



CLASS - VII ENGLISH NOTES DECEMBER

O Captain! My Captain!

I. Answer these questions in 30-40 words.

1. What is the mood of the poet at the beginning of the poem?

The mood of the poet at the beginning of the poem is celebratory as the ship comes to the port after a successful trip.

2. What do the 'bleeding drops of red' signify?

The 'bleeding drops of red' refers to the drops of blood fallen off the captain's body, as he lies dead on the deck of the ship.

3. Why does the poet plead with the captain 'rise up'?

The poet pleads with the captain to 'rise up' because he wants the captain to lead the ship into the port and become a part of history. The poet also wants the captain to witness the celebrations and acknowledge the jubilant crowd that is waiting to get a glimpse of the victorious captain.

4. It is some dream that on the deck,/You've fallen cold and dead. Why is it so difficult for the poet to believe that the captain is no more?

It is unimaginable for the poet that the captain is no more. Hence, the poet is finding it difficult to come to terms with the fact that the captain is dead. So much so that he wishes that it were a dream.

5. What does the poet choose to do towards the end of the poem? How does it set him apart from the others?

After the ship has been anchored in the port, the poet chooses to stay on the deck with the captain, who is now dead. The poet decides to not be a part of the celebrations that are taking place in the honour of the ship having returned victorious.

II. Answer these questions.

1. All poems have a theme. A theme is defined as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work that may be stated directly or indirectly. A Poet may write on any theme, and some common themes are: nature, Children, love, war, honesty, humour, and so on.

What is the theme of this poem?

The poem is an elegy for the captain of the ship that has just returned to the port victorious. Though crowds are celebrating the return of the ship, this moment is juxtaposed with the death of the captain of the ship. The poem is also an extended metaphor about the death of Abraham Lincoln, a former president of the

United States of America, who played a very important role during the American Civil War.

2. Why has the poet repeated the words ‘Fallen cold and dead’ at the end of each stanza?

The poet has repeated the words ‘fallen cold and dead’ to reiterate the fact that the captain of the ship is no more. These words also add to the solemnity of the occasion amidst all the celebrations.

3. How does the poet present the contrast between the joy of returning victorious and the sorrow of seeing the captain lying dead on the deck of the ship? Quote examples from the poem to support your answer.

The poet is able to beautifully present the turmoil that he is going through while trying to balance his personal feelings of loss with the celebrations taking place for the victorious return of the ship to port.

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,

But O heart! heart! heart!

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;

It is some dream that on the deck,

You’ve fallen cold and dead.

4. Write a paragraph about the historical significance of this poem. (Note: You may ask your teacher to give you a few points to attempt this answer.)

The poem is an extended metaphor about the death of Abraham Lincoln, a former president of the United States of America, who played a very important role during the American Civil War. The ‘captain’ represents Abraham Lincoln and the ‘ship’ represents the nation during the Civil War. ‘The prize we sought is won’ refers to the fact that the pride of the American Union was restored.