



FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

ST. LAWRENCE HIGH SCHOOL

A JESUIT CHRISTIAN MINORITY INSTITUTION



STUDY MATERIAL 2

Sub: ENGLISH 'B'

Class: XII

Topic : ON KILLING A TREE

Date: 07.05. 2020

Textual Words & Meanings :

WORD	MEANING
1. Jab	1. a sudden hit with a pointed object.
2. Consuming	2. absorbing , devouring.
3. Crust	3. top layer of the soil.
4. Leprous	4. affected with leprosy.
5. Hide	5.the skin of an animal.
6. Bark	6. skin of a tree.
7. Curled	7.twisted.
8. Twigs	8.small shoots of a tree
9. Miniature	9.very small , tiny.
10. Boughs	10. branches of trees.
11. Anchoring	11. fixing , securing.
12. Snapped	12. break or tear with a noise.
13. Scorching	13. burning.
14. Choking	14.having difficulty in breathing.
15. Withering	15. drying.

Short Question & Answers :

1 .What does the poet mean by ' It takes much time to kill a tree '?

Ans: By the above statement the poet means to say that killing a tree is not a simple task.

2. How has the tree grown?

Ans. The tree has grown slowly by drawing its essential nutrients from the earth's crust and sunlight , air and water from the atmosphere.

3. What medical term does Gieve Patel use to describe the roughness of the bark of a tree?

Ans : The poet uses the medical term ' leprous hide ' to describe the roughness of the bark of a tree.

4. Where do the leaves sprout from ?

Ans . The leaves sprout from the leprous hide.

5. Where will green twigs rise from?

Ans. The green twigs will rise from the healed barks and from close to the ground.

6. What does the poet mean by "Not so much pain will do it" ?

Ans. By the expression "Not so much pain will do it" , the poet means to say that hacking and chopping can

inflict much pain to the tree but will not be able to kill it.

7. What would happen if the development of miniature boughs of a chopped tree are not checked ?

Ans . If the development of miniature boughs of a chopped tree is not checked , they will expand into a full grown tree of former size.

8. What does the expression, 'anchoring earth' suggest ?

Ans . The expression 'anchoring earth' suggests that the roots of the tree have sunk in firmly into the earth, holding the tree securely.

9 .What does the phrase 'earth-cave' refer to?

Ans. The phrase 'earth-cave' refers to the hollow that is formed when the roots are pulled out of the ground.

10. What is 'the strength of the tree'?

Ans. The root is the strength of the tree.

11. What remains "hidden for years inside the earth" ?

Ans. The roots of the tree remain 'hidden for years inside the earth'.

12. What scorch and choke the tree after it is pulled out?

Ans. Sun and air scorches and chokes the tree after it is pulled out.

13. What role does the sun and air play in the poem 'On Killing a Tree' ?

Ans. In the poem 'On Killing a Tree' the sun and air are both 'life - givers' and 'life - takers'.

14.'And then it is done'-What act is referred to here?

Ans. Here the act referred to is that of killing a tree.

15. Find a word from the text which means 'cure'.

Ans. 'Heal' is the word which means cure'.

16. When does the 'bleeding barks' heal?

Ans. The bleeding bark heals naturally over the passage of time.

17. What human activity is ironical in 'On Killing a Tree' ?

Ans. The fact that humans are destroying nature that nourishes human life is ironical.

18. What are the steps to be followed after uprooting for complete annihilation of a tree?

Ans. The steps to be followed after uprooting are scorching and choking in sun and air, browning, hardening, twisting and withering.

19. What does the tree symbolize?

Ans . In Gieve Patel's poem 'On Killing a Tree', the tree is a powerful symbol of life and its struggles as well as of nature that nourishes human civilization.

20. Which expressions suggest that the tree is personified in the poem, 'On Killing a Tree' ?

Ans . Words and expressions such as 'leprous hide', 'bleeding bark', 'heal', 'sensitive' etc .suggest that the tree is personified in the poem , 'On Killing a Tree'.

Descriptive and Analytical Questions :

1.Relate after Gieve Patel how a tree heals itself?

Ans : Nature is a great healer. The tree which is an integral part of nature is deep rooted. Hacking and chopping can hinder its growth only for a limited period .The bleeding bark heals up steadily as the root is firmly anchored to the earth and holds it firmly. It is full of vital forces and helps twigs and miniature boughs to flourish with new zeal. There is no dearth of sunlight , air and water. The tree grows fully posing a challenge to the hacker , ruthless and insensitive ,who cannot be appreciated but rather despised for such vile , irresponsible and baseless act.

2.Justification of the title 'On Killing a Tree.'

Ans; Gieve Patel's 'On Killing a Tree' is a graphic picture of man's cruelty towards nature which is symbolized by the tree. The poem vividly describes the stages of annihilation of a tree. A tree is endowed by nature with an indomitable spirit to resist the onslaughts of inconsiderate human being. There are different levels in the poem. The poem on the surface seems to guide a person on how to kill a tree.

Normally, the word 'fell' is used or in some cases the word 'cut' is used. The poet deliberately chooses the word 'killing'. Trees actually protect and sustain our lives but we are too greedy and selfish to permit our benefactor to coexist harmoniously with us.

The poem, therefore, depicts the different stages of violence to the tree and suggests how the tree can bounce back to life notwithstanding the attacks on it and the ruthless cutting of its branches. It is by completely uprooting the tree and scorching as well as choking it in the sun and in the air that man can successfully kill a tree. That is why the name of the poem is 'On Killing a Tree'. The irony in the title is implicit. Patel wants to arouse not merely the sympathy of the reader but he wants to awaken our conscience against mindless deforestation.

3. Describe after the poet Gieve Patel how the tree grows before it is hacked to death?

Ans : Gieve Patel graphically depicts the growth of a tree stage by stage slowly but steadily drawing its much needed nutrients from mother earth. No matter how hard and hostile nature be, the roots absorb from the earth what nourishes and strengthens the tree. Years of exposure to sunlight, air and water enable the tree to sprout leaves and grow to fullness and perfection. The leprous hide cannot conceal the emergence of shoots and buds. The most outstanding aspect of its growth is its power of endurance. Here hacking and chopping cannot kill a tree. The bleeding bark heals in due course and the green twigs and boughs give the tree its old shape again. Its stubborn root holds it in position and yielding to attacks do not characterize the growth of a tree.

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