

* Reading A

1. where was the scorpion hiding?
why?

The scorpion was hiding beneath a sack of rice to save itself from the rain.

2. Why did the peasants come to the speaker's house?

The peasants ~~was~~ ~~coming~~ came to the narrator's house when they found out that the narrator's mother had been stung by a scorpion.

3. Who clicked their tongues? why?

The peasants clicked their tongues to express their condolences and sympathy as they watched the poet's mother writhing in pain.

4. Give an example of a superstition from the poem.

Superstitions are irrational beliefs held by a community based on some natural or supernatural occurrence. They are usually believed to bring or bad luck.

An instance found in the poem is the neighbour's belief that with every movement the scorpion makes, its poison spreads in the blood affected.

5. How will the world be benefited from the mother's suffering?

The mother's suffering will diminish all evil in this world as per the superstitious beliefs of the peasants.

B/i. It is quite evident that the poem is set in a poverty-stricken household in an underdeveloped area, most probably in a remote village. The people are illiterate and steeped in superstitions. There is no mention of any health facility. Even the father, who is a rationalist, had to depend on powders, mixtures and herbs instead of taking his wife a doctor. More over, the details such as mud-baked walls, lanterns and candles also portray the image of rural setting.

2. The scorpion probably stung the mother as an act of self-defence

3. The peasants were standing in a huddle, and against the light of the candles and lantern they their shadows appeared in the shape of scorpions.

4. According to the peasants, a scorpion's sting was fatal as it had no cure. They were completely unaware of the available medical facilities and praying was the only way of helping the mother. Their only hope was that their prayers would help to cure the mother of her pain, one of the ancient methods of treatment was to eliminate the affected body part so as to stop the infection or poison from spreading to the rest of the body.

c) i. The peasants were ignorant and unfamiliar with the wonders of modern medicine. They were also poor. Though they wanted to help the mother, they couldn't. Praying and sympathizing were the only way they could express their care and support.

2. IF I were one of the peasants, I would have called the village doctor or any paramedical staff, present in the village to give immediate treatment to the woman.

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