

HOT Question

1) In the poem No Men Are Foreign, the poet emphasizes the idea of universal brotherhood and equality. Justify this statement with reference to the poem.

Answer: In No Men Are Foreign, the poet James Kirkup highlights the essential unity of all human beings, regardless of nationality, race, or culture. He asserts that the earth we walk on, the air we breathe, and the basic needs of life are the same for everyone. The poet also emphasizes that war, hatred, and division are destructive forces that blind us to our shared humanity. He reminds us that by harming others, we are essentially harming ourselves, as we all share the same human spirit. Thus, the poem advocates for peace, unity, and the understanding that no one is truly foreign, and no land is strange.

2) “Division among people is an illusion created by hatred and ignorance.” Justify this statement with reference to the poem *No Men Are Foreign*.

Answer: In No Men Are Foreign, the poet argues that the divisions we perceive among people are artificial and created by hatred and ignorance. He highlights that beneath the superficial differences of race, nationality, or culture, all humans are fundamentally the same. The poem emphasizes that we all share the same earth, breathe the same air, and live similar lives. The poet denounces the violence and conflicts that arise from these divisions, stating that wars harm everyone and only serve to destroy the unity of mankind. By pointing out that hatred blinds us to our shared humanity, the poet reinforces the idea that division is an illusion, and we are all united by our common existence.

SHORT QUESTIONS

Question 1. How can we be one people though we belong to different nations?

Answer: Even if we belong to different nations, we can be one because we all have the same body and we live and die on the same planet. All of us enjoy the same sun, air and water.

Question 2 “...whenever we are told to hate our brothers....” When do you think this happens and why?

Answer: Whenever their own importance or existence is in danger, politicians and religious leaders make us believe that our existence and our interests are in danger and provoke us to hate our fellow human beings. This happens when we allow our reason to be swayed by our fears and hatred.

Question 3. What are peaceful harvests? What do the peaceful harvests symbolise?

Answer: Peaceful harvests are the bountiful crops grown during times of peace. They are said to be peaceful because they can be nurtured only during times of peace. They symbolise happiness and prosperity.

Question 4: Who tells us ‘to hate our brothers’? Should we do as we are told at such times? What does the poet say?

Answer: The politically motivated and power-hungry people tell us to hate our brothers during wartime. The poet says that we should not get swayed by such provocation. If we do so, it would result in our own dispossession, betrayal and condemnation.

Question 5. What does the poet mean when he says “Remember, no men are strange, no countries foreign”?

Answer: The poet is making an impassioned plea telling readers to give up extreme nationalism and perceived differences between people belonging to different nations. We are brothers because we inhabit the same planet, drink the same water and breathe the same air, but we feel different and behave like enemies at times. The poet wants us to give up our misplaced patriotism and live in universal brotherhood.

Question 6. What does the poet say about ‘hating our brothers’?

Answer: The poet strongly condemns 'hating our brothers'. He feels that when we indulge in such negativity, we actually harm ourselves. We deprive ourselves of the love of our brothers and earn condemnation for such depravity.

Question 7. What does the poet mean when he says “by war’s long winter starv’d”?

Answer: If a war is raging in a country then that country faces the threat of starvation since all agricultural production comes to a halt. Just as there are no crops in winter, war renders a land barren. That is why there is a shortage of food in winters and in times of war, too, there is deprivation and famine. People starve to death. Thus, starvation is associated with war and with winter.