

Comprehension 6: CSS 2017

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow: (20)

Education ought to teach us how to be in love always and what to be in love with. The great things of history have been done by the great lovers, saints, men of science and artists, and the problem of civilization is to give every man a chance of being a saint, a man of science or an artist. But this problem cannot be solved unless men desire to be saints, men of science and artists. And if they are to desire that continuously they must be taught what it means to be these things. We think of the man of science, or the artist if not of the saint, as a being with peculiar gifts who exercises more precisely and incessantly perhaps, activities which we all ought to exercise. It is a commonplace belief that art has ebbed away out of our ordinary life, out of all the things which we use, and that it is practiced no longer recognize the aesthetic activity as an activity of the spirit and common to all men. We do not know that when a man makes anything he ought to make it beautiful for the sake of doing so, and that when a man buys anything he ought to demand beauty in it for the sake of that beauty ~~in it for the sake of that beauty~~. We think of beauty if we think of it at all, as a mere source of pleasure, and therefore it means to us an ornament added to things for which we can pay extra as we choose. But neatly is not an ornament to life, or the things made by man. It is an essential part of both. The aesthetic activity, when it reveals itself in things made by men, reveals itself in design, just as it reveals itself in the design of all natural things. It shapes objects as the moral activity shapes actions, and we ought to recognize it in objects and value it, as we recognize and value the moral activity in actions. And as actions empty of the moral activity are distasteful to us, so should objects be that are empty of the aesthetic activity. But this is not so with most of us. As we do not value the aesthetic activity in ourselves, so we do not value it; do not even recognize it or the lack of it, in the work of others. The artist, of whatever kind, is a man so much aware of the beauty of the universe that he must impart the same beauty to whatever he makes. He has exercised his aesthetic activity in the discovery of beauty in the universe before he exercises it in imparting beauty to that which he makes. He has seen things in that relation which is beauty before he can himself produce that relation in his own work, whatever it may be. And just as he sees that relation for its own sake, so he produces it

for its own sake and satisfies the desire of his spirit in doing so. And we should value his work, we should desire that relation in all things made by man if we too had the habit of seeing that relation in the universe, and if we knew that, when we see it, we are exercising an activity of the spirit and satisfying a spiritual desire. And we should know also that work without beauty means unsatisfied spiritual desire in the worker; that it is waste of life and a common evil and danger, like thought without truth or action without righteousness.

Questions:

(4 marks each)

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Answer no 1: The author is lamenting about the fact that now a days people do not value aesthetic activity. It is ~~not~~^{neither} recognized in ourselves, nor in the works created by other people. People think of beauty as a source of seeking pleasure and nothing else. Moreover, it has become a firm belief that art has been removed from day-to-day life and is not practiced by anyone.

Answer no 2: Artist is a person who has a profound understanding and insight of the beauty of universe. He sees relation between or among things in the universe and try to assimilate it in his work of art. He tries to show that beauty to ^{the} people which he sees in this universe. In contrast, a common man is deprived of the necessary insight to see this relation ~~and~~ and beauty in this universe.

Answer no 3: We can make our lives beautiful and charming by contemplating the relation between or among different things in this universe; because in this way we will exercise and practice spiritual activity. By practicing it, we will satisfy our spiritual desires; which will ultimately makes our life charming, beautiful, and worthwhile. "Unexamined life is not worth living." (Socrates).

Answer no 4: From the selected excerpt the writer means that beauty is not just an embellishment to life or the work of man but it is a necessary part of both natural and artificial creation. Without beauty, any kind of creation, whether it is natural or artificial, can not fulfil the criterion of a genuine work of art. Hence, beauty is not just an ornament to life, but an indispensable part of it.

Answer no 5: Indeed! art and beauty affect ^{both} practical life and morals in a profound manner. By observing the relation between various phenomena in the universe, we can practice spiritual activity, fulfil our spiritual desires and elevate our moral level. Moreover, we could also make acquaintance with the truth because according to John Keats, "Beauty is truth and truth is beauty - that is all you need to know". Through art and beauty, we can also make our practical life better by trying to complete every task with absolute perfection.