

**Main points**

- Ode to a Nightingale is written by John Keats.
- John Keats is a Romantic poet.
- His poetry celebrates beauty which is considered to be the ultimate truth.
- The poem is in the form of an ode.
- An ode is a type of lyric poetry which is written for praising or glorifying an event or an individual.
- Keats wrote this lyrical beauty after being inspired from a nightingale who builds its nest in front of his house.
- The nightingale is a symbol of beauty,immortality and liberation from the world's troubles.
- Keats is intoxicated on hearing the Nightingale song.He compares the song to hemlock,opium and Lethe river.
- Keats wishes to be as happy as the nightingale.
- Keats says that human life is full of miseries and therefore he wants to forget it by drinking a beaker full of wine.
- He wants to leave the world by flying on the wings of poetic imagination and go to the nightingale.
- Keats calls nightingale an immortal bird who sings melodious songs.
- The poet wants to be with the nightingale forever but the truth and reality of life brings him back to himself.
- The poetry of John Keats is filled with sensuous imagination.Its language is sweet and sublime.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS**

1. **What type of poem is,'Ode to a Nightingale'?**
  - a. Sonnet
  - b. Ode
  - c. Ballad
  - d. Elegy
2. **Poet wants to escape from the \_\_\_\_\_ aspects of the human conditions.?**
  - a. Drowsiness
  - b. Pleasant
  - c. Unpleasant
  - d. None of these
3. **"My heart aches....." here the cause of 'ache' is**
  - a. Envy
  - b. Despair
  - c. Suffering
  - d. Joy
4. **What is Lethe?**
  - a. One of the rivers of Hades in Greek Mythology
  - b. An ancient Greek prayer
  - c. A Greek mythological God
  - d. Heaven in Greek mythology
5. **"Of beechen green" is of the poem,'Ode to a Nightingale' Beech is a kind/species of-**
  - a. Bird
  - b. Tree
  - c. Animal
  - d. Witch
6. **" What thou, light-winged dryad of the trees" According to classical mythology Dryad is a/ an**
  - a. Nymph
  - b. Bird
  - c. Goddess
  - d. Angel
7. **What is Nightingale?**
  - a. Bird
  - b. Tree
  - c. Animal
  - d. Flower
8. **The Nightingale sings spontaneously welcoming the season of-**
  - a. Winter
  - b. Spring
  - c. Summer
  - d. Autumn
9. **Hippocrene is \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - a. A mountain
  - b. A fountain
  - c. A river
  - d. A hill
10. **The ingredients of Keats' wine are-**
  - a. Tasting of Flora and the country green
  - b. Dance and Provencal song
  - c. Sunburnt mirth and blushful Hippocrene
  - d. All of these
11. **The word 'beauty' in the line "Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes" refers to-**
  - a. Fanny Brawne
  - b. Rose
  - c. The moon
  - d. Women of beauty
12. **Who has heard the same song of the nightingale in the past?**

- a. Lethe
- b. Dryad
- c. Emperors, Clown, Ruth
- d. None of these

13. In the last stanza Keats finds the song of the bird to be-

- a. Melancholy
- b. Joyful
- c. Charming
- d. Immortal

14. Which word returns the speaker from his reverie to reality?

- a. Meadows
- b. Forlorn
- c. Anthem
- d. Adieu

15. To whom is the speaker/poet addressing in the poem?

- a. Lethe
- b. Dryad
- c. Nightingale
- d. Ruth

### ANSWER KEY

1-b, 2-c, 3-c, 4-a, 5-b, 6-a, 7- a, 8-c, 9-b, 10-d, 11-d, 12-c, 13-a, 14-b, 15-c

### VERY SHORT QUESTIONS

1. Who is the poet of 'Ode to a Nightingale' ?

Ans. 'Ode to a Nightingale' is written by John Keats.

2. What kind of poetry is an 'Ode to a Nightingale'?

Ans. Ode to a Nightingale is an Ode.

3. What is an ode?

Ans. An ode is a lyrical poetry written for a special event or that speaks to particular person or thing.

4. What kind of bird is the nightingale ?

Ans. Nightingale is a bird that sings very sweetly. It is considered to be an immortal bird.

5. Why does the poet's heart ache?

Ans. The poet's heart aches on hearing the song of the nightingale.

6. What is a Hemlock?

Ans. Hemlock is a kind of poison.

7. What is Lethe?

Ans. Lethe in ancient Greek mythology, is an imaginary river of forgetfulness.

8. Why does the poet want wine ?

Ans. The wine helps him to elope with the bird and also provide inspiration for writing poetry.

9. What does the poet want to forget?

Ans. The poet wants to forget all the worries and agonies of life.

10. What is the significance of the word 'forlorn' to the poet ?

Ans. 'Forlorn' means alone and lost. The word brings the poet back to his real self.

### SHORT QUESTIONS

1. What does the poet want to drink and why ?

Ans. The poet wants to drink wine which will help him to leave this world and elope in the dark forest with the nightingale. The poet wants to escape from the worries and anxieties of the world and the wine will help him to forget all his sadness.

2. What is the nightingale symbolic of ?

Ans. In the poem, nightingale is symbolic of beauty, immortality and freedom from the world's troubles. The song of bird is so enchanting that the poet is transported to another world free from the burden of harsh realities.

3. How does Keats explain human life on earth ?

Ans. According to Keats, human life is miserable and dismal. Here everybody's life is fraught with sorrows and sufferings. It is a world ruled by death, decay and destruction.

4. Explain the term light winged Dryad ?

Ans. In Greek mythology, Dryad was a nymph who lived in a wood and flew from one tree to another very swiftly. The poet has compared the nightingale to a Dryad because it also flies in the same manner and sings a mesmerizing song.

5. Why does Keats bid farewell in the end. ?

Ans. On the wings of his poetic fancy, the poet reached the land of nightingale. Yet in the end he bids farewell because he observes that it has no power to keep him confined to the bird's world forever. He realizes that he cannot live in that fantasy world permanently and has to return to real life.

## LONG QUESTIONS

**1. What is the Central theme of Ode to a Nightingale ?**

Ans. Ode to a nightingale is an ecstatic poetry by John Keats. The poem dwells on the idea that nothing is permanent in this world. The speaker perceives immortality in the figure of the bird, of which the speaker believes that it is unplagued by human worries. The song of the bird has been echoing for centuries. Eventually, even, when the nightingale flies away, the speaker is left with a sense of loss that everything in the world inevitably fades away.

**2. From what aspects of human life does the poet wish to escape ?**

Ans. The poet is boundlessly happy on hearing the song of nightingale and he delves deep into other thoughts. He sympathizes with human beings for all the sorrows and sufferings that one has to go through in one's life. The poet wants to escape from all these pains. All the worldly gains have pain rooted in them and he wants to go away from them. He learns that this world can serve nothing more than momentary pleasures to human beings. The poet wishes to escape from all these aspects of human life and desires to go to a world where spiritual bliss awaits him.

**3. Nightingale is symbolic of immortality. Explain**

Ans. In the poem, Keats addresses to the nightingale and talks to it throughout. He cherishes the nightingale's song and feels elated. The song of Nightingale soothes and comforts him. He calls the bird immortal because it is eternal. It does not fade away like the youth of human beings which withers away with time and age. He wishes to be transported to the land of nightingale. The song of the nightingale has been heard from ages. Kings, clowns and even Ruth have heard the voice of a nightingale.