



Chapter 1 - A Requiem - William Shakespeare

SOLUTIONS

Textual Comprehension Questions.

Q1. Death spells freedom from all mortal fears. What are the specific fears referred to by Shakespeare in the poem?

Ans: We, human beings, while alive on the earth, are bound by many mortal fears. The specific fears with reference to this poem include the heat of the sun, harsh coldness of the winter wind, the tyranny of the cruel master, the frown or anger of the powerful, the problems of fooding and clothing, the fear of lightning and thunder and of criticism and scandals of all kinds. But, when once death conquers, it spells freedom from all mortal fears.

Q2. Death is the ultimate leveller of all differences in human society .Discuss how the poem presents this idea.

Ans: Death is the ultimate leveller .It levels everyone on this earth to the same level whether he be rich or poor, king or servant, strong or weak. The handsome men beautiful girls as well as the poor chimney sweepers, all come to dust at the time of death. The king, learned man, a physician and all sorts of people in different ways of life including the young lovers of today shall come to dust when death comes. No one can escape from death.

Q3. Discuss the central idea conveyed by the poem.

Ans: In this poem “A Requiem” Shakespeare talks about death and is attempting to find consolation after death. After life, the poet suggests that we must face death calmly and confidently because in death one finds freedom from all ills and evils of the society. It is the final release from all miseries, sorrows and sufferings of human existence and its ultimate return to the abode of God and the Eternity. The dead soul leaves the world to the Eternal home with success and failures after finishing his due share while alive on earth.

The poet also conveys the idea that death levels everyone to the same and equal level whether he be rich or poor, big or small, strong or weak. All will be same at the altar of death.



Q4. Do you think the title of the poem is apt? Why?

Ans: The title of the poem is appropriate to the meaning of the poem. The poet has expressed his feelings for the rest of the soul of the dead. He says that a death person becomes free from all kinds of fear that exist in the society. Dead is the great leveller of all differences in human existence in the society. The mortality of the physical body and the immortality of the soul are what the poem emphasises. This poem is a kind of memorial service for the peaceful rest of the departed soul.

Q5. Explain: a) 'Fear no more the frown.....is as the oak'

(b) 'Fear not slanders.....and come to dust.'

Ans: a) It is the second stanza of the poem "The Requiem" by William Shakespeare. This poem is about the soothing consolation for the peaceful rest of the departed soul. The poet reminds the dead man or his soul that he has nothing more to fear in this mortal world. A dead person needs no longer to be afraid of the frown and cruelty of the powerful masters. There will be no problems of fooding and clothing after death. Death is very impartial. Dead soul no longer concerns his need whether it be big like oak or small like reed as he is now resting in his eternal home.

Ans: b) It is the last stanza of the poem "The Requiem" by William Shakespeare. This poem is a sort of memorial prayer for the rest of the departed soul. After death, a person no longer feels any of the differences that exist in the society. He no longer needs to be afraid of lightning nor the thunder storm. He is free from public criticisms and scandals of all kinds. Joy and sorrow which are experienced by every living soul will not feel anything after death. Death is inevitable in the life of everybody. It should not be the cause of sorrow because all persons whether they are young lovers or old ones are bound to come ultimately to the altar of death. No mortal can delay when death hour comes.

Textual Composition Questions.

Q1. Why does the poet say, 'Fear no more'?

Ans: The poet says so because after dead we need not fear either the excessive heat of the summer sun or the harsh winter cold; we have done our duties and we are now in the heavenly home happily insensible to all the cares and anxieties of the mortal world. Everyone must die from the highest born and the fittest to the lowest.



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Q2. What picture of the world does the poet depict in the poem?

Ans: The poem depicts about death. It says that death can come at any age and all the troubles and worries happening while alive will not matter when we are dead. It is written for the consolation of death. The poet wants to say that a dead person becomes free from all kinds of worldly anxieties. Death levels everyone to the same level.

Q3. Although the poet advised us not to fear, what is your feeling?

Ans: Actually this poem "A Requiem" is all about the soothing consolation of the departed souls, addressing not to worry about any worldly anxieties and problems that exist in the world as they are in His Heavenly abode. However, we, all living person in this mortal world, are not yet free from the fear of all kinds and endless cares. The feeling of fearfulness however hard we try to forget, does not work on us. Hence, the poet's advice not to fear is unacceptable to us as poor mortals.

EXTRA QUESTION

Explain with reference to the context.

Q1. Fear no more the heat O' the sun

Nor the furious winter's rages

Thou thy worldly task hast done,

Home art gone and ta'en thy wages

Ans: The above stanza is taken out from the poem "A Requiem" written by William Shakespeare. It is the first stanza of the poem. The poem expresses that a dead person becomes free from all kinds of fears in our mortal existence.

Here, in this stanza the poet gives a soothing consolation to the departed soul that he has nothing to fear in this mortal world after death. He should not be fearful now as he cannot feel the heat of the sun or the furious rages of the winter. After death a person goes to Eternal home with his rewards and punishments assigned to him by God after finishing his due share while alive on earth just like a labourer works and goes home after taking his wages.



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