



**INDIAN SCHOOL DARSAIT
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**



Subject : English Lesson : Keeping Quiet

Date of Worksheet : May 2019

Name of the Student : _____ Date: _____

Class & Div : XII Roll Number :

Summary

The poet talks about the need of silence and quiet introspection and the importance of quietude and calmness. He also talks about creating a feeling of mutual understanding among human beings. The poet asks us to keep still and count up to twelve. He also asks us to sit still. For a moment we should not speak any language. We should not move our arms so much. It will be a moment of complete silence without rush or worry. This would be an exotic moment. Then a sudden strangeness will prevail which we will all enjoy. It will be bliss. The fisherman would not harm the whales in the cold sea. Even the man gathering salt would stop working and look at his hurt hands and reflect at the pain and harm, his strenuous task has caused him. All kinds of wars must be stopped at once. The green wars against the environment, wars with poisonous gases, fire arms, must be stopped at once. People who are all the time preparing for wars leaving no survivors behind ought to find time to wear clean clothes and walk around with their brothers strengthening the message of peace and brotherhood. At the same time the poet cautions not to confuse stillness with total inactivity. Life is an ongoing process and should not be associated with death. It is to be lived with positive attitude. He does not want us to ruminate over death. But he feels that if for once we do not focus ourselves single-mindedly to keep our lives moving but do some introspection or spend some time in silence doing nothing, we can understand ourselves better and escape from the threatening calls of death. The earth can teach us a lesson how everything comes to a dead end and comes to life again. In the same manner a quiet introspection can bring all evil thoughts to an end and bring in a new life of peace and tranquility. Now the poet will count up to twelve and we should keep quiet and he will go.

I Read the extract and answer the questions that follow:

1. ***” Perhaps the earth can teach us.... And you keep quiet and I will go.”***

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a) Who can teach us and what?

The earth can teach us. The Earth can teach us how new life emerges from the ashes of the dead remains. Likewise quiet introspection will enable us to live a life of peace and harmony.

b) Why does the speaker count up to twelve?

It is a part of initiation in meditation. All distractions and digressions are washed away and man is in a moment of bliss.

c) Explain-‘you keep quiet and I will go’?

The poet wants us all to keep quiet and experience the moment of realization and peace. He will go and pass on the message to another group of people.

d) How does the Earth teach us that there is activity even in apparent stillness?

Though the Earth appears still, there are changes that keep occurring beneath its surface. A seed that seem lying dead under the Earth germinates under favourable conditions.

2. ***“Those who prepare green wars, wars with gas, wars with fire,... in the shade, doing nothing.***

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a) In which wars are there no survivors?

There are no survivors in the wars of poisonous gases and the war of fire-arms.

b) Who would put on clean clothes?

The war-wagers would put on clean clothes and walk with their brothers under the trees leisurely.

c) What does ‘put on clean clothes’ signify?

‘Put on clean clothes’ signifies the feelings of their mutual understanding.

d) What sort of wars are mentioned in the above lines?

- Green wars destructing the natural environment, wars with poisonous gases and the wars with fire.
3. **“What I want should not be confused with total inactivity....I want no truck with death.”** 4
- a) What is it that should not be confused with total inactivity?
It is the moment of silence that should not be confused with total inactivity.
- b) What is the life about?
Life is about actions and dynamism and must go on. The efforts to keep the race alive cannot be suspended even for a day as action is the essence of life.
- c) Explain: “no truck with death”.
Total inactivity is a synonym of death and he has no association with death. This short silence is very much alive and a preparation for renewed hectic activity.
- d) Name the poem and the poet.
Keeping Quiet and the poet is Pablo Neruda
4. **“If we were not so single-minded about keeping our lives ... threatening ourselves with death.”**
- a) What will happen if we go on thinking single-minded?
In case we go on thinking single minded, we will remain busy in worldly activities, thereby we won't find time for self-introspection. It will be a sad situation.
- b) How can we understand ourselves?
We can understand ourselves through self-introspection.
- c) In what way can huge silence dispel sadness?
Huge silence will remove all our tension, violence and warfare. It will do away with all our sadness.
- d) What is the ‘sadness’ that the poet refers to in the poem?
The poet Pablo Neruda refers to ‘sadness’ which we form out of our own thinking and actions. We understand a lot of things but fail to understand ourselves and our actions and this becomes the creator of all disasters. This is the ‘sadness’ that the poet refers to in the poem
- e) Why does the poet want us to ‘do nothing’ for once?
The poet wants to do nothing for once, here he specifies that we should cease all our activities in order to have introspection within ourselves so that we can realize the exotic moment.

II Answer the following questions in 30-40 words.

1. According to the poet, what is that human beings can learn from nature? 2
We must not forget that nature is a fine teacher. Nature remains at work even under apparent stillness. It teaches us to be quiet and still. We too must understand that all things are bound together and depend on each other for their survival. We should introspect ourselves by remaining calm and composed. It is of no use to trouble or hurt others. We should believe in ourselves and develop at our own pace. We must be contented with what we possess and not be greedy.
2. ‘Under the apparent stillness there is life’. Justify. 2
The poet does not want to equate stillness with total inactivity. Under the apparent stillness there is life. We can learn it from the earth when everything seems dead, the earth still remains alive. The life on earth goes on under the apparent stillness.
3. **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE**
1. Why shouldn't we speak any language and move our arms so much?
 2. How does the poet distinguish ‘stillness’ from ‘total inactivity’? Explain.
 3. “I want no truck with death.” Explain.
 4. What are the various wars mentioned? What is the result of these wars?
 5. What would be the result of quietude?
 6. What is the ‘exotic moment’ mentioned in the poem and how can we achieve it?
 7. According to the poet, why should not we speak in any language?