

The Half Closed Eyes of the Buddha and the Slowly Sinking Sun by Shankar Lamichhane

Notes, Summary, Questions and Answers

(Exam focused Questions)

Class 12 English

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Summary

The Half Closed Eyes of the Buddha and the Slowly Sinking Sun by Shankar Lamichhane is a symbolic and reflective story written using the stream of consciousness technique. Instead of following a conventional plot with continuous actions and dialogues, the story presents two interconnected monologues: one belonging to a foreign tourist visiting Nepal and the other to a Nepali tourist guide. Through these two contrasting voices, the author presents both the beauty and the hidden reality of Nepal.

In the first monologue, the foreign tourist expresses deep admiration for the Kathmandu Valley. The visitor is fascinated by its green hills, fertile rectangular fields, colorful clay houses painted in red, yellow, and white, and the peaceful fragrance of the soil mixed with the serenity of the mountains. The tourist believes that the West owes a great debt to the East because Eastern civilization has gifted the world with the Puranas, brass sculptures, ivory ornaments, palm leaf manuscripts, copperplate inscriptions, philosophy, religion, art, and wisdom.

The tourist also recalls historical and legendary references connected

with Nepal. The legend of Manjushri, who cut the Chobhar Gorge to drain the ancient lake and create the Kathmandu Valley, appears as one of the most memorable stories. The tourist admires Nepal's unique cultural diversity, where Aryans and non Aryans, Hindus and Buddhists, and people of different traditions have lived together peacefully for generations.

One image especially captures the tourist's imagination: the eyes found throughout Nepal. The samyak gaze of the shaven monks and nuns, the painted eyes on windows and temple panels, the majestic eyes of the Himalayas, and above all, the peaceful half closed eyes of the Buddha become powerful symbols of wisdom, purity, and harmony.

The second monologue presents a completely different perspective. The Nepali guide appreciates his country's beauty but wants the tourist to experience a reality that cannot be found in guidebooks, novels, or photographs. To fulfill the tourist's wish to see "special eyes," he takes the visitor to Chobhar Hill, explains the significance of the Adinath Temple as a symbol of religious coexistence, and later leads the tourist to a remote village.

There they meet a poor farming family whose young son has been completely paralyzed by polio. The child cannot speak, walk, move his hands, chew food, or even spit. Only his eyes remain alive and expressive. The guide quietly lies to the parents by suggesting that the foreign visitor is a doctor who has crossed seven seas to bring life restoring treatment. The innocent couple welcomes the visitor with hope and gratitude, believing their suffering may finally end.

The guide carefully observes the contrast between the paralyzed boy and

his healthy younger sister, who crawls freely, plays happily, and explores the world without limitations. Watching the boy's eyes sparkle whenever his sister creates mischief becomes one of the story's most emotional moments.

The story ends by connecting two different kinds of eyes: the peaceful half closed eyes of the Buddha, which symbolize harmony, tolerance, and spiritual wisdom, and the helpless eyes of the paralyzed child, which reveal Nepal's hidden pain, poverty, and silent endurance. Through this powerful contrast, Shankar Lamichhane creates a unified picture of a country whose beauty and suffering exist side by side.

Important Themes

Beauty and Reality

The story contrasts the breathtaking beauty of Nepal with the difficult lives of ordinary people living in poverty.

Religious Harmony

Hindus, Buddhists, Aryans, and non Aryans coexist peacefully, making Nepal a symbol of tolerance.

Culture and History

The story celebrates Nepal's rich artistic traditions, ancient civilization, and historical legends.

Poverty and Compassion

Behind Nepal's beauty lies hidden suffering, represented by the paralyzed child and his family.

Hope and Humanity

The welcoming eyes of the villagers show that kindness and hope survive even during hardship.

Different Perspectives

The tourist and the guide see the same country differently, showing that reality depends on one's experience.

Character Information

The Foreign Tourist

The foreign tourist is curious, educated, and deeply interested in Nepal's culture and history. She admires the country's natural beauty, religious tolerance, and artistic heritage. However, she initially sees only the brighter side of Nepal until the guide reveals a more painful reality.

The Nepali Guide

The guide loves his country but understands both its strengths and weaknesses. Instead of presenting Nepal as a perfect destination, he wants the tourist to witness its hidden struggles. His thoughtful observations connect the story's symbolic images and emotional ending.

The Paralyzed Boy

The boy becomes the story's most powerful symbol of silent suffering. Although his body is almost completely immobile because of polio, his expressive eyes continue communicating emotions and hope.

The Village Couple

The innocent parents represent ordinary rural Nepali families who continue believing in hope despite living with poverty and illness.

Important Events

The tourist admires Kathmandu Valley

The visitor becomes fascinated by Nepal's scenery, culture, and peaceful atmosphere.

Historical legends are remembered

Stories about Manjushri, Bhrikuti, and ancient Nepal enrich the tourist's understanding.

The guide reveals another reality

Instead of ending the tour with beautiful scenery, the guide leads the tourist toward rural hardship.

The Adinath Temple visit

The temple becomes a living example of religious coexistence.

The remote village visit

The tourist meets a poor family whose son has been paralyzed by polio.

The emotional ending

The guide compares the child's eyes with the Buddha's eyes, uniting beauty and suffering into one powerful image.

Difficult Vocabulary

Serenity: Peacefulness and calmness.

Fragrance: A pleasant smell.

Monologue: A long speech expressing one person's thoughts.

Samyak: Pure, complete, or right understanding.

Coexistence: Living together peacefully.

Puranas: Ancient Hindu religious texts.

Manuscript: A handwritten document.

Inscription: Words written on stone or metal.

Tolerance: Acceptance of different beliefs.

Paralyzed: Unable to move parts of the body.

Compassion: Sympathy and concern for others.

Symbolism: The use of symbols to express deeper meanings.

Key Message / Main Idea

The story teaches that a country's true identity cannot be understood by seeing only its beautiful places. Real understanding comes from recognizing both its cultural richness and its hidden struggles. Shankar Lamichhane suggests that beauty and suffering, hope and hardship, and spirituality and reality can exist together within the same society.

Textbook Exercise & Answers

Understanding the Text

a. How does the tourist describe his initial impression of the Kathmandu valley?

The tourist's first impression of the Kathmandu Valley is filled with admiration and wonder. She is deeply impressed by the valley's natural beauty, including its green hills, rectangular fields, colorful clay houses painted in red, yellow, and white, and the peaceful fragrance of the soil mixed with the cool mountain air. Having grown up near the plains and the sea, she finds Nepal's hills comforting and spiritually refreshing. She also notices the calm atmosphere created by the surrounding mountains and believes that the valley possesses a unique harmony between nature and human life. Her appreciation goes beyond physical beauty, as she feels that every part of the valley reflects peace, history,

and cultural richness. This positive first impression establishes the contrast that later develops when the guide introduces her to Nepal's hidden hardships.

b. According to the tourist, why is the West indebted to the East?

According to the tourist, the West is indebted to the East because Eastern civilization has contributed countless valuable gifts to humanity. She believes that the East has enriched the world through the Puranas, brass sculptures, ivory ornaments, palm leaf manuscripts, copperplate inscriptions, philosophy, religion, artistic traditions, and ancient wisdom. She also feels that the East has preserved a civilization whose cultural and spiritual values continue inspiring people around the world. For her, Nepal represents this generous Eastern tradition, where history, religion, art, and peaceful coexistence have flourished together. The tourist believes that these contributions have shaped human civilization in ways that many Western societies often fail to fully appreciate.

c. How does the tourist interpret the gaze of the monks and nuns?

The tourist interprets the gaze of the monks and nuns as the *samyak* gaze, meaning a pure, unbiased, and spiritually enlightened way of seeing the world. She believes that their eyes are free from prejudice, discrimination, selfishness, and worldly impurities.

Instead of looking at people with judgment, their peaceful eyes reflect wisdom, compassion, and inner calmness. This symbolic gaze becomes one of the story's most important images because it later connects with the half closed eyes of the Buddha and the expressive eyes of the paralyzed child. Through this interpretation, the tourist begins understanding that eyes in Nepal often symbolize much more than

physical vision.

d. Why do the tourists think Nepali people are wonderful and exceptional?

The tourists consider Nepali people wonderful and exceptional because they observe kindness, generosity, peaceful coexistence, and deep respect for cultural diversity throughout the country. They admire how people from different communities live together without allowing religious or cultural differences to create conflict.

The welcoming smiles of ordinary villagers, the artistic wooden carvings, traditional music, colorful festivals, and religious devotion all leave a lasting impression on the visitors. The tourists feel that Nepal's people possess a unique warmth that makes them different from many other societies. Their ability to preserve harmony despite diversity becomes one of the strongest reasons behind this admiration.

e. What are the different kinds of communities in the Kathmandu valley and how do they coexist with each other?

The Kathmandu Valley is home to many different communities, including Aryans, non Aryans, Hindus, Buddhists, and people belonging to various other cultural backgrounds. Despite these differences, they have lived together peacefully for generations.

The story suggests that Nepal's soil itself symbolizes unity by allowing different traditions, beliefs, and customs to grow together. Temples, prayer wheels, festivals, and everyday social life all demonstrate mutual respect rather than conflict. The Adinath Temple, where Hindu and Buddhist symbols exist side by side, becomes a powerful example of this religious coexistence. Through these examples, the author presents Nepal

as a society where diversity strengthens harmony instead of weakening it.

f. What does the tourist feel about the temple of Adinath?

When the tourist visits the Adinath Temple near Chobhar Hill, she sees it as one of the finest examples of Nepal's religious tolerance and coexistence. Although the temple is primarily dedicated to Shiva, it also contains numerous Buddha statues and prayer wheels carrying the sacred Buddhist inscription "Om Mani Padme Hum."

The tourist is especially moved by seeing children from different religious backgrounds playing together without caring about differences in faith. For her, the temple becomes much more than a religious site. It symbolizes Nepal's ability to unite different traditions, philosophies, and beliefs within the same sacred space.

g. Why does the guide take the tourist to the remote village?

The guide takes the tourist to a remote village because he wants her to witness the hidden reality of Nepal that cannot be captured by photographs, travel books, or ordinary sightseeing. Until that moment, the tourist has admired Nepal's mountains, temples, art, and cultural diversity, but she has not experienced the struggles faced by ordinary rural families.

By introducing her to the poor farming family and their paralyzed son, the guide reveals the compassionate side of Nepal that often remains invisible to outsiders. His purpose is not to destroy the tourist's admiration but to complete her understanding by showing that beauty and suffering exist together. This visit becomes the emotional turning point of the story.

h. What does the innocent village couple think of the doctor?

The innocent village couple mistakenly believes that the foreign tourist is a doctor who has crossed seven seas to bring life restoring treatment for their paralyzed son. The guide quietly creates this misunderstanding because he wants the tourist to experience the depth of the villagers' hope and faith.

The parents welcome her with gratitude, affection, and complete trust, treating her almost like their own eldest child returning home. Their reaction reveals both their innocence and their desperate desire to save their son from his lifelong suffering. This moment becomes one of the story's most emotional scenes because it combines hope with heartbreaking reality.

i. What are the differences between the paralyzed child and his sister?

The story creates a powerful contrast between the paralyzed boy and his younger sister to highlight both suffering and the value of ordinary life. The boy's entire body is almost completely immobile. He cannot walk, speak, move his hands, chew food, or even spit. His eyes remain the only part of his body capable of expressing emotion and proving that life still exists within him.

His sister, however, enjoys complete freedom. She crawls around the house, picks up objects, puts them into her mouth, knocks over cooking stones, spills beer, and creates innocent childhood mischief. Watching her reminds the guide that ordinary activities become extraordinary privileges for someone who has lost them. The boy's sparkling eyes whenever his sister plays become one of the story's most touching symbols of silent longing.

j. Why does the guide show the instances of poverty to the tourist?

The guide deliberately shows the tourist examples of poverty because he believes that understanding Nepal requires seeing both its beauty and its hardships. The tourist already knows about Nepal's temples, mountains, religious harmony, and cultural traditions through books and personal observation, but she has not experienced the difficult lives of ordinary villagers.

The guide wants her to witness the "pulse of reality," meaning the hidden suffering that exists behind the country's attractive image. The poor family with the paralyzed child becomes a living example of this forgotten reality. Through this experience, the guide teaches that true understanding comes from seeing both hope and pain together rather than admiring only the country's beautiful surface.

Reference to the Context

a. Explain the following lines in the context of the story.

"I see countless gods in this country; I see countless temples and shrines, I hear countless religious legends. I feel as if the history of this country is flowing inside me like blood."

These lines express the foreign tourist's deep emotional and spiritual response after experiencing Nepal's rich cultural and religious heritage. Throughout the first monologue, the tourist admires the Kathmandu

Valley not only for its natural beauty but also for its ancient civilization, artistic traditions, and peaceful atmosphere. While travelling through Nepal, the tourist encounters numerous temples, shrines, monasteries, prayer wheels, sculptures, and sacred sites that represent centuries of history and faith.

The statement that the country's history flows inside the tourist "like blood" suggests that Nepal's culture has become part of the visitor's own emotional experience. Instead of remaining an ordinary tourist, the visitor begins to feel personally connected with the country's historical and spiritual identity.

The reference to "countless gods" and "countless temples" also reflects Nepal's remarkable religious diversity. Hinduism and Buddhism exist side by side, and this coexistence creates an atmosphere of tolerance that deeply impresses the tourist.

At a deeper level, these lines prepare readers for the story's central contrast. Although the tourist initially sees Nepal as a land of beauty, peace, and spirituality, the guide later reveals another side of the country where poverty and suffering also exist. Thus, these lines represent the beginning of the tourist's emotional journey from admiration to a more complete understanding of Nepal's reality.

b. The story talks about ethnic and religious harmony in Nepal. Why are harmony and tolerance important in society?

The story presents Nepal as a country where people from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds have lived together peacefully for generations. Through examples such as the Adinath Temple, where Hindu and Buddhist symbols exist together, the author shows that harmony becomes one of Nepal's greatest strengths.

Harmony is important because it allows people with different beliefs, languages, and traditions to live peacefully without unnecessary conflict. It creates mutual respect, strengthens social unity, and encourages cooperation among communities. When people accept each other's differences, society becomes more stable and inclusive.

Tolerance is equally important because it teaches people to respect opinions and customs that may differ from their own. Instead of creating division, tolerance promotes understanding and friendship. In the story, the tourist becomes deeply impressed by seeing Aryans and non Aryans, Hindus and Buddhists, monks and ordinary villagers sharing the same cultural space peacefully.

Modern societies are becoming increasingly diverse due to migration, globalization, and cultural exchange. In such a world, harmony and tolerance become essential for maintaining peace, reducing discrimination, and helping people work together for common goals. Through this message, Shankar Lamichhane suggests that Nepal's tradition of peaceful coexistence offers an important lesson for the wider world.

c. Draw a portrait of Siddhartha Gautam based on the story.

Although Siddhartha Gautam does not appear directly as a character in the story, his presence is felt throughout the narrative through the powerful symbol of the Buddha's half closed eyes. These eyes become one of the central images that connect spirituality with human compassion.

The tourist admires the peaceful expression found in Buddhist statues across Nepal, describing the Buddha's eyes as calm, gentle, and full of wisdom. They do not reflect pride, anger, or selfishness. Instead, they

symbolize inner peace, compassion, patience, and complete understanding of human suffering.

The story also connects the Buddha's eyes with the *samyak* gaze of monks and nuns, representing pure and unbiased vision. These eyes seem capable of looking beyond outward appearances and recognizing the deeper realities of life.

The final comparison between the Buddha's eyes and the expressive eyes of the paralyzed child gives Siddhartha Gautam even greater symbolic importance. The Buddha's peaceful gaze represents the ideal of compassion, while the child's helpless eyes reveal the suffering that still exists in society. Together, they suggest that true spirituality requires not only peaceful meditation but also compassion for people living in hardship.

Through these symbolic references, Shankar Lamichhane portrays Siddhartha Gautam as an enduring symbol of wisdom, tolerance, kindness, and humanity.

d. Notice the usage of words in the story such as handicapped, 7 seas, flesh and blood, laurel wreath, stone heart, eye of the storm etc. Find out whether they are idioms or not.

Most of these expressions are idioms or figurative expressions because their meanings go beyond the literal meaning of the individual words. They make the language more expressive and help readers understand emotions and ideas more vividly.

Handicapped: Refers to a person living with a physical disability. In modern English, the expression person with a disability is generally preferred.

Seven seas: An idiomatic expression meaning a very long distance across

the world.

Flesh and blood: An idiom referring to one's close family members or blood relatives.

Laurel wreath: A symbolic expression representing honor, victory, achievement, or success.

Stone heart: An idiom describing a person who lacks sympathy, compassion, or emotional warmth.

Eye of the storm: An idiom referring to the calm center of a difficult or dangerous situation, or someone caught in the middle of conflict.

The story uses such expressions to create emotional depth, symbolic meaning, and stronger imagery. They enrich the narrative while making abstract ideas easier to understand.

Reference Beyond the Text

a. What does tourism mean to your country? Discuss its pros and cons.

Tourism is one of Nepal's most important industries because it brings visitors from around the world to experience the country's natural beauty, cultural heritage, religious traditions, and adventure activities. Like the foreign tourist in the story, many visitors come to admire Nepal's mountains, temples, monasteries, festivals, and peaceful atmosphere. Tourism contributes not only to the economy but also to the country's international identity.

One of tourism's greatest advantages is that it creates employment opportunities. Thousands of people work as guides, hotel staff, porters, drivers, restaurant owners, and handicraft sellers. Tourism also encourages the preservation of historical monuments, cultural traditions, and religious sites because these become valuable attractions for visitors.

Another benefit is cultural exchange. Tourists learn about Nepali traditions, while local people gain opportunities to interact with people from different countries and cultures. This exchange can increase mutual understanding and respect.

However, tourism also has disadvantages. Popular tourist destinations can become crowded, creating environmental pollution, waste management problems, and pressure on natural resources.

Commercialization may also reduce the originality of traditional culture when customs become products designed mainly for tourists.

The story itself reminds readers that tourism often presents only the attractive side of a country. Visitors may admire temples, mountains, and festivals while remaining unaware of the poverty and hardship faced by ordinary villagers.

Therefore, responsible tourism should balance economic growth with environmental protection, cultural preservation, and social awareness. When managed properly, tourism can become a powerful force for both national development and international understanding.

b. Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multireligious country. Write an essay about the importance of tolerance in a diversified society.

The Importance of Tolerance in a Diversified Society

Nepal is one of the world's richest examples of cultural diversity. People belonging to different ethnic groups, languages, religions, and traditions have lived together for centuries. This diversity has become one of the country's greatest strengths, but maintaining it requires tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding.

Tolerance means accepting people even when they have beliefs, customs, or lifestyles different from our own. It does not require people to

abandon their identities. Instead, it encourages peaceful coexistence while respecting differences. In a country like Nepal, where Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Kirat followers, and many ethnic communities share the same society, tolerance becomes essential for national unity.

The story *The Half Closed Eyes of the Buddha and the Slowly Sinking Sun* provides a beautiful example of this idea. The Adinath Temple shows Hindu and Buddhist symbols existing together peacefully, while people from different communities continue living side by side without allowing religious differences to create conflict. The tourist becomes deeply impressed by this unique harmony.

Tolerance also helps reduce discrimination and social conflict. When people respect each other's languages, festivals, and traditions, communities become stronger and more cooperative. Schools, workplaces, and public institutions also become more inclusive when diversity is treated as a strength rather than a problem.

In today's globalized world, people travel, migrate, and communicate across cultures more than ever before. Developing tolerance allows societies to solve disagreements peacefully and build lasting relationships based on respect.

Finally, tolerance reflects humanity itself. Just as the Buddha's peaceful eyes symbolize compassion and understanding, society becomes stronger when people choose kindness instead of prejudice. A diverse country like Nepal can continue flourishing only when its people protect the harmony that has shaped its identity for generations.

Simple Question Explanations

Why are the Buddha's half closed eyes important?

The Buddha's half closed eyes are important because they become the central symbol of the entire story. They represent peace, wisdom, compassion, patience, and spiritual balance. Unlike ordinary eyes that simply look at the outside world, the Buddha's eyes suggest a deeper understanding of human life and suffering.

At the end of the story, the guide connects these peaceful eyes with the expressive eyes of the paralyzed child. This comparison shows that true compassion should not remain only as a religious symbol but should also recognize the pain and struggles of ordinary people.

Why does the guide take the tourist to the village instead of another tourist place?

The guide wants the tourist to experience the real Nepal rather than only its beautiful temples, mountains, and historical monuments. He believes that guidebooks and photographs often hide the difficult lives of ordinary villagers.

By introducing the tourist to the poor family and their disabled son, the guide completes the tourist's understanding of Nepal. He shows that a country's true identity includes both its cultural richness and its hidden suffering.

What does the paralyzed boy symbolize?

The paralyzed boy symbolizes the silent suffering that exists behind Nepal's beautiful image. Although his body cannot move, his eyes remain full of life and emotion.

His character represents thousands of ordinary people who continue

living with hardship while still holding onto hope. His expressive eyes become one of the strongest emotional symbols in the story.

Why is the Adinath Temple important?

The Adinath Temple is important because it symbolizes Nepal's religious harmony. Although it is a Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva, it also contains Buddhist prayer wheels and Buddha statues.

The temple proves that different religious traditions can exist peacefully in the same place, making it one of the story's strongest examples of coexistence.

Important Lines / Passages

The Buddha's half closed eyes

This image is the heart of the story. The Buddha's eyes symbolize calmness, wisdom, tolerance, and compassion. They become even more meaningful when compared with the eyes of the paralyzed child, showing that spirituality should include concern for human suffering.

The guide's desire to show the pulse of reality

The guide says that books, novels, and photographs cannot fully reveal Nepal's true identity. This passage becomes important because it explains why he takes the tourist to a remote village instead of another famous monument.

The village parents welcoming the foreign tourist

The innocent couple's belief that the tourist is a doctor creates one of the story's most emotional scenes. Their hope, gratitude, and trust reveal the human side of poverty.

The contrast between the two children

The comparison between the paralyzed boy and his playful younger sister highlights how ordinary childhood activities become precious when someone loses the ability to enjoy them.

The slowly sinking sun

The sinking sun symbolizes the passage of time, quiet reflection, and the fading boundary between beauty and suffering. It complements the peaceful image of the Buddha's eyes while creating a thoughtful ending.

Exam Focused Questions

1. How does Shankar Lamichhane use symbolism in *The Half Closed Eyes of the Buddha* and *The Slowly Sinking Sun*?

Shankar Lamichhane uses symbolism throughout the story to express deeper meanings beyond ordinary events. The Buddha's half closed eyes symbolize wisdom, peace, and compassion. The paralyzed child's eyes represent silent suffering and hope despite physical helplessness. The Adinath Temple symbolizes religious harmony, while the slowly sinking sun represents reflection and the passage of time. Together, these symbols create a powerful message that beauty and hardship exist side by side in Nepal.

2. How does the story present two different perspectives of Nepal?

The story presents Nepal through two contrasting voices. The foreign tourist admires Nepal's mountains, temples, cultural heritage, artistic traditions, and peaceful atmosphere. In contrast, the Nepali guide introduces another reality by showing poverty, illness, and the struggles of ordinary villagers. The combination of these two perspectives creates a balanced picture of Nepal's true identity.

3. Why is the ending of the story considered powerful?

The ending becomes powerful because it connects two completely different images: the peaceful eyes of the Buddha and the helpless eyes of the paralyzed child. This comparison transforms the story from a simple travel experience into a reflection on compassion, social responsibility, and the hidden realities of human life.

4. How does the author present religious harmony in Nepal?

The author presents religious harmony through the coexistence of Hindus, Buddhists, Aryans, and non Aryans living peacefully together. The Adinath Temple becomes the strongest example because Hindu and Buddhist symbols exist within the same sacred space. The story suggests that mutual respect has become an important part of Nepal's cultural identity.

5. What role does the Nepali guide play in the story?

The guide serves as the bridge between appearance and reality. Instead of allowing the tourist to leave with only beautiful memories, he introduces her to Nepal's hidden struggles. His thoughtful observations help reveal the story's central message that true understanding requires seeing both beauty and suffering together.

6. Why is the story written as two monologues?

The use of two monologues allows readers to experience two different ways of seeing the same country. The foreign tourist represents admiration from an outsider's perspective, while the Nepali guide represents lived experience from within the country. This structure creates a richer and more balanced understanding of Nepal.

7. What is the central message of the story?

The central message is that true beauty cannot be separated from human reality. A country's identity includes both its cultural achievements and its social challenges. The story encourages readers to develop compassion by recognizing both hope and suffering together.

Commonly Confusing Points

Is this story a normal short story with one continuous plot?

No. The story is written using the stream of consciousness technique and is presented through two interconnected monologues rather than a traditional plot.

Who is the narrator?

There are two narrating voices: a foreign tourist and a Nepali tourist guide. Both present different perspectives of Nepal.

Why does the guide lie to the village couple?

He allows the parents to believe that the foreign tourist is a doctor because he wants the visitor to experience the depth of their hope and innocence. The lie also highlights the family's desperate wish to save

their son.

What is Samyak Gaze?

Samyak Gaze refers to a pure, unbiased, and enlightened way of seeing the world. It becomes a symbol of spiritual wisdom throughout the story.

Why are the child's eyes compared with the Buddha's eyes?

Both become powerful symbols. The Buddha's eyes represent compassion and peace, while the child's eyes reveal silent suffering. Together, they complete the story's message about humanity.

What does the title mean?

The title combines two important symbols. The Buddha's half closed eyes represent spiritual wisdom, while the slowly sinking sun represents reflection and the hidden reality beneath outward beauty.

Quick Revision

Author

Shankar Lamichhane

Genre

Reflective Essay using the Stream of Consciousness Technique

Main Voices

Foreign Tourist and Nepali Tourist Guide

Important Characters

The Paralyzed Boy, His Parents, and Hong'er like Symbolic Village Children

Setting

Kathmandu Valley, Chobhar Hill, Adinath Temple, and a Remote Nepali Village

Beginning

The foreign tourist admires Nepal's natural beauty, history, and cultural richness.

Development

The tourist learns about Nepal's legends, religious harmony, and artistic traditions through personal reflection.

Turning Point

The guide takes the tourist away from famous attractions to witness rural poverty and human suffering.

Climax

The tourist meets the paralyzed child whose expressive eyes become the emotional center of the story.

Ending

The guide connects the child's eyes with the Buddha's half closed eyes, leaving readers with a message about compassion, hope, and reality.

Major Themes

Beauty and reality, religious harmony, cultural heritage, poverty,

compassion, hope, and different perspectives.

Important Symbols

Buddha's Half Closed Eyes: Wisdom, peace, and compassion.

Paralyzed Boy's Eyes: Silent suffering and hope.

Adinath Temple: Religious coexistence.

Slowly Sinking Sun: Reflection and the passage of time.

Literary Device

Stream of Consciousness: The story presents thoughts, memories, and reflections instead of following a traditional plot.

Key Lesson

True understanding of a country comes from recognizing both its beauty and its hidden struggles. Compassion becomes meaningful when people see beyond attractive appearances and acknowledge the suffering of others.

One Minute Revision

A foreign tourist admires Nepal's mountains, temples, and cultural heritage, believing it to be a land of peace and harmony. A Nepali guide then reveals another reality by taking the visitor to a poor village, where they meet a boy paralyzed by polio. The story ends by comparing the child's expressive eyes with the peaceful half closed eyes of the Buddha, teaching that beauty, suffering, and compassion exist together.

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