

SELECTIONS FROM ENGLISH VERSE

Class XI

(Elective Course)



ਇਹ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਮੁਫਤ
ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਣੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਕਰੀ ਲਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।



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ਇਹ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਵਿਕਰੀ ਲਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।

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Foreword

The 10+2 pattern of education aims at revitalising education by giving it a new direction, by making it socially and individually relevant and by relating it to national aspirations. Two syllabi in English, one General, the other Elective, have been developed for the Senior Secondary Classes i.e., XI and XII. The General Syllabus aims at developing in the learner higher-order language abilities whereas the thrust of the Elective syllabus is on developing in the learner sensitivity to the imaginative and creative uses of language.

The present book '*Selections from English Verse*', is primarily designed for developing in the students a taste for poetry. The poems in this selection have been chosen in the hope that they will interest young Indian school students. Adequate notes and exercises are intended to help him/her comprehend the poems. Teachers, too, will find them helpful.

Suggestion for further improvement in book, however, will be welcome.

Chairman

Punjab School Education Board

‘ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਨਿਆ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਘੱਟ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ’, ਪੰਜਾਬ

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Compiler's Note

The poems in this selection have been chosen in the hope that they will interest young Indian school students, taking their early steps in the English language. All of them are good poems in themselves and should provide material to the young students to memorise whole poems or memorable lines from some of them. Unless poetry is memorised and recited with gusto its appeal to the young is very limited. The teachers, therefore, who will use the book in the classroom are earnestly requested to enthuse the students about the sounds and rhythms of poetry, rather than merely load them with annotations and translations into their mother-tongue.

Poetry must be taught as poetry—which is the language in its most exciting form. The teacher himself must feel enthusiastic about the poem and then communicate his enthusiasm to his students by the mere reading of the poems in the class. If this can be done well, annotations and word-meanings are secondary.

Poetry can only appeal to the young if it gives them joy and these poems, it is hoped, will encourage young readers to read and enjoy poetry. But it is the teacher alone who can create interest in poetry in the growing minds.

3 My Native Land

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who ne'er himself hath said,
'This is my own, my native land !'
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned.

As home his footsteps he hath turned 5
From wand'ring on a foreign strand ?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well ;
For him no minstrel's raptures swell ;

High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim : 10
Despite those titles, power and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,

Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung. 15

Sir Walter Scott

4 The Snake

A narrow fellow in the grass
Occasionally rides ;
You may have met him—did you not ?
His notice sudden is.

The grass divides as with a comb, 5
A spotted shaft is seen ;
And then it closes at your feet
And opens further on.

He likes a boggy acre,
 A floor too cool for corn. 10
 Yet when a child, and barefoot,
 I more than once, at morn;
 Have passed, I thought, a whip-lash
 Unbraiding in the sun--
 When, stopping to secure it, 15
 It wrinkled, and was gone.
 Several of nature's people
 I know, and they know me ;
 I feel for them a transport
 Of cordiality ; 20
 But never met this fellow
 Attended or alone
 Without a tighter breathing,
 And zero at the bone.

Emily Dickinson

5 About Ben Adhem

About Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase !)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
 And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel writing in a book of gold:—
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold ; 5

And to the Presence in the room he said,
 “What writest thou ?” —The vision raised its head,
 And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
 Answered, “The names of those who love the Lord.” 10

“And is mine one ?” said Abou. “Nay, not so,”
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
 But cheerly still, and said, “I pray thee, then,
 Write me as one that loves his fellow-men”.
 The angel wrote and vanished. The next night 15

It came again with a great wakening light,
 And showed the names whom love of God had blest,
 And lo ! Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt

6 The Patriot

I

It was roses, roses, all the way,
 With myrtle mixed in my path like mad :
 The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
 The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
 A year ago on this very day. 5

II.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
 The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
 Had I said, “Good folk, mere noise repels,—
 ‘But give me your sun from yonder skies !’
 They had answered, “And afterward, what else ?” 10

III

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
 To give it my loving friends to keep !
 Nought man could do, have I left undone :
 And you see my harvest, what I reap
 This very day, now a year is run. 15

IV

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set ;
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles's Gate—or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow. 20

V

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind ;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds. 25

VI

Thus I entered, and thus I go !
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
“Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
‘Me ?’—God might question ; now instead
‘Tis God shall repay : I am safer so. 30

Robert Browning

7 The Brook

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down, 5
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow To join the brimming river, For men may come and men may go, But I go on forever.	10
I chatter over stony ways, In little sharps and trebles, I bubble into eddying bays, I babble on the pebbles.	15
With many a curve my banks I fret by many a field and fallow, And many a fairy foreland set With willow-weed and mallow.	20
I chatter, chatter, as I flow To join the brimming river, For men may come and men may go, But I go on forever.	
I wind about, and in and out. with here a blossom sailing. And here and there a lusty trout, And here and there a grayling,	25
And here and there a foamy flake Upon me, as I travel With many a silver water-break Above the golden gravel,	30
And draw them all along, and flow To join the brimming river, For men may come and men may go, But I go on forever.	35

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers ;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers. 40

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows ;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars 45
In brambly wildernesses,
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses,

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river, 50
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

8 Casabianca

The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled ;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck,
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood, 5
As born to rule the storm ;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud though childlike form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go,
Without his father's word; 10
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud :—"Say, father say,
If yet my task be done ?"
He knew not that the chieftain lay 15
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father !" once again he cried,
"If I may yet be gone
And"—but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on. 20

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair,
And looked from that lone post of death,
In still, yet brave despair.

And shouted but once more aloud, 25
"My father, must I stay ?"
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way :

They wrapt the ship in splendour wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child,
Like banners in the sky. 30

There came a burst of thunder sound,
The boy oh ! where was he?
Ask of the winds, that far around
With fragments strewed the sea, ! 35

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part –
But the noblest thing that perished there,
Was that young faithful heart. 40

Mrs Hemans

9 Robin Hood and Alan-a-Dale

I

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
 All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw,
 That lived in Nottinghamshire. 4

II

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
 All under the green-wood tree,
He was aware of a brave young man,
 As fine as fine might be. 8

III

The youngster was clothed in scarlet red,
 In scarlet fine and gay,
And he did frisk it over the plain,
 And chanted a rounde-lay. 12

IV

As Robin Hood next morning stood,
 Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man
 Come drooping along the way. 16

V

The scarlet he wore the day before,
 It was clean cast away ;
And at every step he fetched a sigh,
 “Alack and well-a-day !” 20

VI

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Nick the miler's son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he saw them come.

VII

“Stand off, stand off,” the young man said,
“What is your will with me ?”
“You must come before our master straight,
Under you green-wood tree”. 28

VIII

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin asked him courteously,
“Oh, hast thou any money to spare,
For my merry men and me ?” 32

IX

“I have no money,” the young man said,
“But five shillings and a ring ;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.” 36

X

“Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she is now from me tane,
And chosen to be an old knight's delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.” 40

XI

“What is thy name?” Then said Robin Hood,
 “Come tell me, without any fail.”:
“By the faith of my body,” then said the young man,
 “My name is Alan-a-Dale.” 44

XII

“What wilt thou give me”, said Robin Hood,
 “In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true-love again,
 And deliver her unto thee ?” 48

XIII

“I have no money,” then quoth the young man,
 “No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
 Thy true servant for to be.” 52

XIV

How many miles is it to thy true - love ?
 Come tell me without any guile.”:
“By the faith of my body,” then said the young man,
 “‘It is but five little mile.” 56

XV

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
 He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church
 Where Alan should keep his wedding. 60

XVI

“What dost thou do there ?” the Bishop he said,
 “‘I prithee now tell to me”:
“I am a bold harper,” quoth Robin Hood,
 ‘And the best in the north countrie’. 64

XVII

“O, Welcome, O, Welcome !” the Bishop he said,
 “That music best pleaseth me.”:
“You shall have no music,” quoth Robin Hood,
 ‘Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.’ 68

XVIII

With that came in a wealthy knight,
 Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass,
 Did shine like glittering gold. 72

XIX

“This is no fit match,” quoth bold Robin Hood,
 “That you do seem to make here ;
For since we are come unto the church,
 The bride she shall choose here own dear.’ 76

XX

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
 And blew blasts two or three ;
When four and twenty bowmen bold
 Came leaping over the lee. 80

XXI

And when they came into the churchyard,
 Marching all on a row,
The first man was Alan-a-Dale,
 To give bold Robin his bow. 84

XXII

“This is thy true-love,” Robin he said,
 “Young Alan, as I hear say ;
And you shall be married at this same time,
 Before we depart away”. 88

XXIII

‘That shall not be,’ the Bishop he said,
 ‘For thy word it shall not stand ;
They shall be three times asked in the church,
 As the law is of our land’.

92

XXIV

Robin Hood pull’d off the Bishop’s coat,
 And put it upon Little John ;
“By the faith of my body,” then Robin said,
 ‘This cloth doth make thee a man.’

96

XXV

When Little John went into the quire,
 The people began for to laugh ;
He asked them seven times in the church,
 Lest three times should not be enough.

100

XXVI

“Who gives me this maid ?” then said Little John ;
 Quoth Robin, “That do I !”
“And he that doth take her from Alan-a-Dale
 Full dearly he shall her buy”.

104

XXVII

And thus having ended this merry wedding,
 The bride looked like a queen,
And so they returned to the merry green-wood,
 Amongst the leaves so green.

108



10 Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog

Good people all, of every sort, Give ear unto my song ; And if you find it wondrous short, It cannot hold you long.	4
In Islington there was a man, Of whom the world might say That still a godly race he ran, Whene'er he went to pray.	8
A kind and gentle heart he had, To comfort friends and foes ; The naked every day he clad When he put on his clothes.	12
And in that town a dog was found, As many dogs there be, Both mongrel, puppy, whelp and hound. And curs of low degree.	16
This dog and man at first were friends ; But when a pique began, The dog, to gain some private ends, Went mad and bit the man.	20
Around from all the neighbours streets The wondering neighbours ran, And swore the dog, had lost his wits, To bite so good a man.	24
The wound it seem'd both sore and sad To every Christian eye ; And while they swore the dog was mad, They swore the man would die.	28

But soon a wonder came to light,
That show'd the rogues they lied ;
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

32

Oliver Goldsmith

11 We Are Seven

A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?

4

I met little cottage Girl :
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

8

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad :
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
—Her beauty made me glad.

12

“Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be ?”
“How many ? Seven in all”, she said,
And wondering looked at me.

16

“And where are they ? I pray you tell.”
She answered, “Seven are we ;
“And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.”

20

- “Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother ;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.” 24
- “You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven ! I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be.” 28
- Then did the little Maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree.” 32
- “You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five.” 36
- “Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little Maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
And they are side by side.” 40
- “My stockings there I often knit,
my kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.” 44
- “And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.” 48

“The first that died was sister Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.” 52

“So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.” 56

“And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.” 60

“How many are you, then,” said I,
“If they two are in heaven ?”
Quick was, the little Maid’s reply,
“O Master ! we are seven.” 64

“But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in heaven !”
“Twas throwing words away ; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, ‘Nay, we are seven.!’” 69

William Wordsworth

“Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother”, she said, “if this be true, 30
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due”.

“Nay, now, my child”, said Alice the nurse,
“But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald’s,
When you are man and wife”.

“If I’m a beggar born”, she said,
I will speak out, for I dare not lie,
Pull off, pull off the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by”. 40

“Nay now, my child”, said Alice the nurse.
“But keep the secret all you can”.
She said, “Not so ; but I will know
If there be any faith in man”.

“Nay now, what faith ?” said Alice the nurse
“The man will cleave unto his right”.
“And he shall have it”, the lady replied,
“Tho I should die - to - night”

“Yet give one kiss to your mother, dear !
Alas, my child ! I sinn’d for thee”. 50
“O mother, mother, mother,” she said,
“So strange it seems to me!”

“Yet here’s a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go.”

She clad herself in a russet gown,
 She was no longer Lady Clare :
She went by dale, and she went by down,
 With a single rose in her hair. 60

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
 Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropped her head in the maiden's hand,
 And follow'd her all the way.

Down stepped Lord Ronald from his tower :
 "O Lady Clare, you shame your worth !
Why come you dressed like a village maid,
 That are the flower of the earth ?"

"If I come dressed like a village maid,
 I am but as my fortunes are : 70
I am a beggar born," she said,
 "And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
 "For I am yours in word and in deed ;
Play me no tricks", said Lord Ronald,
 "Your riddle is hard to read."

Oh, and proudly stood she up !
 Her heart within her did not fail :
She looked into Lord Ronald's eyes,
 And told him all her nurse's tale, 80

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn :
 He turned and kissed her where she stood ;
"If you are not the heiress born,
 And I," said he, "the next in blood—

“If you are not the heiress born,
And I,” said he, “the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare.”

88

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

13 The Charge of the light Brigade

I

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
“Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !” he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II

“Forward, the Light Brigade !”
Was there a man dismayed ?
Not though the soldier knew
Someone had blundered :
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

10

III

Cannon to right of them, 20
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
Volleyed and thundered ;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there, 30
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them. 40
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered.
Stormed at with shot and shell,

While horse and hero fell.
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

50

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

NOTES

1 The way of Poetry

William Blake (1757-1827) was a famous English poet and artist. He wrote poetry from his boyhood and some of his good poems were written when he was 12 years old. He earned his living by selling prints and by engraving. His most famous collections of poems are “songs of innocence” and “songs of experience.”

The poet tells us in this poem that poetry came to him from heaven. The child in the poem stands for divine inspiration.

Lines

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|---|--|
| 1. | <i>piping</i> | : | playing upon the pipe or flute |
| 2. | <i>glee</i> | : | merriment—happy songs |
| 5. | <i>Lamb</i> | : | Lamb stands for all that is innocent and helpless in the world. It also stands for—Christ. The innocent always suffer in the word. |
| 6. | <i>Cheer</i> | : | happy spirit |
| 15. | <i>vanished</i> | : | disappeared |
| 17. | <i>rural</i> | : | Simple such as the villagers use |
| 18. | <i>stained</i> | : | coloured |

QUESTIONS

1. What was the poet doing when he met the child ?
2. What did the child ask the poet to do ?
3. What did the child do when he heard the poet's song ?
4. What did the poet do after the child had asked the poet to write down the songs ?
5. The word 'pipe' has been used in different forms in the poem.
To what part of speech does each form belong ?
6. Change into Indirect Form of Narration :
“Pipe a song about a Lamb !”
So I piped with merry cheer.
“Piper, pipe that song again”
So I piped : he wept to hear.

2. Going Downhill on a Bicycle

H.C. Beeching (1859-1919) was better-known as a scholar and critic. He wrote some occasional poetry.

Lines

2. *poised* : balanced
3. *heedful* : attentive, careful
4. The air goes by in a wind, As the bicycle moves down the slope of the hill, it gathers speed and the air seems to rush by him.
6. *with a mighty lift* : full of a sense of great joy
12. *feathery* : as if given wings
13. *aught* : anything
14. *bliss* : happiness, joy
15. *skating* : sliding on an icy surface with iron slip on shoes or skates.
- bound* : tied down
16. *steel shod* : wearing steel shoes with wheels under them
17. *slackens* : grows less
- 17-18 The boy has not to paddle because the cycle continues to move by its own momentum or speed. The cycle then moving has been compared to a boat moving on the surface of water.
19. *scarce* : hardly
- 23-24 These lines contain the message of the poem. One has to work very hard to achieve anything. Hard work is always rewarded. The boy climbed the hill with his bicycle with great effort ; his reward was also great when he flew down on his bicycle like a bird.

QUESTIONS

1. What does the boy feel while riding downhill on a bicycle ?
2. What does he say to the bird ?
3. Why is riding a bicycle downhill better than skating ?
4. What lesson does this poem teach us ?
5. Pick-out adjectives from stanzas 1, 2, 3.

6. Change into the Indirect Form of Narration :
 “Is this, is this your joy ?
 O bird, then I, though a boy,
 For a golden moment share
 Your feathery life in air !”



3 Native Land

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) was a Scottish novelist and poet. Though he is famous for his historical novels, yet his poems are full of the spirit of heroism and nobility. He considered patriotism a great virtue. In this poem, he states that a man who has no love for his country would not be honoured and remembered.

Lines

1. *breathes* : lives
 with soul so dead : a man who does not love his country is without noble feelings. This amounts to the death of the spirit.
3. *native land* : the country of one's birth
3. *burned* : felt excited with the love of his country
6. *strand* : country, land
7. *mark him well* : observe him carefully
8. *minstrel* : singer, poet
raptures swell : songs of praise and admiration come out (of the heart of the poet) in an inspired manner. The line means that no poet will feel inspired to sing joyfully the praises of such a man.
9. *proud his name* : belonging to an old and noble family
10. *boundless* : limitless, immense, very great
11. *despite* : in spite of
pepf : wealth, riches
12. *the wretch* : miserable creature
concentered all : having thoughts of nothing but himself
in self

13. *forfeit* : lose
renown : fame
14. doubly-dying : Such a man dies a double death : when he is alive, he is dead to the world because no one honours him. The second death is physical death.
15. *vile* : low, worthless
sprung : was born
16. *unwept* : with nobody weeping in sorrow over his death.
unhonoured : with nobody honouring him.
unsung : with nobody singing his praises.

QUESTIONS

1. How should a man feel when returning to his own country after a long stay abroad ?
2. What will be the fate of the man who does not love his own country ?
3. How does a man lose his good name ?
4. Write a paragraph on Patriotism.
5. Make nouns from the following :-
 breathe, human, proud, new, live.

4 The Snake

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was an American poetess. She lived a lonely life, did not marry and was devoted to writing poetry. Her poems were published after her death. This poem describes the behaviour of the snake, which is considered the enemy of man. There is something strangely attractive and yet frightening about this creeping creature.

Lines

1. *narrow fellow* : thin creature
2. *rides* : moves about
4. *His notice sudden is* : the snake appears all of a sudden.
6. *spotted shaft* : a stick with spots on it
7. *closes* : disappears, vanishes

8. *opens* : reappears
 9. *boggy acre* : marshy land
 13. *whip lash* : the leather thong of the whip
 14. *unbraiding* : untwisting
 15. *secure it* : catch it
 16. *wrinkled* : curved up
 17. *nature's people* : creatures or animals
 19. *transport* : strong feeling
 20. *cordiality* : friendship, warmth
 23. *tighter breathing* : feeling of fear (fear makes one's breath go fast.)
 24. *Zero* : the temperature of ice ; a feeling of cold fear

QUESTIONS

1. Where did the poet see a snake ?
2. How does a snake move through the grass ?
3. How does the snake appear to the poet ?
4. How does the poet feel about the snake ?
5. Use the following words both as noun and verbs :
 ride, meet, notice, like, pass, wrinkle.



5 Abou Ben Adhem

James Henry Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) was a famous English poet journalist and critic. He was a close friend of all the great poets of his age—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats. He usually wrote stories in verse and some lyrics. The poet says that to love and serve one's fellowmen is a nobler act than to worship God.

Lines

1. *Abou Ben Adhem* : This is the Arab or Jewish manner of naming people—it means Abou, son of Adhem.
may his tribe increase : a brief blessing after naming a person—meaning : May there be many such people.

- 3-4 The light of the moon which was streaming into his room from a window, looked like a fully-opened lily flower.
4. *rich* : Here it is used to mean extremely beautiful.
in bloom : fully-opened
6. *exceeding* : very great
7. *Presence* : the angel
8. *vision* : the angel
9. *accord* : peace, harmony
10. *Lord* : God
16. *wakening light* : bright light that woke him up
- 17-18 Those whom God loves are extremely fortunate and God showers on them His blessings.
18. *Led* : was on top

QUESTIONS

1. What did Abou see when he awoke one night ?
2. Whose names was the angel writing in his book ?
3. Why did Abou “speak low” on learning the angel’s reply ?
4. What did the angel tell Abou on his second visit ?
5. What do we learn from this poem ?
6. Change the following into the Indirect Form of Narration :
 But cheerly still, and said, “I pray thee, then
 Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.”
7. Pick out words in the poem that express the idea of peace and goodness, and use them in sentences.



6 The Patriot

Robert Browning (1812-1889) was a famous English poet. The message of his poetry is that life is worth living and that love makes life a particularly noble and joyful experience.

The Patriot comes home after winning for his country and he is given a hero’s welcome. But these very people later become his enemies, and now are going to put him

to death owing to some differences. But the Patriot is sure that he has been wrongly judged and that God alone will do justice to him.

Lines

1. *roses, roses all the way* : decoration was made on the road as a sign of welcome to him
 2. *myrtle like mad* : a sweet-smelling white flower
: wildly, in great abundance
 3. *heave and sway* : move up and down and sideways
(The house-roofs were crowded with people and when they moved, it appeared as if the roof-tops moved.)
 4. *spires flamed* : the pointed towers of churches
: were red with red flags and they looked as if they were on fire
 6. *the air broke into a* : sounds produce vibrations, and with vibrations, the air seems to tremble and things appear shaky and dim as they do in a mist.
 7. *rocked* : shook, swayed
(Walls of old houses seemed to shake when the crowd pressed against them and shouted. The poet wishes to tell the reader that a very large number of people had come to see the Patriot).
 8. *repels* : does not please
 9. *yonder* : over there, in the distance (one points towards the object when saying this)
- 8-10 If I had asked the people that I did not like mere shouting but wanted a solid proof of their love for me, they would have done the impossible to please me. And then they would have asked me if they could do something more also.
11. *alack !* : alas ! an exclamation of sorrow
leaped at the sun : tried to do the impossible
 13. *naught* : nothing
 14. *harvest* : fruit, reward
 17. *palsied* : paralysed (with extreme old age)
 18. *allow* : admit, declare
 19. *shambles* : place of killing, slaughter-house

20. *scaffold* : the place where criminals are executed
throw : believe
21. *more than needs* : which is quite unnecessary
25. *misdeeds* : wrong actions (said ironically here)
27. *in triumphs* : at the moment of their greatest victories people have died. This is really a glorious way to die.
- 28-30 If a man dies at the height of his glory, he has been rewarded by the people and he cannot ask God for further reward. This is not the case with the Patriot. He has not been rewarded by the people ; so he can ask God to judge him and deal him accordingly.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the welcome accorded to the Patriot when he first entered the city.
2. What would the people have done for him and why ?
3. Why did the attitude of the people change towards the patriot.
4. Describe the last journey of the Patriot.
5. Bring out the idea in the last stanza. Why does this idea give him courage to face his end ?
6. Use the following in sentences :
break into, leap at the sun, leave undone, drop down, in-stead of.
7. Change the following into the Indirect Form of Narration :
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels,
But give me your sun from yonder skies".
They had answered, "And after-ward, what else ?"
8. Use the following words as nouns and verb :
flame, flag, rock, crowd, cry, need, sight.

7 The Brook

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) was a well known English poet. He was the son of a churchman and was educated at the Cambridge University. He was made the poet laureate of England in 1850. His poetry gave comfort and courage to his readers in the Victorian Age, when religion was losing its hold.

The speaker in the poem is the Brook itself. It describes its passage from its source in the mountains till it joins a river. The poet has described the journey of the Brook with the help of a series of pictures. He compares the life of man with that of the Brook, Men are born, grow up and die but the Brook “goes on for ever”.

Lines

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1. <i>haunts</i> | : | places often visited |
| <i>coot</i> | : | a web-footed water bird like a duck |
| <i>hern (old form of</i> | : | a bird with a long neck and long legs |
| <i>heron)</i> | : | that lives along marshes and river banks |
| 2. <i>sally</i> | : | a sudden rushing forward |
| 3. <i>sparkle</i> | : | shine |
| <i>fern</i> | : | long, grass-like plants |
| 4. <i>bicker</i> | : | flow down noisily |
| 6. <i>ridges</i> | : | edges of mountains |
| 7. <i>thorps</i> | : | villages |
| 10. <i>brimming</i> | : | filled with water |
| 14. <i>sharps</i> | : | high tones of voice |
| <i>trebles</i> | : | low tones of voice |
| 15. <i>eddying</i> | : | going round in whirl pools |
| 16. <i>babble</i> | : | move noisily |
| 17. <i>fret</i> | : | to wear away by rubbing against |
| 18. <i>fallow</i> | : | uncultivated land |
| 19. <i>foreland</i> | : | headland, piece of land fronting and embankment |
| <i>fairy foreland</i> | : | small patches of land on which grow willow and other trees and which are beautiful like fairyland |
| 20. <i>willow-weed</i> | : | trees that grow on the banks of streams |
| <i>mallow</i> | : | name of another plant that grows on river bank |
| 27. <i>lusty</i> | : | lively, active |
| 28. <i>grayling</i> | : | a grey-coloured fish |
| 29. <i>foamy flake</i> | : | piece of foam that cover the surface of water |
| 37. <i>steal</i> | : | go noiselessly (The Brook becomes calm when it flows in the plains) |
| 38. <i>hazel covers</i> | : | groves of hazel trees |
| 39. <i>forget-me-not</i> | : | the name of a flower of blue colour. It is considered a sign of faithfulness and friendship. |

41. *gloom* : move slowly under overhanging branches.
glance : move swiftly
42. *skimming* : swallows (name of the bird) that
swallows skip on the surface of water
- 43-44 Where the water is not deep, the rays of the sun seem to be caught in the net, and it appears as if they are dancing on the sand at the bottom of the Brook.
46. *brambly* : places over-grown with
wildernesses thorny bushes.
47. *linger* : loiter, to walk or move slowly, to continue to stay at a place.
shingly bars : places full of fine stone pieces and sand
48. *creesses* : name of a plant that grows in water

QUESTIONS

1. Where does the Brook spring from ?
2. Describe the different stages of the Brook's journey from the mountains to the river.
3. Which of the two word pictures in the poem do you consider the more beautiful ? Describe them in your own words.
4. Compare the life of man with that of the Brook.
5. Use the following words in sentences :
sally, wind about, in and out, here and there, linger by, loiter about.



8. Casabianca

Mrs Felicia Dorothea Hemans (1793-1835) was an English poet. She was fairly well-known poet and writer in her own age. Heroism, nobility and virtue are the themes of her best-known poems.

The boy in the story was the son of a French Naval Captain, Louis de Casabianca, Commander of the ship *Orient*. The ship was blown up by its Commander after a gallant fight with the British Fleet, commanded by Lord Nelson in the Battle of the Nile in 1798.

All the crew left the ship, but the boy refused to leave and perished with his father. The heroism and the sense of duty shown by the boy are indeed rare in the world.

Lines

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. <i>deck</i> | : | the upper platform of a ship |
| 2. <i>whence</i> | : | from where |
| 3. <i>battle's wreck</i> | : | the remains of the ship destroyed in the sea-fight |
| 7. <i>a creature of
heroic blood</i> | : | a child of brave ancestors |
| 9. <i>rolled on</i> | : | continued to spread |
| 10. <i>word</i> | : | permission |
| 16. <i>unconscious</i> | : | unaware |
| 19. <i>booming</i> | : | noise made by guns as they are fired |
| 21. <i>breath</i> | : | shaking |
| 24. <i>despair</i> | : | state of hopelessness |
| 27. <i>shroud</i> | : | canvas sails of the ship |
| 28. <i>wreathing</i> | : | encircling |
| 29. <i>splendour</i> | : | the burning ship presented a grand sight |
| 23—24 | | The boy stood all alone on his post of duty where he was sure to die, but he did not move. He knew that he would die but he did not lose courage. |
| 36. <i>fragments</i> | : | pieces |
| <i>strewed</i> | : | scattered |
| 37. <i>mast</i> | : | the big pole in the centre of the deck |
| <i>helm</i> | : | steering wheel |
| <i>pennon</i> | : | flag |
| 39. <i>perished</i> | : | was destroyed |

QUESTIONS

1. Narrate the story of Casabianca in your own words.
2. Why did Casabianca not leave his post ?
3. What would you have done if you were in the place of Casabianca?
4. Describe the scene of the burning ship in your own words.
5. Describe the boy standing on the deck and the fire raging around him.

6. Use the following in sentences :
roll on, make way, lit, flee, gone, shout aloud, perish, faithful heart.
7. Give the present tense of the following :
fled, lit, shone, heard, wrapped, caught, streamed, strewed, borne, perished.



9. Robin Hood and Alan-a-Dale

Robin Hood is perhaps the most heroic and romantic character of medieval England. He was a bold outlaw who lived in the time of King John. It is believed that he was a nobleman who did not like the tyranny of King John and of his nobles. He collected a band of brave warriors around him and started living in a forest. He robbed the rich to help the poor. He also helped the people in trouble like Alan-a-dale. A large number of stories, both in verse and prose, have come down to us about the heroic deeds of Robin Hood and his brave companions.

This poem in four-line stanzas is a ballad—a poem which tells a story of love or of some heroic deed. Wandering minstrels travelled all over the country singing them and thus earning a living.

Lines

1. *gallants so free* : fine, cheerful fellows
2. *mirth* : a jolly story
11. *frisk* : jump happily about
12. *chanted a
 rounde-lay* : sang a happy song of love
15. *espy* : see
16. *come drooping* : walking alone in a dejected manner
18. *cast away* : taken off
19. *fetched* : heaved, breathed out
21. *Little John* : one of Robin Hood's followers—in fact he was very tall.
26. *What is your
 will with me* : What do you want to do with me ?
40. *slain* : broken ; unhappy
43. *by the faith of
 my body* : I tell the truth.

48. *deliver her* : to get her back to you
unto thee
51. *swear upon a book* : take an oath on the holy Bible
54. *guile* : deceit, falsehood
58. *neither did* : neither stopped nor slowed down ;
stint nor lin moved very fast.
62. *I prithe should* : I pray thee ; I request you.
keep his wedding should be married according to the previous arrangement
69. *knight* : warrior, nobleman
71. *finikin* : fine-looking, dainty, delicate
to make match to bring together by marriage ceremony
79. *bowmen* : archers : Robin and his men were famous for their skill with the bow and arrow.
97. *quire* : pulpit—the place where church officials stand
104. *full dearly he* : He will have to pay a heavy price
shall her buy : to get her.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the appearance of Alan when Robin Hood first saw him. Why did he look unhappy ?
2. What was Alan's mood when Robin Hood saw him again ?
3. What was the story narrated by Alan to Robin Hood ?
4. What did Robin Hood do to help Alan ?
5. Describe the scene in the Church when Robin Hood's companions came in, and what happened afterwards.
6. Change into the Indirect Form of Narration : “Stand off, stand off !” the young man said, “What is your will with me ?” “You must come before our master straight, under you greenwood tree.”
7. Use the following in sentences of your own :
outlaw, espy, droop, cast away, step forth, stand off, in ready gold, fit match, law of the land, pull off, pay dearly.



10. Elegy on the Death of a Mad dog

Oliver Goldsmith (1728—1774) was a well-known poet, play-wright and novelist. He was born in Ireland, but later settled in London. His novel “The Vicar of Wake-field” is still popular.

An elegy is a poem of mourning at the death of someone. Elegies are serious and full of sentiments for the dead. But this poem is funny. When an unimportant or slight topic is treated in a serious manner, it becomes laughable. It is funny to hear of a mad dog dying after biting a human being.

Lines

3. *wondrous short* : suprisingly or uncommonly brief
4. *hold you* : hold your attention
7. *godly race he ran* : lived a pure and virtuous life
15. *mongrel* : dog of a mixed breed
- whelp* : a young dog ,a puppy
- hound* : hunting dog
16. *curs of low degree* : ordinary dogs that wander about
18. *pique* : quarrel, enmity
19. *to gain some private ends* : for some secret reasons
23. *lost his wits* : gone mad
25. *sore and sad* : serious and painful
29. *came to light* : happened

QUESTIONS

1. What sort of man is this story about ?
2. Was he really good and charitable ?
3. What happened after the dog had bitten the man ?
4. What is funny about this story ?



11 We are Seven

An innocent child does not understand the meaning of death. To the little girl in the poem, her dead sister and brother are alive even though they are buried in the earth. She visits them, sings to them, sits for hours near their graves.

Lines

3—5 The child lives a happy life. She does not know anything about the dark side of life. Even breathing gives her pleasure. Every part of her body is full of vitality.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 8. <i>clustered</i> | : | hung round in curls |
| 9. <i>rustic</i> | : | lacking refinement or polish ;
simple, artless |
| 10. <i>wildly</i> | : | not clothed fashionably |
| <i>woodland air</i> | : | having something wild about her looks |
| 16. <i>looked at me</i> | : | Perhaps she thought that I was |
| <i>in surprise</i> | | asking her silly questions |
| 21. <i>churtyard</i> | : | the area round a church where the dead are buried |
| 35. <i>laid</i> | : | buried |
| 42. <i>hem</i> | : | stich the border |
| 46. | | where the light is dim and everthing looks lovely |
| 47. <i>porringer</i> | : | a small cup in which children eat their porridge
etc. |
| 51. <i>God released</i> | : | Death came to her and put an end to |
| <i>her of pain</i> | | to her pain |
| 67. <i>throwing</i> | : | It was useless to argue with her |
| <i>words away</i> | | |

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the child the poet met.
2. What was the talk between the poet and the child in the poem?
3. How did the poet try to tell her that her dead brother and sister were no more ?
4. Was the poet able to convince the girl ?
5. Explain why this poem appeals to you.

6. Use the following in sentences of your own :
go to sea, run about, side by side, go away, forced to go throw words away.
7. Change into the Indirect Form of Narration :
“How many are you then” said I,
“If the two are in heaven ?”
Quick was the little maid's reply,
“O Master ! We are seven.”

12. Lady Clare

Alice the nurse had substituted her own child for the old Lord's daughter when the latter died. But everything turns out well as Lord Ronald's love was true and deep. True love overcomes all difficulties and does not attach any importance to position and birth.

Lines

1. *blow* : blossom
3. *doe* : as small female deer
5. *I trow they did* : I believe they parted lovingly.
not part in scorn
- scorn* : dislike, contempt
10. *lands so broad* : large area of fertile and beautiful
and fair land
18. Everything ends happily and justly.
19. *heir* : legal owner
21. *out of mind* : mad, insane
22. *speak so wild* : speak senselessly
39. *brooch* : a gold ornament studded with costly stones
44. *faith* : loyalty
46. *cleave unto his* : attain his right; get what belongs
rights to him.
50. *sinn'd* : did wrong
57. *russet* : coarse homespun cloth of reddish brown colour
used by poor people
66. *shame your worth* : you are dressed in an unbecoming manner.

68. *flower of earth* : the most beautiful woman in the world
 70. *my fortunes are* : my worth is
 81. *laugh of merry* : with a hearty laugh he treated her story
scorn of no importance.

QUESTIONS

1. What did Lady Clare think of Lord Ronald's love for her ?
2. Who was Alice ?
3. What did Alice tell Lady Clare ?
4. What advice did Alice give her daughter ? What was the reply?
5. Why did Lady Clare want to tell the truth to Lord Ronald ?
6. How does the story end ?
7. Use the following in sentences of your own :
 scorn, true worth, come round, be out of one's mind.
 speak wildly, keep one from one's due, keep the
 secret, to be a beggar born, in word and deed.



13. The Charge of the Light Brigade

This poem was inspired by an incident that occurred during the Crimean War (1854-1856) which the English, the Turks and the French fought against the Russians. During the battle of Balaclava, the Russians captured many Turkish guns. The Commander of the Light Brigade, Lord Cardigan, received orders from his Senior Commander to recapture the guns. The order was carried out and the Light Brigade attacked the Russian gun positions with drawn swords. Out of 607 attacking soldiers only 195 came back alive.

Lord Tennyson read the account of this battle in The Times. He was inspired by the spirit of heroism of the English soldiers and wrote this stirring poem.

Lines

1. *league* : a measure of road distance about three miles long
3. *valley of death* : the enemy firing line where death was certain
6. *he* : the commander
10. *Was there a* : Did any one of them show fear or
man dismayed ? feel discouraged ? None.

‘ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਨਿਆ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਘੱਟ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ’, ਪੰਜਾਬ

12. *blundered* : made a serious mistake
- 13—15 The soldiers were sure that they should not question the orders even if they were wrong. Their duty as true soldiers was to obey them, and if need be, die fighting.
21. *volleyed and thundered* : fired cannon-balls at them repeatedly
- stormed at with shot and shell* : bombs and shots were being rained on them by the enemy
24. *jaws of death* : the enemy lines where death was certain
25. *mouth of hell* : the area between the enemy's guns has been compared to the mouth of hell. They were sure to be killed.
27. *sabres bare* : naked, drawn swords
32. *plunged in the battery smoke* : hidden in the dense smoke coming out of the cannon's mouth
34. *Cossack* : a Russian tribe of famous warriors
36. *shattered and sundered* : The line of the enemy broke and the enemy soldiers began to run hither and thither in confusion.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the order given to the Light Brigade ?
2. Why was the order wrong ?
3. What did the soldiers of the Light Brigade do when they received the order ?
4. What happened when the Light Brigade attacked the Russian batteries ?
5. What do we learn from this poem ?
6. Why should we honour the Light Brigade ?
7. Give the present tense of the following verbs :
rode, dismayed, blundered, reasoned, stormed, flashed, broke, fought, wondered.

