

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

Thinking about the Poem

I.

Question 1. What kind of place is Innisfree? Think about:

- (i) the three things the poet wants to do when he goes back there (stanza I);
- (ii) what he hears and sees there and its effect on him (stanza II);
- (iii) what he hears in his “heart’s core” even when he is far away from Innisfree (stanza III).

Answer: Innisfree is a beautiful place where poet has spent a lot of time as a boy.

(i) The three things the poet wants to do when he goes back to Innisfree are:

- he wants to build a small cabin of clay and wattles.
- he wants to have nine bean-rows there
- he wants to have a hive for the honeybee

(ii) He hears the cricket sing and sees the midnight glimmer with beauty. He sees the sky glowing purple at noon. He watches the evenings full of the linnet’s wings. All of these have a positive effect on him and he feels very peaceful.

(iii) He hears the lake water lapping by the shore at low sounds in his “heart’s core” even when he is far away from Innisfree.

Question 2. By now you may have concluded that Innisfree is a simple, natural place, full of beauty and peace. How does the poet contrast it with where he now stands? (Read stanza III.)

Answer: The poet contrasts the natural beauty of Innisfree with the roadways and grey pavements of the city he now lives in. “Grey” pavements show the lack of colours and liveliness of the place.

Question 3. Do you think Innisfree is only a place, or a state of mind? Does the poet actually miss the place of his boyhood days?

Answer: Yes, I think Innisfree is a place in reality. The poet actually misses the place of his boyhood days spent in the natural beauty of Innisfree. He gets reminded of the low sounds of the lake water lapping by the shore.

II.

Question 1. Look at the words the poet uses to describe what he sees and hears at Innisfree

- (i) bee-loud glade
- (ii) evenings full of the linnet’s wings
- (iii) lake water lapping with low sounds

What pictures do these words create in your mind?

Answer: (i) bee-loud glade creates a picture of a place in a forest that is filled with the soft buzzing sound of honeybees.

(ii) evenings full of the linnet's wings creates an image of a red-orange sky that is full of linnets. Linnets are beautiful birds that add up to the scenic beauty of a place when they flutter their wings and fly.

(iii) lake water lapping with low sounds lets us take a dive into the peaceful scenario where the water of the lake is flowing and producing soothing sound.

Question 2. Look at these words;

... peace comes dropping slow

Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings

What do these words mean to you? What do you think “comes dropping slow...from the veils of the morning”? What does “to where the cricket sings” mean?

Answer: These words mean that one can attain peace slowly and gradually.

Peace is what comes dropping slow from the veils of the morning.

The poet says that peace and serenity is spread gradually from the rising morning sky to the ground where the cricket sings.