

G. N. National Public School
Class. XII. Subject. English
Poem: Keeping Quiet

1. What will counting upto twelve and keeping still help us achieve?
 Ans. When we count upto twelve and keep still, it will help us achieve a sense of togetherness. We will think about ourselves and the world around us. In the silence of peace, we will have time to introspect. This would help in creating a feeling of mutual understanding among human beings.
2. Do you think the poet advocates total inactivity and death?
 Ans. No, the poet does not advocate total inactivity and death. He says that what he wants should not be confused with total inactivity. He clarifies that he has no truck with death. According to the poet, life is meant to be lived to the fullest. All the inhuman and destructive activities must be stopped.
3. What is the sadness that the poet refers to in the poem?
 Ans. The sadness that the poet Pablo Neruda refers to in the poem is the failure to understand ourselves. In the race to live our lives, we become single-minded and forget to stop and think what is it that we actually need and that leads to sadness. The mindless activities of human beings lead them to destruction.
4. What symbol from nature does the poet invoke to say that there can be life under apparent stillness?
 Ans. The poet invokes a powerful symbol of the earth to educate that there can be life under apparent

stillness. He says that the Earth is a great teacher. It seems silent and yet nurtures so much life on it. During the winter season, seeds buried are dormant but sprout in the spring. The poet wants us to be productive in our silence.

1. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:-

Perhaps the Earth can teach us
as when everything seems dead
and later proves to be alive.
Now I'll count upto twelve
and you keep quiet and I will go.

a) What does the Earth teach us?

Ans:- The Earth teaches us how new life springs from dead remains, and how there is life under apparent stillness. [The Earth can teach us how silence is productive]

b) What does the poet mean to achieve by counting upto twelve?

Ans:- The poet wants to achieve peace by counting upto twelve.

c) What is always alive, even when everything seems to be dead?

Ans:- The Earth is always alive, even when everything seems to be dead. There is always some activity going on in nature beneath its apparent stillness.

d) What does the poet ask us to do?

Ans:- The poet asks us to keep quiet while he is counting upto twelve.

H.W.

- (i) How will keeping quiet protect our environment?
- (ii) What are the different kinds of wars mentioned in the poem? What is Neruda's attitude towards these wars?
- (iii) Which is the exotic moment that the poet refers to in 'Keeping Quiet'?