

Read the poem given below and do the tasks given on the next page.

Casabianca (1826)

Written by Felicia Hemans

The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but he had fled;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck,
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though childlike form.

The flames rolled on – he would not go,
Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud – 'Say, father, say
If yet my task is done?'
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

'Speak, father!' once again he cried,
'If I may yet be gone!'
– And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath
And in his waving hair;
And look'd from that lone post of death,
In still yet brave despair.

And shouted but once more aloud,
'My father! must I stay?'
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapped the ship in splendour wild,
They caught the flag on high,

And streamed above the gallant child,
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound –
The boy – oh! where was he?
Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strewed the sea!

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part,
But the noblest thing which perished there,
Was that young faithful heart.

Glossary

whence - from where

wreck - broken remains

faint - unconscious

splendour – impressive beauty

booming - making deep loud sound

despair- total hopelessness

sail- cloth connected to a ship to catch the wind

shroud - ropes to support mast of ship

wreathing - coiling

gallant- brave

strew- spread or scatter

helm- lever that controls ship

pennon- flag

perish- destroy

Task-1: Discuss the following topics in groups. Write your responses on the lines given.

Topics:

a. The father-child relationship is one basic theme in English writing. Give one or two examples of poems/stories/songs in your language dealing with the subject of father –child relationship.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

b. Do you think self-sacrifice is a good moral value?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

c. What is your opinion about wars between countries and peoples? Do you think the world is moving towards peace?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Task-2: Answer the following questions. Your answers must be as brief as possible

a. Why did all others flee from the deck?

.....

b. What was shining around the boy?

.....

c. Identify the rhyme scheme of the first stanza.

.....

d. Write two descriptive adjectives used to present the boy standing on the deck.

.....

e. Why didn't the boy move away from the deck?

.....

f. Why didn't the father reply to the boy's question?

.....

g. Who replied to his cry out?

.....

h. What wrapped the ship in wild splendour?

.....

i. What is the figure of speech in "young and faithful heart"?

.....

j. Why is the "young and faithful heart" the noblest?

.....

Answer Key

Task 2

- a. The deck was burning
- b. Flames
- c. ABAB
- d. Beautiful, bright
- e. Father asked him to stay there
- f. He died
- g. Booming shots
- h. (Wreathing) fires
- i. Synecdoche - a part (here an organ – heart) signifies the whole (here the boy) Another Eg “experience hands” for experienced persons
- j. He sacrificed his life for his father’s words