

Wicks balance flame, a dark dew falls

In the street of the fruit stalls

Melon, guava, mandarin,

Pyramid-piled like cannon balls,

Glow red-hot, gold-hot, from within.

Dark children with a coin to spend

Enter the **lantern's orbit**; find

Melon, guava, mandarin-

The moon **compacted** to a **rind**,

The sun in a **pitted** skin.

They take it, break it open, let

A gold or silver fountain wet

Mouth, fingers, cheek, nose, chin:

Radiant as lanterns, they forget

The dark street I am standing in.

لاٹین کی بنیاں تھانے کو منڈوانا کرتی ہیں، سیاہ اوس پڑ رہا ہے۔

پھلوں کی دکانوں والی گلی میں

خربوڑے، امرود اور سنگترے،

مخروطی ڈھیر توپ کے گولوں کی طرح،

اندسے، سرخ سنہری آگ سے دھکتے ہوئے نظر آرہے ہیں۔

سیاہ فام بچے ایک سکہ لیے

لاٹین کے مدار میں داخل ہوتے ہیں اور پاتے ہیں

خربوڑے، امرود، کتو

چاند سکر کر چھلکے میں سما گیا ہے،

سورج مسام دار چھلکے میں سمٹ گیا ہے۔

وہ پھل لیتے ہیں اور اسے توڑتے ہیں

سنہری یا نقرئی فوارہ تر کر دیتا ہے

منہ، انگلیوں، رخسار، ناک اور ٹھوڑی کو:

لاٹین کی طرح دسکتے ہوئے، وہ بھول جاتے ہیں

کہ میں جس گلی میں کھڑا ہوں وہ تاریک ہے۔

WORDS	URDU	SYNONYMS	WORDS	URDU	SYNONYMS
compacted	سکر کے	compressed, packed, unified	rind	سخت چھلکا	hard skin, peel, covering
pyramid	مخروطی	conical, funnel-shaped	wicks	بنیاری	cords, strings, threads
glow	چمکانا	sparkle, flush, redder	dew	شبنم، اوس	droplets, vapors, moisture
orbit	حلقہ، مدار	range, circle, radius	pitted	مسام دار	uneven, holed, dented
radiant	چمکتا ہوا	shining, glowing, gleaming	cannon	توپ	gun, firearm, shooter

EXPLANATION WITH REFERENCE TO THE CONTEXT**LINES 1-5**

*Wicks balance flame, a dark dew falls
In the street of the fruit stalls
Melon, guava, mandarin,
Pyramid-piled like cannon balls,
Glow red-hot, gold-hot, from within.*

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the poem “In the Street of the Fruit Stalls” by Jon Stallworthy.

CONTEXT:

The poet paints a gloomy picture of the world. It is threatened with war, misery and poverty. However, all these threats have failed to crush man’s love for pleasure. The world is like a street of fruit stalls where there is fun, joy and comfort as well as grief, sorrow and discomfort.

EXPLANATION:

The poet describes a market scene. It is evening and a dark dew is falling. There is a street of fruit stalls. Lanterns have been lightened, which have faintly brightened the dark street. The fruits like melon, guava and mandarin are piled up in conical form. They glow red-hot and gold-hot from within. They look like bombs to the poet, because there is a war going on in the surroundings. Africa has a high prevalence of civil wars due to high levels of poverty, corruption and failed political institutions.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

To deepen the impact of the dark street, the poet uses colour images like ‘Glow red-hot, gold-hot’. The phrase ‘cannon balls’ serves as a metaphor for threats of war, destruction, poverty and misery. The rhyme scheme in these lines is AABAB

LINES 6-10

*Dark children with a coin to spend
Enter the lantern’s orbit; find
Melon, guava, mandarin —
The moon compacted to a rind,
The sun in a pitted skin.*

(6 Times)**EXPLANATION:**

The children having black complexion enter a street of fruit stalls. They have a coin to spend. They do not have sufficient money, but they have their innocent desires. Fruits like melon, guava and mandarin attract their attention. It seems to them as if the moon and the sun have come in their hands. They feel as if they have conquered the universe. They forget all the misery around them, and have great fun and enjoyment.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

The metaphors of the moon and the sun stand for joys, pleasures and treasures. They also stand in sharp contrast to the dark street, and deepen the impact of gloom and misery. The rhyme scheme in these lines is ABCEC

LINES 11-15

*They take it, break it open, let
A gold or silver fountain wet
Mouth, fingers, cheek, nose, chin:
Radiant as lanterns, they forget
The dark street I am standing in.*

(3 Times)

EXPLANATION:

The children are attracted by the beautiful colors of the fruit, which glow red-hot and gold-hot from within. They buy it, peel it and break it open. Its juice wets their mouth, fingers, cheek, nose and chin. They have great joy and fun. Their faces lit up like lanterns. They seem totally unaware of the surroundings which is painful for the poet. They forget all sorrows and sufferings of life. It seems as if they have got all the wealth they were searching for.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

The poet uses the simile of lantern to describe glow and jubilation on the children's faces. The lantern also stands in sharp contrast to the dark street, which is a symbol of grief, sorrow, and suffering. The rhyme scheme in these lines is AABAB

TEXTBOOK EXERCISE

Q.1 Write a critical note on the poem, "In the Street of the Fruit Stalls".

Critical Note

Ans. The poet paints a gloomy picture of the world. It is threatened with war, misery and poverty. However, all these threats have failed to crush man's love for pleasure.

Q.2 Give a summary of the poem in your own words.

Summary of the Poem

Ans. It is a dark, wet evening. There is a street of fruit stalls. Various fruits are piled up in a conical form. They look like bombs in the lanterns' light. Poor children come there with a coin to spend. They pick up a fruit and break it open. The juice sticks on their fingers and cheeks. Dark children glow like lanterns. They forget all the misery around them.

Q.3 What are the feelings of the poet standing in the dark?

(13 Times)

The Poet is Sad

Ans. The poet is sad standing in the dark street. He is sad at the miserable conditions the poor people are living in. "The dark street" stands for poverty, suffering and misery. The spontaneous jubilation of the dark children only heightens the gloomy mood of the poet.

Q.4 Why has the poet used “cannon balls” to describe the fruit? (20 Times)

War is Going on

Ans. The poet has used “cannon balls” to describe the fruit because a war is going on in the background. The poet is so horror-stricken that even the fruits piled up in a conical form appear to be bombs to him. Fruits glowing red-hot and gold-hot, like cannon balls point to the devastation of war in the surroundings.

Q.5 Paraphrase the last stanza in your own words.

Paraphrasing of Last Stanza

Ans. Dark children come into the street of the fruit stalls. They buy fruit with the coin they have. They break it open and let the gushing juice wet their mouths, fingers, cheeks and chins. Children enjoy the fruit and are least conscious of the miserable situation that saddens the poet.

**Q.6 Make a list of fruits described in the poem. OR
What fruits does the poet mention in the poem ‘In the Street of the Fruit Stalls’? (1 Time)**

Melon, Guava and Mandarin.

Ans. The fruits described in the poem are melon, guava and mandarin. They are piled up in a conical form. They glow red-hot and gold-hot from within in the lantern’s light. They look like bombs to the poet.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM PAST PAPERS

Q.1 How do the children enjoy the fruit in the poem “In the Street of the Fruit Stalls”? (4 Times)

Children Enjoy Fruit Merrily

Ans. The children enjoy the fruit merrily. They come in the street of the fruit stalls with a coin to spend. They pick up a fruit and break it open. The juice sticks on their fingers and cheeks. Dark children glow like lanterns. They forget all the misery around them.

**Q.2 What happens to the children when they eat fruit? OR (3 Times)
How do the children eat fruit “In the Street of the Fruit Stalls”? OR (1 Time)
What do the children do after buying the fruits? (1 Time)**

Children Glow like Lanterns

Ans. When the children eat fruit, the juice sticks on their mouth, fingers, cheek, nose and chin. Dark children begin to glow like lanterns. It seems to them as if the moon and the sun have come in their hands. They forget all the misery around them.

Q.3 Why do the children forget all about their problems after eating fruits? (2 Times)

Children are Very Happy

Ans. The children forget all about their problems after eating fruits because they are very happy. They are dark, poor children, and they have only a coin to spend. However, even a coin gives them so much pleasure and happiness that they forget all the misery around them.

Q.4 How does the poet describe the fruits piled in the fruit stalls at night? (1 Time)

Fruits Look like Cannon Balls

Ans. The poet describes the fruits piled up in the fruit stalls very gloomily. The fruits like melon, guava and mandarin are lying in pyramid-shaped piles. They look like cannon balls. Since war is going on in the surroundings, even the fruits look like bomb shells to the poet.

Q.5 Describe in a few lines the street of fruit stalls. (1 Time)

A Street of Fruit Stalls

Ans. It is a dark, wet evening. Lanterns are glowing and a dark dew is falling. There is a street of fruit stalls. Various fruits are piled up in a conical form. They glow red-hot and gold-hot from within. Since war is going on in the surroundings, even the fruits look like bomb shells to the poet.

Q.6 What do the wicks do in the street of the fruit stalls? (1 Time)

Wicks Balance Flames

Ans. The wicks balance flames and illuminate the surroundings in the street of the fruit stalls. The wicks make the fruit glow red-hot and gold-hot, which look like cannon balls in the dim light. They stand for a ray of hope in the dark, gloomy surroundings.

Q.7 What is the central idea of the poem “In the street of the Fruit Stalls”? (1 Time)

Man’s Love for Pleasure

Ans. The poet paints a gloomy picture of the world. It is threatened with war, misery and poverty. However, all these threats have failed to crush man’s love for pleasure. The world is like a street of fruit stalls where there is fun, joy and comfort as well as grief, sorrow and discomfort.

MCQS TEXTBOOK EXERCISE

1. Which fruit has not been mentioned in the poem?

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| (a) mango | (c) melon |
| (b) guava | (d) mandarin |

2. The fruit resembled the _____.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| (a) vegetables | (c) cannon balls |
| (b) bullets | (d) biscuits |

3. It was a _____ street.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| (a) dark | (c) bright |
| (b) airy | (d) blind |

4. The children were _____.

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| (a) pale | (c) dark |
| (b) white | (d) yellow |

5. Wicks balance flame, a dark dew _____.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| (a) falls | (c) calls |
| (b) moves | (d) comes |

6. **Pyramid-piled like cannon** _____.
 (a) bullets (c) balls
 (b) guns (d) spears
7. **The sun in a pitted** _____.
 (a) skin (c) rim
 (b) arm (d) leg
8. **The dark street I am standing** _____.
 (a) out (c) in
 (b) into (d) on

ANSWER KEY

1.	A	2.	C	3.	A	4.	C	5.	A	6.	C	7.	A	8.	C
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MCQS FROM PAST PAPERS

1. **In which light children enter to buy fruit?** (1 Time)
 (a) lantern (b) lamp
 (c) moon (d) bulb
2. **Mention the fruit that are stacked in the street.** (1 Time)
 (a) Oranges, apples, grapes (b) Melon, guava, mandarin
 (c) Bananas, pineapples, oranges (d) Apples, melons, grapes

ANSWER KEY

1.	A	2.	B
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MORE MCQS FOR PRACTICE

1. **What do the children have in their hands?**
 (a) coins (c) notes
 (b) balls (d) sticks
2. **Wicks balance flame, a _____ dew falls**
 (a) heavy (c) dark
 (b) light (d) bright
3. **Radiant as _____, they forget**
 (a) stars (c) light
 (b) moon (d) lantern
4. **What saddens the poet?**
 (a) sense of failure (c) poverty of children
 (b) shoriness of life (d) darkness of dew
5. **Who wrote the poem, "In the Street of the Fruit Stalls?"**
 (a) Shelley (c) W.H. Davies
 (b) T.S. Eliot (d) Jon Stallworthy

ANSWER KEY

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

1. **The moon compacted to a rind.** (4 Times)
 (a) widened (b) burnt (c) broken (d) packed
 (a) compressed (b) declined (c) fore (d) perfect
 (a) placed (b) unified (c) reflected (d) trimmed
2. **Radiant ad lanterns, they forget.** (4 Times)
 (a) shining (b) red (c) coloured (d) beautiful
3. **The fruit glowed red-hot from within.** (3 Times)
 (a) darkened (b) sparkled (c) sprinkled (d) wasted
4. **Pyramid piled like cannon balls.** (2 Times)
 (a) High up (b) conical (c) top linked (d) flat
5. **Enter the lantern's orbit.** (1 Time)
 (a) range (b) mood (c) light (d) string

ANSWER KEY

1.	D/A/B	2.	A	3.	B	4.	B	5.	A
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MORE SYNONYMS FOR PRACTICE

1. **Wicks balance flame, a dark dew falls.**
 (a) steady (c) flicker
 (b) flutter (d) extinguish
2. **The fruits were piled like cannon balls.**
 (a) scattered (c) peeled
 (b) stacked (d) plucked
3. **The moon compacted to a rind.**
 (a) bud (c) stem
 (b) peel (d) pulp
4. **The sun in a pitted skin.**
 (a) even (c) soft
 (b) hard (d) uneven
5. **Wicks balance flame, a dark dew falls.**
 (a) lanterns (c) chords
 (b) candles (d) cords

ANSWER KEY

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