

Poetry

UNIT

P.7 Song of the Rain *by Kahlil Gibran*

1. (a) **Given below are five lines from a poem but they are not in the right order.**

Get into groups of four. Read the lines and put them in the right order. Read the version that you develop to the whole class.

The voice of thunder declares my arrival

I emerge from the heart of the Sea

I descend and embrace the flowers.

I am dotted silver threads dropped from heaven

The rainbow announces my departure

- (b) **What is 'I' in these lines?**

- (c) **Imagining yourself as the subject of this poem, write five lines about yourself in less than five minutes.**

You may like to

- define yourself
- state what you do
- explain why people like/dislike you
- mention any other characteristic about yourself

2. **Now listen to a poem about the rain. As you listen number the stanzas given in the boxes.**



I am beautiful pearls, plucked from the
Crown of Ishtar by the daughter of Dawn
To embellish the gardens

I emerge from the heart of the Sea and
Soar with the breeze. When I see a field in
Need, I descend and embrace the flowers and
The trees in a million little ways

The voice of thunder declares my arrival :
The rainbow announces my departure.
I am like earthly life, which begins at
The feet of the mad elements and ends
Under the upraised wings of death

I am dotted silver threads dropped from heaven
By the gods. Nature then takes me to adorn
Her fields and valleys.

I touch gently at the windows with my
Soft fingers and my announcement is a
Welcome song. All can hear but only
The sensitive can understand

The field and the cloud are lovers
And between them I am a messenger of mercy.
I quench the thirst of the one,
I cure the ailment of the other.

I am the sigh of the sea, the laughter of the field;
The tears of heaven.

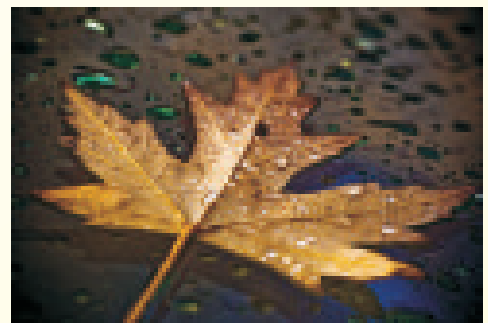
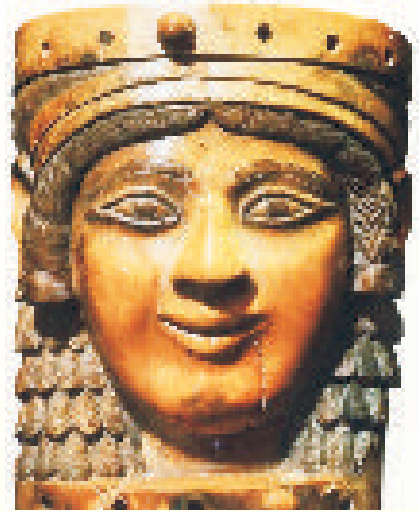
When I cry the hills laugh;
When I humble myself the flowers rejoice;
When I bow, all things are elated



So, with love-
Sighs from the deep sea of affection; Laughter
from the colourful field of the spirit; Tears from
the endless heaven of memories.

3. **Read the song once again.**

- 1 I am dotted silver threads dropped from heaven
By the gods. Nature then takes me, to **adorn**
Her fields and valleys.
- 5 I am beautiful pearls, plucked from the
Crown of **Ishtar** by the daughter of Dawn
To **embellish** the gardens.
- When I cry the hills laugh;
When I humble myself the flowers rejoice;
When I bow, all things are **elated**.
- 10 The field and the cloud are lovers
And between them I am a messenger of mercy.
I **quench** the thirst of the one;
I cure the ailment of the other.
- 15 The voice of thunder declares my arrival;
The rainbow announces my departure.
I am like earthly life which begins at
The feet of the mad elements and ends
Under the **upraised** wings of death.
- 20 I emerge from the heart of the sea and
Soar with the breeze. When I see a field in
Need, I descend and embrace the flowers and
The trees in a million little ways.
- I touch gently at the windows with my
Soft fingers, and my announcement is a
- 25 Welcome song. All can hear, but only
The sensitive can understand.



adorn : to decorate or add beauty to.

Ishtar : Goddess of fertility, love, war and sex, in the Babylonian Pantheon, she "was the divine personification of the planet Venus".

embellish : decorate.

elated : very happy and excited.

quench : satisfy thirst.

upraised : lifted or moved upwards.



I am the sigh of the sea;
The laughter of the field;
The tears of heaven.

30 So with love -

Sighs from the deep sea of affection; Laughter from the colourful
field of the spirit; Tears from the endless heaven of memories.

About the Poet

*Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931) was a Lebanese-American artist, poet and writer. His poetry is notable for its use of formal language as well as insights on topics of life using spiritual terms. One of his most notable lines of poetry in the English-speaking world is from **Sand and Foam** (1926) which reads 'Half of what I say is meaningless, but I say it so that the other half may reach you.'*

4. On the basis of your understanding of the poem, answer the following questions by ticking the correct choice.

- (a) The rain calls itself the 'dotted silver threads' as _____.
- the shimmering drops fall one after the other
 - it ties heaven and earth
 - it dots the earth with shimmering water
 - it decorates the fields
- (b) The tone and mood of the rain in the poem reflect its _____.
- love for the earth
 - desire to take revenge
 - merriment as it destroys
 - desire to look beautiful

5. Answer the following questions

- Why is the rain divine?
- In this universe, rain performs many functions. What are those?
- "When I cry the hills laugh;

When I humble myself the flowers rejoice;

When I bow, all things are elated."

Cry, **humble** and **bow** indicate different intensity with which the rain falls. Explain the three in context.



- (d) How do you think the rain quenches the thirst of the fields and cures clouds ailment?
- (e) Think about million little ways in which the rain embraces the trees. Mention a few of them.
- (f) *"....All can hear, but only
The sensitive can understand"*
What does the poet want to convey?
- (g) (i) Notice the imagery built around '*sigh of the sea*', '*laughter of the field*' and '*tears of heaven*'. Explain the three expressions in context of rain.
(ii) How would you express rain as
- *an agent of floods*?
- *a source of water for dams*?
- (h) *"I am like earthly life ..."*
Why does the poet call rain as earthly life?
- (i) Explain the ending of the song.

6. ***'Ode to Autumn' is a beautiful poem written by the famous poet John Keats. Listen to an excerpt from the poem and pick phrases which personify autumn.***

Phrases

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. ***Rain in the hills and rain in the desert present entirely different scenario. In the hills it revitalises the greenery and freshens the vegetation; it waters the parched land and relieves the thirsty and panting souls in the desert.***

This has been a year of scanty rains. Imagine how the rain would be welcomed when it pours in the hills and in the desert after a long dry spell. Choose one of the places and describe

- (a) What are you likely to see?
- (b) What would happen to the rain water?
- (c) What would be the scene before and after the rain?

