of the first and second stanza** is soothing and calming.

In the **third stanza the mood of the poem changes**. Phrases such as ‘Murmur a little sadly, how love fled’ conveys a sense of regret, ‘and hid his face amid a crowd of stars’ shows how life passed by and therefore is used to express a sense of loss.

A4. Write a critical appreciation of the poem, *When you are old*.

Themes:The poet suggests that the one who is proud of his or her youthful beauty shall fade away as years move on. And he or she shall look back in time to ponder how things were. When the youthful sap fades away in the cruel hands of time it might bring loneliness. The poem rather exhibits a dismal approach to ageing which constitutes in loneliness when the glitter of youthful beauty transitions into darkness.

Figurative Analysis: The poem contains a handful of literary devices well suited for a short poem.

