



**CLASS VI – ENGLISH**

**There Have Come Soft Rains (New Images)**

**~John Philip Johnson**

**Week – 21 to 24 December 2020**

**Number of Teaching Blocks – 3**

Dear Students

- Before going through this e-lesson, make sure you read the poem 'There Have Come Soft Rains' thoroughly.
- Mark the vocabulary words in the text and find out their meanings using a dictionary.
- The lesson is divided into two parts – the first is the lesson on 'There Have Come Soft Rains' and the second is a language enhancement activity.
- Mark the answers of the back exercise questions of 'There Have Come Soft Rains' in the book itself. (Pg no. 115)
- The exercise on 'There Have Come Soft Rains' must be attempted in the English fair notebook. Do not forget to write the questions as well.
- The answers to the practice questions in this worksheet shall be shared in the next e-lesson.

**Subtopics –**

- Theme and title of the poem
- Explanation and Analysis of the poem
- Poetic devices in the poem

**Web links for further reference –**

- The impact of war on children - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dG8grqCDOmU>
- The Cold War explained - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rB1Y4Lu1rZs>
- Ray Bradbury's short story 'There Will Come Soft Rains' - [https://www.btbores.org/Downloads/7\\_There%20Will%20Come%20Soft%20Rains%20by%20Ray%20Bradbury.pdf](https://www.btbores.org/Downloads/7_There%20Will%20Come%20Soft%20Rains%20by%20Ray%20Bradbury.pdf)

**Instructional Aids –**

- Microsoft Word to be used as a white board (screen sharing)
- YouTube video for further reference
- Graphic Organizer to summarize the poem

**Learning Outcomes –**

Each learner will be able to:

- Summarize the poem briefly
- Analyse the theme of the poem
- Identify the poetic devices in the poem

## Activities -

- **Brainstorming:** The teacher to share the screen and type the question 'After-effects of war' to initiate a discussion on the poem.
- **Language Enhancement Activity** ( at the end of this e-lesson)

## BLOCK - I

### **Lesson Development**

#### TEXT OF THE POEM:

In kindergarten during the Cold War,  
mid-day late bells jolted us,  
sending us single file into the hallway,  
where we sat, pressing our heads  
between our knees, waiting.

During one of the bomb drills,  
Annette was standing.  
My mother said I would talk on and on  
about her, about how pretty she was.  
I still remember her that day,  
curly hair and pretty dress,  
looking perturbed the way  
little children do.  
Why Annette? There's nothing  
to be upset about—  
The bombs won't get us,  
I've seen what's to come—  
it is the days, the steady  
pounding of days, like gentle rain,  
that will be our undoing.

#### I. ABOUT THE POET AND THE POEM -

- John Philip Johnson is an American poet.
- He was born in Iowa and grew up in Illinois and Indiana.
- His poems have appeared in several publications including *Rattle*, *Asimov's Science Fiction*, *Apex*, *Strange Horizons* and many more.
- The poem ***There Have Come Soft Rains*** was published in 2014.

- Johnson wrote this poem in 2013 after reading Ray Bradbury's story, '*There Will Come Soft Rains.*'
- The story is about an empty family home after everyone has died in a nuclear war.
- It made him think of his own childhood during the cold war when fears of nuclear warfare were at their height.
- The poem is about love and loss and what time does to people.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE POEM –

- John Philip Johnson's poem is based on Ray Bradbury's short story 'There Will Come Soft Rains.'
- The story also made him think of his experiences during the cold war.
- Ray Bradbury's short story 'There Will Come Soft Rains' takes up a common concern of the mid-twentieth century. As technology advanced at a rapid pace, particularly following the development of the atomic bomb in the 1940s, a fear of robots taking the place of humans developed.
- Many of the jobs typically performed by humans have been handed over to robots in the short story. The stove cooks breakfast on its own, and small robot mice clean the house. To some extent, humans have been replaced by technology in this story.
- **The dangers of reckless, thoughtless development is one of Bradbury's themes, or the story's main ideas, in 'There Will Come Soft Rains'.**

## BLOCK - II

### Lesson Development

## III. THEME –

- The poem talks about the after-effects of war.
- It also deals with the emotions people (particularly children) go through during an atomic bomb drill.
- The children in the poem grow up to believe that the war, like gentle rain, would probably be unending and that they would grow old one day and die waiting for the war to end.
- The poem also depicts a situation of 'fear' – the position in which the students are made to sit during the drill instills a sense of fear in them. It also showcases the fear of nuclear warfare.
- The situation of mock drills depicted in the poem is actually based on a true situation in America that was struck by Cold War.
- The poem subtly hints on the themes of love and loss and what time does to people.

## IV. POETIC DEVICES –

### **Alliteration**

- **"My mother", "upset about"**

### **Simile**

- **'Like gentle rain'**

### **Symbolism**

- **'Gentle Rain' as a symbol of unending war**

#### **V. TITLE –**

- The title 'There Have Come Soft Rains' has been inspired from Ray Bradbury's story 'There Will Come Soft Rains.'
- Both the pieces of text deal with the after-effects of nuclear warfare and nuclear inventions.
- The title of the poem somewhere suggests the psychology of the people who are a victim of the war.
- The fact that they constantly live in fear of being killed makes them believe that the war would never end.
- They grow up to believe that the war will keep going on, like gentle rain.

### **BLOCK – III**

#### **Lesson Development**

#### **VI. SUMMARY –**

- The poem, written in the form of a comic strip, talks about the mock bomb drills conducted in a kindergarten school in America during the Cold War.
- The children in the kindergarten were trained to move in a single queue at the ring of a bell and sit down, pressing their heads between their knees.
- The poet shows how the children were lead when there was an atomic bomb drill alert.
- One of the children notices a fellow classmate standing during one of the drills. The girl was named Annette and the little child could notice the look of tension, fear and worry on her face.
- His mother recalls how the child always used to talk about Annette – her pretty face and dress, her curly hair.
- Noticing the worried look on her face, the little child wants to reassure Annette that there is nothing to be worried about and that the bombs won't get them.
- The little child also thinks that probably they will spend their life like this; waiting for the unending war to end.
- The war has also been compared to 'gentle rain' – just like the rain which keeps pouring gently, the war seems to be unending.
- The comic also suggests that this is how probably they will all grow old – waiting for the war to end.

## VII. ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS -

(To be attempted in the English fair notebook)

**Q1.** *“Why Annette? There’s nothing  
To be upset about...”*

- a) Name the poet and the poem.
- b) Who is the speaker?
- c) Who is Annette? Why is she upset?

**Q2.** Analyse how *‘There Have Come Soft Rains’* is a war poem.

**Q3.** Throw light on the significance of the title of the poem.

**Q4.** Explain what *‘gentle rain’* in the poem stands for.

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### LANGUAGE ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

- In the previous lesson you discussed who ‘Keyworkers’ are. Make a list of such keyworkers around you and write how each of them contributes to sustenance of life.

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### SUPPLEMENTARY READING

**NOTE:** Please make sure you read the supplementary reader ( the whole book) – A Christmas Carol. The text, as given in the book, will be tested as part of the Annual Examination. (Please find the PDF of the book attached with this e-lesson.)

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### ANSWER KEY TO THE E-LESSON ON ‘FIFTH FORM JUSTICE’

## SUMMARY:

The story of the "Fifth Form of Justice" **revolves** around two sisters, Merle and Mavis, and their cousin, Clive. In the story, Clive **predicts** the future playfully one night and helps his cousins by predicting the questions which were to be asked the next day in the exam hall. He gives suggestions and **reveals** the questions that would be asked in the exam.

Much to their surprise, the questions which Clive predicted were all asked in the exam the next day. Merle and Mavis were astounded and surprised by the **accuracy** of Clive's **prophecy** and told about it to their friends.

However, Merle and Mavis were later called in the evening into a meeting of the Fifth form by some of their **classmates**. They **accused** them of cheating in the exams after one of their **classmates** saw Merle entering the **study room** where the question papers were kept.

They were **shocked** to hear this accusation as they were studying at home the other day. It was only until they came to know at home that it was Clive who entered the study **wearing** Merle's clothes the other day. Clive **admitted** what he had done and he was made to do the same at school.

Finally, the classmates who represented the Fifth form also got to know the truth and **dismissed** their court of justice and made amends to their false **allegations** towards Merle.

## ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

*(Given below are just the value points/ key points. The learners can refer to them to frame proper answers.)*

**Q1.** ***"You atrocious imp! Look here! You don't know what a scrape you've got us into."***

(a) Merle to Clive

(b) Merle and Mavis/ Ramsay sisters

(c) They have been accused of cheating and unfairly accessing the question papers before the exam as they knew the questions already.

**Q2.** Merle's jersey was found wet, Clive's pen-knife fell out of the jersey's pocket and Clive had told them the questions before the exam. Mavis put all this together and concluded Clive must have dressed up as Merle and gone to school. This resulted in the boarders mistaking Merle to have jumped out of the study and seen the papers. Thus accusing them of cheating.

**Q3.** Giving appropriate adjectives with evidence, explain how Clive was casual, carefree and naughty in comparison to the sisters who were sincere, careful, honest and responsible.

**Q4.** Subjective answer. Select and explain on your own.

**Q5.** Yes. The story is about fifth graders- Merle, Mavis and their classmates accusing them of cheating; it tells how justice was meted out to the innocent and honest Merle and Mavis in an informal trial initiated by their classmates of Fifth form i.e., fifth class.

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