



## INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

<b>Class: IX</b>	<b>QUESTION BANK (2024-2025)</b> <b>TOPIC: OH, I WISH I'D LOOKED</b> <b>AFTER ME TEETH</b>	<b>SUBJECT: ENGLISH</b>
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### About the Poet

**Pam Ayres** (1947- ) is a contemporary writer, a great entertainer who writes and performs comic verse. She started writing poems and verses as a hobby and has appeared in every major TV show in the U.K. She has published six books of poems, and cut seven record albums including a collection of 50 best known poems.

**MESSAGE:** The poem conveys the message that time once lost cannot be regained. Therefore, it is important to make hay while the sun shines. Good food habits and a good sense of dental hygiene needs to be inculcated amongst the children by the adults and timely measures should be taken to preserve one's teeth.

**TITLE:** "Oh, I wish I'd Looked After Me Teeth" conveys the poet's regret at having damaged her teeth due to her negligence. Pam Ayres has deliberately used a clause rather than a phrase to explicitly underline her sense of remorse at her irresponsible approach and culpable carelessness. The interjection 'Oh' brings out a sense of helplessness that the narrator feels when there is no use crying over spilt milk. Thus, the title that sounds so casual has been selected with a great care and it is a well-chosen and an apt title.

**THEME:** The poem is an account of how the poet ruined her teeth due to her negligence and poor eating habits. At a later stage in life when the damage had been done beyond repair, she regretted her carelessness but then it was too late. Through the poem, an effort has been made to convey to the readers not to neglect one's teeth.

### **LITERARY DEVICES:**

**Alliteration:** is "the repetition of usually consonant sounds occurring recurrently at the beginning of a word or of a stressed syllable within a word."

Examples: ● sweet sticky food ('s' sound occurs repeatedly)

- lollies, I licked ('l' sound occurs repeatedly)
- cavities, caps and decay ('c' sound occurs repeatedly)
- molars of mine ('m' sound occurs repeatedly)

**Repetition:** Poets often repeat single words or phrases, lines, and sometimes, even whole stanzas at intervals to create a musical effect; to emphasize a point; to draw the reader's attention or to lend unity to a piece.

Example: ● Oh, I wish I'd looked after me teeth.

The above line which appears as the title of the poem is repeated thrice in the poem. This repetition highlights the poet's regret at having neglected her teeth and it also emphasizes their importance.

**RHYME SCHEME:** The rhyme scheme of the poem is **aabba**.

## **SHORT ANSWERS**

### **Q1. What are the different kinds of sweets that the poet ate which led to the cavities?**

**Ans.** The poet mentions various sweets in the poem that contributed to the cavities, including toffees, sweet sticky food, gobstoppers (large, hard sweets), lollies, liquorice all sorts (candy made with liquorice root), sherbet dabs (tiny sweets), and hard peanut brittle.

### **Q2. Why has the line, “Oh, I wish I’d looked after me teeth’ been repeated in the poem by Pam?**

**Ans.** The repetition of the line “Oh, I wish I’d looked after me teeth” in the poem by Pam Ayres serves as a refrain, emphasizing the central theme and regret of the speaker. The repetition creates a rhythmic pattern and reinforces the poet’s remorse for not taking better care of her teeth.

### **Q3. What were the consequences of the poet’s actions in her childhood according to the poem ‘Oh, I wish I’d looked After Me Teeth’?**

**Ans.** According to the poem “Oh, I Wish I’d Looked After Me Teeth” by Pam Ayres, the consequences of the poet’s actions in her childhood include dental problems and the need for dental treatment. The poet reflects on the various sweets and candies she consumed, her lack of proper tooth care, and the subsequent impact on her dental health.

### **Q4. What perils did the poet spot?**

**Ans.** The poet in “Oh, I Wish I’d Looked After Me Teeth” by Pam Ayres reflects on the perils beneath the surface of neglecting dental care. These perils include cavities, decay, the need for fillings, injections, and dental drillings, all of which contribute to the regret expressed in the poem.

### **Q5. How does the poem successfully ‘awaken the reader to his dental hygiene and care’?**

**Ans.** The poem by Pam Ayres successfully raises awareness about dental hygiene by humorously portraying the consequences of neglect. Through vivid descriptions of sweets, regrets, and dental procedures, it engages the reader, prompting reflection on the importance of proper dental care.

### **Q6. “But up-and-down brushing and ‘pokin and fussin’. What do you understand by the line?**

**Ans.** The line “But up-and-down brushing and ‘pokin and fussin’ from the poem “Oh, I Wish I’d Looked After Me Teeth” by Pam Ayres refers to the poet’s casual and careless approach to dental care in her youth. The repetition of “up-and-down brushing” suggests a simplistic and hasty technique, and “pokin and fussin” conveys a lack of thoroughness and commitment to proper oral hygiene.

### **Q7. What did the poet interpret her mother’s false teeth to signify in the context of her own dental care?**

**Ans.** The poet interpreted her mother’s false teeth as a warning that neglecting dental care could lead to the need for false teeth in the future, similar to her mother’s situation.

## **LONG ANSWERS**

### **Q1. Discuss the role of the mother’s false teeth in the poem and its impact on the poet’s realization about dental care.**

**Ans.** In “Oh, I Wish I’d Looked After Me Teeth” by Pam Ayres, the mother’s false teeth play a significant role in shaping the poet’s realization about dental care. The poet describes her mother’s dentures as being “stuck in a jug in the bedroom.” This vivid image serves as a tangible representation of the consequences of neglecting dental health, as the mother has reached a point where she has lost her natural teeth and relies on dentures.

The presence of the false teeth becomes a poignant and somewhat humorous reminder of the impact of poor dental care over time. It serves as a visual cue for the poet to reflect on her own neglect and the potential future consequences if she doesn’t take better care of her teeth. The mother’s dentures act as a symbol of the irreversible damage that can occur and emphasize the importance of proactive dental

maintenance. This realization contributes to the poem's overall message about the long-term effects of neglecting one's oral health.

**Q2. How does the poet's regretful tone in "Oh, I Wish I'd Looked After Me Teeth" contribute to the overall theme of the poem?**

**Ans.** The regretful tone in "Oh, I Wish I'd Looked After Me Teeth" by Pam Ayres enhances the poem's theme of neglect and the consequences of not taking proper care of oneself. The poet's lamentation about neglecting her teeth reflects a broader societal tendency to overlook the importance of health maintenance. Through humor and regret, Ayres highlights the repercussions of neglecting seemingly mundane aspects of self-care. The tone serves as a cautionary note, urging readers to consider the long-term impact of neglecting their well-being. Overall, the regretful tone reinforces the poem's central message about the importance of proactive self-care and the potential regrets that may accompany neglect.

**Q3. How does the poem address the universal theme of regret and the passage of time in the context of oral hygiene?**

**Ans.** "Oh, I Wish I'd Looked After Me Teeth" addresses the universal theme of regret and the passage of time within the context of oral hygiene. The poem reflects on the poet's regretful realization regarding her neglect of dental care over the years. The mention of sweets, lack of proper care, and the consequences of these choices becomes a metaphor for life's fleeting moments and the irreversible effects of neglect.

The universal theme of regret is woven into the narrative, as the poet humorously laments missed opportunities to preserve her oral health. The passage of time is evident in the progression from indulging in sweets to facing the repercussions, highlighting the inevitability of consequences over the years. This universal narrative resonates with readers, prompting reflection on their own lives and choices. In connecting the theme of regret with oral hygiene, the poem offers a relatable perspective on the broader human experience of time's passage and the consequences of neglect.

**Read the given extracts and answer the questions that follow :**

**Question.1.**

*'Oh I showed them the toothpaste all right,  
I flashed it about late at night,  
But up-and-down brushin'.  
And pokin 'and fussin'.  
Didn't seem worth the time—I could bite.*

- (a) What is 'them' being referred to in the first line ? Why did the poet show them the toothpaste ?
- (b) Explain the phrase 'pokin' and 'fussin'.
- (c) What didn't seem 'worth the time' to the poet ?

**Answers :**

- (a) The word 'them' refers to teeth. The poet did not brush the teeth properly. She only showed them the toothpaste.
- (b) The phrase pokin' and fussin' mean checking carefully.
- (c) To the poet, brushing the teeth carefully is not worth the time.

**Question.2.**

*When I think of the lollies I licked And the liquorice all sorts I picked,  
Sherbet dabs, bit and little,  
And that hard peanut brittle,  
My conscience gets horribly pricked.*

- (a) How does the poet feel when she thinks of all the sweets she has taken ?
- (b) What do you think of her as a child ?
- (c) What are 'liquorice' and 'sherbet dabs' ?

**Answers:**

- (a) The poet feels guilty when she thinks of all the sweets she has taken.
- (b) She was very fond of sweets and careless about her teeth.
- (c) 'Liquorice' is a kind of candy. 'Sherbet dabs' are tiny sweets.

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