

## **Ozymandias Previous Year Questions (with model answers)**

**Q1. In the poems 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley and 'Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments' by William Shakespeare, the concept of Time is explored, but each poet treats it in a distinct manner. Elucidate. [CBSE 2024]**

**Ans.** In both these poems, time is an important component. In the poem Ozymandias, we see that the passage of time has destroyed the statue of king Ozymandias which is a ruin now. The shattered pieces of the statue lie scattered in the vast desert. In the poem Not Marble nor the Gilded Monuments, the poet refers to time as being 'sluttish', someone with bad qualities because time converts the statues and monuments into ruins. By calling it 'sluttish' he also personifies time and gives a lot of emphasis on the power of time.

We see that both the poets are referring to the destructive nature of time. However, PB Shelley has laid more emphasis on the irony which is there in the words inscribed on the pedestal and the actual condition of the great colossal work which is destroyed with the passage of time. While Shakespeare talks of time having an immoral character which destroys great monuments and statues made by great men. He immortalises his poetry written in praise of the brave men which will outlive the great structures. He says that the poetry will not be affected by time and through it, the praise of the poet's beloved will remain forever.

**Q2. Time humbles even the greatest of the great. One should cultivate the quality of humility. Describe how time has reduced the mighty Ozymandias to nothing. [CBSE 2018]**

**Ans.** King Ozymandias considered himself to be the king of kings. He ruled over his empire with a firm hand. He looked down upon his subjects with sneer and cold command and regarded them as inferior. He was arrogant and highly conceited and believed that no one will ever be able to equal his achievements. He was so intoxicated with power that the welfare of his people was never his consideration. He believed himself to be above law and destiny. But now his shattered statue, half-buried in sand, proved that time had leveled his fame and work. The ruins around the statue bear the testimony to the fact that nothing lasts forever. This is the true destiny of man. He is insignificant before the power of time. The poem illustrates the vanity of human greatness. It depicts, that one must command respect and not demand it. One must never misuse power and might. Glorious deeds should be committed to get respect from posterity. The real power lies in winning the hearts and not in ruling the weak and needy. This describes how time has reduced the mighty Ozymandias to nothing.

**Q3. How can we say that the sculptor was a master artist? [CBSE 2017]**

**Ans.** He was a master artist because he had copied the king's facial expressions of sneer and cold command well, onto the statue.

**Q4. What is the setting of the poem, 'Ozymandias'? [CBSE 2017]**

**Ans.** The setting is a vast expanse of desert where one can see the ruined remains of the statue of king Ozymandias.

**Q5. What do the expressions on Ozymandias' face reveal about him? [CBSE 2017]**

**Ans.** The expressions on Ozymandias' face are of sneer and cold command. They made him appear powerful and absolute ruler-like. His facial expression conveyed that he was arrogant and despised his subjects.

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