



**Compiled and Circulated by: Mr. Manas Barik, Guest Lecturer,
Dept. of English, Narajole Raj College**

=====

**SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (“The Tyger”)
(PART-1)**

1. What is the theme of the poem?

Answer: The poem presents an intense, visionary style with which the poet confronts a timeless question through the creation of a still-life reverie. The Lamb and the Tyger are symbols for two different states of the human soul, when the Lamb is destroyed by experience; the Tyger is needed to restore the world. The Tyger is something within the soul of man. From a Freudian point of view, the psyche encompasses the extremes symbolized in the Tyger and the Lamb. This poem is concerned with the immense problem of evil. By the fire symbol, Blake intends to say that it is wrath whose main object is to punish the wrong-doers and love the virtuous and wipe out the worn out beliefs, to consume error, to annihilate the stubborn beliefs. The poem represents a natural energy and something defined by “a harsh mechanical process”. In the context of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, this poem is a social protest. Blake himself wanted to approve the power to destroy the age-old society with wrongs and injustices. The Tyger is a sign of revolutionary times and hence this poem is a response to the terrible, new born beauty of violent revolution. Though energy can be curbed, it bursts forth in revolutionary wrath.

2. Comment on the spelling “Tyger”?

Answer: Blake’s spelling in the title suggests the exotic or alien quality of the beast. The spelling is worth retaining for it seems to emphasize the symbolic quality of the fierce animal. The poet’s intention is perhaps to render an exotic quality of the beast or to show that it is not really about a tiger but a metaphor. The spelling startles the reader. A tiger is a large Asian Carnivorous mammal of the cat family or a fierce, daring, or aggressive quality. The stylistic device is appropriate for this poem embodies a theological question who created it. The tiger is an animal of flesh and blood but it is a symbol or sign of revolutionary



**Compiled and Circulated by: Mr. Manas Barik, Guest Lecturer,
Dept. of English, Narajole Raj College**

=====

times. Here the tiger is a symbol gains momentum. The tiger initially appears as a strikingly sensuous image. As the poem progress, it takes on a symbolic character, and comes to embody the spiritual and moral problem the poet explores: perfectly beautiful and got perfectly destructive, Blake's tiger becomes the symbolic centre for an investigation into the presence of evil in the world.

3. "Tyger Tyger burning bright / in the forest of the night" – **Explain**

Answer: William Blake's tyger is a passionate and fiery creature. It is a wonderful creation of God. We find in it a fine combination of beauty and ferocity. The tiger is the poet's symbol of fierceness in the soul. The fierce forces in the soul are needed to break the bond of experience. The tiger may be the symbol of spiritual revolt backed by uninhibited natural energy. It may be the symbol of the Creator in whom we find the wrath of the tiger. God comes down into the earth when mankind faces spiritual crisis, as Messiah. It may be all pervasive evil in the world as it has "fearful symmetry". It may be a symbol of awful beauty in creation. This memorable opening couplet points to the stark contrast of the dark "forest of the night" which suggests an unknown and hostile place, and the intense "burning" brightness of the tiger's colouring. The forest of the night where the tiger lie ambush symbolizes ignorance, repression and superstition. Some think the forest to be "the world of Experience where many sterile errors (dead trees) conceal the path and dim the light". The forest of the night may be the symbol of dark human experiences like ignorance, repression and superstition which need the fierce forces of tiger to be smashed and burn down through its luminous eyes which is full of passion and energy. Wild passion in the dark wood inevitably carries social and psychological implications. Blake conveys violent - revolutionary energy by his use of a reasoning poetic symbol the wild beast in the forest.

4. **Explain the phrase "fearful symmetry"**

Answer: The literal meaning of 'fearful symmetry' is awe-inspiring yet well proportioned body. The tiger is strikingly beautiful yet horrific in its capacity for violence. The term 'symmetry' means excellence of proportion and regularity of form and the word 'fearful' means horrible, awful and frightful. Here we are



**Compiled and Circulated by: Mr. Manas Barik, Guest Lecturer,
Dept. of English, Narajole Raj College**

=====

startled by both the beautiful contrast and the absolute truth of the description. We observe the complexity of the tiger's markings in the phrase. The phrase demonstrates that God is a perfect craftsman. The tyger is exactly what his creator meant him to be. Each living creature is a unique blast of creativity by some immoral hand. Like us, the sensitive human artist is awe struck by the divine artistry. The dreadful and well-proportioned shape of the tyger overwhelms the poet because beauty and ferocity are two diametrically opposite traits. Hence, this phrase reveals an oxymoronic twist.

5. "In what distant deeps or skies/ Burnt the fire of thine eyes" - Explain

Answer: in contrast to the pastoral setting of the innocent lamb, the tyger is born out of the abysmal depths of consciousness, and our highest flights of fantasy. Blake uses the metaphor of fire to describe the way the Tyger sees and is seen. Blake uses an old symbol "fire", the symbol of wrath. Spenser views wrath is a fire. According to Blake, wrath is one of the deadly sins and yet he regards wrath as a virtue. This poem is concerned with a gravest problem, namely "evil". By means of the symbol, Blake means to say that it is wrath whose object is to punish the wrong doers and loves the virtuous followers and to discards the worn-out customs and beliefs. In other words, wrath is to serve the purpose of consuming errors and wiping out the stubborn beliefs which cannot be rooted out by the tame horses of instruction. The wrath of the lion is wisdom of God. "The wrath which Blake found in Christ, his symbol of the divine spirit, which will not tolerate restrictions but asserts itself against established rules, was the means by which he hoped to unite innocence and experience." Wrath is the prominent aspect of Christ. The term 'deeps' here means "volcanoes" or places infinitely low and 'skies', places infinitely high or heaven. The speaker here refers to the excessively bright eyes of the Tyger which burnt like fire. He asserts that such exceptional kind of fire cannot be found on this earth. He surmised that the fire was brought from either Heaven or Hell.

=====

Sem. – II :: Paper C4T :: British Romantic Literature

=====