

2.1 Song of the Open Road

ICE BREAKERS

Choose the mode of travel that you would like the most for a journey.

- (a) Airways (b) Waterways (c) Railways (d) Roadways

Give reasons for your preference.

- (a)
(b)
(c)

Ans: I would like travel by train because:

1. I can meet with my Soul Mate:
2. Can have Unlimited Fun with Friends:
3. Can enjoy Bonding with My Family:
4. can buy Clothes, Toys, and Other Stuff at Cheap Prices:
5. Can eat Special Dishes Offered by Indian Railways:
6. Can enjoy the Scenery of the Indian Countryside:
7. Can mingle with the colourful Indian crowd:

➤ Discuss with your partner, the preparations you would like to make for the journey chosen.

- (a)
(b)
(c)
(d)

Ans: My preparation for railway journey:

1. Book Ahead of Time. ...
2. Register with Cleartrip.com Immediately. ...
3. Decide Which Class is Right for You. ...
4. Snag a Foreign Tourist Quota Ticket. ...
5. If Your Route Is Sold Out, Check Nearby Stations. ...
6. Be Prepared for Long Delays (and Bring Snacks)...
7. Pay Attention and Have a Map Downloaded on Your Phone. ...
8. Opt for Overnight Trains When Possible.

➤ Discuss the ways in which you would overcome the problems/ hindrances/ difficulties you face during your journey.

- (a)
- (b)
- (c)
- (d)

Ans:

1- Unclean and unhygienic-

Most trains short or long distance, ordinary passenger trains or super-fast services, barring selected few have no arrangements of proper cleaning. The stinking toilets of trains make it impossible to use these but also make it difficult to travel because the fowl smell makes the travel a horrible experience and this is common for all classes of train

2- Unauthorized vendors –

You can find them everywhere right from entrance of railway stations to main platforms of stations, inside the running trains, general bogies or AC coaches, day or night. You can hear them selling tea & coffee at 2am in sleeper coaches as if you are not there for sleeping purpose but to keep awake with the help of drinks, they are brewing for you. And the height of irony is that railway staff and protection forces are supporting them while you try to protest.

3- Dirty linen –

It is in its literary sense, most blankets and bed sheets, towels, pillow covers are stained, and stinking provided in AC coaches, which you use, as there is no alternative. Most coaches have no proper storage space in sleeper trains but the packets of blankets and other clothing are stored near the stinking toilets or even in toilets some times.

Imagine the problems of sufferings of the passengers when they have to use such stinking clothes. There is one popular saying among Indian travellers especially in Hindi speaking belts 'Suffer is suffering' (In Hindi suffer means traveling). There is no use making complaints of such poor clothes and service provided as you might face the dirty or rude behaviour of attendants or service staff.

4- Theft is common problem-

As there is no stoppage for outsiders to enter into coaches of any class the bad characters take full advantage of the situation and your luggage is always at risk of being stolen. In most cases, you never recover your luggage and railway police mostly behaves in rude way, never registering your complaints or making it a mere formality with no intention to recover your lost property. People generally believe that police and protection forces are in association with thieves.

5- Passengers do not care for others-

Most passengers have no civic sense that make the travel even more difficult by their habits of spilling garbage, spitting frequently eating different tobacco products, spilling water, allowing children to urinate or ease bowl without caring for other passengers.

6- Passengers talking loudly –

While on mobile phones at night are a favourite pass time for many of so-called cultured and educated persons traveling in trains.

7- Enquiry counters-

An enquiry counter is a place on a railway station where you queue up to learn many new experiences but your queries never get an answer as in most cases either there is no one attending the counter. Or if you

are lucky enough and there is one sitting at the counter, he is either talking to his co-workers or busy on his personal phone to have spare time to attend you.

8- No Time table-

There is nothing like fixed time or scheduled running for Indian trains apart from a few selected ones. As against the standards set for late running throughout the world, we do not seem to care much about timetables. As they think if we had our trains running at scheduled timings there was no need of waiting rooms, what I feel is, to take full advantage of waiting rooms they delay their trains. On a serious note, we do not mind trains running late by an hour or two and no one cares much.

9- No pantry services available-

In most trains running for medium or even long distances they do not provide pantry car in the train but in most cases they arrange food from outside or the services provided by unauthorized vendors who provide inferior quality and overcharge passengers as per their own sweet will. The trains having facility of dining car/pantry services have lot to be desired as their services are not up to satisfactory level or too poor in quality, overcharged and not hygienic.

➤ **During every journey we have to observe certain rules. Discuss your ideas of the journey without any restrictions. You can begin like this—**

(a) I would go alone / with selected friends/

(b)

(c)

(d)

Ans: Tips for Traveling in India:

1. Don't Try to Cover Too Much Ground
2. Prepare Yourself for Culture Shock
3. Bring Traveller's Diarrheal Tablets

4. Go Beyond the Cities.
5. Cover Yourself and Dress Conservatively
6. Take Off Your Shoes Before Entering a Temple
7. Get a SIM Card for your phone.
8. Watch Out for Religious Scams
9. Don't Be Afraid of the Local Pharmacy

Understand the Indian Head Waggle

1. Learn How to Haggle
2. Watch Out for Pickpockets
3. Understand that Personal Space Isn't the Same as What You Are Used To
4. Carry Hand Sanitizer and Toilet Paper
5. Consider Going Vegetarian During Your Trip
6. Be Wary of the Common Travel Scams
7. Don't Be Fooled by Fake Ticket Offices
8. Don't Expect Things to Happen on Time
9. Couples – Avoid Public Displays of Affection
10. Learn How to Eat with Your Hands
11. Inspect Bottled Water Before Purchasing
12. Count Your Change Very Carefully
13. Don't Forget Travel Insurance
14. Be on Your Guard When Exchanging Money
15. Be Careful When Walking on the Sidewalk
16. Just Go for It!

Part 2

BRAINSTORMING

(A1) (i) Pick out the lines showing that the poet is prepared to enjoy every moment of his journey.

Ans: Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,

Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

(ii) By 'old delicious burdens' the poet means—

- (a) the luggage
- (b) the food he carries
- (c) the stress he bears during the travels
- (d) sweet memories of the past

Ans: (c) the stress he bears during the travels.

(iii) The poet is a person who is free from all inhibitions. Discuss how the concept of 'freedom' is expressed in the poem.

Ans: He describes himself as being “healthy and free,” and he realizes he is the only person who is in complete control of his life; he chooses his own destiny. Because of this realization, he does not have to wish or hope or pray for good fortune. He says that he, himself, is his own good fortune, and that is all he needs. Here, the speaker seems to separate himself from others. He says the earth is fine the way it is; he does not desire to be any closer to the stars than he already is. Where the speaker emphasizes his free will and independence, which means he probably does not include himself in the group of people who belong to the constellations. He does not belong to them because he does not need them.

(A2) (i) Following are the activities of the poet related to his journey on the road. Divide them into two parts as ‘activities the poet will practise’ and ‘activities he will not practise’.

- (a) Walking along the road though he does not know where it reaches
- (b) Complaining about the discomforts during the journey
- (c) Postponing the journey
- (d) Praying for good fortune
- (e) Carrying the fond memories of the good people
- (f) Creating contacts with famous and influential people
- (g) Striving to achieve high and bright success
- (h) Reflecting and developing his own ‘self’

Ans:

Activities the Poet will practice	Activities the Poet will not practice
1. Walking along the road he does not know where it reaches.	Complaining about the discomforts during the journey.
2. Carrying the fond memories of the good people.	Postpone the journey.
3. Striving to achieve high and bright success.	Praying for good fortune.
4. Reflecting and developing his own self.	Creating contact with famous and influential people.

(ii) Write down the traits the poet exhibit through following lines. One is done for you.

(a) Henceforth, I ask for no good fortune—I myself am good fortune :

Self-confidence

(b) Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need nothing

Ans: Strong

(c) I do not want the constellations any nearer,

Ans: Independent.

(d) I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,

Ans: Declaration

(e) I am filled with them, and I will fill them in return.)

Ans: Promise

(iii) 'Healthy, free, the world before me'.

Express your views regarding the above line.

Ans: The poet describes himself as being “healthy and free,” and he realizes he is the only person who is in complete control of his life; he chooses his own destiny. He's free, out there in the wide world. He can go anywhere he wants to go. He is independent.

(A3) The poet has used many describing words such as 'healthy' in this poem. Make a list and classify them as -

(a) For the world

(b) For himself

(c) For the road

Ans: (a) For the world : wide

(b) For himself : healthy and free

(c) For the road : Open

- (A4) (i) Read the expression ‘old delicious burdens.’ A burden cannot be delicious. The poet has used this combination of words to express that he has many sweet memories of the people and places which he would like to remember forever. The poet has used seemingly contradictory expressions to convey the meaning that his heart is full of sweet memories of good and kind people. Though he wants to be free from any type of attachment, he wants to cherish these sweet memories in his heart forever.

The expression contains opposite ideas that make it seem absurd or unlikely, although it may be true. This is called ‘Paradox.’

- (ii) The road in the poem does not mean only the road to travel. The poet wants to suggest the road of life. Explain the metaphor with the help of the poem.

Ans: It's like this on the road, our speaker tells us: you can reach everything you see, and you approach everyone you see. You can even *possess* everything you see—without even working or paying for it. You take the best parts with you of the people and places you visit. The universe itself, in fact, is a road, on which all souls travel.

- (iii) **Free Verse:** Free Verse is a poetry that does not rhyme or have a regular rhythm. The features of Free Verse are—

It is a literary device that is free from limitations of regular metre or rhythm, does not rhyme with fixed forms, and still it provides an artistic expression. In this way, the poet can give his own shape to a poem as he desires and can use various poetic devices to create the effect he considers suitable for the piece.

As Free Verse gives greater freedom for choosing words and conveying their meanings to readers, it is free from artificiality of a typical poetic expression. This technique is commonly used in modern poetry.

- (a) Although Free Verse requires no metre, rhyme or other traditional poetic techniques, it is the use of internal pattern of sounds, the choice of exact words and their chosen places are the factors which attribute the Free Verse, its lyrical or rhythmic beauty.
- (b) Free Verse is completely different from 'Blank Verse' which essentially has to occur in iambic pentameter. Blank verse is poetry written with regular metrical but unrhymed lines. It is described as 'the most common' form of English poetry which has been influential since the 16th century.

(iv) There are certain words that are repeated in the poem.

For example, 'no more' (Line 7).

Find out other similar expressions. Explain the effect they have created in the poem.

Ans: Henceforth, good-fortune, open road, I am filled with them, and I will fill them in return, I carry them,

(v) The use of personal pronoun 'I' is evident and prominent in this poem. Give reasons.

Ans: *Song of the Open Road* is told from a first person (I) point of view, and the speaker, perhaps Whitman, knows himself very well.

Part- 3

(A5) (i) With the help of the following points, write a poetic appreciation of the poem 'Song of the Open Road'.

- About the poem / poet and the title
- The theme
- Poetic style

- The language/ poetic devices used in the poem
- Special features
- Message, values, morals in the poem
- Your opinion about the poem

Ans: An Appreciation Song of the Open Road

About the poem / poet and the title:

Walt Whitman, a renowned American poet wrote ‘Song of the Open Road’. It is a famous narrative poem about life lessons, observations, and joy. It was first published on July 4, 1855. The poem speaks about the freedom the speaker feels on his journey. It also illustrates how this journey fills his heart with immense pleasure. Though the poem was written in the mid-nineteenth century, it is very much applicable today. The readers would feel motivated and encouraged to enjoy nature, traveling, to be bold and courageous. The poem covers every aspect of human life and offers a solution as well.

The theme:

Freedom, joy, and optimism are the major themes of this poem. Throughout the poem, the poet encourages the readers to be true to themselves and live a free life. Although his life is not free from obligations and troubles, he encourages everyone to live their dreams, leaving the obstacles behind. His journey from the community to the natural world makes him understand the true philosophies, realities and hidden secrets of the world. He understands that the key to happiness is to be true to his ideals, his soul, and his intelligence. Therefore, the poem establishes the idea that the earth offers us multiple chances to fulfil our dreams with the right amount of motivation and determination.

Poetic style/ The Language/ Poetic Devices used in the poem:

Whitman separates his poem into four separate stanzas. With the exception of the first stanza, which contains only three lines, the other stanzas contain four lines of verse. The poem utilizes free verse; the lines are unrhymed and of varying lengths. *Song of the Open Road* is told from a first person point of view, and the speaker, perhaps Whitman, knows himself very well. The poet mainly used figures of speeches like metaphor, alliteration, repetition, paradox etc.

Special features:

The poem is written in very simple and effective language which is easy to understand. As it is written in a free verse, there is no rhyme scheme and meter. In the last stanzas poet uses parentheses to separate himself from the worldly needs. Phrases like 'light-hearted' and 'querulous criticisms' are interesting. Imageries such as constellations and brown colour are noteworthy.

Messages, values, moral in the poem:

It teaches us to be optimistic and happy. We have everything including freedom and opportunities. It encourages us to enjoy the life in healthy and free world. It motivates us to fill our heart with immense pleasure.

Your opinion about the poem:

I think this poem is a motivational which tells us to live our life through our own way. One more thing I like in this poem, that we should respect our mother earth which gives us more than our need. Life is a journey which we live freely and with a nature.

- (ii) Write four to six lines of Free Verse on the topic 'The road that leads to my college'. Express that it is the road to knowledge and bright future. You may begin like this: Every day I tread with the bag of books ...

Ans: Every day I tread with the bag of books

towards my college.

It is a temple of knowledge,

I am the devotee of my college.

It is a place which will mould my life.

There I will get insight of my life.

(iii) Write a blog on the following topic.

(a) Man is free by birth.

Ans: When a man takes birth, he is an innocent being with no duties and responsibilities. He is as pure and innocent as a child of God, but then he is a social being son or a daughter of someone with host of relatives and indebted to his parents and society at large for being given an identity. But a man is found in chains is a fact which is difficult to challenge! The truth of his bondage is reflected at various levels. First is the biological bondage of his various phases in life birth, teenage, youth, maturity, old age and finally death. There are some other chains where the man is caught in present scenario like social and political chain. In social chain you may see the evils or the cruel acts against women or the weaker section of the society, illiteracy, unemployment these are all the social evils where the men is caught today. In politics we have the exploitation of the masses by the handful of dictators who have curbed the man's right of expression and speech. We talk about fundamental rights and human rights they are merely theoretical concepts in today's scenario. Therefore, man is neither born free nor lives in freedom.

(iv) Expand the ideas suggested in the following lines:

(a) All roads lead to Rome.

(b) A man without liberty is a body without a soul.

Ans:

(a) All roads lead to Rome:

The phrase *all roads lead to Rome* means that there are various ways to reach a conclusion, many ways to achieve a goal, and many routes to arrive at a decision. The idea is that there are many methods to accomplish something, all leading to the same result. The proverb *all roads lead to Rome* may be derived from a phrase coined by French poet Alain de Lille in the Middle Ages in 1175: “mille vie docent hominem per secula Romam,” which means “a thousand roads lead a man forever toward Rome.” Ancient Rome and the Roman Empire is well-known for its engineering prowess. Many ancient Roman structures are still intact, including aqueducts, public Roman baths such as the Baths of Caracalla, walls such as Hadrian’s Wall and the Antonine Wall, and Roman architecture such as palaces, temples, and coliseums where one may view Roman concrete. Portions of many Roman roads such as the Appian Way or Via Appia are still in existence. These roads provided a route for a strong Roman economy and for rapid deployment of the Roman army. Every Roman road was considered to begin at the Milliarium Aureum or Golden Milestone, installed by Emperor Caesar Augustus in the Roman Forum in the City of Rome.

(b) A without liberty is a body without a soul:

It is quite true liberty is as essential as air we breathe. If you have liberty, you can create anything; but if you don’t have it, life appears hard struggle. If a man has all the luxuries but no liberty, those luxuries can't make him happy. On the contrary if he has less luxuries, but complete liberty, he will be happy. Liberty is life. Without liberty life is worse than hell. Life is all about man attaining liberty. In the past man lived in various types of slaveries. In the Stone Age he strove to achieve liberty ignorance. He learnt to make fire, shelters, clothes, etc. Then with the formation of human societies, various ills such as discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, creed,

and financial status arose. Then men fought for political, social, and financial liberty. Still many challenges such as fatal diseases, pollution, advancement of science and technology stand as unconquerable mountains in front of him. Man must work harder to be free of all types of bondages. Only then he can say he is truly free. He is busy making strategies to overcome them. Liberty is essential for man's happiness. Without it man's life is meaningless.

(A6) (i) Take help from the sources available on the internet and make a list of proverbs and quotations about 'road.'

(ii) Read the poem 'The Road Not Taken' by Robert Frost.

Ans:

(i) A list of proverbs and quotations about 'road'

1. Short is the road that leads from fear to hatred. ~ Italian Proverb
2. Light in the streets, shadows in the house. ~ South American Proverbs
3. The wind sweeps the road clean. ~ Sanskrit Proverb
4. Heaven has a road, but no one travels it; Hell has no gate but men will dig to get there. ~ Chinese Proverb
5. If you want to travel fast use the old roads. ~ Vietnamese Proverb
6. The night walks the same road as the dream. ~ Russian Proverb
7. shortcut There are a thousand roads to every wrong. ~ Polish Proverb
8. Don't leave the main road for a. ~ Portuguese Proverb
9. The road to success is lined with many tempting parking spaces. ~ Traditional Proverb
10. Good looking and good luck don't always walk the same road. ~ Creole Proverb

11. One generation builds the street on which the next will walk. ~ Chinese Proverb

12. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. ~ English Proverb

13. Failures are but mileposts on the road to success. ~ Italian Proverb

14. One road lead to heaven but many lead to hell. ~ Hungarian Proverb

15. The longest road out is the shortest road home. ~ Irish Proverb

16. Two shorten the road. ~ Irish Proverb

17. You make a road by walking on it. ~ Nicaraguan Proverb

18. The ear is the road to the heart. ~ French Proverb

19. Leave a great talker in the middle of the street. ~ English Proverbs

20. You often meet your destiny on the road you take to avoid it. ~ French Proverb

21. Goodwill makes the road shorter. ~ Brazilian Proverbs

22. Dangerous enemies will meet again in narrow streets. ~ Chinese Proverb

23. Every road does not lead to Rome. ~ Slovenian Proverb

(ii) The Road Not Taken (BY ROBERT FROST)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.