

# St. Xaviers School , Purulia

Subject : English Literature

Dated : 20/04/2020

Good Morning students of Class X and welcome to English Literature class .

## The Patriot

( by Robert Browning)

About the Poet : Robert Browning was born on 7<sup>th</sup> may 1812 . He was an English writer and dramatist whose authority of dramatic verse and specifically the dramatic monologue , made him one of the foremost Victorian writers . The Patriot – an old story is an example of his works containing dramatic monologue . He had written many sonnets too .

What is a monologue?

Mono means one . So , monologue means a long speech by one actor in a play or film .

Who is a patriot?

He is a martyr. A person who sacrifices one's life for the motherland .

Summary: "The Patriot " is a dramatic monologue written by the renowned English poet and playwright Robert Browning .

Browning highlights how the true Patriot / Leaders are sometimes misunderstood . It speaks about the sacrifice of such leaders who are dragged to the scaffold by the same public who once had adored him . Browning talks about politics, religious faith , patriotism and the harsh realities of the world.

The 'Patriot Speaker ' narrates his tale to us as he has been taken to the scaffold to be executed publicly for his misdeeds . He tells us of his situation ; how he was once well loved by everyone , and now how he is hated by the same people .

The Patriot is innocent of having done any misdeeds , and it is only out of the misunderstanding of the people that he is being put to death . His death sentence is for wrong reason . He is tired of persuading people to listen to him . It has done no good to him .

Browning criticises the public sentiment and morality in the poem " The Patriot " . People often are fickle minded , not all decisions made by the people are correct .

The poem has a universal appeal as history has witnessed such rise and fall of many such martyrs time and again – a grim reminder that life is uncertain .

### Reference to Greek Mythology

Q. What does 'leaping at the sun' signify in the poem "The Patriot"?

A. 'Leaping at the sun' signifies trying to do what is impossible or termed impossible.

Here comes reference to the story of Greek Mythology Daedalus and Icarus. In the third stanza of the poem, the patriot expresses his discourse on what all he did for his country and countrymen. In a way to do it he became overambitious and tried to touch the sun like Icarus, the son of Daedalus.

The story revolves around the escape of these two men from a high tower where they were held prisoners. Daedalus made wings out of bird feathers and wax. Icarus was too young. He ignored the warning given to him by his father. He forgot that the wings were attached with wax. Icarus was taken aback (surprised) with the ability of flight, flew too close to the sun, which caused the wax in his wings to melt and his eventual fall which killed him.

Try to solve the following questions of the poem 'The Patriot'. (consult your poem workbook):

Q1. In what way did the public show their fondness to the patriot when he returned home? (refer to 1<sup>st</sup> (first) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (second) stanza of the poem)

Q2. Do you find extreme ambition of the patriot to bring his downfall? (quote phrases from the poem)

Q3. In what way did the crowd show their hatred towards the patriot? (refer to 4<sup>th</sup> (fourth) and 5<sup>th</sup> (fifth) stanza)

Q4. In what way do the poet show his faith / dependence on god in the last stanza?