

Bihar Board Class 11 English Book Solutions Poem 9 Voice of the Unwanted Girl

Bihar Board Class 11 English Voice of the Unwanted Girl Textual Questions and Answers

A. Work in small groups and discuss these questions :

Question 1.

How many brothers or sisters do you have ? Does the girl child in your family receive same kind of love and attention as the boy in the family ? If not, why ? Is it proper ?

Answer:

We are three brothers and one sister. We all receive same kind of love and attention equally. There is no discrimination between a boy and a girl in my family. We all enjoy the same right in the family.

Question 2.

You might have heard several cases of female foeticide ? Who, in your opinion, is responsible for this ?

Answer:

Our society is responsible for this. In our society girl is considered a burden. The parents have to fight much for the marriage of the girl. Even after her being educated nobody is ready to marry her without dowry.

B. 1.1. Write 'T' for true and 'F' for false statements :

- (a) Mother was taken to the autopsy room by force.
- (b) The doctor was solely responsible for the heinous crime.
- (c) The female foeticide took place in Bombay.
- (d) Everybody loved the speaker.
- (e) Mother loved Pomegranate very much.

Answer:

- (a) False
- (b) False
- (c) True
- (d) False
- (e) False.

B. 1. 2. Answer the following questions briefly :

Question 1.

Who is 'T' in the opening line ?

Answer:

The unwanted girl is T in the opening line.

Question 2.

Who does the speaker address to ?

Answer:

The speaker addressed to her mother.

Question 3.

What did the mother do to the speaker ?

Answer:

The mother had the speaker killed before she was born.

Question 4.

What happened to the speaker ?

Answer:

The speaker was cut like a sliced Pomegranate in the autopsy room.

Question 5.

What did the doctor tell the mother ? How did it affect her ?

Answer:

The doctor told the mother that the foetus was a girl. Then the mother was sad because it would be her second daughter.

Question 6.

How did the mother dress up when she knew about her second girl child ?

Answer:

The mother put on her grass-green sari, and put parijatak blossoms in her hair.

Question 7.

Do you find any evidence in the poem that shows the mother's lack of concern for her girl child ?

Answer:

The mother had the child sent away. She would not even touch it or ask about it. This shows her lack of concern for the girl child.

B. 2. Answer the following questions briefly :

Question 1.

Who does 'everyone' refer to in line 28 ? Why did everyone smile ?

Answer:

Everyone in line 28 refers to the mother, father, friends and doctors. They smiled because they had successfully got rid of the unwanted girl child.

Question 2.

How does the 'unwanted girl' question her mother's conscience ?

Answer:

The unwanted girl questions her mother's conscience. She tells her mother that she acted in an unmotherly fashion. She has acted against the will of God.

Question 3.

What does the killed infant smell of ?

Answer:

The killed child smells of formaldehyde.

Question 4.

How many times has the verb 'look' been repeated in the poem ? What effect does it have on you ?

Answer:

The verb look has been repeated ten times in the poem.

It makes me feel that the killed girl child is deeply disturbed. She pricks her mother's conscience. She tells her what a heinous crime the mother has committed.

Question 5.

What does 'God's will' mean in line 44 ?

Answer:

In line 44, God's will means what God ordained. The unwanted girl child wants to say that the mother had acted against what God had wanted. God wanted the girl to grow up in a natural way.

Question 6.

What does the speaker wish in the last two lines ?

Answer:

In the last two lines the unwanted child wishes that her mother should have shown her concern for her. She should have shown her motherly love. At least should have desired to see how the girl child looked.

C. 1. Long Answer Questions :

Question 1.

Who, in your opinion, is responsible for the killing of the unborn female child — mother, doctor, society or all of them ?

Answer:

In my opinion all of them are responsible for killing the unborn girl child. The traditional society looked upon women as inferior, useless and no better than slaves. Women had no rights, and parents had to give a lot of dowry at the time of a girl's marriage. Girls were never given any education. They were ill-nourished. If a girl was born, it was no matter of rejoicing. If a girl died, there was nothing to grieve about. People wanted sons to perpetuate their family name. Many people deliberately killed a girl child just after her birth.

Even today there are orthodox people who consider a daughter a curse. They look upon the second daughter as a misfortune. It is not only men's attitude. Women themselves subscribe to this view. That's why, mothers are part of the crime of getting the girl child killed.

In modern times, science has made it possible to determine the sex of the unborn child. So the doctors have made it a business. They determine the sex, and if it is a girl, they help in abortion. In this way all of them are responsible in getting the female child destroyed. The government has made a law that determination of the sex of an unborn child is illegal and punishable.

Question 2.

How will you react if you find that female foeticide is being committed before you ? Would you try to stop it or remain indifferent to it ?

Answer:

I hope that I will try to do my best to stop it. I would inform the police about it if I failed to convince the people concerned.

Question 3.

Describe the scene of autopsy room with all minute details. Have you ever been to an autopsy room ?

Answer:

It was a very sad day in my life when for the first time I had to be present in the autopsy room during the postmortem on one of my friend's dead body. The autopsy room looks similar to an operating room. An atmosphere of dignity and respect for the deceased is maintained at all time. The room has a good lighting arrangement. It is fitted with fly-proof net to avoid flies. There is provision for both hot and cold water taps. Water resistant coating materials are used on the walls so as to wash them with water easily. Postmortem table is preferably made up of marble or stainless steel. There is a refrigerator in the postmortem room to store tissue sample. The room has adequate number of exhaust fans.

Question 4.

Attempt a critical estimate of the poem.

Answer:

The speaker, in the poem is an unborn girl child. Apparently it is impossible. How can a child who is killed before she is born speak ?

The poet uses the unborn child as a mouthpiece to articulate the crime of mothers and humanity against the innocent unborn girl children. She does not accuse her father, society and the doctors, though they are equal partners in the crime. If only they had done the killing, it wouldn't have been so bitter. But the child did not expect a mother to treat her own child with such callousness as to not even think of her.

The child describes how she was sliced like a Pomegranate in the autopsy room and the mother did not even think of looking at it.

Then the child pricks her mother's conscience. She says she has nipped a bud before it could bloom. She killed a butterfly that could flit; she murdered a sweet girl whom someone would have loved and admired. These images are beautiful, and sharpen the acuteness of the crime and the loss.

The second part of the poem uses a rhetoric device to make the mother answerable as if she was being tried in a court of law. There is no rhyme scheme in the poem. The sentences are short, like slaps of whiplashes.

C. 2. Group Discussion :

Discuss the following in groups or pairs.

Question a.

How far is it proper to say "Blessed with a son and cursed with a daughter" ?

Answer:

It is not proper at all. In old days, sons stayed with their parents and were supposed to support them in the old age, whereas daughters were married, and left their parents to serve their husband's family. Now even sons leave their old parents and go to far off places for better employment. Girls too help their parents because they are educated and have independent income.

Question b.

True progress can hardly be achieved without abolishing gender bias in the society.

Answer:

Men and women are equal partners. They both can contribute to the building up of society. Gandhiji realised this. He called upon women to come forward and join the national movement. Women proved that they could endure hardships and make every possible sacrifice for a national cause. India's independence could not have been possible without women's contribution. Indeed, it is wrong to have a bias against women.

C. 3. Composition :

Write a paragraph in about 100 words on the following:

Question a.

Female foeticide.

Answer:

It is a matter of shame that some people are still so orthodox and ignorant that they consider the birth of a girl child a curse. During the last twenty years, there have been so many female foeticides that ratio between male and female drastically changed. Even in the national capital, the ratio is 820 girls against 1000 boys. Just imagine what will happen to society where there are no women. It will be the dooms day. So we must protect girls, look upon them as essential as boys, and empower them to be more useful to society.

Question b.

A visit to an autopsy room.

Answer:

It was a very sad day in my life when for the first time I had to be present in the autopsy room during the postmortem on one of my friend's dead body. The autopsy room looks similar to an operating room. An atmosphere of dignity and respect for the deceased is maintained at all time. The room has a good lighting arrangement. It is fitted with fly-proof net to avoid flies. There is provision for both hot and cold water taps. Water resistant coating materials are used on the walls so as to wash them with water easily. Postmortem table is preferably made up of marble or stainless steel. There is a refrigerator in the postmortem room to store tissue sample. The room has adequate number of exhaust fans.

D. 1. Dictionary Use:

Ex. 1. Correct the spelling of the following words:

Answer:

insection — injection

trafic — traffic

cluched — clutched

blosoms — blossoms

glisened — glistened

formaldehyd — formaldehyde.

D. 2. Word-meaning :

Find from the poem words the meanings of which have been given in Column A'. The last part of each word is given in Column 'B':

'A'	'B'
(1) rushing	(a) a gas with no colour and a strong smell.
(2) slush	(b) wish, desire
(3) sulking	(c) grasped
(4) clutched	(d) blowing away angrily
(5) autopsy room	(e) speeding up
(6) glistened	(f) snow that is starting to melt and become dirty
(7) will	(g) shine due to wetness
(8) formaldehyde	(h) room for medical examination of a dead person.

Answer:

1. (e)
2. (f)
3. (d)
4. (c)
5. (h)
6. (g)
7. (b)
8. (a)

D. 3. Vocabulary Test :

Ex. 1. Add a prefix to each of the following words and use the new words in sentences of your own:

told, heard, wanted, touch, turn, speakable.

Answer:

Told — untold — This is an untold story.

heard — unheard — Their protests went unheard.

wanted — unwanted — It is very sad when children feel unwanted.

touch — retouch — Retouch means to make small changes to a picture or photograph so that it looks better.

turn — return — Will you return today ?

speakable — unspeakable — The abusive language used by him is unspeakable.

D. 4. Registers :

Ex. 1. Find out the words from the poem which are used in medical field:

Answer:

doctor, injection, autopsy, cut, formaldehyde.