

## Section C

# LITERATURE TEXTBOOKS & SUPPLEMENTARY READER

## TEXTBOOKS (First Flight)

### Lesson

### 1

## A Letter to God

— G.L. Fuentes



### (Summary)

#### Introduction

Lencho was a simple hearted and hard working farmer. His crop was ruined in a hailstorm. He had no worldly help. So, he wrote a letter to God to send him some money. He did get some money from the Postmaster who was surprised and impressed by his faith in God.

This story reflects the power of faith.

#### Lencho and his fields :

- Lencho was a farmer who lived in a solitary house on the top of a low hill. From here he could see his field of ripe corn.
- The earth was in need of a good rain. He waited eagerly for rain.
- One day, while taking meal, Lencho heard big drops of rain falling.
- He felt that new coins were falling from the sky into the farm.
- But his happiness was short-lived as very large hailstones began to fall.

#### Crop ruined by hailstorm :

- The poor farmer had expected the hailstorm to pass quickly. But no such thing happened.
- The hailstorm destroyed his crop completely. He was filled with grief and sadness.
- He told his family that their work had come to nothing and they would have to go hungry that year.
- His wife consoled him saying “No one dies of hunger”.

#### Lencho’s only hope :

- All through the night Lencho thought of one last hope— the help of God.
- So, the following Sunday morning he wrote a letter to God requesting him to send a hundred pesos to sow his field again.
- He addressed the envelope to God, put the letter inside and went to town to post the letter.

#### Postmaster’s surprise and help :

- The postman was surprised to see such a letter. He showed the envelope addressed to God to his boss, the postmaster.
- At first, he laughed heartily but soon became serious. He opened the letter and read it.
- He was astonished at the faith Lencho had in God.
- Now, the postmaster was a kind man. He thought of helping Lencho. So, with great effort he managed to collect seventy pesos.
- He put the money in an envelope, wrote a single word in the letter — ‘God’ and addressed it to Lencho.

#### Lencho receives the letter :

- On the following Sunday when Lencho received this letter, he got angry to find only seventy pesos in the envelope.
- Immediately, he sat down and wrote another letter to God to express his ideas. He put it in the envelope, affixed a stamp and dropped it in the mailbox.

### Post office employees a bunch of crooks :

- As soon as the letter fell into the box, the postmaster went to open it.
- In the letter Lencho had requested God to send him the rest of the money as he had received only seventy pesos out of a hundred he had asked for.
- Further, he asked God not to send the money through the mail as the post office employees were a bunch of dishonest people.

## ( Word-Meanings )

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**entire**—whole; **crest**—top of mountain; **dotted**—marked with dots; **harvest**—ripe crop; **downpour**—heavy rain; **intimately**—closely; **shower**—light rain; **supper**—light last meal of the day.

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**predicted**—forecast; **approaching**—coming; **huge**—very large; **exclaimed**—said in surprise; **coins**—metal money; **expression**—act of representing one's feelings; **draped**—covered; **resembles**—to have similarity with; **hailstones**—frozen drops of rainwater; **exposing**—to lay open and unprotected; **remained**—was left; **destroyed**—ruined; **plague**—the name of a disease/epidemic; **locusts**—a migratory winged insect.

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**corn**—grain; **sorrowful**—full of sorrow; **solitary**—lonely, single; **upset**—feel disturbed; **seems**—appears; **through**—till the end; **instructed**—imparted knowledge; **conscience**—moral sense of right and wrong; **ox of a man**—very hard-working, laborious; **day break**—very early in the morning—; **place in the mail**—to post; **sow**—to scatter seed on earth to grow; **troubled**—disturbed; **placed**—put, fixed; **mailbox**—postbox; **laughing heartily**—to have

a full laugh; **career**—professional life; **boss**—officer.

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**broke out**—started; **almost**—nearly; **commented**—said, remarked; **correspondence**—communication through letter; **tapping**—giving a gentle blow; **idea**—thought; **evident**—clear; **goodwill**—kind feeling, well wishing; **stuck**—remained firm; **resolution**—firm decision; **several**—many; **obliged**—indebted to; **charity**—kindness; **impossible**—not possible; **gather**—to collect; **addressed**—put postal address; **containing**—comprising, including; **a bit**—a little; **usual**—ordinary, common; **contentment**—satisfaction; **deed**—act; **slightest**—even a little; **surprise**—astonishment, wonder; **confidence**—faith; **counted**—reckoned; **denied**—refused; **wrinkling**—a fold, a crease; **brow**—forehead; **caused**—reason or motive of an action; **effort**—attempt; **express**—to state one's opinion; **licked**—passed the tongue over a thing; **affixed**—attached firmly.

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**blow**—a hard stroke; **fist**—clenched hand; **rest**—remaining; **through**—by means of; **mail**—postal system; **a bunch of crooks**—a group of dishonest people.

## ( Extract Based Objective Type Questions )

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow :

1. The house—the only one in—the entire valley—sat on the crest of a low hill. From this height one could see the river and the field of ripe corn dotted with the flowers that always promised a good harvest. The only thing the earth needed was a downpour or at least a shower. Throughout the morning Lencho—who knew his fields intimately—had done nothing else but see the sky towards the north-east.

(i) Based on the detail of the house's location, how can it best be described?

- (a) majestic (b) imposing  
(c) solitary (d) unique

(ii) The field of corn dotted with flowers means that

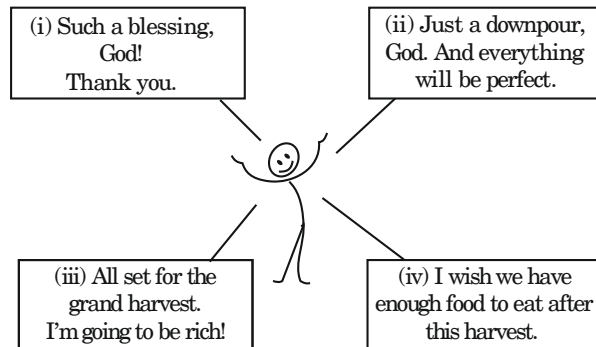
- (a) not a single flower was bigger than a dot  
(b) the flowers were scattered across.  
(c) the flowers were in shaped like dots.  
(d) the flowers had shrunk in size.

(iii) Lencho wished for a downpour or a heavy shower. Pick the option that correctly lists the correct match for kinds of rain.

(1) heavy rain	(i) light rain that fall in very fine drops
(2) thunderstorm	(ii) very heavy rain, tropical rain
(3) drizzle	(iii) It's coming down quite strong and you get very wet very quickly
(4) torrential rain	(iv) really heavy rain that comes very suddenly
(5) downpour	(v) is a violent, short-lived weather disturbance associated with lightning, thunder and strong, gusty winds

- (a) 1→(ii), 2→(iv), 3→(v), 4→(i), 5→(iii)  
 (b) 1→(iv), 2→(i), 3→(iii), 4→(v), 5→(ii)  
 (c) 1→(v), 2→(iii), 3→(iv), 4→(ii), 5→(i)  
 (d) 1→(iii), 2→(v), 3→(i), 4→(ii), 5→(iv)

(iv) Based on the given extract, what is Lencho NOT likely to think while looking at his field?



- (a) Option (i)                      (b) Option (ii)  
 (c) Option (iii)                    (d) Option (iv)

(v) Which quote supports the idea in the given extract?

- (a) "Farming is a profession of hope."  
 (b) "I would rather be on my farm than be emperor of the world."  
 (c) "Farming looks mighty easy when your plough is a pencil, and you're a thousand miles from the corn field."  
 (d) "Those too lazy to plough in the right season will have no food at the harvest."

(vi) The earth needed

- (a) a downpour or at least a shower.  
 (b) some fertilizer/manure.  
 (c) pesticides.  
 (d) a little digging.

(vii) What did Lencho do throughout the morning ?

- (a) Prayed to God for rains.

- (b) Worked in his fields.  
 (c) Seen the sky towards the north-east direction.  
 (d) Stayed with his family.

(viii) Lencho kept looking in the north-east direction because

- (a) the sky looked beautiful that side.  
 (b) the rain-clouds were to come from that direction.  
 (c) his house was in that direction.  
 (d) the storm clouds were approaching from that side.

(ix) The word 'intimately' here means

- (a) thoroughly.                      (b) closely.  
 (c) sincerely.                        (d) dearly.

(x) What promised a good harvest ?

Ans. (i) (c) solitary

(ii) (b) the flowers were scattered across.  
 (iii) (d) 1→(iii), 2→(v), 3→(i), 4→(ii),

5→(iv)

(iv) (d) Option (iv)

(v) (a) "Farming is a profession of hope."

(vi) (a) a downpour or at least a shower.

(vii) (c) Seen the sky towards the north-east direction.

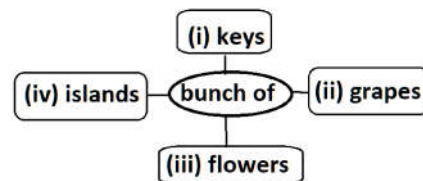
(viii) (b) the rain-clouds were to come from that direction.

(ix) (a) thoroughly

(x) The river and the field of ripe corn dotted with the flowers promised a good harvest.

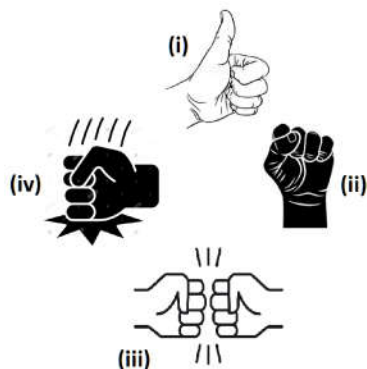
2. When he finished, he went to the window to buy a stamp which he licked and then affixed to the envelope with a blow of his fist. The moment the letter fell into the mailbox the postmaster went to open it. It said: "God: Of the money that I asked for, only seventy pesos reached me. Send me the rest, since I need it very much. But don't send it to me through the mail because the post office employees are a bunch of crooks. Lencho."

(i) '... bunch of crooks.' Pick the option that DOES NOT collate with 'bunch of', correctly.



- (a) option (i)                      (b) option (ii)  
 (c) option (iii)                    (d) option (iv)

(ii) Pick the option that lists the option corresponding to—'with a blow of his fist.'



- (a) Option (i)                      (b) Option (ii)  
 (c) Option (iii)                    (d) Option (iv)

(iii) What was the most likely response that the postmaster expected in Lencho's second letter?

- (i) sorrowful                              (ii) gratitude  
 (iii) disappointment                      (iv) elation  
 (v) shock  
 (a) (ii) and (v)                              (b) (i) and (iii)  
 (c) (ii) and (iv)                              (d) (iii) and (v)

(iv) Lencho's letter included

- (a) details of his problems.  
 (b) description of the post office.  
 (c) belief of being looted.  
 (d) List of further demands.

(v) Pick the most suitable quote for this extract.

- (a) "It is easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled." — Mark Twain  
 (b) "Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance." — Confucius  
 (c) "You see a person's true colours when you are no longer beneficial to their life." — anonymous  
 (d) "True generosity means accepting ingratitude." — Coco Chanel

**Ans.** (i) (d) option (iv)

(ii) (d) Option (iv)

(iii) (c) (ii) and (iv)

(iv) (d) List of further demands.

(v) (d) "True generosity means accepting ingratitude." — Coco Chanel

**3.** With a satisfied expression he regarded the field of ripe corn with its flowers, draped in a curtain of rain. But suddenly a strong wind began to blow and along with the rain

very large hailstones began to fall. These truly did resemble new silver coins. The boys, exposing themselves to the rain, ran out to collect the frozen pearls.

(CBSE, 2010, 1081407-A1, A2)

(i) He felt \_\_\_\_\_ when he saw his fields covered with a curtain of rain.

- (a) angry                      (b) upset  
 (c) satisfied                      (d) only (a) and (b)

(ii) The rain was followed by \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) strong wind                      (b) more rain  
 (c) bright sun                      (d) a party

(iii) The hailstones looked like \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) silver coins                      (b) rain drops  
 (c) young children  
 (d) all of the above

(iv) The frozen pearls are \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) silver coins                      (b) corn field  
 (c) hailstones                      (d) only (a) and (b)

(v) The sudden change that came was that

- (a) the strong wind took away the rain clouds.  
 (b) it stopped raining.  
 (c) along with rain large hailstones started falling.  
 (d) there was cloud burst.

(vi) What did resemble the new silver coins ?

- (a) The rain drops.  
 (b) The hailstones.  
 (c) The pebbles of the boundary.  
 (d) The flowers in the field.

(vii) When the boys saw the hailstones falling, they

- (a) started collecting them.  
 (b) started playing with them.  
 (c) threw them on each other.  
 (d) made a heap of them.

(viii) 'frozen pearls' here means

- (a) icy cold pearls.  
 (b) hailstones  
 (c) icelets that looked like pearls.  
 (d) the name/kind of pearl.

(ix) How did these new silver coins bring disaster to him ?

**Ans.** (i) (c) satisfied

(ii) (a) strong wind

(iii) (a) silver coins

(iv) (c) hailstones

(v) (c) along with rain large hailstones started falling.

(vi) (b) The hailstones.

(vii) (a) started collecting them.

(viii) (b) hailstones.

(ix) These new silver coins turned into hailstones which destroyed all his crops and ruined his hopes.

4. The field was white, as if covered with salt. Not a leaf remained on the trees. The corn was totally destroyed. The flowers were gone from the plants. Lencho's soul was filled with sadness. When the storm had passed, he stood in the middle of the field and said to his sons, "A plague of locusts would have left more than this."

(i) **The field looked as if covered with salt as**

- (a) the hailstorm lasted long and covered the whole field.
- (b) the hailstones were as white as salt.
- (c) Lencho had sprinkled white pesticide over the field.
- (d) there were white flowers on the plants.

(ii) **What was the major effect of hailstorm on the field ?**

- (a) The field was covered with hailstones.
- (b) The corn was totally destroyed.
- (c) The plants bent down due to the pressure of hailstones.
- (d) The leaves and flowers were no more to be seen.

(iii) **Lencho was sad because**

- (a) the hailstorm lasted too long.
- (b) he was left with no corn to sow and feed his family.
- (c) all his and his sons' labour had gone waste.
- (d) he was robbed off his money.

(iv) **The noun form of 'destroyed' is**

- (a) destroy
- (b) destruction
- (c) destroying
- (d) destroys

(v) **Why did no leaf remain on the trees ?**

(vi) **How did Lencho feel after the storm ?**

(vii) **What was the major effect of hailstorm on the field ?**

(viii) **What made Lencho sad ?**

**Ans.** (i) (b) the hailstones were as white as salt.

(ii) (b) The corn was totally destroyed.

(iii) (b) he was left with no corn to sow and feed his family.

(iv) (b) destruction

(v) A hailstorm had struck, leaving the field bare.

(vi) Lencho was utterly unhappy and distressed.

(vii) The corn was totally destroyed.

(viii) He was left with no corn to sow and feed his family.

5. All through the night, Lencho thought only of his one hope : the help of God, whose eyes as he had been instructed, see everything, even what is deep in one's conscience. Lencho was an ox of a man, working like an animal in the fields, but still he knew how to write. The following Sunday, at day break, he began to write a letter which he himself would carry to town and place in the mail.

(CBSE, 2010, 1081403-A1, A2)

(i) **Lencho thought of his one hope as :**

- (a) he wanted to be rich.
- (b) he wanted to buy more land.
- (c) all his crops were ruined due to hailstones.
- (d) he lived all alone in the hill top.

(ii) **Lencho was an ox of man. It means that Lencho :**

- (a) was master of an ox.
- (b) was an illiterate.
- (c) was a hard working strong man.
- (d) was a weak and dependent man.

(iii) **Lencho needed the help of God as :**

- (a) he knows everything about man and helps him.
- (b) Lencho worshipped Him a lot.
- (c) Lencho donated a lot to God.
- (d) he loved Him the most.

(iv) **Find out a word from the passage which means the same as 'subconscious' :**

- (a) conscious
- (b) conscience
- (c) instructed
- (d) mail

(v) **All through the night Lencho thought**

- (a) about his ruined crop.
- (b) about the hailstones and his crop.
- (c) how he would feed his family.
- (d) of one hope — the help of God.

(vi) **Lencho had been instructed about God that**

- (a) God sees everything, even what is deep in one's conscience.
- (b) God gives the reward of sincere hard work, sooner or later.
- (c) God never betrays his trust in Him.
- (d) He always helps His faithful followers.

**(vii) The passage reflects that Lencho**

- (a) was a God fearing fellow.
- (b) trusted God.
- (c) had full hope that God will help him.
- (d) was an orthodox person.

**(viii) The noun form of 'instructed' is**

- (a) instruct
- (b) instruction
- (c) instructional
- (d) instructing

**(ix) The expression—'ox of a man' implies**

- (a) a very hard working man.
- (b) a man who loves oxen.
- (c) a man as sturdy as an ox.
- (d) a man who owns an ox.

**(x) What did Lencho do the following Sunday ?**

- (a) Very early he wrote a letter to God.
- (b) He went to the bank to get some loan.
- (c) He went to the landlord to get some loan.
- (d) He went to his friend to get some help.

**(xi) Lencho wanted to post the letter himself because**

- (a) it was an important letter.
- (b) it was an urgent letter.
- (c) he did not trust anyone.
- (d) if he gave it to someone else he might forget to post it.

**(xii) The noun form of 'carry' is**

- (a) carried
- (b) carries
- (c) carrier
- (d) carrying

**(xiii) What did Lencho think throughout the night ?**

**(xiv) What does 'Lencho was an ox of a man' imply ?**

**(xv) Which line suggests that Lencho was literate ?**

**(xvi) What strange action did Lencho take ?**

**Ans.** (i) (c) all his crops were ruined due to hailstones.

(ii) (c) was a hard working strong man.

(iii) (a) He knows everything about man and helps him.

(iv) (b) conscience.

(v) (d) of one hope — the help of God.

(vi) (a) God sees everything, even what is deep in one's conscience.

(vii) (c) had full hope that God will help him.

(viii) (b) instruction

(ix) (a) a very hard working man.

(x) (a) Very early he wrote a letter to God.

(xi) (a) it was an important letter.

(xii) (c) carrier

(xiii) He thought of one hope—the help of God.

(xiv) He was very hardworking—he worked like an ox.

(xv) "The following Sunday... he began to write a letter ...." This line suggests that Lencho was literate.

(xvi) Lencho's odd action was his letter addressed to God.

**6.** Lencho showed not the slightest surprise on seeing the money; such was his confidence—but he became angry when he counted the money. God could not have made a mistake, nor could he have denied Lencho what he had requested.

**(i) The fact that shows Lencho was sure to get the reply is that**

- (a) he did not show any surprise to receive the letter.
- (b) he asked the postman if there was any letter for him.
- (c) his deep faith in God assured him that God would reply his letter.
- (d) he believed that God will definitely help him.

**(ii) Lencho became angry after counting the money as**

- (a) he received only 70 pesos instead of 100 pesos.
- (b) he thought the post office employees had cheated him.
- (c) God would neither make a mistake nor deny him what he had asked for so post office employees must have cheated him of 30 pesos.
- (d) why did God not send him the full amount ?

**(iii) How much money had Lencho received ?**

- (a) 50 pesos
- (b) 60 pesos
- (c) 70 pesos
- (d) 80 pesos

**(iv) The verb form of 'confidence' is**

- (a) confident
- (b) confidential
- (c) confidently
- (d) confide

**(v) Who could not have made a mistake in Lencho's eyes ?**

(vi) Why was Lencho not surprised on seeing the money ?

(vii) What did Lencho find when he counted the money ?

**Ans.** (i) (a) he did not show any surprise to receive the letter.

(ii) (a) he received only 70 pesos instead of 100 pesos.

(iii) (c) 70 pesos

(iv) (d) confide

(v) God

(vi) This was because, Lencho had full confidence in God. He had firm faith in the help of God.

(vii) He found only 70 pesos and not 100, the amount he had asked for.

## ( Very-Very Important Questions )

### Short Answer Type Questions

**1. Who read the letter sent by Lencho ? What did he do then ?** (CBSE 2-1-1, 2023)

**Ans.** Postmaster read the letter sent by Lencho.

(i) Became serious — impressed with Lencho's faith in God.

(ii) Decided to help him.

(iii) Asked for and collected contribution from post office employees — himself — put it in envelope with a letter with God written.

**2. What did Lencho hope for and why ?** (CBSE 2-2-1, 2023)

**Ans. What :** hoped for good rainfall

**Why :** | rain promised good yield

| crops only source of income.

| black clouds were approaching

**3. In what way would writing a letter to God help Lencho tide over his crisis ?** (CBSE 2-2-2, 2023)

**Ans.** He believed in God — he knew that God would help him/would respond to him/God would communicate with him — he knew that God would send him the money he needed.

**4. The postmaster had mixed emotions while opening the letter. Explain.** (CBSE 2-2-3, 2023)

**Ans.** In the beginning, the postmaster laughed at it. Slowly he became eager and curious to know what was written in the letter to God.

**5. Why did the night after the rains turn sorrowful for Lencho ?** (CBSE 2-4-1, 2023)

**Ans. •** His crops were fatally destroyed by hailstones.

• He had nothing to feed his family.

**6. What are the raindrops compared to and why ?** (CBSE 2-6-1, 2023)

**Ans.** Raindrops are compared to new coins — cents — big drops ten cents and small coins — five cents hopes these raindrops will bring him rich crop.

**7. Whom did Lencho write a letter ? What did he ask for ?** (2016-HAX4L4W)

**Ans.** When Lencho's annual crop was completely destroyed due to heavy rains and hailstorm and there was no one to help him during the crisis, Lencho wrote a letter to God. He wrote the letter requesting him to send 100 pesos so that he could sow his fields again till the next crop.

**8. How far would you agree that one's positivity can bring in a spark of brightness even in adverse circumstances ?** (2015-6YH8G65, 4XHIZCL)

**Ans.** It is absolutely true that optimism can bring about a spark of brightness even in adverse situations. It was Lencho's innocent optimism that eventually led to his getting seventy pesos. In fact, it was his positivity that despite suffering the disastrous effects of the hailstorm he wrote a letter to God in the first place. His hope finally triumphed.

**9. What impression do you form of the postmaster after reading the story 'A Letter to God' ?**

**Ans.** The postmaster was a kind, generous, helpful, amiable and god-fearing man. He was generous, as he helped Lencho with 70 pesos. He also wrote a reply for Lencho's letter in order to maintain his faith in God.

**10. Why was Lencho and his family in distress ? Whom did he ask for help ?** (2010-1081401-A1)

**Ans.** Lencho's crops were completely destroyed by the hailstones. He feared that he and his family would go hungry. He had no one to help him but he had full faith in God whose eyes see everything. He wrote a letter to

God asking for hundred pesos to sow the crop and survive until the next harvest.

**11. Explain the qualities of the post office employees ?** (2018-19-CBSE, SQP)

**Ans.** The post office employees were quite helpful and kind. Lencho sent a letter to God asking for money to make up for the loss caused by the torrential rains to his crops. When the post office employees found it they decided to help him by collecting money from their staff. Even the head postmaster contributed to the fund by giving a part of his salary. They exhibited sympathetic and compassionate behaviour towards the poor farmer.

**12. Why would you not agree with Lencho calling them ‘a bunch of crooks’ ?**

(2018-19-CBSE, SQP)

**Ans.** Lencho was not the least justified in addressing the post office employees as ‘a bunch of crooks’. His crops were badly damaged by heavy rains. He asked for the compensation from God and posted a letter at the post office. When the letter was received at the post office, the staff understood his plight and came forward for his help by contributing money from their side.

### Long Answer Type Questions

**1. Imagine Robert Frost from A Dust of Snow met with Lencho from A Letter to God and discussed the various ways nature can influence a person’s mood. Create this conversation in not more than 120 words.**

You may begin this way :

**Lencho :** As a farmer, my livelihood depends on nature and sometimes nature can be cruel.

(CBSE Addl. Practice, 2023-24)

**Ans. Lencho :** As a farmer, my livelihood depends on nature and sometimes nature can be cruel. Once, I was looking forward to the rain. In fact, I was hoping for it for my crops, and when it did start to rain, I was so satisfied! I even went outside in the rain to feel the rain on my skin and breathe in the sweet air. But the weather very quickly changed and the rain turned into a hailstorm and all of my crops were destroyed.

**Robert Frost :** I’m so sorry that happened to you. Nature can definitely be cruel, but I’ve noticed that it can also be full of hope. I was once having a bad day when a single flake of

snow fell on me. It was so small and beautiful that it completely lifted my mood. I think the way nature influences our mood depends on a variety of factors. I felt hope because I saw the beauty in a single snowflake. But had I seen a hailstorm that destroyed a farm, I’m sure I would have been hopeless too.

**Lencho :** It’s interesting you say that you found hope in nature. For me, I found hope and faith in God. And you’re right, there are definitely a lot of factors that contribute to how nature can influence our mood.

Once the hailstorm was over my entire field was covered in a sheet of white. Anyone else seeing that may have felt it was beautiful and the view may have lifted their spirits. But since that sheet of white meant that all my hard work had gone to waste and my family would go hungry, to me, it only represented sorrow.

**Robert Frost :** Yes, we may not know in whether nature can influence someone’s mood in a good way or a bad way, but what we do know is that nature is powerful and capable of affecting our moods and feelings.

(Accept any other valid response.)

[**Explanation :** A detailed conversation has been presented to allow for usage of content points as per individual choice. However, the final answer has to be a cohesive whole, structured as a conversation, in about 120 words.]

**2. Lencho had faith in God but lacked faith in humanity. Elaborate with reference to ‘A Letter to God’. (100-150 words)** (2019-SQP)

**Ans.** When Lencho’s crops got ruined in the hail storm, he had no hope left but in God. So, he wrote to God requesting for a hundred pesos to sow his field again and to live until the crops came again. Seeing his letter addressed to ‘God’, the kindhearted post master wanted to appreciate his faith in God. He collected some money from his staff and added his own money. Together, he had seventy pesos which he put into an envelope and sent it to Lencho, signing it as God. When Lencho received the money, he was not at all surprised or amazed. So deep was his faith in God. Counting the money, he found it less than what he had asked for. So, he wrote back to God requesting Him to send the remaining thirty pesos, but this time, through mail, as the post office employees were a ‘bunch of crooks’. Thus Lencho, exhibited his lack of faith



in humanity. He did not realize the irony that they were his real helpers, not 'crooks' as he thought them to be.

**3. "Lencho showed not the slightest surprise on seeing the money; such was his confidence - but he became angry when he counted the money."**

Lencho received the money and a letter from God but still he was not happy. Was it not in his attitude to be happy with what he achieved? Did he not know the pleasure of being grateful to others? Reflecting on the values required to lead a happy life, write an explanation in about 100-150 words.

**Ans.** Lencho had full faith in God and hence, he had written a letter to God asking for 100 pesos. But when he received the money and a letter from God, he was not happy. It was not his attitude to be happy with what he had received, nor was he grateful to God. He was angry because he had received 70 pesos instead of 100. He did not doubt God for it. He wrote another letter to God asking him to send rest of the money but not through the post office as he thought they were a bunch of crooks. This shows that Lencho had full faith in God and was confident that his desire would be fulfilled. It was Lencho's innocent optimism that eventually led to his getting seventy pesos. Optimism and faith can lead to happy life.

**4. The postmaster represents such people who still believe in helping others. Mention those values of the postmaster which you would like to emulate in yourself. Write in 100-150 words.**

(2015-KL9NU9N; 2014-04U3C79)

**Or**

**In the lesson 'A Letter to God', what moral values does the postmaster display in his behaviour? (2018-CBSE, Delhi Comptt)**

**Ans.** The postmaster was a kind, generous, helpful, amiable and god-fearing man. He received a letter from Lencho which was written to God asking for 100 pesos so that he could sow his fields again. The postman felt sympathetic towards Lencho. He decided to help Lencho. He gave up a part of his salary and asked all other employees to help. Even friends were made to contribute for a cause of charity and he managed to collect 70 pesos.

He sent the money to Lencho along with a reply. He did so in order to preserve the man's faith in God. This shows the postmaster was a nice man at heart.

**5. 'If you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year.'**

Lencho had faith in God but he didn't manage to solve the problem by himself. Did he lack the courage to resolve his matter himself? What values did he lack? Explain it in 100-150 words.

(2015-SZSVGSP; 2014-CNWW62H)

**Ans.** Lencho was a hardworking farmer. He was completely dependent upon the crops of his fields for feeding his family. His annual crop was completely destroyed due to heavy rains and hailstorm. In the entire village, there was no one to help him during the times of financial crisis. He had firm belief in God and hence he wrote a letter requesting Him to send 100 pesos so that he could sow his fields again till the next crop. This act did not prove that he lacked courage to resolve his problem, but shows that he did not have any option left for himself. He had a firm belief in God. He was an ox of a man but lacked money to stand again.

**6. 'But in the hearts of all who lived in that solitary house in the middle of the valley, there was a single hope: help from God.'**

Give the character-sketch of Lencho.

**Or**

**"I wish I had the faith of the man." Describe Lencho's character in the light of the above statement.**

**Ans.** Lencho was a hardworking farmer. He laboured like an ox. He had good knowledge of farming and knew his crop needed a downpour to give him good yield.

Lencho had great faith in God. He knew how to read and write. He wrote a letter to God for help when his crops were totally ruined by hailstones.

He was a simple and innocent farmer. He could not reason out things. He blamed the post office employees for cheating him of 30 pesos and called them 'A bunch of crooks'.

But Lencho was a caring head of a family. He got sad and worried that his family would have to go hungry.

## (Questions From NCERT Textbook)

### Oral Comprehension Check

#### PAGE 05

**1. What did Lencho hope for ?**

**Ans.** Lencho hoped for a good harvest for which a downpour or at least a shower was needed. So, he waited eagerly for rain.

**2. Why did Lencho say the raindrops were like ‘new coins’ ?**

**Ans.** Lencho hoped to get good crops because of rain drops. He thought he would earn good money so he called them new coins. But rain drops soon turned into hailstones which destroyed all his crops and ruined his hopes.

**3. How did the rain change ? What happened to Lencho’s fields ?**

**Ans.** The rain changed into a hailstorm.

The crops were ruined completely by hailstorm in Lencho’s fields. The poor farmer had expected the hail-storm to pass quickly. But no such thing happened. Lencho was filled with grief and sadness.

**4. What were Lencho’s feelings when the hail stopped ?**

**Ans.** Lencho was filled with grief and sadness. The hailstorm had destroyed his crop completely. He told his family that their work had come to nothing and they would have to go hungry that year.

#### PAGE 06

**1. Who or what did Lencho have faith in ? What did he do ?**

**Ans.** Lencho had full faith in the help of God.

So, he wrote a letter to God requesting him to send a hundred pesos to sow his field again. He addressed the envelope to God, put the letter inside and went to town to post the letter.

**2. Who read the letter ?**

**Ans.** The postmaster read the letter.

**3. What did the postmaster do then ?**

**Ans.** The postmaster was astonished at the faith Lencho had in God. He thought of helping Lencho in order not to shake the writer’s faith in God. He asked for money from his employees and he, himself gave a part of his salary. So, with great effort, he managed to collect seventy pesos and sent the money along with a letter to Lencho.

#### PAGE 07

**1. Was Lencho surprised to find a letter with money in it ?**

**Ans.** Lencho was not at all surprised to see the money in the letter as he was fully confident about receiving God’s help. He knew that God will send money for him. On opening the letter he found seventy pesos instead of hundred. So, he wrote another letter to God to send rest of the amount but now not through mail as he thought that the post office employees were crooks.

**2. What made him angry ?**

**Ans.** Lencho had deep faith in God and hence wrote a letter to God asking for 100 pesos. But when he received 70 pesos instead of 100, he was angry. He wrote another letter to God asking him to send rest of the money, but not through the postoffice as he thought of the post-office employees to be ‘a bunch of crooks’.

#### PAGE 07, 08

### Thinking about the Text

**1. Who does Lencho have complete faith in ? What sentences in the story tell you this ?**

**Ans.** Lencho had full faith in the generosity of God. The following sentences in the story tell us about it.

‘Lencho thought only of his one hope : ‘The generosity of God’, whose eyes, as he had been told, see everything, even what is deep in one’s conscience.’

Again, Lencho showed not the slightest surprise on seeing the money in the envelope—such was his confidence. But he became angry when he counted the money. ‘God could not have made a mistake nor could he have denied Lencho what he had requested. The above facts from the text prove his deep faith and confidence in God.

**2. Why does the postmaster send money to Lencho ? Why does he sign the letter ‘God’ ?**

**Ans.** The postmaster was a kind, generous, helpful and God fearing man. When he received the letter written to God asking for 100 pesos, he felt sympathetic towards Lencho. Hence, he decided to help Lencho. He gave a part of his

salary and asked the other employees to help. He signed the letter 'God' in order to preserve the man's faith in God.

**3. Did Lencho try to find out who had sent the money to him ? Why/why not ?**

**Ans.** No, Lencho did not do so.

Because, he had full confidence and firm faith in God. Even after receiving seventy pesos, he thought that God would have sent all the money, he had requested.

**4. Who does Lencho think has taken the rest of the money ? What is the irony in the situation ? (Remember that the irony of a situation is an unexpected aspect of it. An ironic situation is strange or amusing because it is the opposite of what is expected.)**

**Ans.** Lencho thinks that they may be employees of the post office who had taken the rest of the money. He thinks, "God could not have made a mistake nor he could have denied him what he had requested."

The irony in the situation is that the persons who should have been praised for their contribution, kindness and charity, are being called 'a bunch of crooks'. The kind and generous employees of the post office who contributed a part of their hard earned money to help Lencho so that his faith in God could not be shaken, are blamed by him to have cheated him.

**5. Are there people like Lencho in the real world ? What kind of a person would you say he is ? You may select appropriate words from the box to answer the question.**

greedy	naive	stupid	ungrateful
selfish	comical	unquestioning	

**Ans.** No, there are no such people like Lencho in the real world. This is the rarest of the rare case of Lencho who has extreme faith in God. The writer quotes, "Never in his career as a postman had he known that address".

I would say that he is a naive person who has blind faith in God and relies in his help.

I can confidently say that he is neither greedy nor a selfish person. This is because, he asks for only 100 pesos, that is just sufficient to sow his field and to feed his family till the next crop.

Even in the second letter, he asked for the remaining 30 pesos only.

He cannot be rated as stupid because he knows reading and writing. But he is a responsible person.

Some people may call him ungrateful as he did not thank the post office employees. But, I do not think so because he never could know about their help.

I think his act cannot be called comical. In fact, he is a naive person who does not know that one cannot do correspondence with God through post office. But, one can only pray to God for help.

In fact, his unquestioning faith in God makes him believe that no one except God can help and send him the required money.

**6. There are two kinds of conflict in the story : between humans and nature, and between humans themselves. How are these conflicts illustrated ?**

**Ans.** The writer, G.L. Fuentes has illustrated these conflicts very beautifully :

**Between humans and nature:** This is absolutely true that the man has been struggling against the elemental forces of nature ever since the beginning of life. There have been numerous incidents of disasters that have struck mankind. In the case of Lencho also, we have read that Lencho and his sons worked very hard to grow the crop. They were expecting a good harvest. But, nature's cruel hands in the form of hailstorm ruined their crop completely.

**Between humans themselves:** Here in the story, the conflict is that the persons who should have been given credit for their contribution, kindness and charity, are being called 'a bunch of crooks'. The postmaster, his friend and his employees contribute a part of their hard earned money to help Lencho. But Lencho is unaware of their act of charity and blames them for cheating him. Lencho thought that the post office employees had cheated him by taking out 30 pesos from the envelope. He believed that 'God could not have made a mistake nor he could have denied him what he had requested'.

### **Thinking about Language**

#### **PAGE 08**

**I. There are different names in different parts of the world for storms, depending on their nature. Can you match the names in the box with their descriptions below, and fill in the blanks ? You may use a dictionary to help you.**

gale, whirlwind, cyclone, hurricane, tornado, typhoon

- (i) A violent tropical storm in which strong winds move in a circle : \_ \_ \_ c \_ \_ \_  
 (ii) An extremely strong wind : \_ \_ \_ a \_ \_ \_  
 (iii) A violent tropical storm with very strong winds : \_ \_ \_ p \_ \_ \_  
 (iv) A violent storm whose centre is a cloud in the shape of a funnel : \_ \_ \_ n \_ \_ \_  
 (v) A violent storm with very strong winds, especially in the western Atlantic Ocean : \_ \_ \_ r \_ \_ \_  
 (vi) A very strong wind that moves very fast in a spinning movement and causes a lot of damage : \_ \_ \_ l \_ \_ \_

**Ans.** (i) cyclone (ii) gale (iii) typhoon (iv) tornado (v) hurricane (vi) whirlwind

**PAGE 09**

**II. Match the sentences in column 'A' with the meanings of 'hope' in column 'B'.**

**Ans.**

A	B
1. 'Will you get the subjects you want to study in college?' 'I <i>hope</i> so'.	1. wanting something to happen (and thinking it quite possible.)
2. 'I <i>hope</i> you don't mind my saying this, but I don't like the way you are arguing.	2. showing concern that what you say should not offend or disturb the other person : a way of being polite.
3. This discovery will give new <i>hope</i> to HIV/AIDS sufferers.	3. a feeling that something good will probably happen.
4. We were <i>hoping against hope</i> that the judges would not notice our mistakes.	4. wishing for something to happen, although this is very unlikely.
5. I called early <i>in the hope</i> of speaking to her before she went to school.	5. thinking that this would happen (it may or may not have happened).
6. Just when everybody had <i>given up hope</i> , the fishermen came back, seven days after the cyclone.	6. stopped believing that this good thing would happen.

**III. Relative Clauses**

**PAGE 09, 10**

*Join the sentences below using who, whom, whose, which, as suggested.*

- (1) I often go to Mumbai. Mumbai is the commercial capital of India. (*which*)  
 (2) My mother is going to host a TV show on cooking. She cooks very well. (*who*)  
 (3) These sportspersons are going to meet the President. Their performance has been excellent. (*whose*)  
 (4) Lencho prayed to God. His eyes see into our minds. (*whose*)  
 (5) This man cheated me. I trusted him. (*whom*)

**Ans.** (1) I often go to Mumbai *which* is the commercial capital of India.  
 (2) My mother, *who* cooks very well, is going to host a TV show on cooking.  
 (3) These sportspersons, *whose* performance has been excellent, are going to meet the President.  
 (4) Lencho prayed to God, *whose* eyes see into our mind.  
 (5) This man, *whom* I trusted, cheated me.

**IV. Using Negatives for Emphasis**

**PAGE 10**

*Find sentences in the story with negative words, which express these ideas emphatically.*

1. The trees lost all their leaves.  
*Not a leaf remained on the trees.*  
 2. The letter was addressed to God himself.  
*It was nothing less than a letter to God.*  
 3. The postman saw this address for the first time in his career.  
*Never in his career as a postman had he known that address.*

**V. Metaphors****PAGE 11**

In pairs, find metaphors from the story to complete the table below. Try to say what qualities are being compared. One has been done for you.

<b>Object</b>	<b>Metaphor</b>	<b>Quality or feature compared</b>
Cloud	Huge mountains of clouds	The mass or 'hugeness' of mountains
Raindrops	<i>New coins</i>	<i>Size, shape and monetary value</i>
Hailstones	<i>frozen pearls</i>	<i>round, hard and shining as pearls</i>
Locusts	<i>A plague of locusts</i>	An epidemic (a disease) that spreads very rapidly and leaves many people dead
<i>Lencho</i>	An ox of a man	<i>hard working and strong as an ox.</i>

**Short Answer Type 1 Questions**

1. People get support from family and friends during bad times. How does Lencho's family behave after the harvest is ruined?
2. 'Lencho was an ox of a man, working like an animal in the fields, but still he knew how to write.' What does this line tell us about the norm amongst such farmers, then?
3. What, according to you would have been the likely reaction of Lencho's wife upon knowing about him writing an actual letter to God?

**Short Answer Type 2 Questions**

1. Lencho and his family knew the implications the hailstorm would have on their lives. Write a conversation between Lencho and his wife as they watched the downpour turn to a hailstorm.
2. Lencho did not bother exploring any other means to resolve his situation but just turned to God. Do you feel that his approach was justified? Why/Why not?

**Long Answer Type Questions**

1. The people at the post-office contribute to put together whatever they can manage, for Lencho.
  - (a) What do you think was the main reason behind their help? Would you have done the same if you were one of the employees?
  - (b) As an employee, write about your perspective and reason(s) for contributing to the fund. The fact that you don't want to say 'no' to a cause initiated by your boss, can also be an equally compelling reason!
2. The postmaster was a representative of God. Evaluate this statement in the context of your understanding of 'A Letter to God'.

## (Summary)

'Dust of Snow' is a short poem describing a simple moment which has a larger significance. A crow sitting on a hemlock tree shakes off the dust of snow on the poet. This simple action changes the depressive mood of the poet. Lost in sorrow, he has wasted a part of his day repenting but now with the change of mood, he wants to utilise the rest of the day in some useful activity.

## (Extract Based Objective Type Questions)

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow :

1. The way a crow  
Shook down on me  
The dust of snow  
From a hemlock tree  
Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.

## (Word-Meanings)

**dust of snow**—particulate matter of snow;  
**hemlock tree**—a kind of poisonous plant;  
**rued**—held in regret or repentance.

(i) Of the many symbols the hemlock tree represents, choose the one that Frost drew upon in all likelihood, for this poem.

Symbol of

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| (a) longevity. | (b) togetherness. |
| (c) healing.   | (d) protection.   |

(ii) Choose the option that lists the possible feelings of the poet prior to the experience shared in the poem.

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| (1) reassured | (2) disappointed |
| (3) curious   | (4) demotivated  |
| (5) thankful  | (6) disheartened |
| (7) impulsive |                  |
| (a) 1, 3 & 7  | (b) 2, 4 & 6     |
| (c) 5 & 7     | (d) 1 & 3        |

(iii) Identify the option that DOES NOT use the word 'rue' correctly.

- (a) The film was a disaster and he rued his decision to act in it.
- (b) I am sure she rued the day she listened to a fortune-teller.

- (c) It wasn't long before I rued my disobedience and my deceit.
- (d) Others finally rue the one who is dishonest and heartless.

(iv) *Synecdoche is a poetic device that uses a part to represent the whole. e.g., That's a great set of wheels! (Set of wheels has been used for car.)*

Pick an example of synecdoche from the poem.

- (a) Has given my heart / A change of mood
- (b) The way a crow/ Shook down on me
- (c) The dust of snow / From a hemlock tree
- (d) And saved some part / Of a day I had rued

(v) Choose the option showing the reason NOT corresponding with "... a crow / Shook down on me / The dust of snow".

- (a) The crow's landing on the branch of the tree.
- (b) The shivering of the crow, due to the cold.
- (c) The readjustment of position of the crow on the branch.
- (d) The cawing of the crow hidden in the foliage.

(vi) The composer of the above lines is :

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| (a) Leslie Norris | (b) Robin Klein   |
| (c) Robert Frost  | (d) John Berryman |

(vii) The change of mood was brought by :

- (a) Hemlock tree
- (b) autumn season
- (c) fall of dust of snow
- (d) voice of crow

(viii) Some part of the day was saved as the poet became :

- (a) sad (b) happy  
(c) quarrelsome (d) sleepy

(CBSE, 2010, 1081403-A2)

(ix) What do the 'crow' and 'hemlock' symbolise ?

(x) The mood of the poet changed because \_\_\_\_\_.

(xi) What does the poet mean when he says "and saved some part of the day?"

(xii) Who shook the dust of snow ?

(xiii) What is dust of snow ?

(xiv) What mood of the poet is conveyed in these lines ?

(xv) What did the crow do to the hemlock tree ?

(xvi) What did the tree have on it then ?

(xvii) The rhyming scheme of the given stanza is \_\_\_\_\_.

- (a) a b a b (b) a a b b  
(c) a b c b (d) a b a c

**Ans.** (i) (c) longevity.

(ii) (b) 2, 4 and 6

(iii) (d) Others finally rue the one who is dishonest and heartless.

(iv) (a) Has given my heart / A change of mood

(v) (d) The cawing of the crow hidden in the foliage.

(vi) (c) Robert Frost

(vii) (c) fall of dust of snow

(viii) (b) happy

(ix) The 'crow' symbolises 'joy' and the 'hemlock' tree symbolises 'sorrow'.

(x) He saw a crow sitting on a hemlock tree that shook off the dust of snow on him.

(xi) The poet has saved some part of the day as he did not waste the time in repenting and regretting.

(xii) A crow shook the dust of snow.

(xiii) Dust of snow refers to particulate matter of snow that settles on surfaces after a snowfall.

(xiv) The poet's altered mood, one that changes from sorrow to joy, is depicted here.

(xv) The crow shook the dust of snow from the hemlock tree.

(xvi) The tree had snow on its leaves.

(xvii) (a) a b a b

## ( Very-Very Important Questions )

### Short Answer Type Questions

1. How has the poet observed nature in the poem 'Dust of Snow' ? (2016-KJHLQH)

**Ans.** The poet has observed nature as a positive medium of change for him. The poet had been sorrowful and in depressive mood in the poem. But then the way a crow shook snow dust off, it changed his mood. Nature gave him an inspiration to behave in positive manner.

2. What is the underlying message for us regarding our hectic life with reference to the poem, 'Dust of Snow' ?

(2016-NGD12ZT)

Or

What is the central idea of the poem 'Dust of Snow' ?

(2016-RPNCKFM; 2015-HKLWK17, ORUWQSN)

Or

What does the poet want to convey through the poem 'Dust of Snow' ?

(2016-S1G92GT; 2015-NFYH9EP)

**Ans.** In the poem 'Dust of Snow', the poet wants to convey that sometimes certain

moments or actions which are simple have larger significance. They can change the mood or life of a person. The way a crow shakes down dust of snow on the poet inspires and gives him the idea to shake off his depressive thoughts, become cheerful and do something useful.

3. What side of nature do 'crow' and 'hemlock' represent ?

**Ans.** 'Crow' is a black, harsh voiced bird and 'hemlock' is a tree with poisonous, bitter fruit. Both are not beautiful. They represent dark, depressive, sorrowful and bitter side of nature.

4. Why does the poet use such poetically uncommon bird and tree ? What does it reflect ?

**Ans.** The poet seems to be in a depressive and sorrowful mood. In such a mood, one cannot think of sweet and beautiful side of nature. The harsh, bitter and poisonous images come to his mind. That is why he uses an uncommon, harsh, ugly crow and poisonous tree like hemlock.

**5. Justify the role of the crow in the poem 'Dust of Snow' in changing the poet's mood.** (2016-5K1LVDL)

*Or*

**In the poem 'Dust of Snow', how does the poet's mood get changed ?**

(2018-CBSE, Delhi Comptt)

**Ans.** I think, 'the way snow dust was shaken off' changed his mood. Perhaps it gave the poet inspiration/idea to behave in the same manner—shake off his depressive thoughts and revive his cheerful mood.

**6. What mood of the poet is reflected in the poem ? How does it reflect ?**

**Ans.** The sorrowful and depressive mood of the poet is reflected in the poem. The use of the bird 'crow', which is ugly and harsh, and hemlock tree, which is a poisonous plant, reflects the poet's mood.

### **Long Answer Type Questions**

**1. Positive attitude in life can make the world a better place to live in. Do you agree or disagree with reference to the poem 'Dust of Snow' ? Express your views bringing out the inherent values.**

(2016-QUFPA7N)

**Ans.** I completely agree with the statement that positive attitude can make the world a better place to live in. Robert Frost, in 'Dust of Snow', talks of how an otherwise bad day altered into a not so bad one, due to the action of a crow. It was a seemingly disconnected occurrence that brought about a change of mood in the poet. One lesson that can be learnt from the poet, is to see the brightness amidst the gloom. The crow, the hemlock and the snow are all dark images, and yet, the poet sees the colour of happiness. Another lesson is that life is made up of small joys. It is through them that one can always manage to see positivity in negativity.

**2. Our attitude towards a situation evokes both negative and positive response.**

**Analyse this with reference to the poem, 'Dust of Snow' to bring out the inherent valuable lessons.** (2015-KQKAHD4)

**Ans.** Whatever life throws challenges at us, it evokes both positive and negative responses. The poet, in the poem 'Dust of Snow,' was in a sorrowful mood. However, when a crow shook down the 'dust of snow' on him, his bitter mood changed into a more optimistic one. Now, being in a sorrowful or bad mood already, the poet

could have got angry at the crow also. However, the dust of snow becomes a positive medium of change for him. It made him cheerful to some extent, and helped him forget his sadness, at least for a few moments. Thus, we see that instead of seeing the negative aspect of a happening, one should see the positive aspect, and one's response may greatly affect the outcome of incidents.

**3. 'Has given my heart**

*A change of mood'*

**The poet has succeeded in giving valuable information in a light-hearted manner. What creates the desired effect ? Highlight its importance in the present day life.**

**Ans.** Truly, Frost has used simple language to drive home a very significant message, that little things sometimes, have a big impact. An easy, uncomplicated language, coupled with unusual visual imagery and brevity of words creates the desired effect. The poet's bitterness finds reflection even in the environment around him. The noisy, dark crow, the poisonous hemlock and the icy snow around—all are essentially depressing images. However, despite the negativity, when the crow shakes down the dust of snow onto the poet, it also shakes off some of the author's regretful thoughts. Today, when all of us live in stressful atmospheres, the poem teaches us to gain happiness from little things.

**4. 'And saved some part**

*Of a day I had rued.'*

**Simple moment proves to be very significant and saves rest of the day of poet from being wasted. Explain on the basis of the poem 'Dust of Snow'.**

(2018-19-CBSE SQP)

**Ans.** The poet was in a depressive mood. He was sitting under a Hemlock tree. When a crow sitting on the tree shook off the 'Dust of Snow' on the poet his mood suddenly got changed from sad to happy. The poet was sitting helpless soaked in despondence, thinking about his problems and wasting away his crucial time and energy in unnecessary and futile thinking. The crow's gesture bestowed upon him optimism, he decided to shake off his problems and think of devising a solution instead of lamenting and regretting. The poet sends out the message, through the poem, that there is nothing good or bad in life. Our pessimistic thinking is solely responsible for our sorrows. Life is full of



problems but every problem has a solution. Instead of grieving on our situations we should strive to look for ways to combat the problems successfully. The crow taught the poet a lesson now to take adverse circumstances in stride and work for a better life.

## (Questions From NCERT Textbook)

PAGE 14

### *Thinking about the Poem*

**1. What is a “Dust of Snow” ? What does the poet say has changed his mood ? How has the poet’s mood changed ?**

**Ans.** (i) “Dust of Snow” refers to the small particles of snow that settle on surfaces after a snowfall.

(ii) The poet says that the ‘Dust of Snow’ that is shaken down by a crow on the poet has changed his mood.

(iii) A crow sitting on a hemlock tree shakes off the dust of snow on the poet. This simple action has changed the poet’s depressive mood. His positive spirit revives and he gets ready to utilise the rest of the day in a useful manner.

**2. How does Frost present nature in this poem ? The following questions may help you to think of an answer.**

(i) **What are the birds that are usually named in poems ? Do you think a crow is often mentioned in poems ? What images come to your mind when you think of a crow ?**

(ii) **Again, what is “a hemlock tree” ? Why doesn’t the poet write about a more ‘beautiful’ tree such as a maple, or an oak, or a pine ?**

(iii) **What do the ‘crow’ and ‘hemlock’ represent—joy or sorrow ? What does the dust of snow that the crow shakes off a hemlock tree stands for ?**

**Ans.** (i) (a) The birds like cuckoo, nightingale, pigeon, peacock are usually named in poems.

(b) No, I do not think that a crow is often mentioned in poems.

(c) When I think of a crow the images of a harsh, dark and ugly bird come to my mind.

(ii) (a) “A hemlock tree” is a poisonous tree with small white flowers.

(b) The poet seems to be in a depressive and sorrowful mood. That is why, he does not write

about a more ‘beautiful’ tree such as a maple, or an oak, or a pine.

(iii) (a) The ‘crow’ and ‘hemlock’ represent sorrow. In fact, the poet describes the dark, depressive and bitter side of nature to reflect his own similar mood.

(b) The dust of snow that the crow shakes off a hemlock tree stands for inspiration, revival, positivity and happiness.

**3. Have there been times when you felt depressed or hopeless ? Have you experienced a similar moment that changed your mood that day ?**

**Ans.** (i) Yes, there have been a number of times in my life when I felt depressed or hopeless.

(ii) Yes, I have also experienced a similar moment that changed my mood that day.

On 5<sup>th</sup> of February, an Inter-school debate competition and speech competition were organised in my school. I was a participant in both the competitions. Earlier I had won many prizes in such competitions at the zonal level. I had worked very hard also. So, I was very hopeful to win the first prize in these competitions as well.

The debate competition completed. I performed well. So, I was very hopeful to get a prize. The result got declared but, I was nowhere in the prize list. That made me really depressed and hopeless. I was sitting on one corner of verandah and thinking about not to participate in the speech competition. Suddenly, I heard the melodious song of a cuckoo bird sitting on the branch of a nearby peepal tree. It made me cheerful and inspired me to be cheerful in every situation good or bad. I came to a positive frame of mind. Again, I prepared for the speech competition. And, this time I got the first prize. I was very happy. All the people were clapping for me. That day I realised that a positive outlook on life is one of the most powerful assets one can have.



### ***Short Answer Type 1 Questions***

1. Rationalise what you think the poet was probably doing when the dust of snow fell on him?
2. What does the presence of a hemlock tree tell you about the setting of the poem?
3. The dusting of snow on account of the crow helped make the poet's day better. How do you think the crow's droppings might have impacted the poet?

### ***Short Answer Type 2 Questions***

1. 'Dust of Snow' is one of Frost's most loved poems. Elaborate why you think this is so.
2. The poem evokes a sense of black and white. Justify.
3. The crow and hemlock are usually used as negative references in literature. How is this different in this poem?

### ***Long Answer Type Questions***

1. As a crow you feel highly injured by the incorrect perception humans have about your species. Imagine yourself to be a crow and write your opinion about this prejudice. Make a case for breaking stereotypes.

2. Imagine that Frost is of present day and has been invited to write for an e-zine - "Teen Talk".

He chooses to draw upon his experience with the crow and the dusting of snow to share his thoughts on 'Every cloud has a silver lining'.

As Frost, express your thoughts for the e-zine.