

# **St. Andrews Scots Sr. Sec. School**

**9th Avenue, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, Delhi – 110092**

**Session: 2025- 2026**

## **NOTES**

**Class - IX**

**Subject - English**

**Topic: The Solitary Reaper' (Poem)**

### **Q1.RTC-**

**I. "Will no one tell me what she sings?—**

**Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow**

**For old, unhappy, far-off things,**

**And battles long ago:**

**Or is it some more humble lay,**

**Familiar matter of to-day?**

**Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,**

**That has been, and may be again?"**

**1. Why does the poet ask questions in the first line?**

**Ans. The poet asks this question because he is unable to understand the meaning of the song, as the language in which she was singing was not familiar to the poet.**

**3. The phrase "the plaintive numbers flow" suggests that the girl's song is:**

**Answer: Slow and mournful.**

**4. What do you understand by "humble lay"?**

**Answer: Ordinary song**

**5. The speaker suggests that the girl's song might also be about:**

**Answer: A personal loss or pain.**

**2. "No nightingale did ever chant**

**More welcome notes to weary bands**

**Of travellers in some shady haunts,**

**Among Arabian sands."**

**(a) What does the nightingale's song do?**

**Answer: The nightingale's song welcomes and soothes the tired travellers as they reach the oasis.**

**(b) Why has the poet compared the nightingale's song to that of the solitary reaper?**

**Answer: The song of the nightingale and the reaper's song has been compared by the poet as they arouse feelings of pleasure and joy.**

**(c) Name the poetic device used by the poet in the line "Among Arabian sands"**

**Answer: Alliteration**

**Answer the following questions in brief:**

**1. How does the poet bring out the beauty in the song of 'The Solitary Reaper'?**

**Ans.** The poet compares the song of the solitary reaper to the sweet notes of the nightingale and the cuckoo. The song of the nightingale is very welcoming to the tired travellers and the song of the cuckoo bird brings joy to the listeners. Similarly, the song of the reaper too arouses the same feelings of pleasure and joy in the poet.

**2. What effect does the song of the reaper have on the poet?**

**Ans.** The poet was captivated by the reaper's melancholic song. He stood motionless and heard it with rapt attention. The song left a long lasting impression in his heart. He bore her music in his heart for a long time afterwards even when he could not hear her singing.

**3. Justify the title of the poem, 'The Solitary Reaper'.**

**Ans.** The title of the poem is an apt one. The title indicates that the contents of the poem relate to a harvester who is all alone and who is the main character of the poem. The word 'solitary' also reflects her untold pain of loneliness and evokes our sympathy for the reaper.

**Long Answer Type Questions:**

**1. Music doesn't know boundaries. Wordsworth was not able to understand the dialect of the song of the reaper, and even though it was melancholic, it left a long lasting impression in his heart.**

**Describe, in your own words, how music can soothe the tired one even if one doesn't understand it.**

**Ans.** Wordsworth was passing through the fields when he heard the 'melancholic strain' of the solitary reaper, which at once caught his attention and totally enchanted him. He was on his way to some place but he was so caught up by the melody, that he stopped for some time to listen to it. He was awestruck even though the song was a sad one and he could not understand the language in which the girl was singing.

**This is what music does. It doesn't know boundaries. It affects all, and the source of the sound doesn't matter. In the desert, the nightingale's song comes as a blessing for the tired travellers. In spring time, the cuckoo bird breaks the silence.**

**Music is above the barriers of language and tones. It affects us and enchants us.**

**2. Discuss the central theme of the poem 'The Solitary Reaper'**

**Ans.** The central idea of William Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper" is the profound beauty and emotional impact of music, particularly when experienced in solitude and nature. The poem explores how a simple, melancholic song sung by a Highland girl in a field can deeply move the listener, transcending language barriers and creating a lasting

impression. The poem also highlights the power of imagination, as the poet, unable to understand the words, constructs his own narrative around the song's emotional tone.