

QUICK DRILL · CBSE CLASS 11

The Portrait of a Lady (Hornbill)

English · Chapter 1 · 15 MCQs · 20 minutes · PYQ-tagged with time budgets

DATE	TOTAL MARKS	DURATION	MARKING	TARGET
_____	15	20 min	+1 / 0	≥ 12/15

OBJECTIVES

Reinforce the four core topics of The Portrait of a Lady (Hornbill) via 15 PYQ-derived MCQs. Identify weak sub-topics via concept-node IDs (see answer key). Build per-question time budget habit.

INSTRUCTIONS

Attempt all 15. Time budget shown per Q (use it as pacing guide). Mark answers (A/B/C/D) in the margin. Answer key + explanations on the last page. **Don't peek — score yourself honestly.**

SECTION · QUICK DRILL

Q 1-15 · 20 MIN

Q1. Who is the author of 'The Portrait of a Lady'?

- (A) Shirley Toulson
(C) Ruskin Bond

- (B) Khushwant Singh
(D) R. K. Narayan

PYQ 2020 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 20s

Q2. Who is the 'lady' referred to in the title?

- (A) The author's mother
(C) The author's grandmother

- (B) A young woman the author loved
(D) The author's teacher

PYQ 2019 · School Annual · 1m · 20s

Q3. In the village, where did the grandmother take the author every day?

- (A) To the market
(C) To the river

- (B) To the temple-school
(D) To the city office

PYQ 2018 · Mid-Term · 1m · 20s

Q4. On the way home from the temple-school, the grandmother used to feed:

- (A) The village dogs
(C) The sparrows

- (B) The cows
(D) The beggars

PYQ 2020 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 20s

Q5. Why did the author and his grandmother grow apart in the city?

- (A) They had a quarrel
(C) Because of the English school's modern subjects she could not share

- (B) She fell seriously ill
(D) He no longer loved her

PYQ 2019 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

Q6. Why was the grandmother distressed about the author being taught Science?

- (A) It was too difficult
(C) It cost too much

- (B) She felt it had no place for God
(D) It was taught in English

PYQ 2018 · School Annual · 1m · 30s

Q7. How did the grandmother spend her afternoons in the city?

- (A) Reading novels
(C) Visiting neighbours

- (B) Feeding hundreds of sparrows
(D) Shopping

PYQ 2020 · Mid-Term · 1m · 20s

Q8. How did the grandmother see the author off when he left for abroad?

- (A) She wept bitterly
(C) Calmly — she kissed his forehead and told her beads, showing no sentimentality

- (B) She refused to come
(D) She fainted

PYQ 2019 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

Q9. What unusual thing did the grandmother do on the evening of the author's return?

- (A) She prayed all night as usual
(C) She cooked a huge feast

- (B) She collected the village women, took an old drum and sang for hours
(D) She went to the temple

- Q10.** How did the grandmother spend her final hours before death?
(A) Talking to relatives **(B)** Telling the beads of her rosary in continuous prayer
(C) Singing **(D)** Sleeping
 PYQ 2018 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

- Q11.** What did the sparrows do when the grandmother died?
(A) They chirped happily and ate the bread **(B)** They gathered in silence and did not eat the bread crumbs
(C) They flew away at once **(D)** They attacked the mourners
 PYQ 2019 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

- Q12.** The grandmother's serene, white-clad presence is best described as:
(A) Loud and lively **(B)** An expanse of pure white serenity
(C) Stern and frightening **(D)** Fashionable and modern
 PYQ 2020 · Mid-Term · 1m · 20s

- Q13.** Who is the poet of the paired poem 'A Photograph'?
(A) Khushwant Singh **(B)** Shirley Toulson
(C) Robert Frost **(D)** Kamala Das
 PYQ 2018 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 20s

- Q14.** In 'A Photograph', whose childhood image is shown in the photograph?
(A) The poet's **(B)** The poet's mother's
(C) The poet's sister's **(D)** A stranger's
 PYQ 2019 · School Annual · 1m · 20s

- Q15.** The phrase 'the laboured ease of loss' in 'A Photograph' is an example of:
(A) A simile **(B)** An oxymoron
(C) Alliteration **(D)** Hyperbole
 PYQ 2020 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

Q 1-15 · MARK YOUR SCORE

Q1. Answer: B

The memoir is by Khushwant Singh. Shirley Toulson wrote the paired poem 'A Photograph'.

Q2. Answer: C

The 'lady' is the author's own grandmother; the title is an affectionate, slightly ironic tribute.

Q3. Answer: B

She walked him to the school attached to the temple, where she read the scriptures while he learnt.

Q4. Answer: A

In the village she fed stale chapattis to the village dogs; in the city she fed the sparrows.

Q5. Answer: C

He went to an English school teaching Science and Music — subjects outside her world — so the common ground vanished. It was NOT a quarrel.

Q6. Answer: B

To her, Science left no room for God; she was also distressed by the Music lessons, which she thought lewd.

Q7. Answer: B

Feeding the sparrows was the happiest half-hour of her quiet, secluded city day.

Q8. Answer: C

She showed no sentimentality; she kissed his forehead silently while her fingers told the rosary beads.

Q9. Answer: B

For once she set aside prayer and celebrated his homecoming by singing and beating an old drum, overstraining her heart.

Q10. Answer: B

Knowing her end was near, she refused to waste time talking and lay telling her beads until the rosary slipped from her dead fingers.

Q11. Answer: B

Thousands of sparrows gathered in silent mourning and ignored the bread crumbs thrown to them; they flew off only when her body was carried out.

Q12. Answer: B

The author compares her calm, white presence to 'an expanse of pure white serenity' — dignified peace, not youthful beauty.

Q13. Answer: B

'A Photograph' is by Shirley Toulson.

Q14. Answer: B

The photograph shows the poet's mother as a girl of about twelve, with her cousins Betty and Dolly at the seaside.

Q15. Answer: B

'Laboured' (effortful) and 'ease' (calm) contradict each other — an oxymoron showing that acceptance of loss is hard-won, not truly easy.