

MAIN POINTS

- 'The Ghat of the Only World' written by Amitav Ghosh is a promise fulfilled by a friend.
- In this eulogy, Amitav Ghosh writes a tribute to the Kashmiri poet Agha Shahid Ali.
- Shahid made the author promise to write about him after his death overtakes him.
- Shahid suffered from a brain tumour and ultimately succumbed to it.
- The writer knew Shahid's work long before he met him.
- Shahid's poems collection, 'The Country Without a Post Office' had made a powerful impression on the author.
- The author came to know Shahid through common friends.
- The lesson focuses on Shahid, what were his likes and what was his way of living life.
- The chapter discusses Shahid's love for Kashmir.
- It also talks about his interest in music, food, literature and art.
- The author also discusses Shahid's views on life.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- The writer had telephoned Shahid to remind him about _____**
 - The invitation to a friend's house for lunch
 - The writer was going to come by his apartment
 - The writer was going to pick him up
 - all
- Meanwhile Shahid had been under treatment for 14 months for _____**
 - tuberculosis
 - malignant brain tumour
 - fracture
 - pneumonia
- Shahid requested the writer _____**
 - to pick him up
 - to drop him back
 - to come visiting again
 - to write something about him
- What did the writer answer to Shahid's request?**
 - he did not answer
 - he was too shocked
 - he would do his best
 - he denied
- The writer knew Shahid before he met him from his 1997 collection:**
 - The Country Without a Post Office
 - The Post Office Without a Country
 - Without a Country Post Office
 - None
- Where did the writer quote from Shahid's book of poems?**
 - in a novel
 - in a book
 - in an article
 - in an essay
- Both the writer and Shahid had studied from**
 - Calcutta University
 - Delhi University
 - Madras University
 - Bombay University
- "Mad heart be brave" was written by**
 - Amitav Ghosh
 - Agha Shahid Ali
 - Shahid Ali
 - Shahid Ghosh
- The writer and Shahid did not share common interest in:**
 - rogan josh
 - Kishore Kumar
 - cricket
 - Roshanara Begum
- The writer hatched a plan of 'adda' with _____**
 - Suketu Mehta
 - Shahid
 - Anita Desai
 - Kiran Desai
- Shahid was originally from _____**
 - Brooklyn
 - New York
 - Shimla
 - Srinagar
- Shahid.....the camera.**

- a. hated b. denied
c. loved d. ignored
13. **Shahid was fond of _____**
a. New Bombay films
b. New American films
c. Old American films
d. Old Bombay films
14. **Shahid's youngest sister was _____**
a. Samina b. Sameetah
c. Shahida d. Parveen
15. **Shahid's brother was _____**
a. Iqbal b. Suleman
c. Muhammad d. Murad
16. **The hospital orderly who got the wheelchair for Shahid was from _____**
a. Bolivia b. Europe
c. Ecuador d. Egypt
17. **Which language had Shahid always wanted to learn?**
a. Chinese b. Japanese
c. Egyptian d. Spanish
18. **Shahid wanted to learn a specific language to read which Spanish author?**
a. Cervantes b. Marquez
c. Lorca d. Borges
19. **When Shahid would open the door the aroma of which Indian spice wafted out?**
a. asafoetida b. cumin
c. cloves d. cardamom
20. **Who used to be in Shahid's kitchen?**
a. Poets b. Students
c. writers d. all
21. **How did Shahid generally greet the writer to his house?**
a. Welcome
b. How nice! You have come to see your little mos-lem
c. hug him
d. I am so happy to see you.
22. **Who was the centre of a perpetual carnival?**
a. Shahid b. the writer
c. Amitav Ghosh d. Lorca
23. **How could one say that Shahid was a good cook?**
a. He cooked tasty food
b. He used spices to cook
c. From the smell of a dish alone he could tell its stage of cooking
d. all
24. **Which poet altered radically the direction of Shahid's poetry?**
a. James Merrill b. Marilyn
c. Manto d. Marquez
25. **Who wrote, "I am at the Ghat of the only world"?**
a. Amitav Ghosh b. Shahid
c. Merrill d. Marquez
26. **Shahid would not tolerate any from traditional methods and recipes.**
a. compliance b. indiscipline
c. deviation d. integration
27. **Shahid dreamed that all.....had vanished from the valley of Kashmir.**
a. Muslims b. Hindus
c. Dogris d. pandits
28. **Once Shahid told the writer that he also loved food.**
a. American b. Bengali
c. Mexican d. Indian
29. **What did the author say to protest Shahid's claim of liking Bengali food?**
a. He had never visited Calcutta
b. He had never visited Bengal
c. He had never tasted Bengali food
d. He didn't even know what Bengali food tastes like
30. **Who stopped Shahid at the Barcelona airport?**
a. police b. a female guard
c. the writer d. inspector
31. **Of the many things that Shahid enjoyed, what was his favourite?**
a. good food
b. friends' company
c. good clothes
d. Begum Akhtar's music
32. **When stopped and asked what Shahid was doing in Spain, at the Barcelona airport, he said.....**
a. boarding a flight b. flying
c. writing poetry d. fishing

33. What answer did Shahid give to the guard who asked him if he was carrying anything potentially dangerous to the passengers?
a. none b. nothing
c. my brain d. only my heart
34. Shahid turned the airport incident into a poem called.....
a. Barcelona Airport
b. Spanish Airport
c. Peruvian Airport
d. American airport
35. Where did Shahid take his last class?
a. Trinity College b. King's College
c. Baruch College d. Cambridge college
36. The studentshim.
a. adored b. liked
c. disliked d. loved
37. Who has been cited as "Akhtar incarnate, brimming with laughter and nakhra"?
a. Iqbal b. Sameetah
c. Suketu Mehta d. Shahid
38. Whom did Shahid address as 'my little subcontinental' in class?
a. another teacher
b. the writer
c. the latecomer student
d. a backbencher
39. Shahid has been called as "intermittent, but first hand witness to the mounting violence" in.....
a. USA b. Kashmir
c. England d. South Asia
40. According to the writer Shahid created his finest work in writing of/about.....
a. America b. India
c. Kashmir d. Pennsylvania
41. Although respectful of religion Shahid remained a firm believer in the separation of religion and
a. festivals b. celebration
c. politics d. society
42. Shahid used to tell people how his mother helped him to build a Hindu temple in his room, when they talked about.....
a. religion b. secularism
c. culture d. muslim fanaticism
43. 'The Country Without a Post Office' is a collection of poems by_____
a. Agha Shahid Ali b. Faiz
c. Amitav Ghosh d. Milton
44. Shahid wanted to die in_____
a. New York b. Northampton
c. Amherst d. Kashmir
45. Shahid's beloved poet was_____
a. Emily Dickinson b. Dickens
c. Robert Frost d. Milton
46. Shahid's grave is in_____
a. Amherst b. Northampton
c. Kashmir d. Manhattan
47. If there's a paradise on earth It is this, it is this, it is this.....Which place is meant by 'this'?
a. Salt Lake City b. New York
c. Kashmir d. America
48. What did Shahid love to think despite his approaching death?
a. Meeting his mother in the afterlife
b. Being laid to rest near Emily Dickenson
c. Meeting his father in Kashmir
d. Teaching at Oxford University
49. Shahid's farewell to the world was his poem_____
a. The Country Without a Post Office
b. I dream I am at the Ghat of the Only World
c. Because I Could not Stop for Death
d. Death be Not Proud
50. All of Shahid's medicines, chemotherapy etc had been stopped, because
a. There was no need
b. He was getting better
c. His cancer was cured
d. He had been given enough medicines

ANSWER KEY

1-d, 2-b, 3-d, 4-c, 5-a, 6-c, 7-b, 8-b, 9-c, 10-a, 11-d, 12-c, 13-d, 14-b, 15-a, 16-c, 17-d, 18-c, 19-a, 20-d, 21-b, 22-a, 23-d, 24-a, 25-b, 26-c, 27-d, 28-b, 29-a, 30-b, 31-d, 32-c, 33-d, 34-a, 35-c, 36-a, 37-d, 38-c, 39-b, 40-c, 41-c, 42-d, 43-a, 44-d, 45-a, 46-b, 47-c, 48-a, 49-b, 50-d

VERY SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What is the full name of Shahid?

Ans. Agha Shahid Ali

2. Who is the writer of the chapter?

Ans. Amitav Ghosh

3. Who was Agha Shahid Ali?

Ans. Agha Shahid Ali was a Kashmiri poet who had migrated to the USA, for higher studies and career growth.

4. What had sparked the friendship between the writer and Shahid?

Ans. Common interests, likes and dislikes.

5. What kind of a woman was Shahid's mother?

Ans. Loving and tolerant of other religions

6. What is understood by 'adda'?

Ans. A gathering or meeting without any agenda.

7. What does 'gregarious' mean?

Ans. A person who likes company, is sociable and accepting of others.

8. How did Shahid make sure to not be depressed despite his cancer?

Ans. By having a party at his place every evening

9. Who attended Shahid's parties?

Ans. poets, students, writers, relatives.

10. Who had exerted maximum influence on Shahid's poetry?

Ans. James Merrill

11. What is understood by the word 'diaspora'?

Ans. People who have left their motherland and migrated to another country for better opportunity

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Describe how the author's friendship with Shahid started?

Ans. The author knew Shahid before he met him through his poems. He had quoted from Shahid's collection of poems, 'The Country Without a Post Office' in an article. In 1998 the conversation started with the help of a mutual friend; and slowly gained momentum after Shahid moved to Brooklyn and started to live in author's neighbourhood.

2. Why do you think Shahid Ali asked the author to write about him?

Ans. Shahid informed the author that his brain tumour

was incurable, even after the surgery. According to the doctors there was not much hope left. He was given a year more or less to live. Though Shahid had many friends, he requested the author to write something about him, because they had developed great friendship over the years. They belonged to the same country, their thoughts and choices were similar. Shahid wanted the writer to remember him not through the spoken recitatives of memory and friendship but through the written word. He knew that generally for writers things become real only in the process of writing, as they have an in-built resistance to dealing with loss and sadness.

3. Why did Shahid want to return to Kashmir?

Ans. Shahid wanted to return back to Kashmir at his last stage of cancer. He was born there and had spent his childhood and adolescence there itself. He wanted to breathe his last in his homeland, which is the only paradise on earth.

4. How did Kashmir influence him as a poet?

Ans. Kashmir was his motherland. It had a great influence on him. The violence that took place in Kashmir has been repeated often in his writing; the disappearance of Kashmiri pandits haunted him and is described in his writings. Owing to this he did not allow anyone to tamper with the original pandit cuisines' recipes. His poems on Kashmir were emotional and not remotely political. He loved humanity above all.

5. Describe Shahid's love of food.

Ans. Shahid had a great fondness for food. One of his favourite dishes was rogan josh, a traditional Kashmiri dish. He could tell at what stage the cooking was merely by the smell. He loved exploring different cuisines from different places. He was a great cook who planned much in advance churning out perfect dishes.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Draw a character sketch of Shahid.

Ans. Agha Shahid Ali was a poet of repute from Kashmir. After completing his education at University of Delhi, he moved to the USA for higher studies and as an academic. He studied creative writing in Arizona after which he did several jobs as a teacher. His illness was diagnosed as brain tumour. Despite a major surgery, chemotherapy, radiation and medication, his cancer did not improve. He passed away on 8th December 2001. He had witnessed the violence of the 80's in Kashmir and was deeply pained by it. His pain and emotion regarding

Kashmir was reflected amply in his poems. He was not a religious fanatic. As a child he was helped by his mother in building a Hindu temple in his room. He loved to cook and hold parties at his home as it prevented him from depression. Emily Dickinson was his favourite poet. He also wanted to learn Spanish in order to read Lorca. He enjoyed old Bombay films, rogan josh and Kishore Kumar. He had a great sense of humour and managed to remain lively and joyful despite the knowledge and discomfort of his terminal illness. He had developed a great friendship with the author and had requested him to write something about him after his passing away.

2. Summarise the chapter the Ghat of the only world in your own words.

Ans. 'The Ghat of the Only World' has been written by Amitav Ghosh in remembrance of his friend poet Agha Shahid Ali. The writing captures the last days of Shahid when he was fighting against brain cancer. Thus the author introduces him in a new light. We come to know that even during his darkest days Shahid managed to remain cheerful and energetic. He tried to enjoy life to the fullest by surrounding himself with people, poetry and food. He was able to accept his impending death with open arms because of his magnanimous views. As a poet he was deeply touched by the violence in his homeland, Kashmir, which is reflected often in his writings. According to the author Shahid was a genuine poet, who was not interested in fame or political views but he cared about becoming the real voice of Kashmir with humanitarian concerns. He had developed a great friendship with the author and had requested him to write something about him after his death.

3. What do you gather of the writer from the chapter 'The Ghat of the Only World'.

Ans. The writer Amitav Ghosh is a prolific writer who is known for his well researched novels and articles. In this chapter he has written about a Kashmiri poet Agha Shahid Ali who was suffering from cancer and had requested the author to write something about him after his death. The author was very upset to know of Shahid's impending death; he tried his best to console and support him. The author was there at the hospital when Shahid's surgery for a brain tumour had taken place. He doted on Shahid, respected him for his unbiased writing on Kashmir which was interspersed with emotions and humanity. The writer has proved himself to be a great friend who keeps his promises made to a dead friend.