



Summary:

At night, there are dark clouds that cover the sky. It rains gently and the poet lies on his cozy bed listening to the patter of the soft rain on the roof. He enjoys the sound, the melody of nature.

Every tinkle on the roof echoes in his heart. He recalls the memories of his childhood. The single memory that comes to him, is that of his mother. He pictures the face of his mother as it used to look at him as she tucked him in bed. He recalls how his mother used to tell him stories. He continues enjoying the patter of rain on the roof.

POETIC DEVICES USED IN THE POEM

- 1. Alliteration:** The repetition of an initial consonant sound in two or more consecutive words. 'Humid Hover' – 'h' sound is repeating. 'starry spheres' – 's' sound is repeating. ...
- 2. Personification:** It is the attribution of human characteristics to non-human things. In the poem, melancholy darkness weeps in rainy tears. Melancholy and tears are specific to humans but are attributed to the darkness. Again, in stanza 2, thousand recollections weave air-threads. The weaving is also a characteristic feature of humans but attributed to dreams.
- 3. Onomatopoeia** is the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named. e.g. *patter, tinkle*.
- 4. Metaphor:** It is a figure of speech used to compare two things that aren't alike but have something in common. e.g. *shadows* refer to clouds.
- 5. Transferred Epithet:** When an adjective usually used to describe one thing is transferred to another. e.g. "*melancholy darkness*", "*dreamy fancies*", "*darling dreamers*".
- 6. Personification:** And a thousand recollections, weave their air threads into woof, melancholy darkness gently weeps etc.

Short answer questions:

1. What is 'a bliss' for the poet in the poem Rain on the Roof?

The poet loves rain as it brings his memories back. He thinks it is a bliss to hear the patter of the rain on the roof. When it rains, he lies in his cosy bed and enjoys the melodies of nature. The tinkling of rain gives him immense pleasure. It's a bliss for him.

2. What does the poet dream of?

The poet dreams of his childhood days. He is lost in reveries. He recalls his mother's face. He feels as if his mother is fondly looking at him. He remembers how lovingly his mother used to tell him stories. His mind is flooded with thousands of memories.

3. 'When the humid shadows hover over all the starry spheres.' What does the 'shadow' stand for? What does the poet want to convey?

The humid shadows stand for the dark clouds. The poet imagines that the sky is full of stars and is suddenly covered with dark and humid clouds.

4. 'And the melancholy darkness gently weeps in rainy tears.' What does the melancholy darkness mean and what does it do?

The melancholy darkness stands for the clouds. The poet imagines that the clouds covering the sky are in a state of depression. The poet further imagines that the clouds are weeping in a gentle manner and their tears are falling down as raindrops.

5. 'And thousand dreamy fancies into busy'. When does the 'thousand dreamy fancies' begin in the poet's heart?

When it rains, the poet gets into the cosy cottage. He lies in his bed and listens to the patter of soft rain on the roof. He enjoys the melody of nature. While listening to the sound of rain, his mind is flooded with memories. A thousand dreamy fancies flood his mind.

6. 'Now in memory comes my mother.' When does the poet remember his mother? What does it show about him?

When the poet is in his cosy cottage and enjoys the melody of nature, many childhood memories emerge in his mind. The most touching image that comes to his mind, is of his mother. He remembers her and revives her old memories.

7. 'As I listen to this refrain.' Which kind of refrain is the poet referring to?

The poet remembers his childhood days while remembering his mother. The kind of refrain he refers to is the repetition of the sound of raindrops falling on the wooden tiles of his cottage.

Long answer questions:

1. What are the healing powers of rain described in the poem 'Rain on the roof'? Elaborate it.

As the poet lies on his bed, looking at the dark clouds gather, he first is filled with feelings of gloom and unhappiness. He feels the clouds are weeping and the rain is the tears of these gloomy clouds. However, as he lies snug in bed, listening to the sound of rain, his gloom is lifted and his mind is filled with fantasies and fond memories. This rain and its sound resurrect the fondest memory of the poet- that of his mother- in his mind. As the rain continues, the poet tries to recollect all that caused him pain, yet at the same time lifted his spirits. The rain has thus brought comfort to him.

2. The poet describes the falling rain in the poem 'Rain on the roof.' Write the poet's description in your own words.

The poet first describes the falling rain as the tears of clouds. The dark rain-bearing clouds appear gloomy and depressed to him. Therefore, they are weeping. Their tears fall to earth as a gentle rain. However, as he listens to the patter of rain on the shingles, it provides him immense pleasure. The poet loves to hear the melodious sound of nature. He listens to the patter of soft rain on the wooden roof and is lost in fantasies. He considers it a rare happiness to listen to the patter of the rain on the roof. Rain brings to his mind memories of long-gone days when he was a child, and he lay sleeping in his room along with his siblings, as his mother gazed down at them with love

3. What is the message conveyed by the poem 'Rain on the Roof'?

The poet wants to convey the message that nature too exhibits its grief and pleasure. First, he says that the dark rain clouds float in the air and cover the starry sky. The sky has been shining with stars but is now covered and appears dark. It shows the anxiety or unhappiness of the sky. Then the raindrops fall like tears due to sadness. But the pattering of the rain gives pleasure to the poet who has been lying in a room. The poet becomes lost in old memories while listening to the musical pattering of the rain. It creates echoes in his heart. He remembers his mother in his dreams. Even when the rain stops, he feels the benevolent look of his mother.

4. How can you say that the poet loved his mother very much?

When it rains, the poet lies in his bed in the cottage and old memories come rushing back to him. He remembers his mother and recalls how his mother used to tell him stories while putting him to bed as a child. The poet has very fond memories of his mother looking after him and his siblings while they were asleep. She was very particular about tucking her in their beds and visiting them after they had fallen asleep, to check that they were sleeping comfortably. The author admired this habit of his mother. This shows that he loved his mother very much.

5. Dreams hold importance in the poet's life. Is it true? Explain.

This poem depicts the overall mood on a rainy night. During night the humid cloud full of water creates dark shadows over the star-studded sky. The poet dreams about his mother and the way she used to tuck him in bed. The poet's dream of his mother reminds him of his childhood days. His mother used to tell stories to lull him into sleep full of dreams. The music being played on the rooftop is like the affectionate look by which his mother used to see him, while he was a kid. So, dreams make him realize the importance of the past and the things that he now misses.

6. What happens when the poet listens to the patter of the rain? Do you think that rain is a narrative tool in the poet's life?

The raindrops play music on the roof and create a sound of pitter-patter. To the poet this music is blissful. At the beginning of the poem, there is a certain tinge of sadness around, which starts to weep away with the coming of raindrops. Every raindrop on the tiles of the roof creates a rhythm with the poet's heartbeat. The poet tries to focus on listening to the pitter-patter on the roof whereas, his mind weaves the recollections of fond memories of yester years.

Rain bears a subtle link with all aspects of life. It serves as a powerful narrative tool in the poet's life. It has added a layer of depth and fullness to the situation where the poet is concerned. It delivers an effective voice that communicates the suitable moment of time and space as well as the emotions of the protagonist in a more poignant manner than mere words would do.

Reference to Context Questions:

Read the following stanzas carefully and choose the correct option.

1. *Every tinkle on the shingles has an echo in the heart;
And a thousand dreamy fancies into busy being start,
And a thousand recollections weave their air threads into woof,
As I listen to the patter of the rain upon the roof*

1. The significance of the first two lines is _____
- (a) every drop of rain drops with a tinkle.
 - (b) the poet loves the rhythmic falling of the rain
 - (c) each drop resonates with music and happiness in the poet's heart
 - (d) he is irritated with the pitter-patter all night

Ans: each drop resonates with music and happiness in the poet's heart

2. The rain triggers _____
- (a) a comfortable sleep
 - (b) a thousand memories
 - (c) a feeling of cold
 - (d) a sleepless night

Ans: a thousand memories

3. The meaning of 'woof' is _____
- (a) bark of a dog
 - (b) bark of a tree
 - (c) thread on a loom
 - (d) harbour

Ans: thread on a loom

4. The literary device in the lines 'And a thousand recollection, weave their air-threads into woof' is _____
- (a) simile (b) alliteration (c) personification (d) repetition

Ans: personification

5. What is meant by 'Weave their air-threads into woof'?
- (a) the memories weave a pattern

- (b) a weaver weaves a pattern
- (c) the poet weaves thousands of happy memories like a collage
- (d) raindrops make a fantastic backdrop for the poet.

Ans: the poet weaves thousands of happy memories like a collage.

2. *When the humid shadows hover
Over all the starry spheres
And the melancholy darkness
Gently weeps in rainy tears,
What a bliss to press the pillow
Of a cottage- chamber bed
And lie listening to the patter
Of the soft rain overhead!*

(a) Why has darkness been qualified as ‘melancholy’?

Ans: It is not the darkness that is melancholy, but the people (the poet himself) sitting in the darkness. It is a literary device called transferred epithet which the adjective meant for one noun is attached to another for the impact of creative license.

(b) How can it be melancholy in the ‘Starry spheres’?

Ans: ‘Starry spheres’ and ‘melancholy darkness’ are two opposite propositions used together to create a misty feeling in the reader’s mind, matching the vaporous rain.

(c) What is so blissful about listening to the patter of the soft rain?

Ans: Blissful are the memories of childhood, like a cool cream on a burn wound. Blissful is the disappearance of the worries of the troubled adult mind at the rhythmic pitter-patter of the raindrops on the tin roof of the cottage. Also blissful is the soothed feeling of tension-less, stress-free contentment, away from the turbulences of everyday life.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

Choose the correct answer:

1. Name the poet of 'Rain on the Roof'.
 - a) **Coates Kinney**
 - b) Robert Frost
 - c) Phoebe Cary
 - d) Vikram Seth

2. Name the poetic device in the 'patter of the rain'.
 - a) Alliteration
 - b) Imagery
 - c) **Refrain**
 - d) Personification

3. The poet has memories of his
 - a) Father
 - b) **Mother**
 - c) Friend
 - d) Brother

4. The word 'shingles' mean
 - a) **Rectangular wooden tiles used as roof**
 - b) Singing
 - c) Windows
 - d) The frame of the door

5. Who are the darling dreamers?
 - a) **The poet and his siblings**
 - b) The schoolchildren
 - c) The street children
 - d) None of these

6. What does the poet listen to?
 - a) The sweet music of insects
 - b) The sweet music of the piano
 - c) **The sweet music of raindrops**
 - d) All of these

7. What tinkles on the shingles?

- a) Raindrops
- b) Brass-bells
- c) Hailstones
- d) Bangles

8. Name the figure of speech in the following verse,

‘And a thousand recollections / Weave their air-threads into woof ‘

- a) Personification
- b) Metaphor
- c) Alliteration
- d) Refrain

9. Give the synonym of ‘melancholy’

- a) Happy
- b) Sad
- c) Thrilled
- d) Scared

10. Name the figure of speech in the following line,

‘When the humid shadows hover’

- a) Simile
- b) Transferred Epithet
- c) Metaphor
- d) personification