

Tender Heart High School, Chandigarh

Class: X

Subject: English Literature

7.10.24

Poem: A Considerable Speck

Teacher: Kashama Sharma

PASSAGE-1

- (i) A speck is a small piece of dirt. In the poem, it turns out to be a mite. A mite is a tiny insect which has got two feet, intelligence and decision making power.
- (ii) The poet had been writing something. The last line indicates that he had raised his pen to put full-stop or an end to the sentence he was writing.
- (iii) The words 'idly poised my pen' indicate that the writer had put the pen in his hand in an ideal position to mark a full-stop, or to contemplate what should he write next.
- (iv) The poet later observed that the mite was not just a small piece of dirt. It was something lively and full of intelligence.
- (v) The poet did not kill the mite because he took it as something lively and with a mind of its own. He admired the individuality of the mite because he didn't believe in the theory of collectivistic regimenting love and showed empathy for the mite.

PASSAGE-2

- (i) The little speck appeared to be a small piece of dust only. But the poet felt that it was something lively. It was strange that the speck for the poet meant something having its own mind and intelligence.
- (ii) The first thing that struck the poet about the speck was that it was 'a living mite'; and it had its own ability to move around and even think.
- (iii) The poet was writing something when he noticed a small particle of dust. Later he realized that it was something having its own life and ability to think. In the given context, it implies the poet's own creative ability.
- (iv) The mite reached the inked portion of the paper without anyone's help. It just landed there after it had gone across the sheet of paper still unwritten.
- (v) The feeling that the mite had its own mind which could think like a living organism, refrained the poet from killing the mite.

PASSAGE-3

English Literature

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- (i) The poet noticed the mite racing wildly to the place where his manuscript was kept. It went away and came back again. It brought the reality of the speck to the poet that the mite was nothing else but his own creative ability.

He noticed the reality of the mite when being apprehensive of the nib of the pen it started racing on the sheet of the paper to save its life.

- (ii) The word 'suspicion' in line I here indicates that the mite as creative energy was hovering round the poet's pen. In this situation, 'suspicion' suggests that the 'mite' as creativity was perhaps confirming the poet's proper use of his abilities to write poetry.
- (iii) The mite seemed to drink or smell the ink with a sense of dislike *i.e.*, loathing.
- (iv) A manuscript is the handwritten or unpublished copy of a writing. It would dry as and when the ink on the pages does not remain wet.
- (v) The mite drank a little ink and turned to fly away in terror.

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PASSAGE-4

- (i) 'An intelligence' here means independent faculty to think. The poet asserts this to highlight that the mite he is talking about has special significance and value for him.
- (ii) The mite was very small. There was no scope for such a small entity to have feet. But the way it ran in a very clever way refuted the poet's thoughts that the mite had no room for feet.
- (iii) These words mean that the mite ran here and there in fear. But it moved away to avoid the cause of the terror very cleverly and intelligently.
- (iv) The poet satirizes those who equate the intelligent with the dullard. The poet rather believes that a mite with intellect is better than a man who lacks independent thinking and intellect.
- (v) The poet appreciates the presence of the ability to think intelligently.

PASSAGE-5

- (i) The mite moved away and took its position in the middle of the page. It was in a state of indifference and ready to accept its fate.
- (ii) The phrase 'Collectivistic regimenting love,' means love for some particular groups or species imposed by society or some organization. In the given context, it suggests that the poet did not have any compulsion in appreciating or loving the mite or allowing it to live. The poet did it as he appreciates independent thinking of the mite.
- (iii) The ideology that does not allow independent thinking for the interpretation and understanding of texts has been implicitly criticized by the writer here.
- (iv) There was nothing evil about the mite that the poet could think of. So he let it lie there.
- (v) The poet chooses a 'considerable speck' to express his appreciation of the mind to suggest that even a very small and seemingly insignificant independent thought is valuable. A little speck turns out to be 'considerable' and valuable.

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PASSAGE-6

- (i) The poet appreciates 'mind', *i.e.*, intelligence in others. He does so because he himself has the ability to think intelligently.
- (ii) The quality that encourages independent thinking and inspires new ideas appeals to the writer.
- (iii) In the last stanza the poet expresses the view that the display or expression of intellectual thoughts pleases him. This idea corresponds with the central thrust of the poem. The poem emphasizes the value of independent thinking which gets reinforced in the last stanza. It makes the stanza highly relevant.
- (iv) The poet identified himself with the mite as both have the faculty to think on their own and use their mind for intelligent thoughts.
- (v) According to the poet 'display of mind' suggests the use of intelligent and independent ideas.