

Amanda!

Answers to NCERT Questions

THINKING ABOUT THE POEM

1. How old do you think Amanda is? How do you know this?

Ans: I think Amanda is a teenager, that is, around 12 or 13. She has acne on her face. Usually, boys or girls at this age have them on their faces.

2. Who do you think is speaking to her?

Ans: It is either her mother or her father speaking to her.

3. Why are Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 given in parenthesis?

Ans: Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 are given in parenthesis because they are not spoken by the speaker. Hence, there is a change in narration. These stanzas reflect the thoughts of a day-dreaming girl, that is, Amanda.

4. Who is the speaker in Stanzas 2, 4 and 6? Do you think this speaker is 'listening to the speaker in Stanzas 1, 3, 5 and 7?

Ans: In stanza 2, 4 and 6, the speaker is Amanda. In stanza 2, the speaker is Amanda in the form of a mermaid, in stanza 4 in the form of an orphan and in stanza 6, in the form of a fairy. She does not listen to the speaker in stanzas 1, 3, 5 and 7 as she is a day-dreaming girl.

5. What could Amanda do if she were a mermaid?

Ans: If Amanda were a mermaid, she could move about in the green sea blissfully.

6. Is Amanda an orphan? Why does she say so?

Ans: No, Amanda is not an orphan, wandering in the street. It is clear in stanza 4. She says so because she wants to have freedom which perhaps she does not have to be a parental child.

7. Do you know the story of Rapunzel? Why does she want to be Rapunzel?

Ans: Rapunzel is the heroine of a fairy story. She is a beautiful girl with long hair. She is imprisoned in a tall tower by a witch. In the story, a handsome prince comes and is able to climb to the top of the tower to meet her. He calls out to her. "Rapunzel. Rapunzel, let down your long hair". Amanda wants to be Rapunzel because then she will have long hair and her prince will come to rescue her from her dull life.

8. What does the girl yearn for? What does this poem tell you about Amanda?

Ans: The girl yearns for freedom. She wants to lead her life the way she likes. Perhaps, she does not get freedom in her house. That is why, in her day-dreams, she imagines her to be free and charming.

9. Read the last stanza. Do you think Amanda is sulking and is moody?

Ans: The poet thinks that Amanda is sulking. In fact, Amanda is not happy with her surroundings. She often escapes to the world of day-dreams. That is why, when she comes back from those dreams to the world of harsh reality, she seems to be sulking.

Additional Questions

Extract Based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow: (4 Marks each)

1. Don't bite your nails, Amanda!

Don't hunch your shoulders, Amanda!

Stop that slouching and sit up straight,

Amanda!

- a. What is Amanda doing to her nails?
- b. What does she do to her shoulders?
- c. What is her sitting posture?
- d. How should Amanda sit?

Ans:

- a. Amanda is biting her nails.
- b. She hunches her shoulders.
- c. She is sitting in a slouching posture.
- d. Amanda should sit straight.

2. (There is a languid, emerald sea,

where the sole inhabitant is me —

a mermaid, drifting blissfully.)

- a. Who do these lines refer to?
- b. How is the sea?
- c. Who is the sole inhabitant of the sea?
- d. What does the person refer to want to do?

Ans:

- a. These lines refer to a little girl named Amanda.
- b. The sea is peaceful and beautiful.
- c. The sole inhabitant of the sea is Amanda who is the mermaid.
- d. Amanda wants to drift blissfully with the soft-moving waves of the sea.

3. Did you finish your homework, Amanda?

Did you tidy your room, Amanda?

I thought I told you to clean your shoes,

Amanda!

- a. What does the speaker ask Amanda?
- b. What does the speaker ask her about her room?
- c. What was Amanda told to clean?
- d. Has Amanda cleaned her shoes?

Ans:

- a. The speaker asks Amanda if she has done her homework.
- b. The speaker asks her if she had cleaned her room.
- c. Amanda was told to clean her shoes.
- d. No, Amanda has not cleaned her shoes.

4. (I am an orphan, roaming the street.

I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet.

The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet)

- a. Who longs to be an orphan?
- b. Where is the orphan roaming?
- c. How does the speaker make designs?
- d. What does the speaker say about silence and freedom?

Ans:

- a. Amanda longs to be an orphan.
- b. The orphan is roaming in the street.
- c. The speaker makes designs with her bare feet on the soft dust.
- d. The speaker says that silence is golden and freedom is sweet.

5. Don't eat that chocolate, Amanda!

Remember your acne. Amanda!

Will you please look at me when I'm speaking to you,

Amanda!

- a. What does the speaker tell Amanda about chocolate?
- b. Why should she not eat chocolate, according to the speaker?
- c. What does the speaker want Amanda to do when he is talking to her?
- d. Was Amanda listening to the speaker?

Ans:

- a. The speaker tells Amanda not to eat chocolate.
- b. She should not eat chocolate as it causes acne.
- c. The speaker wants that Amanda should look at him when he is addressing her.
- d. No, Amanda was not listening to the speaker.

6. (I am Rapunzel, I have not care ;

life in a tower is tranquil and rare ;

I'll certainly never let down my bright hair !)

- a. Who was Rapunzel?
- b. What kind of life did Rapunzel lead?
- c. What did she do with her bright hair?
- d. What does the girl in these lines want to do?

Ans:

- a. Rapunzel was a fairy with very long hair.
- b. She led a peaceful life in a tower in which she was imprisoned by a witch.
- c. She let her hair fall down from the castle for her lover to climb upholding them.
- d. She wants never let down her bright hair.

7. Stop that sulking at once, Amanda!

You're always so moody, Amanda!

Anyone would think that I nagged at you,

Amanda!

- a. Whom does the speaker ask to stop sulking?
- b. Did Amanda really sulk?
- c. What kind of girl was Amanda?
- d. What does the speaker fear people will think about him?

Ans:

- a. The speaker asks Amanda to stop sulking.
- b. Amanda did not sulk, but she had some bad habits like nail biting.
- c. Amanda was a freedom-loving and moody girl.
- d. The speaker fears that people will think that he nags Amanda.

Short Answer Questions (30–40 words: 2 Marks each)

1. What are the role/importance of punctuation marks in language? Why has the poet used the exclamation mark after Amanda? Comment on the title of the poem.

Ans: (i) Punctuation is an important part of grammar. It is used to create sense, clarity and stress in sentences. It is used to structure and organise the writing.

(ii) The exclamation mark is used after Amanda! to show the mother's surprise on seeing Amanda. Amanda is a sulky and moody girl which upsets the mother.

2. Is the purpose of someone constantly giving instructions to Amanda being fulfilled? Explain.

Ans: No, Amanda sulks and becomes moody when her mother gives her too many instructions. She does not listen to her mother and does not care to follow them, but she can't dare to ignore them either, so she sulks. Parents in their endeavour to make their children well-behave, give them too many instructions.

3. Amanda imagines herself to be Rapunzel, yet would not like to do what all she did. Identify and state the reasons for her decision.

Ans: Amanda wants to be Rapunzel because she wants to live a peaceful life in a tower, where no one gives any instruction and she doesn't have to do any work. But she doesn't want to escape with a prince like Rapunzel. She never wants to escape and leave such a peaceful atmosphere, with no instructions and no work to do.

4. Who is the mermaid in 'Amanda'? What does 'she' wish to do?

Ans: The mermaid is Amanda herself; as imagined by Amanda. She wishes to drift blissfully on a dreamy, emerald sea, without anyone else accompanying her.

5. What is the theme of the poem, 'Amanda'?

Ans: Too many instructions and too much control are resented by children. They get bored and fed up. Then they listen to their parents half-heartedly and indulge in day-dreaming.

6. What message does the poet want to give through the poem, 'Amanda'?

Ans: The poet wants to convey that parents in their endeavour to make their children well-behaved, mannerly having good habits, give them too many instructions or nag (always finding fault) them. They should adopt positive measures, acceptable to children. Otherwise, they will stop listening to them and indulge in day-dreaming as Amanda did.

7. Who was Amanda? What idea do you form of her through the poem?

Ans: Amanda was a little school-going girl. She seems to love fairy tales, stories like Rapunzel and mermaids. She does not like too many instructions or nagging which make her sulk and moody. Then she does not listen to her mother attentively and starts day-dreaming.

8. Why does she dream to be an orphan?

Ans: She thinks orphans lead a care-free life. There is no one to pester them with instructions. They can wander in a street and make patterns in the soft dust with their bare feet. They don't have to clean the shoes or room or do the homework.

9. Amanda imagines herself to be Rapunzel, yet would not like to do what all she did. Identify and state the reasons for her decision.

Ans: Amanda says it, in the story, Rapunzel lets down her long, beautiful hair to escape with the prince. But Amanda is fascinated by Rapunzel's life in the tower. She never wants to escape and leave such a peaceful atmosphere, with no instruction and no work to do.

10. What made Amanda sulk and become moody?

Ans: Amanda sulks and becomes moody when her mother gives her too many instructions. She does not want to follow them, but she can't dare to ignore them either, so she sulks.

11. How is Amanda seen behaving when the poem starts? What does the speaker ask her not to do?

Ans: When the poem begins, we find that Amanda is biting her nails. She is hunching her shoulders. She is sitting in a slouching posture. That is why, the speaker asks her to behave normally. He asks her not to bite her nails and hunch her shoulders. She should sit up straight.

12. In her day-dreaming, Amanda reaches the sea. What does she imagine herself to be?

Ans: Amanda finds that the sea is relaxed and peaceful. She is the only creature in the sea. She imagines herself to be a mermaid. She is happy. She is drifting on the waves blissfully.

13. What three things does the speaker ask Amanda to do which she has not done?

Ans: The speaker asks Amanda to finish her homework. Then he asks her if she has cleaned up her room. Finally, he finds that her shoes are not clean even though he had asked her to clean them.

14. How does Amanda describe her life as an orphan?

Ans: Amanda says that she is an orphan. She is free and roams in the street. There is soft dust in the street under her feet. She walks silently and creates patterns on the soft dust with her bare feet. She thinks that silence is golden and freedom is sweet.

15. Why is Amanda forbidden to eat chocolate? How does Amanda behave when she is addressed by the speaker?

Ans: The speaker asks Amanda not to eat chocolate. It is because she has had acne already. Eating chocolate might create more pimples. Amanda listens to the speaker without raising her face.

16. What does Amanda say, “I am Rapunzel”? What does she promise not to do?

Ans: Rapunzel was a beautiful girl with long hair. She was locked up in a tower by a witch. In her imagination, Amanda thinks herself to be like Rapunzel who led a peaceful life. She promises never to let down her bright hair.

17. What does the speaker tell Amanda in the end? What is the speaker afraid of?

Ans: The speaker thinks that Amanda is sulking and becoming moody. He thinks that Amanda is always moody. He asks her not to sulk because he is afraid that people will think that he is nagging Amanda.

18. What is the central idea of the poem?

Ans: The central idea of the poem is that children love freedom. They do not want any restrictions on their activities. Secondly, they have a dream world of their own. They like to spend most of their time in that dream world. But the elders are always destroying that dream world by ordering them around.

Long Answer Questions (100–150 words: 8 Marks each)

1. Is Amanda’s attitude a typical teenage behaviour? What is the lesson for parents from this poem?

Ans: Amanda’s attitude is typical of a teenager. Teenagers can be rebellious and apparently hot-headed with a highly independent perspective. In such circumstances, yelling at them and nagging them, as done in the poem with Amanda, will only make matters worse. Forcing decisions on them only makes them more detached as we see in Amanda’s case, where she wishes to be a love mermaid, an orphan or the lonely Rapunzel. She doesn’t want to listen to anyone.

2. Bringing up teenagers can be both a challenge and fun. How far do you agree? Express your views with reference to Amanda’s life.

Ans: Bringing up teenagers is truly challenging and fun. Teenagers can be rebellious and apparently hot-headed with a highly independent perspective. In such

circumstances, yelling at them, and nagging them, as done in the poem with Amanda, will only make matters worse. Forcing decisions on them only make them more detached, as we see in Amanda's case, where she wishes to be the alone mermaid, an orphan, or the lonely Rapunzel. To make things fun, one must become a friend where needed. Sometimes, one needs to just 'chill' with one's kids!

3. What does the girl yearn for? What does this poem tell you about Amanda?

Ans: Most of the children feel that they are controlled and instructed not to do one thing or the other by their parents. So the child or the girl yearns for freedom, to live her life peacefully, in her own way. Nobody should give her any instructions and tell her what to do and what not to.

Amanda is fed up of getting instructions and being nagged by her mother. She wants to escape all this. She is a moody, imaginative girl who loves fantasy and wants to live in her world of imagination.

Self- Assessment Test

Extract Based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. I am an orphan, roaming the street.

I pattern soft dust with my hushed, bare feet.

The silence is golden, the freedom is sweet.

- Who is 'I' in the above lines?
- Why does the speaker want to be an orphan?
- Explain, 'the silence is golden'.
- Name the poem and the poet.

2. Did you finish your homework, Amanda?

Did you tidy your room, Amanda?

I thought I told you to clean your shoes,

Amanda!

- Who is speaking the above lines?
 - To whom is the speaker speaking?
 - What advice is given by the speaker to Amanda?
 - Did Amanda do the things which were asked by the speaker?
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Short Answer Questions

1. Why does Amanda dream to be a mermaid?
2. What message is the poet trying to convey through the poem, 'Amanda'?
3. What does Amanda constantly yearn for?
4. Why is Amanda sulky and moody?
5. Does Amanda like Rapunzel? Why/Why not?

Long Answer Questions

1. Give a character sketch of Amanda with reference to the poem.
2. Throughout the poem, Amanda is constantly day-dreaming. Describe her dreams in detail.