

Amanda!

Thinking about the Poem (Page 62)

Question 1:

How old do you think Amanda is? How do you know this?

Answer:

Amanda is a young girl who is around 9-10 years old. She is being rebuked by her parents with typical instructions – something quite common for children of her age. Her parents are trying to inculcate good manners and etiquette in her for her own good, as she is very naive and innocent.

Question 2:

Who do you think is speaking to her?

Answer:

One of her parents is speaking to her. It is most likely that it's her mother. Generally speaking, a mother is the first teacher of a child. She always tries to guide and instruct her child to follow the righteous path. Hence, the nature of the instructions given to Amanda indicates that the speaker is her mother.

Question 3:

Why are Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 given in parenthesis?

Answer:

Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 are given in parenthesis because they depict Amanda's inner thoughts and reactions as she receives instructions from her mother in stanzas 1, 3 and 5. Each stanza containing rebukes by Amanda's mother is followed by her inner reaction to it in parenthesis. Thus, the poet uses the parenthesis to show that Amanda doesn't voice her inner protests, giving the poem a humorous tone.

Question 4:

Who is the speaker in Stanzas 2, 4 and 6? Do you think this speaker is listening to the speaker in Stanzas 1, 3, 5, and 7?

Answer:

The speaker of stanzas 2, 4 and 6 is the child, Amanda herself. No, she is not listening or paying heed to her mother's words in stanzas 1, 3 and 5 as she is lost in her own dream world. Her imagination lets her escape from reality as she is lost in her own world.

Question 5:

What could Amanda do if she were a mermaid?

Answer:

If Amanda were a mermaid, she could drift away slowly and carelessly on a languid emerald sea. She wished she could be the sole inhabitant of the green sea and would slowly move on it. She longs for a place where she can be all by herself and depend on anybody else for her happiness. Amanda desired to be a mermaid because a mermaid symbolises liberty and wonder, according to her.

Question 6:

Is Amanda an orphan? Why does she say so?

Answer:

No, Amanda is not an orphan. She says so because she wants to be on her own. She feels that she is being constantly nagged by her parents to follow their instructions. Being a little girl, she seeks 'golden' silence and 'sweet' freedom and wants to break all the norms. She wishes to roam around the streets alone and draw dust patterns with her bare feet. She thinks if she were an orphan, she could do all of it without being nagged or rebuked by anyone and be all by herself.

Question 7:

Do you know the story of Rapunzel? Why does she want to be Rapunzel?

Answer:

The story of Rapunzel revolves around her life on a high tower. She was locked in that tower by an evil witch. Over the course of time, she got used to living there. She was very happy and content with her life in the tower. She had very long blonde hair, which was used by the witch to climb the tall tower. One fine day, a prince came to meet her, climbing the tower using her hair. When the witch came to know about it, she punished both of them by separating them. Finally, after many years the couple united forever. Similarly, Amanda wishes to live her life like Rapunzel on a high tower on her own, away from everyone. She yearns for freedom, peace and harmony. Due to this reason, Amanda wants to be like Rapunzel. However, she also states that since she doesn't want to be disturbed, she would never let her bright hair down for anyone to climb up to her. She desires a happy and satisfying life without being disturbed by others.

Question 8:

What does the girl yearn for? What does this poem tell you about Amanda?

Answer:

Amanda is a young girl who yearns for freedom and wants to be on her own. With constant scolding from her parents, she realises that she is incapable of fulfilling their expectations. Generally, children of Amanda's age have similar feelings, irrespective of class, colour or nationality. We all know that traditional societies always demand well-mannered behaviour from every person and the training of children by their parents plays a significant role in moulding their personality. However, most parents tend to ignore the innocence and understanding level of their children, and the young minds face tremendous pressure from their elders that impacts their imaginative power and thoughts.

Question 9:

Read the last stanza. Do you think Amanda is sulking and is moody?

Answer:

No, Amanda is neither sulking nor moody. She simply longs for her freedom as she is fed up with following the instructions given by her parents. She has a strong imaginative power as she visualizes herself to the likes of Rapunzel's story, and she wants to lead a carefree life free from all nagging and scolding from her parents, who are always trying to teach manners and inculcate good habits in her.