

Class 12 chapter Keeping Quite

About the poet: Pablo Neruda is the pen name of Naphtali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto who was born in the town of Parral in Chile. Neruda's poems are full of easily understood images which makes them no less beautiful. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in the year 1971. In this poem Neruda talks about the necessity of quiet introspection and creating a feeling of mutual understanding among human beings. Stillness and silence will help man in creating these feelings.

Question and Answers:

1. What will count up to twelve and keeping still achieve?
 - A. Counting up to twelve takes very short time. Keeping still for this brief interval of time gives us a momentary pause to introspect and review the course of action. It is generally observed that most of the ills and troubles of the world are caused by our rush or hurry. Violence is caused by anger. Keeping quiet and still give us necessary respite and ensure peace.
2. Do you think the poet advocates total inactivity and death?
 - A. No, he doesn't advocate either total inactivity or death. He makes it quite clear that 'stillness' should not be confused with 'total inactivity' or equated to it. Total inactivity brings death. But Neruda has 'no truck with death'. His stillness means halting of harmful and hostile human activities.
3. What is the 'sadness' that the poet refers in the poem?
 - A. Man's sadness is formed out of his own actions and thoughts. It is quite ironical that man who understands so much fails to understand himself and his action. Rash actions prove harmful and disastrous. Man is the creator of all disasters. He is always threatening himself with death because of his thoughts and actions. This is the tragedy of his life,
4. What symbol from Nature does the poet invoke to say that there can be life under apparent stillness?
 - A. The poet wants to prove that there can be life under apparent stillness. The poet invokes the earth as living symbol to prove his point. The earth never attains total inactivity. Nature remains at work all the time even

under apparent stillness. It keeps earth alive. This idea is beautifully illustrated by the following lines: "**as when everything seems dead, and later proves to be alive**"

5. Justify the title 'Keeping Quite'.

A. The title of the poem is quite appropriate and logical. It suggests the necessity of quite introspection. The people of the world are over active and always on the move. Their activities. Have caused untold trouble and sufferings. Keeping quite will do them a lot good .It will save them from many harmful and violent activities. Moreover, it will help in reflecting over the fate of a man and help in creating a feeling of mutual understanding among human beings.
