

My Mother at Sixty-Six Previous Year Questions

(with model answers)

Q1. “See you soon Amma.” How are these words contrary to the speaker’s emotions? [CBSE 2024]

Ans. The words ‘See you soon Amma’ are contrary to the speaker’s emotions because she is actually filled with fear and sadness about her mother’s aging and the possibility of losing her. The cheerful farewell masks her inner turmoil and concern.

Q2. Write a paragraph focusing on how the poems ‘Keeping quiet’ and ‘My Mother at Sixty-six’ illuminate different facets of human introspection and the significance of quiet reflection in understanding oneself. [CBSE 2024]

Ans. In the poem ‘Keeping Quiet’ the poet makes a direct request to the reader to remain quiet, stop working and introspect. He wants them to ponder over the repercussions of their acts so that they can make better decisions for the future. In the poem ‘My Mother at Sixty-six’ the poet sees her old and aging mother whose face looks like a corpse. However, she chooses to keep her pain within and hides it behind a fake smile. She keeps on thinking that her mother needs her, and is fearful of losing her forever. However, these thoughts remain inside her. She remains silent and keeps on introspecting about her mother. Finally, she smiles at her and leaves. In both the poems, we see the importance of quiet reflection. The ability to develop an idea within one’s mind and then, deciding the future actions leads to better decisions for the future.

Q3. What is the significance of the word ‘but’ in ‘but all I said was see you soon, Amma? [CBSE 2023]

Ans. The significance of the word “but” in the line “but all I said was see you soon, Amma?” from the poem “My Mother at Sixty-Six” by Kamala Das is to contrast the speaker’s actual thoughts and emotions with what she said out loud. The word “but” indicates a contrast, and suggests that the speaker’s thoughts and feelings were much more complex and emotional than what she said. The use of “but” suggests that the speaker is holding back her true feelings and emotions, and that there is an unspoken tension between her and her mother.

Q4. Why has the poet mentioned ‘merry children spilling out of their homes’ in the poem? [CBSE 2020]

Ans. The scene outside the car of merry children spilling out of their homes was contrast to the scene inside the car. She mentions it to create a juxtaposition between the scenes inside and outside the car.

Q5. What is the poet's childhood fear? [CBSE 2019]

Ans. The poet's childhood fear in the poem, My Mother at Sixty-Six, is that of losing her mother's company. Through the poem, the poet has tried to depict how the time is nearing. During this her fears will turn into reality, and this makes her feel unhappy and worried at the same time, for her mother has already moved into her old age and is nearing her last days. Her childhood fear appears to grip her again. When the poet sees the corpse-like and pale face of her mother, her ache or the old familiar pain returns. Perhaps this fear was entertained by her since her childhood.

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