

For Anne Gregory

Thinking about the Poem (Page 141)

Question 1:

What does the young man mean by “great honey-coloured /Ramparts at your ear?” Why does he say that young men are “thrown into despair” by them?

Answer:

The young man in the poem praises the “great honey-coloured hair /Ramparts at Anne’s ear” to refer to her beautiful yellow coloured hair that gracefully falls behind her ear and covers it like a wall. Her hair are so attractive that young men hopelessly fall in love with her. They are “thrown into despair” because they are enchanted by Anne’s beauty as her hair beautifully falls behind her ear. She is so pretty that everyone wants her which is not possible hence, they are all thrown into despair.

Question 2:

What colour is the young woman’s hair? What does she say she can change it to? Why would she want to do so?

Answer:

Anne’s hair are yellow in colour just like honey. She says that she can dye it black, brown or carrot colour, which means that she can change it to any colour of her choice. She says so to express that outer beauty can be changed anytime, but that’s not real or permanent. She wants young men to look deep into her soul and wants them to love and appreciate her for her inner beauty rather than her external superficial appearance.

Question 3:

Objects have qualities which make them desirable to others. Can you think of some objects (a car, a phone, a dress...) and say what qualities make one object more desirable than another? Imagine you were trying to sell an object: what qualities would you emphasise?

Answer:

There are various objects having qualities in our lives that make it desirable to others. Here we bring to you a list of objects that make it desirable to others:

Object	Qualities
Car	Colour, speed, fuel consumption, brand
Dress	Pattern, colour, material, fit
Phone	Brand, technology, user-friendliness, memory, price

Bag	Design, colour, brand, price, style
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While selling an object, a person should emphasise on what are the different features of the product and also help the buyer identify how it is better than other products in the market. Students can also add some points on their own to understand how best an object can be sold to a customer.

Question 4:

What about people? Do we love others because we like their qualities, whether physical or mental? Or is it possible to love someone “for themselves alone”? Are some people ‘more lovable’ than others? Discuss this question in pairs or in groups, considering points like the following.

- (i) a parent or caregiver’s love for a newborn baby, for a mentally or physically challenged child, for a clever child or a prodigy
- (ii) the public’s love for a film star, a sportsperson, a politician, or a social worker
- (iii) your love for a friend, or brother or sister
- (iv) your love for a pet, and the pet’s love for you.

Answer:

Every person has his/her own choices, likes and dislikes. Students are advised to answer the question based on their interpretation and personal experience. As humans, we all have our personal favourites based on our perception and situation in life. It is therefore, not wrong to like some person more than others.

- (i) A parent or caregiver's love for a newborn baby, for a mentally or physically challenged child, for a clever child or a prodigy reflects their attentiveness and concern for them.
- (ii) The public's love for a film star, a sportsperson, a politician or a social worker reflects our admiration and being awestruck about their personality.
- (iii) Your love for a friend or brother or sister reflects your love, compassion, empathy and a feeling of togetherness for them.
- (iv) Your love for a pet, and the pet's love for you reflects the unconditional and selfless love towards each other.

Question 5:

You have perhaps concluded that people are not objects to be valued for their qualities or riches rather than for themselves. But elsewhere Yeats asks the question: How can we separate the dancer from the dance? Is it possible to separate ‘the person himself or herself’ from how the person looks, sounds, walks, and so on? Think of how you or a friend or member of your family has changed over the years. Has your relationship also changed? In what way?

Answer:

Students can write this answer as per their personal experiences. It is recommended that they think about their family and friends and attempt this question based on their interpretation and personal experiences.

Here are some hints that may help you:

1. Approach a friend or a family member and give it a thought whether you think of them as an individual or their physical appearance takes precedence.
2. Every person's way of thinking changes with age. A person needs to check it himself if his thought process has remained the same or improved / degraded with time.
3. Every person is unique and we should accept them as they are rather than criticizing them for anything.
4. It is well understood that our love and feelings for our loved ones undergo change in due course of time.
5. We should not judge people superficially for their looks or appearance, rather appreciate the person for his/her positive qualities.