

About the Poet

William Butler Yeats was born on 13 June, 1865 in County Dublin, Ireland. He was an Irish poet and one of the foremost figures of 20th century literature. A pillar of the Irish literary establishment, he helped to found the Abbey Theatre, and in his later years, served as a Senator of the Irish Free State for two terms. In 1923, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature as the first Irishman so honoured. He died on 28 January, 1939 in Cannes, France.

THEME

The poem discusses the importance of physical appearance and beauty in the world. The poem deals with theme of this dark reality of the world. Here, the things or individuals are appreciated as well as judged on the basis of their physical appearance. One should love humans because of their inner beauty rather than their physical beauty.

Summary

This poem is in the form of a conversation that goes on between a young man and a young girl 'Anne Gregory'. The girl had beautiful honey coloured hair. The argument in the first verse is that young men may not necessarily love the girl for what she is, but would be carried away by her golden hair and good looks. To this, the girl argues that she could change the colour of her hair. And then probably she'd be loved for who she is rather than for what she looks like. In the concluding verse, the poet makes the readers understand that it is only God who could love you for being what you are, and would not be affected by your looks or physical appearance.

Explanation of the Poem

1. "Never shall a young man,
Thrown into despair
By those great honey-coloured
Ramparts at your ear,
Love you for yourself alone
And not your yellow hair."

ENGLISH-LANG|LIT

Exp- In the above lines, the poet pays a compliment to the beauty of a young girl named Anne Gregory. He says that she has beautiful honey-coloured, yellowish hair. He says that many young men may fall in love with those beautiful hair which cover her ears on both sides. They will love her not for herself alone but for her yellow hair.

2. *"But I can get a hair-dye
 And set such colour there,
 Brown, or black, or carrot,
 That young men in despair
 May love me for myself alone
 And not my yellow hair."*

Exp- In the above lines, Anne replies to the poet's comment, saying that she will dye her hair brown, black or carrot colour. She will do so to ensure that young men will then love her for her own sake and not for the sake of her beautiful yellow hair.

3. *"I heard an old religious man
 But yesternight declare
 That he had found a text to prove
 That only God, my dear,
 Could love you for yourself alone
 And not your yellow hair."*

Exp- In the above lines, the poet concludes by saying that he had heard a priest declare only the previous night that he had found in a holy book that only God loves human beings for themselves alone and not for their physical charm. In other words, human beings are attracted to each other basically because of physical charms.

POETIC DEVICES

Rhyme Scheme

If we divide this poem of 18 lines into 3 units of 6 lines each, then each of these units will be found to follow the same simple rhyme scheme, that is, ABCBDB.

Apostrophe

This poetic device is used when a poet addresses his or her poem to an absent audience. In this poem, the poet follows the device of the apostrophe as he is addressing himself to Anne Gregory, but we, the readers never see her at any point in the poem.

Metaphor

This poetic device is used when a covert comparison is made between two different things or ideas. In this poem, the poet uses the device of metaphor on the 4th line, when he compares Anne Gregory's hair with the ramparts of a castle. Like the ramparts, her hair also protects her face from being seen fully.

Metonymy

This poetic device consists of the substitution of the name of an attribute or adjunct for that of the thing meant. In this poem, the poet uses the device of metonymy in the 9th line, when he uses the word "carrot" to mean the colour orange, while making suggestions about what colour she can dye her hair.

Compound words

Compound words are formed by adding two words into a single one, when normally those words are not used together. In this poem, the poet uses the device of the compound word in the 14th line, when he combines the words “yesterday” and “night” to create the word “yesternight”.

ANSWERS TO NCERT QUESTIONS

THINKING ABOUT THE POEM

1. What does the young man mean by “great honey-coloured/Ramparts at your ear?” Why does he say that young men are “thrown into despair” by them?

Ans. “great honey-coloured/Ramparts at your ear” refers to the thick locks of hair that fall over her ears and protect them like ‘ramparts’ which means the same as defensive walls. Upon seeing the beautiful honey coloured hair, the boys would be distracted so severely that they would be thrown into despair.

2. What colour is the young woman’s hair? What does she say she can change it to? Why would she want to do so?

Ans. The colour of the young woman’s hair is yellow. She says that she can dye it ‘brown, black or carrot’. She would want to do, so that her lover must love her internally, not physically.

3. Objects have qualities which make them desirable to others. Can you think of some objects (a car, a phone, a dress...) and say what qualities make one object more desirable than another? Imagine you were trying to sell an object: what qualities would you emphasise?

Ans. The objects that make a person desirable to others can be the dresses, shoes, ornaments, hair dyes, hairstyles, etc. But these are only outward expressions of beauty. The real beauty of a person lies within the person. The beauty of the mind or thoughts is the only beauty that lasts.

If I were to sell an object, I would emphasise on its real qualities like its durability, usefulness, etc. rather than physical appearance and attractive exteriors.

4. What about people? Do we love others because we like their qualities, whether physical or mental? Or is it possible to love someone “for themselves alone”? Are some people ‘more lovable’ than others? Discuss this question in pairs or in groups, considering points like the following.

(i) a parent or caregiver’s love for a newborn baby, for a mentally or physically challenged child, for a clever child or a prodigy

(ii) the public’s love for a film star, a sports person, a politician, or a social worker

(iii) your love for a friend, or brother or sister

(iv) your love for a pet, and the pet’s love for you

Ans. Generally, we love people because of their physical features as well as their mental qualities. For example, a mother loves her child whether it is beautiful or not. But some people, in spite of their physical ugliness, may be more lovable than others because of their mental qualities. The following is to be discussed in pairs or groups:

- (i) A parent's love for a newborn baby, for a mentally or physically challenged child or for a clever child will be almost the same. However, the love of a caregiver cannot reach the same level. It would be determined by the relationship.
- (ii) The public's love for a film star, a sports person, a politician or a social worker depends on their emotions. If these persons work as per the wishes or aspirations of the public, they will be popular. Otherwise, they will soon be forgotten.
- (iii) My love for a friend or brother or sister can't be the same. The love for a friend is on a social or emotional scale. The love for brother or sister is purely on an emotional level. We have a love for a friend, but we have affection for a brother or sister.
- (iv) My love for a pet is because of the cuteness of a pet animal. We do not love those animals which look ugly or are bad-tempered.

5. You have perhaps concluded that people are not objects to be valued for their qualities or riches rather than for themselves. But elsewhere Yeats asks the question: How can we separate the dancer from the dance? Is it possible to separate 'the person himself or herself' from how the person looks, sounds, walks, and so on? Think of how you or a friend or member of your family has changed over the years. Has your relationship also changed? In what way?

Ans. It is true that a person is nothing by himself. We cannot separate him from his traits. For example, we hate a person for his negative qualities. We love a person for his good qualities. We cannot separate a person from his character. But sometimes, a person has hidden qualities.

I have seen some of my friends and family members change with the passage of time. That depends on a number of factors. Seeing that my relationship with friends has also changed, but as far as the family members are concerned, I continue to love them as before, not bothering about their changed attitude towards me.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Extract-based Questions

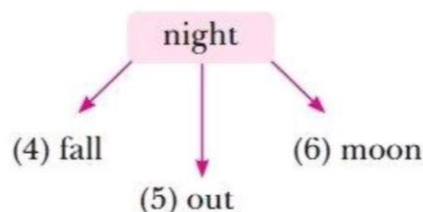
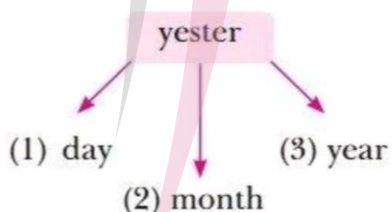
(5 Marks each)

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. I heard an old religious man
 But yesternight declare
 That he had found a text to prove
 That only God, my dear,
 Could love you for yourself alone
 And not your yellow hair.

(CBSE Question Bank)

- (a) 'Yesternight' is a word made of combination of two words to form a new word. Hence, it is a compound word. Choose the words that DO NOT fit the description. (1)



- (i) (3), (4) (ii) (2), (6)
 (iii) (3), (5) (iv) (1), (4)

(b) Who wrote a quote best representing the central idea of the given stanza? (1)

(i) Harpreet	(ii) Manav	(iii) Joel	(iv) Nawaz
You can never meet your potential until you truly learn to love yourself.	Never apologise for being yourself.	God loves you unconditionally, as you are and not as you should be.	Your time is limited so don't waste it living someone else's life.

- (c) The given stanza strongly defies the idea of spiritual self. (True/False) (1)
 (d) What did the old religious man find in the text? (2)

Ans. (a) (ii) (2), (6)

(b) (iii) Joel

(c) False

(d) The old religious man says that he has found a text which proves that only God could love us for ourselves alone and not for our physical beauty. He is the one who truly loves us.

2.

But I can get a hair-dye
 And set such colour there,
 Brown, or black, or carrot,
 That young men in despair
 May love me for myself alone
 And not my yellow hair.

(CBSE Question Bank)

(a) Given below are the taglines of four hypothetical brands. Choose the correct option that fits the best with the first three lines of the given stanza. (1)

LITELIFE	GET SET
Food that makes you light.	My home. My gym.
LOOKBOOK	PLANET FOOD
No game over, get makeover.	Eat! Eat! Eat! Repeat!

- (i) Option (1) (ii) Option (2)
 (iii) Option (3) (iv) Option (4)

(b) The form of the given stanza is a part of an argument. (True/False) (1)

(c) Choose the option that describes a situation of 'despair' as mentioned in the extract. (1)

- (1) Worked very hard and got selected in the audition for the dance competition.
 (2) Worked very hard and was once again, for the 3rd time, unable to get selected in the audition for the dance competition.

(3) Worked very hard for the dance competition audition. My best friend got selected but I didn't.

(4) Worked very hard to get selected in the audition for the dance competition, but the auditions got postponed.

(i) Option (1)

(ii) Option (2)

(iii) Option (3)

(iv) Option (4)

(d) Why does Anne want to change the colour of her hair? (2)

Ans. (a) (iii) Option (3)

(b) True

(c) (ii) Option (2)

(d) By changing the colour of her hair, Anne might find the young man who will love her inner beauty and not her appearance.

3.

Never shall a young man,
Thrown into despair
By those great honey-coloured
Ramparts at your ear,
Love you for yourself alone
And not your yellow hair

(a) 'Never shall a young man' reminds us of _____. (Hint: when the structure of a sentence is changed by the poet to create rhyme) (1)

(i) metaphor

(ii) hyperbole

(iii) inversion

(iv) oxymoron

(b) What makes the young men fall in love with her, according to the stanza? (1)

(c) What does love you for yourself alone and not your yellow hair mean? (2)

(d) Select the sentence in which the word 'love' is used in the similar manner as line 5 of the stanza. (1)

(i) The love of his life is loyal to his beloved.

(ii) Love thy country and respect your countrymen.

(iii) Love has always been treacherous to me.

(iv) Love knows no boundary, no country, no caste.

Ans. (a) (iii) Inversion

(b) Her outward appearance

(c) The poet is talking to a beautiful girl named Anne Gregory. He tells her that a man will never fall in love with her because of her inner beauty, they'll always love her because of her beautiful face and yellow hair.

(d) (ii) Love thy country and respect your countrymen.

Short Answer Questions

(40–50 words: 3 Marks each)

1. What was not liked by the young men?

Ans. The young men do not love the real person but love appearances. Everyone wants that one should be loved for his or her actual personality and not by what he or she looks like.

The young man does not like grey or yellow hair, and they do not care for inner beauty.

2. What is the central idea of the poem, 'For Anne Gregory'?

Ans. The poem conveys the idea that physical beauty may be important for young men or human beings, but God does not love human beings for their physical beauty. In this poem, the poet gives an example of a lover who loves the yellow hair of a young lady and is fascinated by the way it stands as ramparts around her ear. He loves her for what she looks like, but the girl wants to be loved for what she is.

3. To whom is the first stanza of the poem addressed? What does the speaker say to her?

Ans. The first stanza of the poem is addressed to a lady named Anne Gregory. She had a great influence on the poet. He had great respect for her. He tells her that although she is a noble lady, yet nobody would love her for herself alone.

4. The 'yellow hair' is a symbol in the poem. Briefly support the statement with reference to the poem 'For Anne Gregory'. (CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. Yellow hair or blonde hair is considered to be a symbol of beauty. Girls with lighter hair colour are portrayed as beautiful in stories. So, the yellow hair of Anne Gregory in the poem emphasises the conventional idea of a beautiful girl.

5. Evaluate the poem in the context of the given quote.

"If only our eyes saw souls instead of bodies, how very different our ideals of beauty would be." (CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. The poet shares that God loves us unconditionally, for who we are and not our appearances. This quote states that if humans had the ability to look beyond physical appearances, the concept of beauty would have been entirely different. Only God has the ability to resist outward physical temptations. Human beings, without God's strength, can't look beyond physical beauty.

6. The advice given by elders is crucial to young lives. Explain in the context of the poem "For Anne Gregory". (Competency-based Question) (CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. Anne is in her young age. The poet, being an elder, advises her about the concept of love. He also resolves the conflict Anne had in her mind. Quoting a religious text, he makes her understand that only God has the ability to withstand the temptations of physical beauty.

7. Expound on any two ways in which Anne Gregory could practically put the poet persona's advice to use. (CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. Anne Gregory might have understood and propounded that the outward appearance of an individual is insignificant. What is eternal according to her, is the inner beauty and soul. She might not have changed herself for the sake of her lover who finds her beautiful because of the appearance that she has.

8. Describe the method Anne Gregory suggested in order to prove that she is loved for who she is. (CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. Anne Gregory says that she would change the colour of her hair, so that the young men in despair would love her only and not her yellow hair. She wanted them to love her for what she was and not for her appearances such as her hair colour. Objects have qualities which make them desirable to others.

9. Highlight the central theme of the poem 'For Anne Gregory'. (CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. The central theme of the poem is that humans on earth love the outer beauty of everything. They appreciate what seems beautiful to their eyes. In the poem, Anne who is innocent and not well aware of idea of beauty in world, desires to be loved for her soul

which is beautiful. However, the poet tells her that people on earth will love her because of her golden hair.

10. The poet in the poem 'For Anne Gregory' conveys beauty as temporary. Explain with reference to the poem. (CBSE Question Paper, Code 2/5/1; 2022-23)

Ans. In the poem 'For Anne Gregory', the poet has tried to show that inner beauty is real beauty whereas physical appearance is temporary. The first speaker says to Anne that young men love her for her beautiful yellow hair and may never love her for what she really is. To this, Anne replies that her hair colour can be changed into black, brown or carrot, meaning that external beauty is all superficial and men should not love her for that.

Long Answer Questions

(100–120 words: 6 Marks each)

1. The poet in the poem, 'For Anne Gregory' conveys that we should give importance to the inner beauty and not the physical appearance. Elaborate with reference to the poem.

Ans. In the conversation that takes place between Anne Gregory and another speaker, the poet has tried to show that inner beauty is real beauty, whereas physical appearance is changeable and hence, unimportant. The first speaker says to Anne that young men love her for her beautiful yellow hair and may never love her for what she really is. To this, Anne replies that her hair colour can be changed into black, brown or carrot, meaning that external beauty is all superficial and men should not love her for that. Through Anne's reply, the poet has made clear his preference for internal beauty over physical appearance.

2. How right or wrong is it to judge someone on the basis of his/her physical appearance? (Competency-based Question)

Ans. Physical appearances never give the true account of a person as it can be changed with the help of clothing, make-up and other such things.

Something which is not true and real should not be used to judge the person carrying it. A person must be judged on the basis of his behaviour that shows the true characteristics of his personality. This is explained by Anne in her reply to the first speaker that her beautiful hair colour which attracts men is changeable, hence, men should not fall in love with her based on her hair colour.

3. Why do you think, the other speaker mentioned the old religious man and the text that proves that only God can love Anne for herself alone? (Competency-based Question)

Ans. The speaker mentioned the text found by an old religious man that proves that only God can love Anne for herself alone. It is so because the speaker wanted to tell Anne that her desire that men should not see her outer beauty is not going to be fulfilled. The speaker tells Anne that only God can be so great as to avoid external beauty and look beyond it. Man, on the other hand, falls for all things that appear pretty from outside and never bothers about what lies inside.

4. Imagine Anne Gregory grows up to be a motivational speaker. As Anne Gregory, write a short speech on the importance of loving oneself. (Competency-based Question)

(CBSE Question Bank)

Ans. Dear friends,

The importance of believing in oneself can never be overstated. It becomes most important, therefore, to love oneself. I learnt this, as a young teen, the day a poet pointed out that everyone of us is born unique, and in this harsh cruel world, the last thing we would want to do is to criticize ourselves for not being good enough. Eventually, it came

to a point where I stopped caring about what others had thought of me and started to treat myself with love and respect. Throughout these years, I've learnt that loving yourself is the most important thing you can and should do for yourself. It doesn't matter what kind of environment you grew up in, but what does matter is the way you decide to treat yourself.

5. Imagine the poem was written for Anne Gregory's brother, Miller Gregory.

- (a) Would that poem be different from the original poem? If so, highlight the differences it would have.
- (b) Pen down the advice, you think the poet persona would have given to Miller Gregory. *(Competency-based Question) (CBSE Question Bank)*

- Ans. (a) Yes, the poem would be different from the original poem written for Anne Gregory. It would have been written from the perspective of a man, i.e. Miller Gregory who is looking for a beautiful woman to fall in love with.
- (b) In the poem, the poet might advise Miller Gregory to stop rejecting women on the basis of their external beauty. He will ask him to love the woman for her internal beauty. External beauty will go away with time and age, but internal beauty will last for lifetime.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

Extract-based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. I heard an old religious man
But yesternight declare
That he found a text to prove
That only God, my dear,
Could love you for yourself alone
And not your yellow hair.

- (a) Complete the given statement. (1)
The speaker, in the given stanza, responds to the girl's statement about _____.
- (b) The word 'yesternight' is a compound word that has appeared in the stanza. Choose the list/s from the following that purely contain/s compound words only. (1)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Crossword	Aftermath	Candlestick	Downhill
Quirky	Runway	Sunshine	Motorcycle
Awestruck	Pigeonhole	Cutthroat	Offspring
Beachcomber	Aberration	Puckered	Barefoot
Bookworm	Browbeat	Watermelon	Exponential

- (i) Options (1) and (4) (ii) Option (3)
(iii) Options (1) and (2) (iv) Option (1)

- (c) **The message of the given stanza resonates:** (1)
- (i) the elegance and beauty women are blessed with.
 - (ii) loving and caring attention a child gets from his/her parents.
 - (iii) true and pure love of God to His creature.
 - (iv) Both (ii) and (iii)
- (d) **Why has the poet emphasised that only God could love us regardless of our colour, skin, gender or race?** (2)

2.

But I can get a hair dye
 And set such colour there,
 Brown, or black, or carrot,
 That young men in despair
 May love me for myself alone
 And not my yellow hair".

- (a) **The speaker in the above stanza implies:** (1)
- (i) that the speaker is longing to dye her hair.
 - (ii) that there is nothing uncommon to find a selfish love.
 - (iii) what is visible from outside is very superficial and should not be important.
 - (iv) appearances are deceptive.
- (b) **What, according to the speaker, matters most for love?** (1)
- (c) **What can be reflected through the line:** (2)
 'That young men in despair
 May love me for myself alone'
- (d) **Which proverb suits best highlighting the theme of the poem?** (1)
- (i) It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.
 - (ii) Success is the child of audacity.
 - (iii) An idle brain is the devil's workshop.
 - (iv) Beauty is only skin deep.

Short Answer Questions

(40-50 words)

1. What is the theme of the poem, 'For Anne Gregory'?
2. Why do you think the poet mentions the old religious man and the text that proves only God can love Anne for herself alone?
3. What do you think are Anne's views on external beauty?
4. What does the poet mean by 'Thrown into despair/By those great honey-coloured/Ramparts at your ear'?

Long Answer Questions

(100-120 words)

1. Physical beauty is not permanent, but internal beauty is permanent. Explain with reference to the poem, 'For Anne Gregory'.
2. What is the moral of the poem, 'For Anne Gregory'? Explain in detail.

