

Bare foot, through the bazaar,

And with the same **undulant** grace

As the cloth **blown** back from her face.

She **glides** with a stone jar,

High on her head

And not a **ripple** in her **tread**.

Watching her cross **erect**

Stones, garbage, **excrement** and **crumbs**

Of glass in the Karachi **slums**,

I, with my **stoop**, **reflect**:

They stand most straight

Who learn to walk **beneath** a weight.

جنگے، ہاں بازار میں سے۔
اور بل کھاتی لہروں جیسی دلکش کے ماتھے
جیسے دوپٹہ اس کے چہرے سے سرکتا ہے
وہ نفاست سے چلتی ہے پتھر کا گھڑا اٹھائے
جو اُس کے سر پہ رکھا ہوا ہے
اور اُس کی چال میں کوئی لڑکھڑاہٹ نہیں
اُسے تن کر (بغیر جھکے، سیدھا) گزرتے دیکھ کر
پتھروں، کوڑا کرکٹ، فضلہ اور ٹوٹے ہوئے
شیشے کے ٹکڑوں کے اوپر سے جو کراچی کی کچی آبادیوں میں پڑے ملتے ہیں
تو میں نے اپنے جھکے ہوئے جسم کو دیکھتے ہوئے سوچا
وہ لوگ ہمیشہ تن کر کھڑے رہتے ہیں
جو بوجھ اٹھا کے چلنا سیکھ لیتے ہیں

WORDS	URDU	SYNONYMS	WORDS	URDU	SYNONYMS
undulant	لہروں کی طرح	like waves , wavy, rising and falling	erect	سیدھا	upright , straight, standing up
glides	دبے پاؤں چلنا	going smoothly , drifts, skates	grace	شان	beauty, elegance, majesty
tread	چلنا	walk , step, pace	ripple	لہر	wave, tide, swell
excrement	غلاظت	dung , human waste, filth	bare	براہنہ	uncovered, naked, wide open
slums	کچی آبادی	downtowns , poor areas, ghetto	crumbs	ٹکڑے	pieces, bits, scraps
reflect	سوچنا	think , ponder, consider	stoop	جھکنا	bend, droop, bow
beneath	نیچے	under , below, lower	blown	اڑنا	puffed, inflated, driven

EXPLANATION WITH REFERENCE TO THE CONTEXT**LINES 1-6**

*Bare foot, through the bazaar,
And with the same undulant grace
As the cloth blown back from her face,
She glides with a store jar,
High on her head
And not a ripple in her tread.*

(5 Times)

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the poem “A Sindhi Woman” by Jon Stallworthy.

CONTEXT:

The poet highly appreciates the dignity of hard work and steadfastness of the people who work under hostile and adverse circumstances.

EXPLANATION:

A Sindhi woman with bare feet is walking elegantly through a bazaar of Karachi. Her walk is like a wave travelling smoothly on the surface of water. The poet is impressed by her graceful movement that is lovely and rhythmic. The wind blows back the cloth from her face. Her dress is floating and she is moving comfortably towards her destination. Although she carries weight on her head, she is walking effortlessly. Her daily labour has made her strong enough to be comfortable with all her work. In this way her work has proved a blessing in disguise. Her work has not only made her strong but also charming and lovely. The phrase “undulant grace” shows her elegance, charm and beauty.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

The alliterative sounds like ‘bare’...bazaar’, ‘blown’...back’ and ‘high’...head’ lend a melodious and pleasing effect to the reader. The rhyme scheme in these lines is ABBACC.

LINES 7-12

*Watching her cross erect
Stones, garbage, excrement and crumbs
Of glass in the Karachi slums,
I, with my stoop, reflect:
They stand most straight
Who learn to walk beneath a weight.*

(8 Times)

EXPLANATION:

The poet watches the woman crossing over, stones, rubbish, filth and broken pieces of glass in an overcrowded and poor area of Karachi. The poet is bent down by age and hardships of life. He concludes that those people who bear the burden of life remain strong and stable. The poet pays a tribute to working class living in poor and backward areas of the city. He appreciates the working woman. He paints a gloomy picture of the Karachi slums. Heaps of garbage and human waste, scattered stones and broken pieces of glass show the poor condition of the Karachi slums.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

The rhyme scheme in these lines is ABBACC. The alliterative sounds like ‘stand’... ‘straight’, and ‘walk...weight’ mimic the rhythm in the Sindhi woman’s tread.

TEXTBOOK EXERCISE

Q.1 Give a summary of the poem in your own words.

Summary of the Poem

Ans. A Sindhi woman is going through a bazaar with bare feet. She carries weight, but she is walking smoothly, crossing over stones, garbage and pieces of broken glass. This is a scene of a Karachi slum. The poet thinks that only those people walk straight who bear the burden of life courageously.

Q.2 What did the poet reflect when he saw the Sindhi woman? (14 Times)

Responsibilities Keep One Strong

Ans. When the poet saw the Sindhi woman, he reflected that only those people walk straight who bear the burden of life. The poet saw the woman carrying weight on her head and walking smoothly on an uneven path. He concluded that burden of responsibilities makes one strong and stable.

**Q.3 What is the main idea of the poem? OR
What is the central idea of the poem 'A Sindhi Woman'? (3 Times)**

Work Keeps Us Strong

Ans. The main idea of the poem is that work keeps us strong and stable. An idle man soon decays, but a diligent man thrives and prospers. Work does not let us stoop or fall. It gives us grace and strength. It creates rhythm in life. It helps us to walk erect.

**Q.4 What picture of the Karachi slums do we get after reading the poem? OR
What kind of picture of the Karachi slums do we get from the poem 'A Sindhi Woman'? OR (13 Times)**

What does the Sindhi woman cross? OR (3 Times)
What sort of path has the Sindhi woman to cross? OR (1 Time)
Describe the Karachi slums. (1 Time)

A Bazaar of Karachi Slums

Ans. The Sindhi woman crosses a bazaar of the Karachi slums. It is littered with stones, garbage, filth and pieces of broken glass. Her path is rough, dirty and uneven, but she walks smoothly and elegantly. The poet portrays the awful living conditions in which the poor people are living.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM PAST PAPERS

Q.1 Describe the Sindhi woman's walk through the bazaar. (6 Times)

Graceful Walk

Ans. The Sindhi woman's walk through the bazaar is graceful and inspiring. She is walking smoothly and elegantly, though her path is rough and uneven. She carries a stone jar on her head but her walk is steady and dignified. There is undulant grace and wonderful rhythm in her walk.

Q.2 What are the qualities of the Sindhi woman? OR (4 Times)

How does the poet depict the personality of the Sindhi woman? OR (3 Times)

How does the poet pay a tribute to a Sindhi woman? (2 Times)

Firm, Strong and Stable

Ans. The poet pays a tribute to the Sindhi woman by describing her qualities like steadiness, diligence and delicacy. She is passing through a bazaar, littered with stones, garbage, filth and pieces of broken glass. Her path is rough and uneven, but she walks gracefully and elegantly. Her courage has made her firm, strong and stable.

Q.3 What was the Sindhi woman carrying on her head? (2 Times)

A Stone Jar on Her Head

Ans. The Sindhi woman was carrying a stone jar high on her head. The stone jar stands for the burden of responsibilities and liabilities that she has to fulfill in her life. Although she carries weight on her head and her path is uneven, she walks smoothly and elegantly.

Q.4 Who stands straight in life? (1 Time)

Who Learn to Walk beneath a Weight

Ans. Those people stand straight who learn to walk beneath a weight of responsibilities. The poet, with his stoop, concludes that those people who bear the burden of life courageously remain strong and stable in their life. We learn that hard work, courage and sense of duty make our life meaningful and graceful.

MCQS TEXTBOOK EXERCISE

1. High on her _____.

- (a) red (c) head
(b) body (d) foot

2. As the cloth blown back from her _____.

- (a) mouth (c) head
(b) face (d) hair

3. Watching her cross _____.

- (a) bridge (c) street
(b) road (d) erect

4. I, with my stoop, _____.

- (a) walk (c) run
(b) think (d) reflect

5. The woman in the poem is passing through the _____.
 (a) market (c) bazaar
 (b) crowd (d) street
6. She was carrying _____ on her head.
 (a) a bundle of sticks (c) a bundle of books
 (b) a stone jar (d) nothing
7. Those who carry weight stand _____.
 (a) straight (c) bend
 (b) idle (d) fall
8. Her walk was _____.
 (a) smooth (c) difficult
 (b) slow (d) fast

ANSWER KEY

1.	C	2.	B	3.	D	4.	D	5.	C	6.	B	7.	A	8.	A
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MORE MCQS FOR PRACTICE

1. The Sindhi woman walks with _____ grace.
 (a) feminine (c) undulant
 (b) diligent (d) splashing
2. Who wrote the poem?
 (a) Jon Stallworthy (c) P.B. Shelley
 (b) A.E. Housman (d) T.S. Eliot
3. There is not a _____ in the Sindhi woman's tread.
 (a) bend (c) glide
 (b) haste (d) ripple
4. The Sindhi woman stands for _____.
 (a) womanly grace (c) brave people
 (b) Sindhi culture (d) idle women
5. Who stand most straight?
 (a) Who walk beneath a weight. (c) Who walk smoothly.
 (b) Who think and analyze. (d) Who remains idle.

ANSWER KEY

1.	C	2.	A	3.	D	4.	C	5.	A
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SYNONYMS FROM PAST PAPERS

1. I, with my stoop, reflect: (4 Times)
 (a) think (b) ask (c) look (d) criticize
2. And not a ripple in her tread. (3 Times)
 (a) oppress (b) suppress (c) walk (d) grace
 (a) body (b) grace (c) walk (d) leg
3. The Sindhi woman was walking with undulant grace. (2 Times)
 (a) like boughs (b) like daffodils (c) like dolls (d) like waves

4. The Sindhi woman was walking through excrement. (2 Times)
 (a) dung (b) blossom (c) buds (d) flowers
5. The Sindhi woman was gliding through the bazaar. (1 Time)
 (a) running (b) rushing (c) going smoothly (d) going slowly
6. Crumbs of glass in the Karachi slums. (1 Time)
 (a) downtown (b) neighbours (c) beaches (d) cities
7. Who learn to walk beneath a weight? (1 Time)
 (a) along (b) over (c) beside (d) under
8. The poet sees the Sindhi woman walking erect. (1 Time)
 (a) upright (b) bent (c) Hopeless (d) foolish

ANSWER KEY

1.	A	2.	C/C	3.	D	4.	A	5.	C	6.	A	7.	D	8.	A
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MORE SYNONYMS FOR PRACTICE

1. Bare foot, through the bazaar,
 (a) covered (c) uncovered
 (b) visible (d) vague
2. And not a ripple in her tread.
 (a) undulation (c) haste
 (b) disturbance (d) stillness
3. I, with my stoop, reflect;
 (a) bounce (c) ponder
 (b) express (d) yawn
4. They stand most straight
 (a) direct (c) erect
 (b) drawn (d) fast
5. Stones, garbage, excrement and crumbs
 (a) objects (c) weeds
 (b) pieces (d) twigs

ANSWER KEY

1.	C	2.	A	3.	C	4.	C	5.	B
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