

Amanda

The poem Amanda is about a small child whose parents are forever nagging her about what to do and what not to do. This frequent interference makes her very unhappy. It seems as if she is not free to do anything that she wants to do. She wants freedom from all restrictions. She dreams to lead a life of a mermaid in a Languid, emerald sea with her being the only inhabitant there. She feels that an orphan has more freedom than her. She also wished to lead a calm and quiet life in a tower like that of Rapunzel with nobody to disturb her.

NCERT Solutions

Thinking about the Poem (Page 62)

Question 1.

How old do you think Amanda is? How do you know this?

Answer:

Amanda is about a 9-10 year old school going girl. She is being scolded for things typical for that particular age. Her parents are trying to inculcate in her good manners and etiquettes. Amanda is very innocent and immature.

Question 2.

Who do you think is speaking to her?

Answer:

One of her parents is speaking to her. Most probably it is her mother. In a traditional household mother is held responsible for the conduct of child. In this case also, the range of instructions suggests that the speaker is Amanda's mother.

Question 3.

Why are stanzas 2, 4 and 6 given in parenthesis?

Answer:

Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 are given in parenthesis because they reflect the inner thoughts of Amanda. They can be taken as the reaction of the child for the instructions given in stanzas 1, 3 and 5. Here, there is an alternate sequence of scolding of the mother, and corresponding reaction to it given by the child. Also, parenthesis is used here to make the reading of ' the poem friendly

Question 4.

Who is the speaker in stanzas 2, 4 and 6? Do you think this speaker is listening to the speaker in stanzas 1, 3, 5 and 7?

Answer:

Speaker of the stanzas 2, 4 and 6 is the child, Amanda. No, she is not paying any attention to the speaker of stanzas 1, 3 and 5 as she is lost in a world of her own. Her imagination provides her an escape from her sorry reality.

Question 5.

What could Amanda do if she were a mermaid?

Answer:

Amanda wishes to be a mermaid so she could carelessly move along on a languid emerald sea. She just wishes to be carried away by the green sea waves slowly and gradually. Amanda longs for a place where she is all by herself as her happiness is not dependant on any other human being. Hence, she desires to be a mermaid because for a child, mermaid is a symbol of freedom and wonder.

Question 6.

Is Amanda an orphan? Why does she say so?

Answer:

No, Amanda is not an orphan, though she wishes to be one. She is so much stressed with the continuous nagging of her parents that she imagines herself to be better without them. The mere presence of her parents around her depresses her. Amanda is a little girl who seeks 'golden' silence and 'sweet' freedom. She wishes to roam around streets and draw patterns with her bare feet. Indeed it is horribly depressing that Amanda expects being an orphan.

Question 7.

Do you know the story of Rapunzel? Why does she want to be Rapunzel?

Answer:

Story of Rapunzel – Rapunzel's story revolves around her life on a tower Rapunzel was made to live on a high tower by a witch. She eventually got used to living there. She was happy and satisfied with her life. Rapunzel had very long golden hair, using which the witch used to pay her a visit. The fate of Rapunzel took a turn when one day a prince came to meet her using her hair. The witch had punished both of them by separating them. Finally they met after a couple of years only to be united forever this time. Amanda Wishes to live like Rapunzel on a high tower away from everyone. She seeks peace and harmony. That is the reason Amanda wishes to be like Rapunzel. However, she also makes a point that in order to avoid being disturbed she would never let her hair down for anyone to climb to her. She needs no one to make her life happy.

Question 8.

What does the girl yearn for? What does this poem tell you about Amanda?

Answer:

A girl like Amanda yearns for freedom and space for herself. She is incapable to fulfil the expectations of her parents. Amanda is no less than a symbol for all the children who face similar fate irrespective of class, colour or nationality. Traditional societies demand a certain type of behaviour from the individuals and the training to produce such begins at a very young age. Parents ignore the innocence and understanding level of their children and thereby the young ends up killing their imagination and thoughts.

Question 9.

Read the last stanza. Do you think Amanda is sulking and is moody?

Answer:

No, Amanda is neither sulking nor moody. She is simply not interested enough in the nagging business of her parents. Amanda cares more about her imagination and thought process over the manners her parents are trying to inculcate into her.

Extra Questions

Short Answer Type

Question 1.

What does the poet ask Amanda not to do in the poem "Amanda"?

Answer:

The poet advises Amanda not to bite her nails, not to hunch her shoulders and not to eat chocolate. She advises her to sit straight and take care of her acne. She further advises her to keep herself clean.

Question 2.

In which way does Amanda imagine herself to be mermaid? .

Answer:

Mermaid is believed to be a creature with a woman's head and body, and a fish's tail instead of legs. Amanda imagines herself or wishes to be free like a mermaid, which is moving slowly in a state of bliss in the sea, which is green like an emerald.

Question 3.

What instructions were given to Amanda about her homework, room and shoes?

Answer:

Amanda had been commanded or advised to finish her homework and keep her room neat and clean. She is also instructed to clean her shoes.

Question 4.

How and why does Amanda say that she is an orphan?

Answer:

Amanda seems to be fed up with continuous instructions and naggings. She is feeling that her freedom is curtailed. So, she imagines herself to be an orphan street child who leaves imprints caused on the soft dust by her bare feet. She feels that silences is golden or precious and freedom is sweet.

Question 5.

What impression do you form about Amanda, after reading the poem 'Amanda'?

Answer:

Amanda feels suffocated because she is controlled and instructed not to do one thing or the other. She feels that her freedom is curtailed. But Amanda wishes to be free to live in her own world. She is a very sensitive girl who indulges in daydreaming quiet often. She highly values silence and freedom.

Question 6.

What type of life does Amanda wish for?

Answer:

Amanda feels that her freedom has been curtailed. She is leading a controlled life under constant nagging. She wishes for a life free from all the restrictions. She wants to lead a life like a fairy, a mermaid or an orphan. Like a mermaid she wants to drifts blissfully. For, silence is golden and freedom is sweet.

Question 7.

I am an orphan, roaming the street.

Is Amanda an orphan? If not, why does she say so?

Answer:

No, Amanda is not an orphan. There are many restrictions on her. She does not like this life. She wants freedom. She feels that there is no one to understand her feelings. She is all alone. This is the reason she says that she is an orphan.

Question 8.

Don't eat that chocolate Amanda!

Remember your acne, Amanda!

Why is Amanda forbidden to eat chocolate?

Answer:

Amanda is a little child who wants freedom from all restrictions of life. She loves to eat chocolate but she is forbidden to eat them as these will affect her health adversely. She is advised to take care of her acne.

Question 9.

Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,

Who do you think is speaking to Amanda?

Answer:

The poet is speaking to Amanda. She had put many restrictions on her. She advises her to take care of her health and acne. She is advised to follow a controlled and disciplined life.

Question 10.

life in a tower is tranquil and rare;

I'll certainly never let down my bright hair'.

Why does the poet say that life in a tower is tranquil and rare? Whose life is he talking about?

Answer:

The poet feels that life in a tower is peaceful and full of freedom because there is no one to nag you. She is talking about Rapunzel who lives in a peaceful tower.

Question 11.

Why does Amanda imagine to be

(i) a Mermaid (ii) an orphan, and (iii) Rapunzel,

What does it show about her?

Answer:

(i) Amanda imagines herself to be a mermaid so that she may drift in the silent sea and enjoy the loneliness and peace there. She yearns for freedom.

(ii) She wishes to be an orphan so that she may play bare feet in the dust without receiving several instructions or scolding. She wishes for her independence and freedom.

(iii) Amanda is fascinated by the lonely and tranquil life of Rapunzel in a closed tower. She wishes for such a life so that her nagging mother may not reach there. Here also, she yearns for her freedom from nagging.

Question 12.

“Don’t bite your nails, Amanda!

Don’t hunch your shoulders, Amanda!”

Amanda’s parents were over anxious about her. She often found their instructions very stifling. Reading the poem and based on Amanda’s experience, write a paragraph on the topic “Should parents be allowed to control children?”

Answer:

It goes without saying that no child can survive the early years of its life without the care and protection of its parents. But some parents are so over protective and over anxious about their children that they don’t let their children live in peace. They don’t allow them to explore and find out things on their own. Such parents kill the child’s initiative in learning. These parents always boss around and irritate their children.

They don’t trust their child’s capability to do things independently. However, the parents may control the children and guide them as long as it is necessary. Equipped with knowledge and confidence they will be able to face the world boldly. Gradually the child should be allowed to grow on its own and be responsible for its actions. When parents give freedom to their children they gain confidence and learn to do things in a better way.

Question 13.

Is it a fact that every person including a young child has his/her own individuality and personality. It is not necessary that the child will see the world according to the direction of his/her parents. Based on the reading the poem “Amanda” write a paragraph on: Should children be given freedom”.

Answer:

Growing up is a phase which requires a lot of space. A single child in his teens would feel more claustrophobic than four kids in the same family. The reason being parents of a single child tend to be more protective and possessive. What they fail to understand is that without sufficient space to grow the child will only end up disliking his/her parents. Freedom is necessary in any relationship.

A child should be allowed to choose his hobbies, to learn what he pleases, to play with kids of his age. In the present times, where nothing is safe and none can be trusted, parents are only dissuaded from sending their kids out to play. It is only through these activities can a child learn to socialize and understand values. Therefore, parents should give enough freedom for the child to grow but also make sure that the child is not led away by material needs.

Question 14.

Childhood blooms and bounces with the wind of innocence and fanciful fantasy. Any kind of outside or forceful restriction is completely unbearable to a child. If he is nagged or scolded, he may feel alienated and withdrawn. But nagging is not a good option. In the context of the poem “Amanda”, write a paragraph on “effects of parental nagging”.

Answer:

Nagging is never a good option. Parents have a tendency to nag their children, especially regarding their studies. But nagging never helps. When a parent keeps on ranting to the child to study, the child will only grow averse to studying. It will create resentment between the child and the parent.

After a while a point will be reached where the child will simply stop listening to the parent. It also makes the child feel controlled. Parents keep repeating what is to be done, how it is to be done, etc. over and over again, always supervising. This will create stress for the child and make him/her

uncomfortable. Hence, parents should indulge in looking at the brighter side and praise their kids' accomplishments and avoid pointing out the weaknesses.

Question 15.

It is said that excess of everything is bad. Excess of parental love may make a child pampered, in the same way excess of nagging may throw a child into negativity. These statements are seen justified to some extent in the poem 'Amanda'. Explain.

Answer:

None can refute the pious role of parents or elders or teachers in the proper grooming and holistic development of a child. Parent's personality resonates and reflects through the behaviours and personality of a child. Parents do every possible thing, they can do, to shape the character and habits of their child. But sometimes, in course of nurturing the kid, the parents cross the limits unknowingly.

They became either overcaring or over protective or over anxious. They forget the fact that, when a matured mind cannot tolerate excess of do's and don'ts, how can they expect it from a child who is totally unaware of the worries and cares of the world. To a child the world means a world of imagination fancy and fairy.

If being nagged repeatedly she may form negative opinions about his/her mother and father. The same thing we find in the poem 'Amanda'. Amanda is a girl of around 8-11 year of age who lives in her own fairy land. She does not appreciate the constant scolding or nagging of her father/mother.

She feels that her freedom is punctuated. So, she instead of following the instructions, remains wandering in her own world of imagination. Excess of nagging has resulted into negativity as Amanda considers herself orphan. She sulks. She avoids eye to eye contact. Hence, parents must understand the line of boundary and act.

Question 16.

How old do you think Amanda is? How do you know this?

Answer:

Amanda is a teenager. This is the age when a child wants to have freedom. Teenagers do not like nagging and want to have free life. The poet advises Amanda to take care of her acne which commonly appears on the face of a teenager.

Question 17.

Who do you think is speaking to her?

Answer:

Her mother is speaking to her.

Question 18.

Why are stanzas—2, 4 and 6 given in parenthesis?

Answer:

The stanzas 2, 4 and 6 are given in parenthesis because they are the thoughts of the child in between the instructions that she is being given by her mother, which are given in stanzas! 3 and 5. The scolding by the mother and the child's thoughts are placed in alternate stanzas by the poetess.

Question 19.

Who is speaker in stanzas 2, 4 and 6? Do you think this speaker is listening to speaker in stanza 1, 3, 5 and 7?

Answer:

In stanzas 2, 4 and 6, the speaker is the child Amanda?.No, she is not listening to her mother who is speaking in stanza 1, 3,5 and 7. She is lost in her own thoughts and does not listen to what is being said to her.

Question 20.

What could Amanda do if she were a mermaid?

Answer:

If Amanda were a mermaid, then she would drift slowly in a languid emerald sea. She would be the sole inhabitant of relaxed green sea and would move slowly on it.

Question 21.

Is Amanda an orphan? Why does she say so?

Answer:

No, Amanda is not an orphan. She says so because she wants to be alone and enjoy being herself she wants to roam around in the street alone and pattern dust with her barefeet. She finds silence 'golden' and freedom 'sweet'. It is for this reason that she calls herself an orphan.

Question 22.

Do you know the story of Rapunzel? Why does she want to be Rapunzel?

Answer:

Rapunzel was a mythological figure, who was absolutely carefree, leading a calm and quiet life in tower, Amanda wishes to lead a carefree, calm and quiet life like Rapunzel.

Question 23.

What does the girl yearn for? What does this poem tell you about Amanda?

Answer:

The girl (Amanda) yearns for a life of freedom. The poem tells us that she is an imaginative girl who is constantly nagged by her unimaginative mother.

Question 24.

Read the last stanza. Do you think Amanda is sulking and is moody?

Answer:

No, Amanda is neither sulking, nor she is moody. She is simply longing for her freedom. She wants to go out and play wherever she likes.

Reference to Context

Read the following stanza and answer the questions that follow:

Question 1.

Don't bite your nails, Amanda! '

Don't hunch your shoulders, Amanda!

*Stop that slouching and sit up straight,
Amanda!*

- (i) Name the poem and poet.
- (ii) Who, do you think could be the speaker in the stanza?
- (iii) What is the tone of the speaker towards Amanda?
- (iv) Who is Amanda?

Answer:

- (i) This stanza has been taken from the poem 'Amanda' composed by Robin Klein.
- (ii) I, think the speaker could be either mother or the father.
- (iii) The tone of the speaker towards Amanda is 'ragging' and 'scolding'.
- (iv) Amanda is a teenage girl.

Question 2.

*(There is a languid, emerald sea,
where the sole inhabitant is me
a mermaid, drifting blissfully.)*

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) What does the speaker wish?
- (iii) Pick out the word from the stanza an antonym of 'energetic'.
- (iv) Name the poem and poet.

Answer:

- (i) Amanda is the speaker.
- (ii) Amanda wishes to have freedom from constant nagging.
- (iii) 'languid'.
- (iv) The poem "Amanda" composed by 'Robin Klein'.

Question 3.

*Did you finish your homework, Amanda?
Did you tidy your room, Amanda?
I thought I told you to clean your shoes,
Amanda!*

- (i) Who speaks these lines and to whom?
- (ii) What are the various works she has to do?
- (iii) What does the parent think she asked Amanda to do?
- (iv) Does Amanda like the advice of the speaker?

Answer:

- (i) These lines are spoken by Amanda's mother to Amanda.
- (ii) She has to complete homework, clean her room and her shoes.
- (iii) The parents think that she asked Amanda to clean her shoes.
- (iv) No, she does not like the constant nagging by the poet. She wants to live without any restrictions.

Question 4.

*(I am an orphan, roaming the street.
I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet,
The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet.)*

- (i) Who is referred to as an orphan in the first line?
- (ii) What does the speaker want to convey through this stanza?
- (iii) Pick out the word from the stanza that means the same as—'wandering'.
- (iv) Name the poem and poet.

Answer:

- (i) Amanda.
- (ii) She wants to roam in the street and make pattern on sands with her feet.
- (iii) 'roaming'
- (iv) The poem "Amanda" written by 'Robin Klein'.

Question 5.

*Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!
Remember your acne, Amanda!
Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,
Amanda!*

- (i) Who is the speaker in these lines?
- (ii) What does the speaker advise Amanda?
- (iii) Which lines show that Amanda does not take interest in what the speaker says?
- (iv) Name the poem and poet.

Answer:

- (i) Robin Klein (poetess) is the speaker in these lines.
- (ii) The speaker advised Amanda not to eat chocolate. She wants her to take care of her acne.
- (iii) The line "will you please look at me... to you" shows that she is not interested in what the speaker says.
- (iv) The poem "Amanda" composed by 'Robin Klein'.

Question 6.

*(I am Rapunzel, I have not a care;
life in a tower is tranquil and rare;
I'll certainly never let down my bright hair!)*

- (i) Who is the speaker in the stanza?
- (ii) What does the speaker wish to do?
- (iii) What does the stanza promise?

Name the poem and poet.

Answer:

- (i) Amanda is the speaker in this stanza.
- (ii) The speaker wants to be like Rapunzel who lived peacefully in the tower.
- (iii) The speaker promised herself that she would never let down her bright hair. (iv) The poem "Amanda" written by 'Robin Klein'.

Question 7.

*Stop that sulking at once, Amanda!
You're always so moody, Amanda!
Anyone would think that I nagged at you,
Amanda!*

- (i) Who is the speaker in the above stanza?
- (ii) Who is being nagged and by whom in the above lines?
- (iii) Do you think Amanda is moody?
- (iv) Name the poem and poet.

Answer:

- (i) Robin Klein is the speaker in this stanza.
- (ii) Amanda is being nagged by the poet.
- (iii) No, Amanda is not a moody girl. She is a normal girl who wants to get rid of constant nagging and live a peaceful life.
- (iv) The poem "Amanda" written by "Robin Klein".