

CAPSULE MODULE FOR B PLUS STUDENTS BY

ASHRAF VVN MODULE 6

THE BALLAD OF FATHER GILLIGAN BY W B YEATS

1. PROFILE

Prepare a short profile of W.B.Yeats using the hints given below

Name	: W.B.Yeats
Birth	: June 13, 1865, Ireland
Famous as	: Irish poet
Awards	: Nobel Prize for literature in 1923
Notable Works	: The Tower, The winding stair and Other Poems
Died	: January 28, 1939

W.B.YEATS

The famous poet W.B.Yeats was born on June 13, 1865 in Ireland. He was an Irish poet. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923. His notable works were The Tower, The Winning stair and other poems. He passed away on January 28, 1939.

APPRECIATION OF THE POEM

The poem 'The Ballad of Father Gilligan' was written by the famous W.B.Yeats. It is a ballad. It tells the story of a hard working priest and about his parishioners. The poem is about how God intervenes in the life of an earnest priest at a time of immense need. Father Gilligan was a tired out of his priestly obligations during an epidemic in his parish. One evening Father Gilligan was sitting in a chair, he

happened to know that God, the divine had sent an angel to perform last communion of the dying man.

His parishioners were bed ridden or dead or buried. He was worried about his parishioners. He complained that he had no rest, nor joy, nor peace. Realizing his fault, he sought forgiveness from God. He was eager to reach the house of the sick man. Realizing his mistake the priest rode recklessly to the house of the sick man. He thought that he died without receiving the last sacrament. But his wife told him that the man died happily after the departure of priest.

The poem is rich with beautiful images and poetic devices. The time references ‘moth-hour’, ‘sparrow chirp’ are notable. Use of images and similes show the commendable use poetic craftsmanship of W.B. Yeats in the poem.

PICK OUT INSTANCES OF VISUAL AND AUDITORY IMAGES FROM THE POEM

Visual	Auditory
Green sods	Sparrow-chirp
Stars	Pray
Moth	Leaves shake in wind
Rocky lane, Fen	Opening the door

1. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions given below.

The Old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day
For half his flock were in their beds

Or under green sods lay
Once, while he nodded in a chair
At the moth-hour of the eve
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

Questions

1. Why was father Gilligan weary?
2. 'For half his flock were in their beds' What is the significance of this line?
3. What does the moth hour of the eve indicate?
4. Identify a visual image from the above lines

Answers

1. The old priest was very tired because of the self-less service he had been rendering to the poor.
2. More than half the people of parish were dying
3. Moth hour of the eve indicates evening time.
4. Green sods, moth hour

2. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions given below.

I have no rest, nor joy, nor piece,
For people die and die
And after cried he, God forgive !
My body spake not i!

Questions

1. Why was the father restless?
2. Why did the father seek forgiveness from God?
3. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem?

Answers

1. He was not able to perform his priestly obligations due to his overwork.

2. He sought forgiveness from God saying that his body only hesitated to do his duty due to his tiredness.
3. Abcb

3. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions given below.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen:
The sick man's wife opened the door,
'father! You come again!'
'And is poor man dead?' he cried
'He died an hour ago,
The old priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.

Questions

1. What did the sick man's wife ask?
2. When did he die according to his wife?
3. Why did he ride carelessly?
4. Why was the sick man's wife surprised?
5. How did the father express his grief?

Answers

1. The sick man's wife asked why he had come again.
2. He died after his departure.
3. He rode carelessly to reach the sick man's house to do the final rites.
4. Her husband had received the last sacrament from the priest and passed away.
5. He expressed his grief by walking to and fro.

4. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions given below.

'When you were gone, he turned and died'

As merry as a bird'.

The old priest Peter Gilligan

He knelt him at that word.

Questions

1. How did the sick man die?
2. He knelt him at that word. Why?
3. Pick out an instance of simile.
4. Whose words are these? 'When you were gone, he turned and died'

Answers

1. He died as merry as a bird.
2. God extended His helping hand to him. The priest was humbled at this.
3. As merry as a bird.
4. The sick man's wife said that words.

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