



Provincial Department of Education- Sabaragamuwa- Week School

**Subject: Appreciation of English
Literary texts**

Week : 1st Week- October

Grade -10

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Once Upon a Time

Gabriel Okara

Pre Learning Activities

- Write a short paragraph on the poet, Gabriel Okara.



- Name some stories you have read/heard, starting with the phrase '*Once upon a time.....*'

Activity 1

1. Who is the speaker in this poem?
2. What type of a narration is this?
3. Who is the listener? Why does he/she remain mute?
4. Is the poem about the speaker's past? How do you know?
5. How did the people in the past laugh? What does it convey about their behaviour?
6. What does the speaker see in people's behaviour in today's world according to the 1st stanza?
7. What is the situation depicted in 2nd stanza?
8. What is the situation revealed in 3rd stanza?
9. List the changes that the speaker has learnt to do to suit the present world.
10. What are the values of people in the past that the speaker appreciates?

Activity 2

Read the poem and fill in the blanks using the words given within the box.

(1)speaks to his son in this poem. He speaks about his own (2) People in today's world even laugh without (3) feelings. Their laugh only with their (4)is of course fake whereas people in the past greeted others so (5) Lack of (6)in people's behaviour in the present world is well highlighted in this poem. Moreover, the speaker has learnt to wear many (7) to suit different occasions. But he deliberately wants to (8)all this (9) He wants to

relearn the values of the people in the past and seeks help from his son to gain (10) emphasizing the fact that a child is a true product of nature and reality.

pretense, hospitality, teeth, experiences, father, sincerity, true, genuinely, faces, unlearn



Activity 3

Discuss in pairs and answer the questions.

1. What special effect is brought by the title “Once Upon a Time”?
2. Why has the poet used a title like this? Explain.
3. Find phrases and words that the poet has used to portray the deceptiveness of the present-day people.
4. The poet subtly mentions about the trends that changed people’s genuineness in his poem. Find out the words and phrases which highlight them.
5. Why does the poet ask his son to help him to unlearn what he has already learnt?
6. What do you think of the tone of the speaker? Does it change towards the end of the poem?

Activity 4

Match the explanation/ quote with the literary technique. Write the correct letter on the given space.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| a. Slow paced | b. Simile | c. Irony and Sarcasm |
| d. Monologue | e. Metaphor | f. Contrast |
| g. First person narration | | |

1. "And I have learned too"
2. The poet has used repetitions and quotations to maintain a sense of deliberateness throughout the poem.
3. "like a fixed portrait smile."
4. Father speaks while the son remains mute throughout the poem.
5. "...their ice-block-cold eyes"
6. The poet well conveys the difference between the past and the present.
7. "I have also learned to say 'Good bye'
When I mean 'Goodriddance!'"

Activity 5

Find out the words and phrases used by the poet to highlight the following themes in the poem and give a brief explanation for each theme.

- Appearance versus reality
- Change that comes through exposure to other cultures
- Adaptation to new ways of life
- Innocent childhood versus adulthood



Post Learning Activity

- Write a short essay on the topic, '*Adaptation to modern world often leads people to be deceitful.*'

Use following links to learn more about the poem.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vhv9SB04aY> - Channel NIE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TplDu3VeO4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHposlx2hIk>

Assessment

Answer the following questions.

1) “So I have learned many things,

I have learned to wear many faces

like dresses.....”

a) From which work have these lines been extracted? Name the writer.

b) Who is referred to as ‘I’? What is the literary technique used in the extract? What is its effect?

c) What does the extract convey about the person referred to as ‘I’? What is his tone?

(5 marks)

2) What does the poet try to highlight in his poem, ‘*Once Upon a Time*’? Explain.

The following guidelines may help you to build up your answer.

- How deceptive appearance can be
- People are forced to adapt to new ways of life
- Various trends that bring changes to particular cultures
- Child versus Adult

(15 marks)