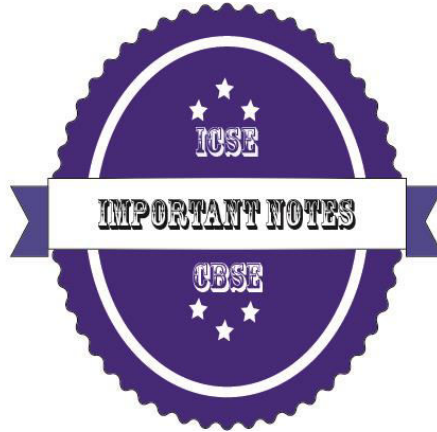


## KATHMANDU-



Extra Questions and Notes

### INTRODUCTION

Kathmandu is the capital of Nepal. In this chapter, Vikram Seth recalls the memories of his visit to Kathmandu. He visits the famous Pashupatinath temple of the Hindus and the Baudhnath Stupa of the Buddhists. He notices that there is noise and confusion around the temple but the Buddhist shrine is full of peace. He also describes the scene around many small shrines of Kathmandu. He notices even the small details like the monkeys in the temple fighting with each other.

(काठमांडु नेपाल की राजधानी है। इस पाठ में विक्रम सेठ अपनी काठमांडु की यात्रा की यादों को ताजा करता है। वह हिंदुओं के प्रसिद्ध पशुपतिनाथ मंदिर एवं बौद्धों के बौद्धनाथ स्तूप को

देखने जाता है। वह देखता है कि मंदिर के आस-पास शोर एवं भीड़ है मगर बौद्ध धार्मिक स्थल शांतिपूर्ण है। यह काठमांडु के अनेक छोटे धार्मिक स्थानों के आस-पास के दृश्यों का वर्णन भी करता है। वह छोटी-छोटी बातें भी ध्यान में रखता है, जैसे कि मंदिर में एक-दूसरे से लड़ते हुए बंदर।)

### THEME

The theme of this brief extract from Vikram Seth's travelogue, 'Heaven Lake', is glimpses of Kathmandu, especially the famous Pashupatinath temple, sacred to the Hindus, and the Baudhnathstupa, a holy place for the Buddhists. His experiences in the two temples form a kind of commentary on the two ways of worship and the two cultures. Another aspect of Kathmandu that forms the sub-theme is the general environment of this place. The author briefly discusses the markets, roads etc. of Kathmandu and also adds a few aesthetic remarks about the musical instrument, flute after listening to a flute seller playing the musical instrument.

### TITLE

The title “Kathmandu” does not specify what the author is going to state about the capital city of Nepal. However, as we know that it is the narration of a part of a journey that the writer Vikram Seth undertook from ‘Heaven Lake’ in China to India, we expect to know more about Kathmandu. Still, with the author’s main focus on the two famous temples and a brief description regarding his general impression about Kathmandu, this title stands justified. The contents of the chapter, although not as descriptive as suggested by the title, still make the title apt as it signifies the main objective of the writer.

### **MESSAGE**

Although the extract is a part of a travelogue and the narration of the experiences of the author in Kathmandu without any apparent message, still it has deeper layers of meaning. The author disapproves of the noise and confusion in the Hindu temple and admires the serenity reigning supreme in the Buddhist temple. He also reveals how we thoughtlessly pollute our rivers washing clothes on its banks, cremating corpses, and dumping rubbish in them. The extract conveys the message that the purity and serenity of the holy places must be maintained.

### **Summary:**

In this chapter, Vikram Seth recalls his memories of his visit to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. He describes two famous temples of that city. The first is the Pashupatinath temple of the Hindus and the other is the Baudhnath Stupa of the Buddhists. At the Pashupatinath temple, there is an atmosphere of confusion. He finds priests, hawkers, devotees, tourists, cows, monkeys, pigeons and dogs roaming there. There is a crowd of devotees and people push one another to make their way to the Lord.

Only Hindus are allowed to enter this temple. A group of Westerners struggle for permission to enter. But the policeman at the gate does not allow them to go in. The author finds monkeys fighting each other. The holy river Bagmati flows by the side of the temple. He sees washerwomen at its banks. A corpse is being cremated on its banks. From the balcony, devotees drop flowers and other offerings into the river. There is a small shrine also on the river bank. Half of the shrine is submerged into the river. It is believed that when the whole of the shrine comes out of the river, the goddess inside will come out. Then the evil period of Kaliyug will end on earth.

In contrast to the Pashupatinath temple, there is a sense of stillness at the Baudhnath stupa of the Buddhists. The author does not find crowds here. It has a big white dome. The shrine is surrounded by a road. There are small shops on its outer edge. Many of these shops are owned by Tibetan immigrants.

Kathmandu is a crowded place. Apart from the two famous shrines, there are a number of small shrines in the narrow and busy streets. The author finds fruit sellers, flute sellers, hawkers of postcards, shops selling western cosmetics, films, chocolates, etc. He roams about in the market aimlessly. Then the author makes up his mind to return home. He enters a Nepal Airlines office and buys a ticket for Delhi. He comes back to his hotel. In a corner of the square near the hotel, he finds a man selling flutes. These flutes are made of bamboo. From time to time, the flute seller plays on flute. The author likes his carefree style. He finds it difficult to come away from there. In fact, the flute music always attracts him. The flute is a common musical organ. It is found in almost every culture. The flute reminds him of the common link between all humanity.

### SUMMARY IN HINDI

इस पाठ में विक्रम सेठ नेपाल की राजधानी काठमांडु की अपनी यात्रा की यादों को तरोताजा करता है।

वह उस शहर के दो प्रसिद्ध मंदिरों का वर्णन करता है। पहला हिंदुओं का पशुपतिनाथ मंदिर है और दूसरा बौद्धों का बौद्धनाथ स्तूप है। पशुपतिनाथ मंदिर में अव्यवस्था का वातावरण है। वह वहां पर घूमते हुए पंडित, फेरीवाले, भक्त, पर्यटक, गाएँ, बंदर, कबूतर और कुत्ते देखता है। वहाँ भक्तों की भीड़ है और लोग भगवान् की प्रतिमा तक जाने के लिए एक-दूसरे को धक्के मारते हैं।

इस मंदिर में केवल हिंदुओं को प्रवेश की अनुमति है। पश्चिमी देशों के लोगों का एक समूह अंदर आने की अनुमति के लिए संघर्ष करता है। मगर गेट पर खड़ा सिपाही उन्हें अंदर नहीं जाने देता। लेखक बंदरों को आपस में लड़ता देखता है। मंदिर के साथ पवित्र नदी बागमती बहती है

। वह इसके किनारों पर धोबिनों को देखता है। इसके किनारे पर एक लाश का दाह-संस्कार हो रहा है छज्जे से भक्तगण नदी में फूल एवं अन्य भेंट की वस्तुएँ गिराते हैं। नदी के किनारे एक छोटा-सा मंदिर भी है। आधा मंदिर नदी में डूबा हुआ है। ऐसा माना जाता है कि जब सारा मंदिर नदी में से बाहर आ जाएगा तो अंदर की देवी बाहर आ जाएगी। तब धरती पर कलयुग का पापी समय समाप्त हो जाएगा।

पशुपतिनाथ मंदिर के विपरीत बौद्धों के बौद्धनाथ स्तूप पर खामोशी है। लेखक को वहाँ कोई भीड़ नजर नहीं जाती है। इसका बहुत बड़ा सफेद गुंबद है। मंदिर के चारों तरफ एक सड़क है। इसके बाहरी किनारे पर छोटी-छोटी दुकानें हैं। इनमें से बहुत सी दुकानें तिब्बती प्रवासियों द्वारा चलाई जा रही हैं।

काठमांडु भीड़भाड़ वाला स्थान है। इन दो प्रसिद्ध मंदिरों के अतिरिक्त तंग एवं व्यस्त गलियों में बहुत – से मंदिर हैं। लेखक को वहाँ फल बेचने वाले, बांसुरियाँ बेचने वाले, पोस्टकार्ड बेचने वाले, पश्चिमी सौंदर्य प्रसाधन, फ़िल्में, चॉकलेट आदि बेचने वाली दुकानें नजर आती हैं। वह लक्ष्यहीन रूप से बाजार में घूमता है। तब लेखक घर लौटने का मन बनाता है। वह नेपाल एयरलाईज़ के एक कार्यालय में जाता है और दिल्ली के लिए एक टिकट खरीदता है। वह वापिस अपने होटल आता है। होटल के नज़दीक के चौराहे के एक कोने में वह एक बांसुरी बेचने वाला देखता है। ये बांसुरियाँ बांस की बनी हैं। समय-समय पर बांसुरी वाला एक बांसुरी बजाता है। लेखक को उसका मस्त तरीका लगता है। उसे वहाँ से चले जीना कठिन प्रतीत होता है। वास्तव में, बांसुरी का संगीत उसे सदा आकर्षित करता है। बांसुरी एक सामान्य वाद्य यंत्र है। यह लगभग हर संस्कृति में पाई जाती है। बाँसुरी उसे सारी मानवता की साझी कड़ी की याद दिलाती है।

**EXTRACTS FOR COMPREHENSION**

(1)

There are so many worshippers that some people trying to get the priest's attention are elbowed aside by others pushing their way to the front.

1. Which place of worship is the narrator describing here?

The narrator is describing Kathmandu's Pashupatinath temple, which is sacred to the Hindus.

2. Why are some people elbowed aside?

The temple is visited by many worshippers, therefore there is a lot of pushing and jostling while people try to move ahead and get the priest's attention. In this attempt, some people have elbowed aside.

3. Why do you think some people are pushing their way to the front?

Some people are pushing their way to the front to get a clear view of the deity and also to make their offerings through the priest.

4. What sort of atmosphere is being created by the crowd in the temple?

The indisciplined and unorganized crowd is creating chaos and confusion. Their unruly behaviour is robbing the temple of its sanctity.

(II)

By the main gate, a party of saffron-clad Westerners struggle for permission to enter.

1. Which place is the author talking about here?

The author is talking of the famous Hindu shrine – the Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu.



2. Who are the saffron-clad Westerners at the main gate?

The saffron-clad Westerners at the main gate are a group of tourists.

3. Why do they struggle for permission to enter?

They struggle for permission to enter because the temple allows entry only to Hindus.

4. What does this show about the cultural practices of this place?

It shows that the authorities who look after this shrine are very rigid about maintaining the sanctity of the temple as a place of worship. They do not want it to be treated like a tourist spot.

(III)

1. Which river is referred to in this extract?

The river Bagmati that flows through Kathmandu near no Pashupatinath temple is referred to here.

2. What is the significance of this river?

The river Bagmati is significant as it is considered sacred by the Hindus. They worship it like a pious deity.

3. What is dropped into this river and from where?

A basket of withered away flowers, leaves and old offerings are thrown into the river from the balcony of the Pashupatinath temple.

4. What does dropping various things into the river reflect about the people?

Throwing of refuse into the sacred Bagmati reflects that these people lack concern for the environment. Their faith and behaviour do not match, for they pollute the very river which they consider to be sacred.

(IV)

I find it difficult to tear myself away from the square.

Who is 'I' in the above lines?

'I' stands for the narrator, Vikram Seth.

2. Which square does the speaker refer to?

The speaker, Vikram Seth, refers to the square near his hotel in Kathmandu.

3. Why does 'he' find it difficult to tear himself away from the square?

'He' finds it difficult to tear himself from the square because he is fascinated by the mesmerising flute-music being played there by the flute seller,

4. Why has the narrator used the expression 'tear me away'?

'Tear me away' means to separate forcibly. Hence the expression shows the effort on the part of the narrator to pull himself away from the alluring music of the flute.

(V)

It weaves its own associations. Yet hear any flute is, it seems to me, to be drawn into the commonality of all mankind, to be moved by music closest in its phrases and sentences to the human voice.

1. What does 'it' stand for?

'It' stands for a flute.

2. How does 'it' weave its own associations?

The expression means that each kind of flute produces a different and unique type of music associated with some particular place.

3. Why does it draw the author in the 'commonality of all mankind'?

The flute draws the author in the 'commonality of all mankind' because this instrument is found in all cultures and is played in a similar manner. Hence, it seems to connect the whole of mankind.

4. Why is its music closest to the human voice?

The music of the flute is closest to the human voice because pauses and breaths are needed to produce musical notes of the flute in the same manner in which phrases and sentences are uttered in a human voice.

### **IMPORTANT PASSAGES FOR COMPREHENSION**

#### **PASSAGE 1**

At Pashupatinath (outside which a sign proclaims 'Entrance for the Hindus only') there is an atmosphere of 'febrile confusion'. Priests, hawkers, devotees, tourists, cows, monkeys, pigeons and dogs roam through the grounds. We offer a few flowers. There are so many worshippers that some people trying to get the priest's attention are elbowed aside by others pushing their way to the front. A princess of the Nepalese royal house appears; everyone bows and makes way. By

the main gate, a party of saffron-clad Westerners struggle for permission to enter. The policeman is not convinced that they are 'the Hindus'.

Questions :

- (i) Who is the writer of this passage?
- (ii) What is the sign outside the Pashupatinath temple?
- (iii) What do the worshippers do
- (iv) Why does the policeman not allow a group of Westerners to enter the temple?
- (v) Find a word from the passage which means the same as 'feverish'.

Answers :

- (i) Vikram Seth is the writer of this passage.
- (ii) The sign outside the temple declares that only Hindus are allowed to enter the temple.
- (iii) The worshippers push one another to reach near the Lord.
- (iv) He does not allow them to enter because they are not Hindus.
- (v) Febrile.

## PASSAGE 2

A fight breaks out between two monkeys. One chases the other, who jumps onto a shivalinga, then runs screaming around the temples and down to the river, the holy Bagmati, that flows below. A corpse is being cremated on its banks; washerwomen are at their work and children bathe. From a balcony a basket of flowers and leaves, old offerings now wilted, is dropped into the river. A small shrine half protrudes from the stone platform on the river bank. When it emerges fully, the goddess inside will escape and the evil period of the Kaliyug will end on earth.

### Questions :

- (i) What do the two monkeys do?
- (ii) Which river flows by the Pashupatinath temple?
- (iii) What activities are going on the banks of the river?
- (iv) What is the people's belief about the half-submerged temple?
- (v) Find a word from the passage which means the same as 'burning of a dead body'.

### Answers :

- (i) The two monkeys fight each other and one monkey chases the other.
- (ii) Bagmati flows by the temple.
- (iii) A dead body is being cremated; washerwomen are washing clothes, children are taking bath.
- (iv) People believe that when the whole temple comes, the period of Kaliyug on earth will come to an end.
- (v) Cremated.

### PASSAGE 3

From time to time he stands the pole on the ground, selects a flute and plays for a few minutes. The sound rises clearly above the noise of the traffic and the hawkers' cries. He plays slowly, meditatively, without excessive display. He does not shout out his wares. Occasionally he makes a sale, but in a curiously offhanded way as if this were incidental to his enterprise. Sometimes he breaks off playing to talk to the fruit seller. I imagine that this has been the pattern of his life for years.

Questions :

- (i) Who is the writer of this passage?
- (ii) Who is being referred to in this passage?
- (iii) How does he play on the flutes?
- (iv) What does the writer say about his attitude?



(v) Find a word from the passage which means 'too much'.

Answers :

(i) Vikram Seth is the writer of this passage.

(ii) A flute seller is being referred to in this passage.

(iii) He plays slowly and meditatively.

(iv) The writer says that his behaviour is casual and careless.

(v) Excessive.

## **PASSAGES FOR PRACTICE**

### **PASSAGE 4**

At the Baudhnath stupa, the Buddhist shrine of Kathmandu, there is, in contrast, a sense of stillness. Its immense white dome is ringed by a road. Small shops stand on its outer edge: many of these are owned by Tibetan immigrants; felt bags, Tibetan prints and silver jewellery can be bought here. There are no crowds: this is a haven of quietness in the busy streets around.

Questions :

- (i) Who is the writer of this passage?
- (ii) What contrasts with Pashupatinath temple do you find here?
- (iii) How does the writer describe the dome of the Baudhnath stupa?
- (iv) By whom are many of the shops owned?
- (v) Find a word from the passage which means 'big'.

### **PASSAGE 5**

Kathmandu is vivid, mercenary, religious, with small shrines to flower-adorned deities along the narrowest and busiest streets; with fruit sellers, flute sellers, hawkers of postcards; shops selling Western cosmetics, film rolls and chocolate; or copper utensils and Nepalese antiques. Film songs blare out from the radios, car horns sound, bicycle bells ring, stray cows low questioningly at motorcycles, vendors shout out their wares. I indulge myself mindlessly: buy a bar of marzipan, a corn-on-the-cob roasted in a charcoal brazier on the pavement (rubbed with salt, chilli powder and lemon); a couple of love story comics, and even a Reader's Digest.

Questions :

- (i) How does the writer describe Kathmandu in the first line of this passage?
- (ii) From where does the writer hear film songs?
- (iii) What does the writer do in the market?
- (iv) Who is the writer of this passage?

(v) Find a word from the passage which means 'old, precious things'.

### **Very Short Answer Type Important Questions**

#### Additional Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. Which two temples did the author visit in Kathmandu?

Ans. The author visited Pashupatinath temple and Boudhanath stupa in Kathmandu.

2. What signboard is there outside the Pashupatinath temple?

Ans. The signboard outside Pashupatinath temple is 'Entrance for Hindus only'.

3. What does everyone do to the Nepalese Princess in the temple?

Ans. Everyone bows to the princess and makes way for her.

4. Which river flows through Kathmandu?

Ans. The Bagmati river flows through Kathmandu.

5. How is the atmosphere at the Pashupatinath temple?

Ans. The atmosphere at the Pashupatinath temple is full of confusion.

6. How is the atmosphere at the Baudhnath Stupa?

Ans. At Baudhnath Stupa there is an atmosphere of stillness.

7. Who owned most of the shops in Kathmandu?

Ans. Tibetan immigrants owned most of the shops in Kathmandu.

8. How does the author decide to take his return journey to Delhi?

Ans. He decides to come back by the plane of Nepal Airlines.

9. Who does the writer see in at square of Kathmandu?

Ans. He sees a flute seller.

10. Who is the writer of the lesson Kathmandu?

Ans. The author of the lesson Kathmandu is Vikram Seth.

### **Short Answer Type Questions (30 to 40 words)**

1. Where did the writer stay in Kathmandu? Which two different places of worship did he visit and with whom?

Ans:-The writer, Vikram Seth, stayed in a cheap room in the centre of Kathmandu town. He visited the Pashupatinath temple, sacred to the Hindus, and the Baudhnath stupa, the holy shrine of the Buddhists. He went with his acquaintances Mr Shah's son and nephew.

Q2. What is written on the signboard outside the Pashupatinath temple? What does the proclamation signify?

Ans:-Outside the Pashupatinath temple, the signboard announces: "Entrance for the Hindus only". It signifies the rigid sanctity that this place of worship associates with and the dogmatic discrimination practised saving this place from being treated like a tourist destination.

Q3.What does the author imply by 'febrile confusion' in the Pashupatinath temple?

Or

What made the atmosphere in and around the Pashupatinath temple full of 'febrile confusion'?

Ans:-The author makes this remark to show the hectic and feverish activity that causes utter chaos. Around the temple, there is a huge crowd of priests, hawkers, tourists, and even cows, monkeys and pigeons. Inside the temple, there are a large number of worshippers who elbow others aside to move closer to the priest. Together, they create utter confusion.

Q4. Why did the policeman stop the Westerners wearing saffron-coloured clothes from entering the Pashupatinath temple?

Ans:-The policeman stopped the saffron-clad Westerners from entering the Pashupatinath temple as the entry of non-Hindus is banned in this temple and he didn't believe that they were Hindus, despite their saffron clothes.

Q5. How does the author describe the fight that breaks out between the two monkeys around the temple of Pashupatinath?

Ans:-The author describes the fight that breaks out between two monkeys in which one chases the other. The monkey being chased jumps onto a shivalitiga, then runs screaming around the temples and finally goes down to the holy river, Bagmati.

Q6. What activities are observed by the writer on the banks of the Bagmati river?

Ans:-The writer observes some polluting activities on the banks of river Bagmati. He notices some washerwomen washing clothes, some children taking a bath and a dead body being cremated on the banks of this sacred river. He also observes someone throwing a basketful of wilted flowers and leaves into the river.

Q7. What is the belief at Pashupatinath about the end of Kaliyug? (Textual)

Ans:- There is a small shrine on the banks of the holy Bagmati in the Pashupatinath temple. Half part of this shrine protrudes from a stone platform. It is believed that when the shrine will emerge completely from the platform, the goddess in the shrine will escape and that will mark the end of the Kaliyug.

Q8. What are the author's observations about the streets in Kathmandu?

Ans:-The author finds the streets in Kathmandu 'vivid, mercenary and religious'. Extremely narrow and busy, these streets have many small shrines and some images clad in flowers. Stray cows roam about mooing at the sound of the motorcycles. Vendors sell their wares shouting loudly and radios are played at a loud pitch. In addition, the horns of the cars and the ringing of the bicycle bells increase this din.

Q9. What picture of the Baudhnath stupa does the author portray?

Ans:-The author gives a brief but vivid picture of the Boudhanath stupa. He admires the serenity and calmness of this shrine. There are no crowds even on the road surrounding the stupa which has some shops run by the Tibetan immigrants. The stupa has an immense white dome with silence and stillness as its distinctive features.



Q10. Describing the streets around the Baudhnath stupa, why does the narrator say this is a haven of quietness in the busy streets around?

Ans:-The narrator observes a sense of stillness at the Buddhist shrine, the Boudhanath stupa. Its immense white dome is ringed by a road with small shops selling items like felt bags, Tibetan prints and silver jewellery. The quietness of the stupa stands out amidst the busy business activities that go around it. Thus, the narrator regards this place as a haven of quietness in the busy streets around.

Q11. The writer says, "All this I wash down with Coca-Cola". What does all this' refer to?

(Textual)

'Ans:-All this' refers to the eatables that the writer enjoys on the road surrounding the Boudhanath stupa. It includes a bar of marzipan and a roasted corn-cob that he enjoys along with the fizzy, carbonated drink, Coca-Cola. Besides, he also gets some comics with love-stories and a copy of the Reader's Digest magazine to indulge himself mindlessly.

Q12. Which is the longer route from Kathmandu to Delhi? Which route does the author opt for?

Ans:-The longer route from Kathmandu to Delhi is to first reach Patna by bus and train. Then go past Benaras, sail on the Ganges and reach Allahabad. Then cross

the Yamuna and finally reach Delhi via Agra. The shorter option taken by the author is to fly via air, straight from Kathmandu to Delhi.

Q13. Why does Vikram Seth decide to buy a ticket directly for the homeward journey?

Ans:- Vikram Seth has been away from home since quite some time. He is feeling very exhausted and homesick. Though his enthusiasm for travelling tempts him to take a longer route to reach back home, his exhaustion and homesickness impel him to buy an air-ticket directly for the homeward journey to Delhi.

Q14. What difference does the author note between the flute seller and the other hawkers?

Or

How is the flute player's way of selling flutes different from that of the other hawkers around?

Ans:-The author points out that while other hawkers shout loudly to attract the customers for their wares, the flute seller plays upon his flute slowly and meditatively. He does not indulge in excessive display nor does he show any desperation to sell his flutes. Although the flute player does not shout, the sound of the flute is distinctly heard above the noise of the traffic and of the hawkers.

Q15.What does Vikram Seth compare to the quills of a porcupine?

Or

(Textual)

Where did Vikram Seth find the flute seller? What did he compare his flutes to?

Ans:-Vikram Seth found a flute seller in Kathmandu standing in a corner of the square near his hotel. He held a pole in his hand which had an attachment at the top. In this attachment, around fifty to sixty flutes were stuck that bulged out in all directions. The author compares these protruding flutes to the sharp, stiff and standing quills of a porcupine.

Q16. Name five kinds of flutes.

(Textual)

Or

Listening to the music of the flute in the square, the author is reminded of various kinds of flutes. Which kinds does he describe?

Ans:-As the author listens to the music of the flute being played by the flute seller, he is reminded of different kinds of flutes. He mentions certain kinds of them like the 'cross-flutes', the 'reed new', the recorder, the Japanese 'shakuhachi' and the Hindustani 'bansuri'. Other flutes are distinguished by their tonal quality like 'the clear or breathy flutes' of South America and the 'high-pitched' flutes of China

Q17. What is the impact of the music of the flute on Vikram Seth?

Ans:-The music of the flute has a hypnotic effect on Vikram Seth. He finds it difficult to 'tear' himself away from the square where this music is being played by the flute seller. It has the power to draw him into the commonality of all mankind and he is moved by its closeness to the human voice.

Q18. Why does the author describe the music of the flute as "the most universal and most particular of sounds"?

Ans:-The music of the flute, according to the author, is the most 'universal' because this musical instrument, made of hollow bamboo is found in every culture in the world. But at the same time, its sound is the most 'particular' because each flute, though played in almost a similar manner, emits a distinct, unique, and individual kind of music.

19. What did the saffron-clad Westerners want?

Ans. The saffron-clad Westerners wanted to go inside the temple of Pashupatinath. But the policeman stopped them. He did not let them go inside the temple because they were not Hindus. The entrance was only for Hindus in the temple.

20. How did the author want to return to Delhi? What made him change his mind?

Ans. From Kathmandu, the author wanted to go Patna by bus or train. Then he would sail the Ganga through Benaras to Allahabad. Then he would sail the Yamuna through Agra to Delhi. But the author was already very much tired. So he decided to return to Delhi by air.

21. Describe how the flute seller sells his wares?

Ans. The flute seller has tied fifty or sixty flutes on a pole. He does not shout out his wares. From time to time, he selects a flute and plays on it. He plays slowly and thoughtfully. Sometimes, he makes a sale. But his attitude is carefree.

22. To hear any 'flute is to be drawn into the commonality of all mankind.'  
Explain.

Ans: The flute is found in each culture in one form or the other. Thus the sound of the flute draws a person into the commonality of mankind.

### **Important Long**

### **Value-based questions-**

## **ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS**

Q.1.How does the author describe the flute seller? What does he say about the flute music?

Ans. The author finds a flute seller in a corner of the square near his hotel. There is a pole in his hand. There is an attachment at the top of the pole. Fifty or sixty flutes are stuck on it. These flutes protrude in all directions. The author compares these flutes to the quills of a porcupine. These flutes are made-of bamboo: From time to time, he stands the pole on the ground. Then he selects a flute and plays on it for a few minutes. The sound rises clearly above the noise of the traffic and the hawkers' cries. He plays the flute slowly and thoughtfully. He does not shout out his wares. Occasionally someone buys a flute from him. But the flute seller's

attitude is carefree. The author likes his attitude. He imagines that this has been his pattern of life for years. The author finds it difficult to come away from there. He has always been attracted by the flute music: He says that the flute is a very common musical instrument. It is found in almost all cultures. It is the common link of all mankind.

2. Compare and contrast the atmosphere in and around the Baudhnath shrine with that in the Pashupatinath Temple. (Textual)

Ans:-The Pashupatinath Temple, sacred to the Hindus, and the Baudhnath shrine of the Buddhists stand in contrast with regard to their ambience.

The noisy confusion of the Hindu Temple is opposite to the tranquillity that reigns supreme in the Baudhnath shrine. In the Pashupatinath temple, utter chaos is created by a large number of unorganised worshippers who try to push each other to reach closer to the priest and the deity. At Baudhnath stupa, there aren't many people inside the structure.

The atmosphere at Pashupatinath Temple is made noisy by the heterogeneous crowd consisting of priests, hawkers, devotees and tourists. The animals like cows and dogs freely move around and the pigeons to contribute to the confusion. Even monkeys play about and fight in the premises of the temple. Confusion is also created by some Westerners who wish to enter the temple.

The Boudhanath stupa, on the contrary, gives a feeling of stillness and silence. Although there are small shops on the road around the temple, run by Tibetan immigrants, there is neither noise nor chaos. The author is so fascinated by the serenity in and around the temple that he calls it 'a haven of stillness' standing quietly amidst the busy streets.

3. How does the author describe Kathmandu's busiest streets? (Textual)

Ans:-The author presents the busiest streets of Kathmandu as 'vivid, mercenary and religious'. It is a place with beautiful, vivid, landscape, and a lot of religious activity goes on all the time. Besides the famous places like the Pashupatinath temple and the Baudhnath stupa, Kathmandu also has small shrines and deities-It is 'mercenary' as it is a tourist place and a lot of business – flourishes in the narrow streets. One can find fruit sellers, flute sellers, and hawkers selling postcard photographs. As in any other tourist place, there are shops selling various things like cosmetics from western countries, rolls of film, chocolates, antique things of Nepal, and copper pots and pans.

There is a bedlam of noises created by radios playing film songs, sounds of car-horns, bells of bicycles and vendors shouting to invite the customers. There are also the cows bellowing as they hear the sounds of motorcycles. Thus, the streets of Kathmandu are full of noise and din.

4." To hear any flute is to be drawn into the commonality of all mankind." Why does the author say this? (Textual)



Ans:-The author hears the music of a flute played by a flute seller in a square near his hotel in Kathmandu and is reminded of the various kinds of music produced by various types of flutes found in various cultures. However, the flute is universal because almost every culture has flutes, though each has a different tone and pitch.

The author further describes the variety of flutes named differently as the shakuhachi in Japan and the bansuri in India. They have different fingering methods and ranges of sound. The Indian bansuri has a deep sound, the South American flute emits clear, breathy sound and the Chinese flute gives out loud, high-pitched melodies.

Despite the variety of flutes and the variations in their music, the author emphasises that the music of all the flutes closely resembles the human voice. To produce music, every flute needs pauses and breaths in the same manner in which phrases and sentences are uttered in the human voice. These pauses and breaths are generated through fingering of the holes of a flute. This characteristic feature of the flutes gives the author a feeling of being “drawn into the commonality of mankind”, which gives him a sense of universality and harmony.

5. What idea do you get about the author from the extract “Kathmandu”?

Ans:-The extract “Kathmandu” taken from Vikram Seth’s travelogue, ‘Heavenly Lake’, brings forth certain traits of his personality. As a traveller, Seth displays a keen sense of observation, and as a person with a fine aesthetic sense, his ability to capture the vivid details comes to the fore.

The pictures of the temples of Kathmandu and its crowded streets become alive with his vivid descriptions. Though indirectly, he also appears to be a lover of serenity and tranquillity when he terms the stupa as a 'haven of quietness'. He also shows his concern as an environmentalist who does not approve of the polluting activities carried on the banks of the Bagmati river. Vikram Seth's fondness for travelling is obvious by the fact that although tired, he still contemplates taking a longer route back home to Delhi.

His fondness for music is brought forth when we find him so enchanted by the music of the flute that he has to force himself to leave the square where the flute is being played by the seller.

His choice of reading reveals that when tired, he prefers to read light and popular stuff. Like a typical traveller, he indulges himself with the eatables he finds available in the bazaar of Kathmandu.

Thus, the author emerges as a man with a profound fondness for travelling, love for music, a keen sense of observation, reflective mind, and an ability to portray places and people minutely and realistically.

6. The author has drawn powerful images and pictures. Pick out three examples each of (Textual)

(i) the atmosphere of febrile confusion outside the temple of Pashupatinath

(ii) the things he sees

(iii) the sounds he hears

Ans:- (i) Some examples of the atmosphere of 'febrile confusion' outside the Pashupatinath Temple:

A huge crowd outside the temple that includes human beings, animals and birds

Some Westerners in the saffron attire like Hindus trying to intrude into the temple and the policeman opposing them

Two monkeys fighting, one chasing the other and jumping on a Shivalinga and then running to the river Bagmati

(ii) Some examples of the things that the writer sees:

Women washing clothes on the banks of Bagmati river

Children bathing in the river

A corpse being cremated at the banks of the Bagmati

A basket with withered flowers, leaves and old offerings being dropped into the river

The Tibetan immigrants selling things on the road around the Baudhnath stupa

The hawkers selling the postcards and other wares in the streets

(iii) Some examples of the sounds that the writer hears:

The blaring horns of the traffic

The sweet and hypnotic sounds of the flute

The loud voices of the hawkers.

The mooing of stray cows

The film songs blaring out from the radios

The sound of car horns

The ringing of bicycle bells

Where does the author find the flute seller and what are his observations about him? What draws the author to the music of the flute?

Ans:-The author finds a flute seller along with many other hawkers in a corner of the square near his hotel in Kathmandu. But the flute seller's style of selling his ware differs absolutely from that of the other vendors. He does not shout to attract the customers nor does he show any kind of desperation to sell.

He carries a pole with about fifty to sixty flutes attached at the top. The author compares these flutes protruding in all directions to the sharp quills of a porcupine. Most of the flutes on the poles are of the varieties of 'recorders' and 'cross-flutes'. The flute seller, instead of hawking loudly, places the pole on the ground every now and then, selects a flute and plays upon it slowly and in a meditative manner without ever resorting to excessive display.

The sound of the flute is distinct and clear and can be heard even above the noise created by the traffic horns and the shouts of the hawkers. He does not seem to run a very brisk business and it appears as if playing the flute is his chief activity and selling of flutes is incidental to it.

The mesmerising music of the flute draws the author to it. He is left spell-bound by its hypnotic notations. The impact is so deep that he has to force himself to leave the square where the flute is being played. This music is etched in his memory and he carries it with him to his home in India.

### **QUICK REVIEW OF THE CHAPTER**

1 .Kathmandu is the capital city of :

(A) China

(B) Nepal

(C) Bhutan

(D) Bangladesh

Ans. (B) Nepal

2. Who is the author of the lesson 'Kathmandu'?

(A) Vikram Seth

(B) A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

(C) Kenneth Anderson

(D) Jerome K. Jerome

Ans. (A) Vikram Seth

3. Which famous Hindu temple is situated in Kathmandu?

(A) Jagannath

(B) Kedamath

(C) Pashupatinath

(D) Deenanath

Ans. (C) Pashupatinath

4. Entrance in Pashupatinath temple is allowed only for

(A) Hindus

(B) Bandhs

(C) Foreigners

(D) All of the above

Ans. (A) Hindus

5. What atmosphere is there near the Pashupatinath temple?

(A) discipline

(B) peaceful

(C) religious

(D) febrile confusion

Ans. (D) febrile confusion

6.. Which river flows through Kathmandu?

(A) Kosi

(B) Bagmati

(C) Gandak

(D) Khalsa

Ans. (B) Bagmati

7. What will happen when the small shrine on the Bagmati river bank will emerge fully?

(A) the evil period of the Kaliyug will end      (B) the new era will start

(C) a new god will appear      (D) Bagmati river will dry out

Ans. (A) the evil period of the Kaliyug will end

8. Which of the following is situated in Kathmandu?

(A) Pashupatinath temple      (B) Baudnath temple

(C) both (A) and (B)      (D) none of the above



Ans. (C) both (A) and (B)

9. What atmosphere is there around the Baudnath Stupa?

(A) a sense of stillness

(B) febrile confusion

(C) excitement and noises

(D) all of the above

Ans. (A) a sense of stillness

10. Who do you find in the streets of Kathmandu?

(A) fruit sellers

(B) flute sellers

(C) hawkers of postcards

(D) all of the above

Ans. (D) all of the above

11. The streets of Kathmandu are

(A) narrowest

(B) busiest

(C) both (A) and (B)

(D) none of the above

Ans. (C) both (A) and (B)

12. How did the author return to Delhi from Nepal?

(A) by bus

(B) by train

(C) by water route

(D) by plane

Ans. (D) by plane

13. The flutes on the pole of fruit seller are compared to

(A) a beehive

(B) a bunch of oranges

(C) Quills of a porcupine

(D) none of the above

Ans. (C) Guills of a porcupine

14. Which flute was he selling?

(A) the reed neh

(B) the recorder

(C) the Japanese Shakuhachi

(D) all of the above

Ans. (D) all of the above

15. Why does the author find himself unable to tear away from the square?

(A) the flute music was very sweet  
eat

(B) there were many things to

(C) he was watching a magic show

(D) he was buying flutes

Ans. (A) the flute music was very sweet