

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

Robert Southey



Introducing the author

Robert Southey (12 August 1774 - 21 March 1843) was an English Romantic poet and Poet Laureate from 1813 to his death in 1843. He is a prolific letter writer, literary scholar, essay writer, historian and biographer.

Warm up

The 'Inchcape Rock' is a perilous reef off the east coast of Scotland near the mouth of the river Tay. The rock was a few inches above the surface of the sea in low tide and was completely covered by the sea in high tide or when the sea was rough. Many ships had been wrecked by this 'Inchcape rock' when it was covered by the sea. This poem is based on this notorious 'Inchcape Rock.' In this poem, Southey decries the evildoing of Sir Ralph the Rover who pays with his life for the crime of removing the Inchcape bell and his sins against humanity.

Read the following unit of the text and note how dangerous the Inchcape Rock was:

Unit 1

Q.1. How does the poet describe the Inchcape Rock ?

Ans. The Inchcape Rock ~~was~~^{is} situated in the east coast of Scotland. During low tide it appears over the surface. During high tide it remains under water.

Q.2. Was the Inchcape Rock dangerous ? Give your reasons ?

Ans. The Inchcape Rock was dangerous, because many ships got knocked with it during high tide and were destroyed.

Q.3. Why did the Abbot place a bell on the Inchcape Rock ?

Ans. The Abbot realised the danger created by the Inchcape Rock. So he placed a bell on the inchcape rock so that it would warn the sailors.

Q.4. When did the Inchcape bell ring ?

Ans. The inchcape bell floated on a buoy in the storm and sent

warnings ringing loudly when there was high tide. It was saving the ships, lives of the sailors.

Q.5. Why did the mariners bless the Abbot ?

Ans. Abbot placed the Inchcape bell. it rang in the storm and high tide and warned the sailors. So they blessed the Abbot.

Q.1. How does the poet express the "cheering power of spring" ?

Ans. Spring is the king of all seasons. Nature looks gay. The sun shines brightly. The sea birds scream. Everything looks joyous.

Q.2. How did Ralph come across the inchcape bell ?

Ans. Sir Ralph was sailing in the sea. He came by the side of the Inchcape rock and from his ships deck, he saw the darker speck, the inchcape bell.

Q.3. What was the effect of the cheering power of spring on Ralph ?

Ans. The cheering power of spring usually makes men happy, spirited, joyful. But Ralph was a wicked fellow. So his mind was filled with wicked ideas seeing the joyous spring around.

Q.4. What kind of person was Ralph ? Which line tells you this ?

Ans. Sir Ralph was a wicked fellow. The line which tells this is – "But the Rover's mirth was wickedness."

Q.5. What act of wickedness did he do ?

Ans. He cut the inchcape bell and destroyed it. It was an act of wickedness.

Q.6. Why did he do the wicked act ?

Ans. Sir Ralph was envious of Abbot's reputation. He made the wicked act to destroy his glory.

Q.1. How did Ralph become rich ?

Ans. Ralph plundered the ships in the sea and became rich.

Q.2. Why did the ship lose its way in the sea while it was heading towards Scotland ?

Ans. While the ship was heading towards Scotland, it lost its way because the sky was overcast. Nothing was seen.

Q.3. Why did a mariner think that they were near the shore ?

Ans. A mariner thought that they were near the shore because they heard the breakers roar.

Q.4. "Oh Christ ! It is the Inchcape Rock !"

Why did the mariners exclaim it ?

Ans. The sailors heard the breakers roar. They thought that it was shore, not inchcape rock because there was no bell sound. But the ship collided with the rock. Being astonished, the sailors exclaimed – Oh Christ ! It is the Inchcape Rock".

Q.5. Why did Sir Ralph curse himself ?

Ans. Sir Ralph cursed himself because he had destroyed the inchcape bell before. But for his stupidity the ship wrecked and he died.

Q.6. "The devil below was ringing his knell".

What does the expression mean ?

Ans. The ship wrecked and began sinking. Sir Ralph too began sinking into water. He was punished for his wicked action. The devil inside water was ringing his death bell. He was going to die after a few minutes.

Q.7. Do you find this poem musical ? The rhyme scheme of the first stanza is AABB. Is the rhyme scheme same for all the stanzas ?

Ans. The poem is musical. The rhyme scheme for all the stanzas is AA BB.

TO MY TRUE FRIEND

Elizabeth Pinard

Warm up

We meet our true friend only once in a lifetime. The greatest gift is not found in a mall but in the hearts of a true friend. Friendship is a relationship between two persons who hold mutual affection for each other. The value of friendship is often the result of friends consistently demonstrating the desire to do what is best for the other, showing mutual understanding, emotional support, and compassion. Friendship is also marked by enjoyment of each other's company, trust in each other and positive reciprocity. Read the poem and note how the poet cherishes the memories of her friend:

① Who is the poet of "To My True Friend"?

Elizabeth Dinard is the poet of "To My True Friend".

② What do you mean by friend?

A person who helps with you is called a friend.

③ What is friendship?

Friendship is a relationship between two persons who hold mutual affection for each other.

④ What do you mean by real/true friend?

A person who shares both sorrowful and delightful moments is called real/true/intimate friend.

⑤ What does the poet pray for?

The poet prays for immortality of her friendship. She has intimate and so precious mind.

⑥ How did the friend encourage the poet?

When the poet didn't know what to do she hoped that her life was spoiled. At that time her friend encouraged her to keep patient and acts effectively.

⑦ How did the friend reassure (ସମ୍ବନ୍ଧ) her?

When the poet is disheartened in problems. Then she reassured to the poet avoid sadness.

⑧ Why did the poet trust her friend?

The poet trusted her friend because she never judged her, loved her, unconditionally and always tried to make cheerful.

9) How did the friend inspire self-confidence in the poet?

When the poet was disheartened, hopeless about any action and result. At that time, she inspired her to put mind in the work. As a result, she gets back self-confidence.

10) How does the poet cherish (happy) the memory of her friend?

The poet cherished the memory of her friend by possessing her sweet smile in her heart. This smile made her path lightened.

11) Are the friends staying close to each other?

No, they staying each other. They depart from so many miles.

12) How does the poet value her friendship?

The poet values her friendship as precious. She wants to grow it and flourish it till infinity.

13) Why does she call her friend extra special?

She loves ~~her~~ ^{her} unconditionally. She had no material desires in her friendship. She wants no return except giving everything to her friend.

14) What is the poet's final wish?

The poet's final wish is she would keep her precious friendship afloat and it would never die away.