

# POETRY

## GLOSSARY

Abruptly – unexpectedly

Abyss- a bottomless depth

Deciphering – decoding

Faint- not clear

Infinitesimal- extremely small

Palpitating- beating rapidly

Perforated – having holes through something

Riddle – puzzle

Soul- the spirit

Substance – fact

Unfastened – to let loose

Violent – forceful

Wheeled – travelled

## PROFILE

**Prepare short profile of Pablo Neruda using the given hints**

Real name : Neftali Recardo Reyes Basoalto

Pen name : Pablo Neruda

Birth : 12<sup>th</sup> July 1904, Parral, Chille

Occupation : poet, diplomat, politician

Type of works : Surrealist poems, historical epics, political manifestos,  
prose

Autobiography

Notable awards : International Peace Prize, Lenin Peace Prize (1953),  
Nobel Prize in Literature (1971)

Died : 23 September 1973, Santiago, Chile

### **Pablo Neruda**

Pablo Neruda is the pen name of Neftali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto. He was born on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1904, in Parral, Chile. He was a poet, diplomat and politician. He wrote in variety of styles in Spanish languages. The type of his works include surrealist poems, historical epics, political manifestos and prose autobiography. Neruda won many awards including international Peace Prize, Lenin Peace Prize (1953) and Nobel Prize in Literature (1971). He died on 23 September 1973 in Santiago, Chile.

### **APPRECIATION**

Pablo Neruda's poem "Poetry" talks about creative imagination and the art of writing poetry effectively. The poet shares his passion of writing poetry and his experience of embracing and being embraced by creativity. It is about finding one's passion and calling.

He says that writing poetry is not simply an action that he performs. Neruda had a strong compulsion to write poetry. At first he didn't have confidence to write poems. So he was aware of the impulse to write poetry in an exciting way.

He was unable to express himself before poetry came to him. He became aware of writing poems. Poetry summoned him from the street, from the branches of night. The creative power changed him into a unique human being.

Poetry found him in times of depression and loneliness that helped him to find his creativity when he was without a face. Before he was introduced to poetry, he was unable to express and communicate his ideas and in a way that was lost. The poet says that he got his identity when the poetry came to him. The poet says that poetry came to his soul like a fever and he made his own way. The inner fire of poetic inspiration gives the poet the power to see the magical vistas and respond to them. Through "Poetry" Neruda redefines the concept of poetry.

The poet uses many images like "branches of night" forgotten wing palpitating plantations, wings, shadow perforated, etc convey sublime thought and exalted vision through this poem. Poetry really takes us to the realm of poetic inspiration and poetic imagination. The overall message of the poem is that poetry allows people to broaden their perspective.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

1. Do you think the speaker in the poem earnestly wishes to be a poet? Which line say so?

Yes. He had a strong impulse to write poetry. His keen interest is visible in the following lines.

Poetry arrived in search of me. I don't know, I don't know where it came from.....

2. What is the figure of speech used in the expression 'poetry arrived'?

The line 'Poetry' arrived in search of me is an example of personification

3. Winter is a season when everything seems frozen and lifeless whereas the river represents the flow of life. Find out a similar expression of contrast from the poem.

No they were not voices; they were not words, nor silences.

4. What was the poet's condition before poetry arrived?

The poet was without face before poetry arrived. The poet could not realize his identity or sense of creativity.

5. What happened to the poet when 'poetry arrived'?

Poetry arrived unexpectedly to the poet. He did not know or understand anything what was happening to him.

6. How did the poet show that after the arrival of poetry his imagination knew no bounds?

He felt something burning in his soul after the arrival poetry. Then his imagination knew no bounds.

7. Poetic intuition is like seeing without eyes. Which line says so?

My eyes were blind and something started in my soul

Something started in my soul.

8. What does 'fever or forgotten wings' indicate?

Fever indicates sudden changes happening in the poet when he encounters creativity. Forgotten images indicate that the poet is faced with reality of discovering his creativity which lay forgotten.

9. How does the vast, infinite and complex universe unfold itself before the poet in the poem?

The poet perceives the beautiful and mysterious things in nature and shows how they unfold before him. He feels that his creativity is infinite like universe. The elements of universe filled him with love and excitement.

10. What do you think is referred to as 'fire' and 'flowers'?

Fire means spark in the mind of the poet that arises at the moment of inspiration. Flowers refer to the blooming of his creative thoughts.

11. I wheeled with the stars' what does the poet mean by this?

The poet journeyed with the stars to explore more areas of unexplored regions.

12. How does the poet express his delight of writing the first line of poetry?

The poet expresses his delight of writing the first line of poetry by saying that his heart broke loose on the wind.

### **1. POEM COMPREHENSION**

**Read the following lines and answer the questions given below**

And it was at that age ... poetry arrived

In search of me. I don't know, I don't know where

It came from, from winter or a river.

I don't know how or when,

No they were not voices, they were not

Words, nor silence,

But from a street I was summoned,

From the branches of night,

Abruptly from others

Among violent fires

Or returning alone

There I was without a face

And it touched me

1. Pick out an instance of personification

2. Who summoned the poet?
3. Pick out an instance of visual image from the lines
4. What does the speaker mean when he says “I was without a face?”

### **Answers**

1. The line ‘Poetry’ arrived in search of me is an example of personification.
2. Poetry summoned the poet
3. Violent fires
4. The speaker felt that he had no identify.

### **2. POEM COMPREHENSION**

I don't know, I don't know where  
It came from, from winter or a river.  
I don't know how or when,  
No they were not voices, they were not  
Words, nor silence,  
But from a street I was summoned,  
From the branches of night,  
Abruptly from others

1. What is referred to as ‘it’ in the above lines?
2. Where was the poet summoned from?
3. What is referred to as ‘night’ in the above lines?
4. Pick out the line which states that the poet was called to poetry suddenly

### **Answers**

1. Poetry is referred to as ‘it’ in the above lines.

2. The poet was summoned from a street.
3. 'Darkness' stands for ignorance in the above lines.
4. 'Abruptly from others.

### **3. POEM COMPREHENSION**

I don't know what to say, my mouth

Had no way

With names

My eyes were blind

And something started in my soul

Fever or forgotten wings

And I made my own way

Deciphering

That fire

And I wore the first faint line

Faint, without substance, pure

Nonsense,

Pure wisdom

Of someone who knows nothing

And suddenly I saw

The heavens unfastened and open,

1. Why couldn't poet say anything?
2. The poet couldn't see anything. Why?
3. How were the poet's first lines of poem?

4 Pick out an instance of alliteration used in these lines

**Answers**

1. He did not know what to say. He did not feel good at doing anything.
2. His eyes were blind.
3. Faint and nonsense.
4. Something started

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