

Chapter: The Ball Poem

1. Read the extracts and answer the questions that follow in a line or two:

(i) What is the boy now, who has lost his ball, What, what is he to do? I saw it go Merrily bouncing, down the street, and then Merrily over – there it is in the water! No use to say – ‘O there are other balls’.

(a) What has happened to the boy?

(b) Why does the poet say ‘No use to say – ‘O there are other balls’?

(c) Which word means ‘happily’?

(d) Where did the ball go?

(ii)Now

He senses first responsibility

In a world of possessions. People will take

Balls, balls will be lost always, little boy.

And no one buys a ball back. Money is external.

(a) What does the boy understand?

(b) What does the word ‘balls’ signify?

(c) What is meant by the word ‘possessions’?

(d) What does “In a world of possessions mean?”

(iii) The epistemology of loss, how to stand up Knowing what every man must one day know And most know many days, how to stand up.

(a) The boy has lost

(b) The lost has taught the boy

(c) The word ‘epistemology’ means

(d) According to the poet every man.

2. Answer these questions in 30-40 words:

(i) What does John Berryman want to convey through this poem?

(ii) “Money is external”. What does the poet mean by this expression?

(iii) Why does the poet think that it is useless to give the following suggestion to the boy? ‘No use to say- ‘O there are other balls’:

(iv) Why did the poet not offer the boy money to buy another ball?

(v) Why did the boy feel so sad at the loss of his ball?

3. Answer the question in 120-150 words:

(i) Why is it important for everyone to experience loss and to stand up after it?

(ii) What does the poet say the boy is learning from the loss of the ball? Try to explain this in your own words?
