



## Department of Education, Sabaragamuwa - Weekly School

Week - 18

Subject:- English Literature

Grade :- 11

Prepared by – RESC, Kegalle

### Poetry

#### I know why the caged Bird sings (Maya Angelou)

#### Questions for critical understanding and analysis

1. Are the birds trapped within a literal cage or trapped in social prejudices?
2. How do you know that the caged bird yearns for freedom?
3. Why does the writer say that 'the fat worms' are waiting for the free bird?
4. What is the tone of the poet?

#### Essay type questions

1. "The struggle and agony of the unprivileged can be heard in their songs. Their voices like that of the caged bird are heard on distant hills and throughout the nations: the voice for freedom from all the social barriers that torture them". Discuss.
2. "This poem suggests that while the privileged masters enjoy all the comforts, in society, the poor sufferers. This contrast further emphasizes the social disparity where one party is enjoying life; while the other is fighting hard for survival" Elucidate your answer.
3. "The theme of the poem deals with social disparity due to many reasons. The poem discusses the oppression, suppression and the struggle for survival of the lower class in capitalistic societies where humans are divided according to their class, wealth, skin colour and political ideologies". How does the poet bring out this theme?

4. The symbolism and visual imagery used in the poem bring out the social injustices. Discuss the effect of these to the poem.
5. “The caged bird represents the oppressed people of the world who suffer from numerous social injustices. They are repressed throughout history and denied their rights and their personal freedom”. Discuss
6. “In the poem, the free bird is a symbol of the privileged class which holds power. They are blessed with power, wealth and freedom to do anything without fear of retribution unlike the oppressed classes”. Discuss