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**Understanding The Text****1. How does Shelley's attitude to science differ from that of Wordsworth and Keats?****Answer:**

In A Poet's Epitaph, Wordsworth observes science with a mind which is critical. He glorifies nature and admires the beauty that it imparts to humanity. It is noticeable how people ruin it with their art and science. In Lamia, Keats explains the two facets of the nature of humans: one is emotional, and the other one is sensual. Keats calls pleasure unreal and philosophy destructive. One should not consider Wordsworth and Keat's opinions as absolute. Shelley, for example, has a different opinion on this. It is good for scientists to consider Shelley as his attitude to Science is opposite to that of Wordsworth. He was not tired of expressing his thoughts regarding science in his poetry. To him, Science symbolised peace, joy and illumination.

**2. 'It is not an accident that the most discriminating literary criticism of Shelley's thought and work is by a distinguished scientist, Desmond King-Hele.' How does this statement bring out the meeting point of poetry and science?****Answer:**

A British physicist Desmond King-Hele, is the author of 'Shelley's Thought and Work'. He said that Shelley's attitude to Science highlights the climate of modern thoughts in which he wished to live. Shelley explains the mechanisms of nature with a wealth of detail and precision. It is an excellent fusion of science and poetry. A scientist reviewing the work of a poet on science, S. Chandrasekhar, gives two examples from the poetry of Shelley to support what is said about him. He explains that in his poem Cloud, a scientific monograph, a creative myth and a picaresque tale of cloud adventure are combined together. He then cites an instance from Prometheus Unbound, described by Herbert Read as the expression given to the desire of humanity for spiritual liberty and intellectual light.

**3. What do you infer from Darwin's comment on his indifference to literature as he advanced in years?****Answer:**

Darwin, a great scientist famous for his work On the Origin of Species, has said that he enjoyed literature until he was 30. He liked the poetic works of Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, etc., immensely. The historical plays of Shakespeare provided such pleasure to him. As he grew older and reached 30, he began losing interest in music and pictures, which once gave great delight to him. He tried reading the poetry of Shakespeare which nauseated him and made him intolerably dull. It is surprising to see that the answer to this change is in the statement by Darwin. To process the laws out of facts, his mind had become like a grinding machine. The part of the brain on which greater tastes depended had gone to waste. Darwin found it hard to infer it, and hence his romance with literature passed away.

**4. How do the patterns of creativity displayed by scientists differ from those displayed by poets?****Answer:**

The poets are the bards who celebrate nature which surrounds them, while the scientists harvest nature and its mechanisms and mark the inventions. Poets like Keats and Wordsworth criticise the exploitation of nature by humans, whereas scientists utilize the available resources of nature to invent and create. However, it is not that enmity is present between the scientists and the poets. Here, Darwin enjoyed literature until he was thirty. He later said, 'My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone on which the higher tastes depend.' Hence, it is clear that the poets celebrate the present while the scientists invent and create, leading us to a tomorrow which makes a difference.

### 5. What is the central argument of the speaker?

**Answer:**

In this essay, the author figures out the reasons for the variations in the patterns of creativity between the practitioners of science and art. He created an assortment of remarks which contained the answer. He gives examples depicting how the scientists and poets noticed each other explains the contrast in their opinions. Poets like Keats and Wordsworth are nature's worshippers and believe that nature is sabotaged by humans due to technological advancement. There are a few poets, such as Shelley, who create poetry on Science. It is very difficult to separate the views of the practitioners and hold them into compartments which are watertight. For example, Darwin enjoyed literature immensely as it provided him joy until the age of 30. By appreciating Shelley's A Defence of poetry, W. B. Yeats named it "the profoundest essay on the foundation of poetry in the English language." In the end, the author wonders about "why there is no similar A Defence of Science written by a scientist of equal endowment." Probably, he was aware of the answer to the question.

### Talking About The Text

Discuss in small groups.

#### 1. 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world'.

**Answer:**

In the essay A Defence of Poetry, Shelley made the given statement. Shelley expressed his view on the poets and their poetry. The beauty of poetry and its power. Poetry arrests the enhancing beauty which makes everything immortal. It not only reflects; it has the power to bring changes and ignite the minds. Humanity is inspired by poetry. Like Shelley said, 'Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors or the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves.' This means that it is poetry which bears the future and inspires minds. It mirrors the present and beholds the past as well. The poets are the subtle revolutionaries of our society. Not only the poets but all the authors also. They are the force that drives society to freshness and are moral critics. They not only participate as viewers in society but also notice and express their appreciation or criticism through their work.

#### 2. Poetry and science are incompatible.

**Answer:**

Every issue has two perspectives. While the poets such as Keats and Wordsworth criticise man for exploitation of nature and move towards Science, Shelley loved the poetry of Science and depicted it in his work. It symbolises peace, joy and illumination. Being a prominent scientist, Darwin immensely enjoyed literature until he reached 30. Faraday, another scientist, was engaged in his scientific experiments on electricity and made new inventions. It is hard to conclude whether scientists or poets are compatible or not. There will be numerous such scientists and poets who are fond of poetry and science. On the other hand, there will be a few more who are concerned only about their concerned subject.

#### 3. 'On reading Shelley's A Defence of Poetry, the question insistently occurs why there is no similar A Defence of Science written by a scientist of equal endowment.'

**Answer:**

One who is passionate about their subject will praise it profoundly. The medium of expression is the only difference. While the scientist makes use of an invention to show his passion, the poet uses words to praise his subject, which is natural. So, Shelley created poetry on Science, and Faraday discovered the laws of electromagnetic induction. This led to the formulation of new concepts like 'fields of force' and 'lines of force'.

It is not true that scientists do not defend their subject. By answering Gladstone, Faraday defended his discoveries that there was a probability of taxing electricity by the government. So, only the medium ones choose to defend their subject.

