

Kanoria PG Mahila Mahavidyalaya
Department of English
BA Hons Part III
Question Bank

Paper XII: Contemporary British Literature

Short Questions:

1. What are the various features of the fox that the poet mentions in the poem *The Thought Fox*?
2. What does the forest symbolise in Ted Hughes' *The Thought Fox*?
3. Discuss in brief the various themes of *The Thought Fox*.
4. Discuss *The Thought Fox* as a modern poem.
5. How does Ted Hughes' childhood makes an appearance in his poetry?
6. What is the hawk contrasted against in the poem *The Hawk in The Rain*?
7. How does the hawk become a symbol in the poem?
8. What is the central theme of the poem *The Hawk in The Rain*?
9. *The Hawk in The Rain* has a chaotic tone. Comment.
10. How does Ted Hughes prove that nature was the only balanced thing left post war through his poem? Discuss in brief.
11. What is the basic observation made by the speaker in the poem *View of A Pig*?
12. What does the pig become a symbol of in the poem *View of A Pig*?
13. What is the most evident theme of the poem *View of A Pig*?
14. What does the poet mean by "too dead to pity" in the poem *View of A Pig*?
15. What is the underlying message that the poet wants to convey in the poem *View of A Pig*?

16. Where does the title of the poem *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing* find its origin?
17. Discuss the structure of Seamus Heaney's *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing* in brief.
18. How does the speaker describe the chaos in the poem *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*?
19. What historical struggle is portrayed in Seamus Heaney's *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*?
20. Seamus Heaney dramatises angst in the poem *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*. Comment.
21. What is the significance of the title of the third part in the poem *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*?
22. What is it that the poet does not want to be revealed in Heaney's poem?
23. Does the poet find an answer to the question "Is there life after death?"
24. What is the basic premise of the poem *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*?
25. What is the central issue of the poem *Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*?
26. Does the form of the poem *Toads* reflect any theme?
27. Why does Larkin use slant rhyme in the poem *Toads*?
28. What is Larkin's frustration all about reflected in the poem *Toads*?
29. Why does the poet use a toad as a symbol in the poem *Toads*?
30. Briefly discuss the comicality of Philip Larkin's *Toads*.
31. Larkin refers to "loblolly-men" in the poem *Toads*. What does it mean?
32. What is the significance of the starting point of the poem *Toads Revisited*?
33. Discuss the tone of the poem *Toads Revisited*.
34. Briefly discuss *Toads Revisited* as a sequel to *Toads*.
35. What is the central theme of *Toads* and *Toads Revisited*?

36. What is the impression of organised religion that the poem *Church Going* gives?
37. Why does the speaker focus so much on the social aspects of the church in the poem *Church Going*?
38. What is the significance of the title of the poem *Church Going*?
39. How does the natural world find a place in the poem *Church Going*?
40. What does 'it' refer to in the line "A serious house on serious Earth it is" in the poem *Church Going*?
41. How would you justify *The Room* as 'Pinteresque'?
42. Why does Rose draw comparisons between the room and the basement in *The Room*?
43. How does the dialog between Rose and Mr. Kidd highlight the absurdity of the play?
44. How does Riley become significant in *The Room*?
45. What does the violent ending of the play *The Room* is supposed to convey?
46. Briefly explain the element of alienation as displayed in *The Room*.
47. What is the significance of Bert's monologue at the end of the play *The Room*?
48. Comment on the symbol of 'blind black man' in reference to *The Room*.
49. What is the significance of the room in Rose's life?
50. Comment on the inevitability of death as described in *The Room*.
51. What is the significance of the title 'Beyond The Gentility Principle' by A. Alvarez?
52. What does Alvarez have to say about Freudian Psychologies in poetry in the Introduction?
53. What is Alvarez's view on the New Age Poetry?

54. What were the various criterias for the inclusion of a writer in the anthology *New Age Poetry*?
55. What is the basic contrast that Alvarez makes of poetry in his anthology?
56. Why does Golding use British schoolboys in *Lord of The Flies*?
57. Give a symbolic illustration of the title *Lord of The Flies*.
58. What is the major theme of *Lord of The Flies*?
59. Interpret “Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!”
60. What does Jack represent in *Lord of The Flies*?
61. What role does the conch play in *Lord of The Flies*?
62. What is the myth that Jack uses to create fear in the mind of boys?
63. What assignment does Ralph give Piggy?
64. What does Simon represent in *Lord of The Flies*?
65. Who or what is *Lord of The Flies*?
66. Give a brief historical background of the novel *Summer Before The Dark*.
67. Discuss in brief the autobiographical undertones in *Summer Before The Dark*.
68. Why does Kate experience a sudden alienation?
69. Discuss the motif of “the cold wind” in the novel *Summer Before The Dark*.
70. Comment on the various sections of the novel *Summer Before The Dark* in reference to the settings of the novel.
71. Discuss the relationship of Kate and Jefferey in *Summer Before The Dark*.
72. Briefly discuss the genre of ‘Inner Space Fiction’ with respect to *Summer Before The Dark*.
73. How does Lessing use food as a trope in *Summer Before The Dark*?
74. Discuss in brief the representation of 1970s and 1980s culture in *Summer Before The Dark*.

75. How do Kate's dreams contribute to her "long interior journey" in *Summer Before The Dark*?

Long Questions:

1. Ted Hughes' poetry is an exploration of modernist, Jungian and ecological viewpoints. Discuss.
2. How does Ted Hughes' poetry incorporate the beauty and savagery of the natural world?
3. Discuss the political context and overtones of Seamus Heaney's "*Whatever You Say, Say Nothing*".
4. Explore the politics of 'telling' in Seamus Heaney's prescribed poem.
5. Write a detailed critical analysis of Philip Larkin's "*Toads*" and "*Toads Revisited*".
6. Attempt a comparative analysis of Larkin's *Toads* and *Toads Revisited*.
7. Larkin has been called "an uncommon poet for the common man". Do you agree? Validate your answer using arguments from the poems you have studied.
8. Discuss the religious elements in Philip Larkin's *Church Going*.
9. Justify Harold Pinter's *The Room* as a Comedy of Menace.
10. Locate the 'naturalistic' and 'absurdist' strands in Harold Pinter's *The Room*.
11. Why does 'the room' become so significant in *The Room*?
12. How does Alvarez's introduction become a response to new age social mobility and cultural anxiety?
13. Attempt a critical summary of Alvarez's *Introduction to New Age Poetry*.

14. Justify *Lord of The Flies* as a political allegory.
15. How does myth play an important role in the power politics of the island in *Lord of The Flies*?
16. How does Golding's *Lord of The Flies* discuss conflict between democracy and communism?
17. Discuss the contrast between savagery and civilisation as depicted in *Lord of the Flies*.
18. How does Golding use color to link characters or provide symbolism in *Lord of The Flies*?
19. Describe some of the ways the vision of humans are described as "at once heroic and sick" in the *Lord of The Flies*.
20. How does Doris Lessing's *Summer Before The Dark* become a feminist novel? Discuss.
21. How does *Summer Before The Dark* become a commentary on the experience of ageing?
22. How is the dichotomy of public and personal discussed in *Summer Before The Dark*?
23. *Summer Before The Dark* is an example of 'Inner Space Fiction'. Discuss.
24. What is the significance of Kate's dreams in the novel *Summer Before The Dark*?
25. How does *Summer Before The Dark* raise Lessing's concern for the political directions of the rising generation?