

The Necklace

POETRY (20 MARKS)

Read the following poem and then answer the questions that follow.

From a distance

Fearful of inching any further,

A cold sweat trickled rivulets,

Making me shiver at noon.

Undaring to approach the form

It was over in minutes,

The necessities of execution availed,

The firestone tyre,

Petrol in blackened tin,

And ignites in numerous hands

Each participant ready and anxious,

To set the man a flame.

As the smouldering form blackened,

Smell of sizzling flesh filling in the air

Piercing the nostrils,

And choking me breathless,

I watched in wonder,

Witness to an unwritten law.

As the crowd dispersed,

The haggling and bargaining resumed,

Buying, selling and cheating,

As men in uniform arrived,

Bearing away the charred remains

Questions

- a) How relevant is the title of the poem above? (2 marks)
- b) Describe the character of the executionists in the poem (2 marks)
- c) What was needed to carry out the execution? (3 marks)
- d) Explain the difference in the use of the word “form” in stanza one and stanza three (2 marks)
- e)
 - i. Who is the persona? (1 mark)
 - ii. What deters the persona from getting closer to the scene of action? (1 mark)
- f) Explain the meaning of the following phrases as used in the poem (3 marks)
 - i. Smell of sizzling flesh
 - ii. Each participant ready and anxious
 - iii. Witnessed to an unwritten law
- g) What mood is portrayed in the poem? (2 marks)
- h) Paraphrase the last stanza (4 marks)

Answers

- a) **How relevant is the title of the poem above? (2 marks)**

The title “Necklace” is relevant because necklace is round and it is normally worn by people (1 mark). In the poem, the tyre used to burn the victim is round-shaped (1 mark)

- b) **Describe the character of the executioners in the poem (2 marks)**

The executioners are cruel/inhuman/brutal/callous/insensitive (1 mark)

Once they finish the execution, they resume their normal duties as if nothing has happened/they brutally murder the victim

NB: Award 0 marks for identification without illustration

- c) **What was needed to carry out the execution? (3 marks)**

The firestone tyre (1 mark), petrol in blackened tin (1 mark) and ignites in numerous hands (1 mark)

- d) **Explain the difference in the use of the word “form” in stanza one and stanza three (2 marks)**

The word “form” in stanza one refers to the victim before he was burned (1 mark)

while in stanza three it refers to the carcass/corpse of the victim (1 mark)

- e)

- i. Who is the persona? (1 mark)**

The persona is an observer or a citizen at a market place (1 mark)

NB: Do not accept the use of “I” as the persona without adequate qualifier

justifying the personality of the “I”

ii. *What deters the persona from getting closer to the scene of action? (1 mark)*

The persona is deterred by fear / frightened to get closer to the scene of the brutality (1mark)

f) Explain the meaning of the following phrases as used in the poem (3 marks)

(i) *Smell of sizzling flesh – The burning of the human body*

(ii) *Each participant ready and anxious –willing not forced to execute*

(iii) *Witnessed to an unwritten law – saw the people carry out mob justice which is illegal*

g) What mood is portrayed in the poem? (2 marks)

The mood is tense (1 mark)

Fearful of inching any further/cold shocks transmitted down (1 mark)

NB: Accept a related qualifier for mood and any appropriate illustration if not provided herein. Do not award marks for identification without illustration

h) Paraphrase the last stanza (4 marks)

The people who had set the man ablaze leave (1 mark) as normal business of selling,

buying and cheating resumes (1 mark).The policemen arrive (1 mark) and ferry away the

remains of the victim(1 mark)