

Holding a gain of **millet** in her beak

The mother sparrow has come to feed.

The young ones are so **tiny** and small

From head to toe they are beaks

When they cry

One grain to be fed to the ten young ones

To whom the mother sparrow should feed?

Conjoining beak with beak

With whom should she **solace**?

Fissuring the atom,

You have learnt to weep and **wail** in a loud tone,

Splitting the grain,

You have learnt to set life on foot

Could you split the grain?

One grain to be fed to the ten young ones.

باجرے کا اکہ۔ انہ برونچے مگر تھئے

چڑیا ماں چو گادینے آئی ہے

بچے اتنے ننھے منے ہیں کہ

سر سے بچوں تک چونچ ہی چونچ لگتے ہیں

جب وہ چلاتے ہیں

دانہ ایک اور بچے دس۔

چڑیا کس کس کو چو گادے؟

چونچ سے چونچ ملا کر

کس کس کی ڈھارس بندھائے؟

ذره توڑ کر

تم نے زار و قطار رونا اور آہ زاری کرنا سیکھا ہے

دانہ توڑ کر

تم نے زندگی کو سہارا دینا سیکھا ہے

کیا تم دانہ توڑ سکو گے؟

دانہ ایک اور بچے دس۔

WORDS	URDU	SYNONYMS	WORDS	URDU	SYNONYMS
holding	تھامے ہوئے	catching , carrying, bearing	millet	باجرہ	cereal, grain of food
conjoining	ملا کر	uniting, combining, joining	solace	تسکین	satisfy comfort, ease
fissuring	ٹوڑنا، ٹکاف ڈالنا	breaking, splitting, break, crack	tiny	ننھے	little, small, micro
wail	رونا چلانا	weep, cry, scream	splitting	ٹوڑنا، چیرنا	breaking, tearing, dividing

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

*Holding a grain of millet in her beak
The mother sparrow has come to feed,
The young ones are so tiny and small
From head to toe they are beaks.*

*When they cry,
One grain to be fed to the ten young ones*

REFERENCE:

These lines have been taken from the poem “The Feed” by Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi.

CONTEXT:

The poet compares the skill of man with that of a tiny bird. The mother sparrow has a natural art of breaking a small particle of food to set life on foot, but man has acquired the art of breaking the atom to bring suffering to humanity. Man needs to learn to give life rather than snatch it.

EXPLANATION:

The poem describes a scene of a mother sparrow feeding her young ones. Symbolically, it is the scene of every home where mothers provide their children with food and basic necessities of life. The poet says that mother sparrow has come to the nest holding a grain of millet in her beak. The young ones are so little that when they cry for food, it seems that they are mere beaks without any body. They are hungry and everyone is anxious to get food, but the mother sparrow has only one grain of millet to feed them. The interesting thing is that she satisfies each of her young ones. The poet is amazed at this wonderful and just distribution of food.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION.

The poet uses a poetic device, hyperbole, to depict the littleness and helplessness of the young ones of sparrow. He says that when they cry, they appear to be beaks from head to toe. The last line alludes to the fact that food is short and the mother’s concern is enormous.

LINES 7-9

*To whom the mother sparrow should feed?
 Conjoining beak with beak
 With whom should she solace?*

(1 Time)

EXPLANATION:

The mother sparrow has only one grain of millet and she has to feed her ten young ones. The food is scarce and she is to feed all of them equally. Whom should she satisfy and console first is her concern. The poet sees dark future of humanity. The poem refers to the global concerns about poverty, wealth inequality, war, injustice, exploitation and stupidity of man. It speaks of the huge responsibilities of a motherland or state to provide all the socio-economic resources to its citizens in order to make them grow and prosper. The mother bird's choice of splitting the grain to satisfy the hunger of all babies is significant. It denotes the conflict faced by the poor countries whether to nourish the hunger-stricken souls or resort to the development of nuclear programme. Through this literal depiction of a bird story, the poet points towards the huge stocks of nuclear weapons that have already added to the sorrows and suffering of human beings.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

The organic images of comfort and solace show the intensity of the mother's love for her children. The poet engages the readers in his feeling of wonder and amazement: is it possible for the mother sparrow to feed her ten young ones with only a grain of millet?

LINES 10-15

*Fissuring the atom,
 You have learnt to weep and wail in a loud tone,
 Splitting the grain,
 You have learnt to set life on foot
 Could you split the grain?
 One grain to be fed to the ten young ones.*

(7 Times)

EXPLANATION:

Through nuclear fission, man has devised nuclear weapons to destroy humanity. But the need of hour is to divide the grain to bring up humanity. The poet wants to show the problems of scarcity of food and basic necessities of life in the present age. Man's technological advancement is no more than to feed the bomb and starve the people. The poem is indicative of alarmingly high level of malnutrition observed in Africa and South Asians countries. Here millions of children are under-nourished and under-weight. They have stunted growth and no access to the basic necessities of life.

CRITICAL APPRECIATION:

The poet compares the acquired skill of man with the natural skill of a tiny bird. The mother's natural love for her children overcomes all problems of scarcity and division of food. The interrogative tone of the poet shows the poet's cynical tone about human beings' tendency towards destruction rather than construction.

TEXTBOOK EXERCISE

- Q.1** What does the mother sparrow hold in her beak? OR
 Why is mother sparrow worried in the poem "The Feed"? OR (5 Times)
 What is the problem faced by the mother sparrow? OR (3 Times)
 Explain the line 'One grain to be fed to the ten young ones'? OR (2 Times)
 Highlight the contribution of the mother sparrow in the poem "The Feed"? (1 Time)
 How does the mother sparrow solace her young ones? OR (1 Time)
 Why is mother sparrow unable to feed her young ones? OR (1 Time)
 What does the sparrow hold in her beak? How many young ones does she have? (1 Time)

Mother Sparrow Holds a Grain of Cereals

Ans. The mother sparrow holds a small grain of cereal in her beak. She has ten young ones to feed. She is worried how to satisfy their hunger. However, she succeeds in feeding them by conjoining her beak with theirs and satisfies them all. The mother's natural love for her children overcomes all problems of scarcity and division of food.

- Q.2** How many young ones are to be fed? OR
 Describe the chicks of sparrow. OR (6 Times)
 How many young ones are to be fed and how does mother sparrow feed them? (1 Time)
 OR
 How do the young ones of the sparrow look when they cry?

A Grain of Food and Ten Young Ones

Ans. The young ones of sparrow are so little and small that they appear to be beaks when they cry. There are ten chicks and the mother sparrow has only a grain of millet to feed them with. However, she succeeds in feeding them by conjoining her beak with theirs and satisfies them all.

- Q.3** What has the poet described in the poem? OR
 What is the theme of the poem "The Feed"? OR (6 Times)
 Write a critical appreciation of the poem. OR
 What do you feel after reading the poem? (The Feed) OR
 What does the reader feel after reading the poem "The Feed"? OR (2 Times)
 Why does the poet think to split the grain? (1 Time)

How to Split the Grain

Ans. The poet compares the acquired skill of man with the natural skill of a tiny bird. The mother's natural love for her children overcomes all problems of scarcity and division of food. She succeeds in feeding her ten young ones by conjoining her beak with theirs. The poet says that man needs to learn how to split the grain and give life rather than snatch it.

- Q.4** Explain the last three lines of the poem "The Feed" with the reference to the context.

Ans. For answer, see EXPLANATION WITH REFERENCE TO THE CONTEXT

Q.5 Which line in the first stanza tells us that the young ones have no feathers?

Third Line in the First Stanza

Ans. Third line in the first stanza of the poem tells us that the young ones have no feathers. The young ones of sparrow are so little and small that they appear to be beaks from head to toe when they cry.

TEXTBOOK EXERCISE

1. What was the mother sparrow holding in her beak?

- (a) wheat (c) rice
(b) millet (d) maize

2. The young ones are tiny and _____.

- (a) big (c) white
(b) small (d) black

3. How many young ones are there in the nest?

- (a) three (c) twelve
(b) nine (d) ten

4. Name the bird that has come to feed her young ones.

- (a) crow (c) pigeon
(b) sparrow (d) parrot

ANSWER KEY

1.	B	2.	B	3.	D	4.	B
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MORE MCQS FOR PRACTICE

1. How do the baby sparrows look?

- (a) pale and yellow (c) big and strong
(b) tiny and small (d) ill and unwell

2. What is the sparrow splitting?

- (a) grain (c) atom
(b) wood (d) plant

3. How many grains does the sparrow bring?

- (a) two (c) three
(b) nothing (d) one

4. Who wrote the poem "The Feed"?

- (a) Jalaluddin Rumi (c) Sachal Sarmast
(b) Allama Iqbal (d) Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi

5. The mother sparrow has come to _____.

- (a) feed young ones (c) make nest
(b) lay eggs (d) count the babies

ANSWER KEY

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

1. **Conjoining** beak with beak. (1 Time)
 (a) confronting (b) conjuring (c) confiding (d) combining
 (a) making (b) covering (c) wrapping (d) uniting
2. Man has **fissured** the atom. (1 Time)
 (a) broken (b) built (c) used (d) liked
3. **Fissuring** the atom. (1 Time)
 (a) joining (b) uniting (c) splitting (d) bringing
4. **Holding** a grain of millet in her beak. (1 Time)
 (a) catching (b) throwing (c) dropping (d) eating

ANSWER KEY

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

1. **Holding** a grain of millet in her beak
 (a) worm (c) cereal
 (b) insect (d) serial
2. **The young ones are so tiny** and small
 (a) big (c) huge
 (b) little (d) large
3. **With whom should she solace?**
 (a) enrich (c) comfort
 (b) feed (d) vex
4. **You have learned to weep and wail** in a loud tone,
 (a) regret (c) cry
 (b) chirp (d) buzz
5. **Splitting** the grain, you have learnt to set life on foot.
 (a) picking (c) gathering
 (b) delivering (d) breaking

ANSWER KEY

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