



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (2026-27)
CLASS – IX
QB – CANVAS OF SOIL

SUMMARY

‘Canvas of Soil’ is a nature poem that compares gardening to painting. The poet imagines the soil as an artist's canvas or palette and the seeds as brushstrokes. Just as a painter creates a masterpiece with colours, a gardener creates beauty by planting and nurturing seeds.

As the seeds grow and flowers bloom in spring, the garden transforms into a vibrant work of art filled with different colours. The poem highlights that this beauty is the result of patience, care, creativity, and harmony between humans and nature. Through this extended metaphor, Maya Anthony celebrates gardeners as artists whose living masterpieces continue to grow and change with the seasons.

Main theme: The poem emphasizes that nature and human effort together create beauty, showing that gardening is both an act of creativity and a celebration of life.

SECTION A – MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION

1. What is the central metaphor used in the poem *Canvas of Soil*?

- a) A garden is compared to a school.
- b) A garden is compared to a painting.
- c) A gardener is compared to a musician.
- d) Soil is compared to water.

Answer: b) A garden is compared to a painting.

2. The expression “palette of earth” refers to:

- a) A colourful painting
- b) A collection of gardening tools
- c) The rich soil from which plants grow
- d) The colours of the sky

Answer: c) The rich soil from which plants grow

3. Why are seeds compared to “brushstrokes”?

- a) They are painted with different colours.
- b) They are carefully placed to create beauty.
- c) They are used to make paintings.
- d) They are found only on canvases.

Answer: b) They are carefully placed to create beauty.

4. What do the gardeners' dreams represent in the poem?

- a) Their desire to travel
- b) Their hopes and creative ideas for the garden
- c) Their fear of nature
- d) Their desire to become painters

Answer: b) Their hopes and creative ideas for the garden

5. The arrival of spring is significant because it:

- a) destroys the garden
- b) brings rain and storms
- c) brings vibrant colours and blooming flowers
- d) changes the soil into a painting

Answer: c) brings vibrant colours and blooming flowers

6. Which of the following is NOT one of the colours mentioned in the poem?

- a) Green
- b) Red
- c) Blue
- d) Yellow

Answer: d) Yellow

7. The phrase “Dancing in the morning light” creates an image of:

- a) flowers moving beautifully in sunlight
- b) gardeners dancing in the garden
- c) birds flying in the darkness
- d) trees bending during a storm

Answer: a) flowers moving beautifully in sunlight

8. The comparison of the garden with a painting mainly highlights:

- a) the artificial nature of gardens
- b) the beauty and creativity present in nature
- c) the difficulty of painting
- d) the importance of buying flowers

Answer: b) the beauty and creativity present in nature

9. What does “Nature’s artwork, ever new” suggest?

- a) Nature constantly creates fresh and changing beauty.
- b) Nature produces the same painting every year.

c) Nature needs an artist to create colours.

d) Nature does not change with seasons.

Answer: a) Nature constantly creates fresh and changing beauty.

10. The poet compares the gardener to a painter because both:

a) work only during spring

b) create beauty through careful and creative effort

c) use only natural colours

d) work with brushes

Answer: b) create beauty through careful and creative effort

11. Which poetic device is most prominent throughout the poem?

a) Irony

b) Extended metaphor

c) Pun

d) Hyperbole

Answer: b) Extended metaphor

12. The word “canvas” in the title symbolically refers to:

a) a piece of cloth used for painting

b) the garden plot/soil where plants are grown

c) the gardener's clothes

d) a wall in the garden

Answer: b) the garden plot/soil where plants are grown

13. What does the poem suggest about the relationship between art and life?

a) They are completely different.

b) Art is more valuable than life.

c) They can come together to create beauty and harmony.

d) Life prevents artistic expression.

Answer: c) They can come together to create beauty and harmony.

14. The tone of the poem can best be described as:

a) angry and critical

b) appreciative and celebratory

c) humorous and sarcastic

d) fearful and anxious

Answer: b) appreciative and celebratory

15. Which of the following best expresses the message of the poem?

- a) Gardens require expensive materials to become beautiful.
- b) Nature and human effort together can create living works of art.
- c) Painting is more beautiful than gardening.
- d) Only professional artists can create beauty.

SECTION B – REFERENCE TO CONTEXT (RTC)

Note: The extracts below are kept brief, followed by competency-based questions.

RTC 1

“Palette of earth, rich and deep”

a. What is the earth compared to in this line?

Answer: The earth is compared to a rich and deep palette.

b. Why is the word “palette” appropriate here?

Answer: A palette holds colours for a painter. Similarly, the earth provides the medium in which colourful plants and flowers grow.

c. Identify the poetic device used in the comparison.

Answer: Metaphor.

d. What does the expression suggest about the soil?

Answer: It suggests that the soil is fertile, rich and full of possibilities for growth.

RTC 2

“Brushstrokes of seeds, planted true”

a. What are compared to brushstrokes?

Answer: Seeds are compared to brushstrokes.

b. Who is implied to be the artist?

Answer: The gardener is implied to be the artist.

c. What does this comparison tell us about planting seeds?

Answer: It shows that planting is a careful and creative process, just like making deliberate brushstrokes on a canvas.

d. Name the poetic device used.

Answer: Metaphor.

RTC 3

“Blossoms bloom, a painted sight”

a. What does the phrase “painted sight” refer to?

Answer: It refers to the colourful and beautiful appearance of blooming flowers.

b. What visual image does the line create?

Answer: It creates an image of a colourful garden that looks like a beautiful painting.

c. Who is described as the creator of this artwork?

Answer: Nature is presented as the creator.

d. What is the dominant sense appealed to here?

Answer: The sense of sight/visual sense.

RTC 4

“Shades of green, red, and blue”

a. What do these colours contribute to the garden?

Answer: They contribute to the beauty, variety and vibrancy of the garden.

b. Why does the poet mention different shades?

Answer: To emphasise the rich variety of colours found in nature.

c. What poetic element is strongly evident here?

Answer: Visual imagery.

d. What does the variety of colours suggest about nature?

Answer: It suggests that nature is diverse, colourful and creative.

RTC 5

“Gardens become paintings still.”

a. What does the word “paintings” suggest?

Answer: It suggests that gardens become works of art through the combined efforts of nature and gardeners.

b. How does the garden resemble a painting?

Answer: The arrangement of flowers, plants and colours creates a beautiful visual composition, like a painting.

c. What role do the gardeners play in this transformation?

Answer: Their labour, care, planning and creativity help transform the garden into a beautiful work of art.

d. What central idea of the poem is reinforced by this line?

Answer: The line reinforces the idea that **gardening is an art form and that nature can become a living canvas.**

SECTION C – ASSERTION–REASON QUESTIONS

Directions: For each question, choose the correct option:

A. Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

B. Both Assertion (A) and Reason (R) are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.

C. Assertion (A) is true, but Reason (R) is false.

D. Assertion (A) is false, but Reason (R) is true.

Question1.

Assertion (A): The poet presents the garden as a work of art.

Reason (R): The poet uses the extended metaphor of painting to describe the process of gardening.

Answer: A

Explanation: The garden is compared to a canvas, while gardening elements are presented through the language of painting.

Question 2.

Assertion (A): The soil is compared to a palette in the poem.

Reason (R): A palette is traditionally associated with colours used by an artist.

Answer: A

Explanation: The comparison connects the fertile soil with the palette of a painter, emphasising its creative potential.

Question 3.

Assertion (A): Seeds are compared to brushstrokes.

Reason (R): Seeds are carefully placed in the soil just as brushstrokes are carefully placed on a canvas.

Answer: A

Explanation: Both involve deliberate placement that contributes to the final artistic composition.

Question 4.

Assertion (A): The poem suggests that gardening requires creativity.

Reason (R): The gardener is presented as an artist who creates beauty using nature as a medium.

Answer: A

Explanation: The comparison between the gardener and an artist directly establishes the creative aspect of gardening.

Question 5.

Assertion (A): The changing seasons contribute to the beauty of the garden.

Reason (R): The garden remains exactly the same throughout the year.

Answer: C

Explanation: The garden changes with seasons; therefore, the reason is incorrect.

Question 6.

Assertion (A): The poem celebrates the cooperation between nature and human effort.

Reason (R): The gardener nurtures the soil and plants, while nature helps them grow and bloom.

Answer: A

Explanation: The poem presents the garden as the result of both human care and nature's creative power.

Question 7.

Assertion (A): The colours mentioned in the poem contribute to its visual imagery.

Reason (R): Colours help readers imagine the garden as a vibrant and beautiful scene.

Answer: A

Explanation: References to different colours create a strong visual picture of the garden.

Question 8.

Assertion (A): The garden can be called a “living canvas.”

Reason (R): Unlike a conventional painting, a garden grows and changes over time.

Answer: A

Explanation: The changing, growing nature of plants makes the garden a living rather than a static work of art.

Question 9.

Assertion (A): The poem suggests that beautiful results can be achieved instantly.

Reason (R): Seeds need time, care and suitable conditions before they grow into plants and flowers.

Answer: D

Explanation: The Assertion is false because the poem emphasises growth and nurturing, while the Reason is true.

Question 10.

Assertion (A): The title *Canvas of Soil* effectively captures the central idea of the poem.

Reason (R): The title combines the idea of painting with the natural medium of soil.

Answer: A

Explanation: “Canvas” represents art, while “soil” represents nature and gardening. Together, they express the poem's central metaphor.

SECTION D – SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How does the poet establish a connection between gardening and painting?

Answer:

The poet develops an extended metaphor throughout the poem. The soil is presented as a palette, seeds as brushstrokes, the garden as a canvas, and the gardener as an artist. When the flowers bloom, the garden becomes a colourful work of art. Thus, gardening and painting are connected through creativity, patience and careful effort.

2. Why does the poet describe the soil as a “palette of earth”?

Answer:

A painter's palette contains colours used to create a painting. Similarly, fertile soil provides the foundation for plants and flowers of different colours. By calling it a “palette of earth”, the poet presents the soil as the creative medium through which the gardener produces a beautiful living artwork.

3. What is the significance of spring in the poem?

Answer:

Spring represents the fulfilment of hope and the beginning of visible growth. The seeds that remain hidden in the soil begin to develop into colourful plants and flowers. Thus, spring transforms the gardener's dreams into a beautiful reality.

4. How does the poem celebrate the role of gardeners?

Answer:

The poem presents gardeners as artists who create beauty through their labour and imagination. They carefully plant seeds, nurture the soil and wait patiently for the plants to bloom. Their efforts transform an ordinary piece of land into a colourful and artistic garden.

5. What message does the poem convey about nature and human creativity?

Answer:

The poem conveys that nature and human creativity can work together to create extraordinary beauty. Nature provides the colours, soil, plants and flowers, while humans contribute imagination, planning, care and effort. The resulting garden becomes a living work of art.

SECTION E – LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

3 Questions

1. “The garden is a living canvas.” Discuss this statement with reference to the poem *Canvas of Soil*.

Answer:

The statement perfectly captures the central idea of *Canvas of Soil*. The poet compares different elements of gardening with elements of painting. The soil becomes a palette, the seeds become brushstrokes, and the garden becomes a canvas. The gardener is presented as an artist who carefully plants and nurtures the seeds.

As the seasons change, particularly with the arrival of spring, the hidden seeds grow into colourful flowers and plants. The shades of green, red and blue make the garden resemble a beautiful painting. However, unlike an ordinary painting, a garden is a living and constantly changing work of art. Therefore, the poem beautifully combines nature, human

effort and artistic creativity.

2. Explain how the poet uses imagery and metaphor to make the poem *Canvas of Soil* vivid and meaningful.

Answer:

The poet uses rich visual imagery and an extended metaphor to present gardening as an artistic activity. Words associated with painting—such as *palette*, *brushstrokes*, *canvas*, *shades* and *paintings*—are used to describe the natural world.

The soil is presented as a painter's palette, suggesting fertility and possibility. Seeds become brushstrokes because they are carefully planted in the soil. When the flowers bloom, they create a “painted sight”, with different colours adding to the beauty of the garden. The imagery allows readers to visualise the colourful flowers and the morning light.

Through these techniques, the poet makes the garden appear like a living masterpiece and encourages us to appreciate both nature and the work of those who cultivate it.

3. “Beauty is created through patience, care and effort.” Discuss this idea with reference to *Canvas of Soil*.

Answer:

The poem strongly conveys that beauty does not appear instantly; it develops through patience, care and effort. The gardener first prepares the soil and carefully plants the seeds. The seeds remain hidden for some time, awaiting the appropriate season. The gardener must therefore have patience and faith in the process of growth.

When spring arrives, the seeds develop into colourful flowers and plants. The garden then becomes a beautiful work of art. The gardener's physical labour and creative vision work together with nature's power to produce this beauty.

Thus, the poem teaches us an important life lesson: meaningful results require time, dedication and nurturing. Just as a garden needs continuous care to flourish, our dreams and abilities also need patience and persistent effort to grow.