

Chapter 1: The Ant and the Cricket

Working with the Poem

Question 1: The cricket says, "Oh! What will become of me?" When does he say it, and why?

Answer: The cricket said the given line when it found that its cupboard was empty and winter had arrived. It could not find a single crumb to eat on the snow covered ground and there were no flowers or leaves on the tree. It wondered what would become of it because it was getting cold and since there was nothing to eat, it would starve and die.

Question 2: (i) Find in the poem the lines that mean the same as "Neither a borrower nor a lender be" (Shakespeare).

Answer: (i) The lines in the poem that mean the same as "Neither a borrower nor a lender be" are 'But we ants never borrow; we ants never lend.'

Question 3: The ant tells the cricket to "dance the winter away". Do you think the word 'dance' is appropriate here? If so, why?

Answer: The ant told the cricket to "dance the winter away" because when it asked the cricket what it did in the summers and why it had not stored any food for summers, the cricket answered that it sang through the warm and sunny months of summers. Therefore, in reply to this, the ant asked the cricket to "dance" the winter away just like it "sang" all through the summers and did not bother to store food for winters.

Question 4:

(i) Which lines in the poem express the poet's comment? Read them aloud.

(ii) Write the comment in your own words.

Answer:

(i) The lines in the poem that express the poet's comment are "Folks call this a fable. I'll warrant it true."

(ii) This comment by the poet means that this poem is indeed a fable as it had a moral behind it. The cricket did not have anything to eat during the winters because it did not bother to store some food during summers. It was negligent and sang all through the summers. The ant, on the other hand, had built a nice home for itself and had stored food so that it would not starve during winters. It worked hard during summers to achieve this. Thus, the moral of the poem is to be prepared for the adverse times and always work hard instead of being negligent.