

UNIT 2
CHAPTER 3
THE SEEDLING

Appreciation of the Poem: "The Seedling"

A Journey to rise and bloom

Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem "The Seedling" tells the story of a small seed growing into a beautiful flower. The poet uses the seedling as a symbol of human effort, hope, and growth. Through this simple journey, Dunbar shares a message about facing life's struggles with courage and a positive attitude.

The theme of the poem is about trying one's best, even at the face of difficulties. The seedling begins its life in darkness but decides to grow anyway. With each step, it welcomes others and keeps moving forward. This reflects how children and adults can achieve success by small steps and working together. The poem reminds us that hard work, patience, and kindness lead to inner beauty and strength.

The poem has a steady rhythm with words like "bed-said" and "day-way," which create a musical feel. The growth of the seedling is a metaphor for human development and effort. Dunbar uses personification, giving the seedling thoughts and actions like talking and sweating. The tone is cheerful and motivating. One line I like most is "Always do the best you can," because it encourages effort in every situation. The poem inspires us to grow through struggles and shine through kindness and effort.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is the poet ?

Paul Laurence Dunbar is the poet.

2. Where was the seedling at the beginning of the poem?

It was lying quietly in a dark bed.

3. "I am not so very robust, But I'll do the best I can;" what do these lines signify?

The seedling admits its limitations but decides to make an effort.

4. What did the seedling say about itself?

It said it was not very strong but would do its best.

5. What did the seedling begin to do after talking to itself?

It began its journey of growth.

6. What did the seedling first push into the light?

It pushed a small leaflet into the light.

7. What did the leaflet do after seeing the surroundings?

It called the stem to join it.

8. Who followed the stem later?

Two more leaflets quickly followed the stem.

9. "Then two other leaflets heard it, and quickly followed them." What do these lines imply?

It implies that teamwork and encouragement are needed for growth.

10. What effect did the fast growth have on the seedling?

It made the seedling sweat and pant.

11. "The haste and hurry made the seedling sweat and pant." What does it mean?

It means rapid growth is exhausting.

12. What did the seedling become after growing?

It grew into a plant.

13. What helped the plant grow further?

Sunshine and rain helped the plant to grow.

14. What did the plant find in it finally ?

The plant found a flower itself finally

15. What does the poet ask little folks to do?

He asks them to be like the seedling and do their best.

16. According to the poet, who must share life's labour?

Every child must share life's labour like every adult.

17. "Every child must share life's labour." What does this line indicate?

Every child must work and face challenges to grow strong.

18. What do the sun and showers represent?

They represent support and help during struggles.

19. "Virtue's fair, unfading flowers." What does this line signify?

A virtuous life is beautiful like unfading flowers.

20. What reward does the poet mention at the end?

Virtue's fair and unfading flowers are the reward.

21. What is the overall message of the poem?

The poem encourages effort, growth, and courage.

Figures of speech in the poem

☀️1. Personification

- To itself it fell a-talking
- I am not so very robust
- the leaflet liked the prospect
- so it called its brother Stem
- seedling sweats and pants
- it found itself a flower

☀️2. Metaphor

- Virtue's fair, unfading flowers

☀️3. Alliteration

- seedling sweat
- life's labour
- haste and hurry
- leaflet liked

☀️ 4. Visual Images

- Light of day
- darksome bed
- sweat and pant
- sunshine and showers
- it found itself a plant

☀️ 5. Auditory image

- so it called its brother Stem

☀️ 6. Symbolism

- Virtue's fair, unfading flower

☀️ 7. Tactile image

- It pushed a little leaflet

☀️ 8. Rhyme scheme of the Stanza

As a quiet little seedling
Lay within its darksome bed,
To itself it fell a-talking,
And this is what it said:

Rhyme Scheme: abab

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