

## MARTHA

Walter de la Mare

*WALTER DE LA MARE ( 1873 – 1956), a modern poet, was quite different from the other poets of his age. He is unlike other modern poets such as T. S. Eliot who discuss problems related to society and industrialization. Walter de la Mare is altogether different from them. Like a conjurer, he creates an atmosphere of mystery, where experience is like a dream like reality. Among his poems “The Listener,” “The Scarecrow” and “Arabia” are worth mentioning.*

**Answer the questions briefly:**

1. Have you read any fairy tale?
2. Do you find its events as real as in life?
3. Does it have any logical sequence of events?



## Martha

“Once...Once upon a time...”

Over and over again,

Martha would tell us her stories,  
In the hazel glen.

Hers were those clear grey eyes  
You watch, and the story seems  
Told by their beautifulness  
Tranquil as dreams.

She'd sit with her two slim hands  
Clasped round her bended knees;  
While we on our elbows lolled,  
And stared at ease.

Her voice and her narrow chin,  
Her grave small lovely head,  
Seemed half the meaning  
Of the words she said.

**B1.1 Write True (T) or False (F) for the following sentences:**

1. Martha tells her stories over and over again.
2. If one watches her eyes, it seems story is told by her beautiful eyes.
3. Her stories were turbulent.
4. She would sit with clasped hands round her neck.
5. Martha would tell her stories in greenish brown valley.

**B.1.2 Answer the questions briefly:**

1. What does Martha do in the hazel glen?
2. What is the colour of Martha's eyes?
3. Who are staring at ease?
4. How do they sit to listen to Martha's story?
5. How were half of the stories said?

"Once...Once upon a time..."

Like a dream you dream in the night,  
Fairies and gnomes stole out  
In the leaf-green light.

And her beauty far away  
Would fade, as her voice ran on,  
Till hazel and summer sun  
And all were gone:—

All fordone and forgot;  
And like clouds in the height of the sky,  
Our hearts stood still in the hush  
Of an age gone by.



**B. 2. Fill in the blanks on the basis of your reading of the poem:**

Like a dream you dream .....the night,  
Fairies and gnomes stole .....  
..... the leaf green light.  
And her beauty far .....  
Would fade as her voice ran.....

**B .2.2. Write True (T) or False (F) for the following sentences:**

1. Fairies and gnomes stole out Martha's beauty.
2. Like a dream her beauty gradually faded away.
3. Her voice could be heard until hazel and summer sun and other things faded away.
4. Clouds in the sky are on lower height.
5. Our hearts are shocked.
6. Martha tells her story today.
7. Her stories have tranquil effect.

**GLOSSARY AND NOTES**

**hazel** (adj.): greenish brown

**glen** (n): deep narrow valley in mountain of Scotland or Ireland

**tranquil** (adj.): calm and peaceful

**slim** (adj.): attractively thin and well shaped

**clasped** (v): to hold tightly in arms or hands

**stared** (v): to look at someone for long time

**grave** (adj.): person is quite serious in appearance or behaviour

**fairies** (n): imaginary creature with magical power

**hush** (n): place where things are quite and peaceful or suddenly becomes quite and peaceful

**C. 1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS**

1. Describe Martha's physical features.
2. Is this poem like a dream? How can you say that?
3. How does this poem end?
4. Do you think that Martha and the children enjoyed the stories?

5. Martha begins with happy and tranquil note and ends with sadness. Why does she do so? Explain.
6. Explain the mood of the poet when he says "Our hearts stood still in the hush of an age gone by".
7. Describe the poet's feeling when he started the poem.

## C.2. COMPOSITION

1. Prepare a report on your visit to any hills.
2. Prepare a short speech on land sliding on hills.

## D. WORD STUDY

### D.1. Rearrange the letters to make meaningful words:

misl,  
rdwo

denb,

ryou,

## E. FIGURES OF SPEECH

### Simile and Metaphor:

Simile is comparison between two objects is. It is suggested by the use of words 'like' and 'as'.

**Find** out simile used by the poet in this poem. (One has been done for you)

'Tranquil as dreams'

Metaphor is a way of comparing things by attributing qualities of one object to another object, person, or thing to the object. It is an implied simile.

Do you **find** any metaphor in the poem? Pick out if any:

(One has been done for you)

'He is the Shakespeare of his school'.

## F. ACTIVITY

Read the poem carefully and find out if the words appearing at the end of each line rhyme alike? (One has been done for you).

You watch, and the story seems

Told by their beautifulness

Tranquil as dreams.

Find out other words, which rhyme alike.

## G. TRANSLATION

1. मेरी दादी कहानियां सुनायेंगी।
2. उनकी आँखों का रंग हल्का भूरा है।
3. कहानियों हमारे दिल और दिमाग को सुकून देती हैं।
4. पहाड़ियों पर बादल थे।
5. उसकी आवाज बहुत प्यारी है।
6. मैंने एक सपना देखा।
7. धीरे-धीरे उसकी आवाज कम हो गयी।
8. हमारा दिल बैठ गया।
9. हम उन्हें एकटक देख रहे थे।
10. उसकी आँखें आधी बात कह देती है।

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