



## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS WITH THEIR ANSWERS

### Act I

1. Read the extract given below and answer the questions (i) to (v) that follow :

**Antonio :** In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.  
It wearies me : you say it wearies you:  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it:  
What stuff tis made of, whereof it is born:  
I am to learn:  
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

(Act I Sc. (i) Lines 1-7)

#### Questions :

1. To Whom does Antonio address these lines ?
2. What do you mean by the words : 'In sooth' ?
3. What is intended by the 'Sadness' of Antonio ?
4. What does the mean by 'want-wit' ?
5. Explain : "I have much ado to know myself".

#### Answers :

1. Antonio addresses these lines to Salario in the Merchant of Venice.
2. The words 'In sooth' mean 'to tell you the truth'.
3. This sadness of Antonio is probably in the key-note of the play which illustrates that the coming events cast their shadows before. The play revolves round this theme mainly.
4. The word 'want-wit' means an idiot.
5. Antonio says that he has great difficulty in recognising himself on account of the sadness that has made him a dullard as such.

2. Read the extract given below and answer the questions (i) to (v) that follow :

I shot his fellow of the self-same flight  
The self-same way with more advised watch,  
To find the other forth ; and by adventuring both,  
I oft found both : I urge this childhood proof,  
Because what follows is pure innocence.  
I owe you much, and , like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost. (Act I Sc. (i) Lines 41-47)

**Questions :**

1. Who speak these words ?
2. What is the occasion of such talk ?
3. What do the words 'advised watch' imply ?
4. What do you mean by 'Childhood proof' ?
5. Explain : "Because what follows is pure innocence" ?

**Answers :**

1. Bassanio speaks these words to Antonio.
2. Antonio assures him (Bassanio) that he was ready to help him with money, personal influence and resources, when Bassanio thanked him for the assistance rendered in the past.
3. The words 'advised watch' mean a deliberate aim (in Archery).
4. The words 'childhood proof' mean the experiments taken at the time of childhood as such. It symbolises risks undertaken by him in a state of pure innocence to attain his object.
5. These words symbolise the honest intention that Bassanio had in his childhood and which he carries on still.

**Passage-3**

*Act I Sc. (i) Line 23 to 40*

**Salario :** My wind cooling my broth,  
Would blow me to an ague when I thought  
What harm a wind too great at sea, might do  
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run  
But I should think of shallows and of flats,  
Ans see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand  
Vailing her high top lower than her ribs

To kiss her burial. Should I go to church  
And see the holy edifice of stone,  
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,  
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side  
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,  
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks  
And, in a word, but even now worth this,  
And not worth nothing? Shall I have the thought  
To think of this, and shall I lack the thought  
That such a thing behanc'd would made me sad?  
But tell not me, I know Antonio  
Is sad to think upon this merchandise.

**Read the above passage and answer the questions given below. Your answer should not be in more than four lines.**

**Questions :**

1. Why would Salario be blown to an ague?
2. What effect would be running of the sandy hour-glass produce on him?
3. What would a visit to the church set him doing?
4. What could cause sadness to Salario?
5. How does Salario interpret or explain Antonio's sadness?

**Answers :**

1. If Salario's ships had gone to sea and if he had heard of a storm that could damage his ships then he would be blown to an ague.
2. The running of the sandy hour-glass would make him think of shallow waters and sand-banks. He would imagine his richly laden ship Andrew run aground.
3. Even the stones in the church walls would bring to his mind the dangerous rocks against which his ships might collide and his spices and silk loaded in the ships would scatter on the surface of the water of the sea.
4. The fear to the safety of his ships would certainly make Salario sad.
5. Thus, says Salario, about Antonio who is sad because his ships laden with goods are at sea and he fears danger to their safety.

(Act I Sc. (i) Lines-161-176)

**Bassanio** :-In Belmont is a lady richly left,  
And she is fair, and, fairer than the word,  
O wondrous virtues :sometimes from her eyes.  
I did receive fair speechless messages:  
Her name is Portia : nothing undervalued  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia :  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth:  
For the four winds blow in from every coast  
Renowned suitors and her sunny locks  
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece.  
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colcho's strand.  
And many Jasons come in quest of her,  
O my Antonio, had I but the means  
To hold a rival place with one of them,  
I have a mind presages me such thrift,  
That I should questionless be fortunate,

**Read the above passage and answer the following questions in two or three sentences :-**

**Questions :**

1. What kind of lady lives in Belmont ?
2. What response did Bassanio receive from her ?
3. What is her name ? What comparisons are drawn ?
4. What attraction she offers to the suitors ?
5. What importance is attached to Belmont ?

**Answers :**

1. Bassanio makes a reference about a lady who lives in Belmont. She has inherited considerable wealth. She is extremely beautiful and possesses wonderful qualities.

2. Bassanio loves the lady very much. He has received speechless messages from her. This is a clear indication that she has love for him.

3. Her name is Portia. She is in no way inferior to Cato's daughter and Brutus' wife, Portia.

4. Portia is rich and virtuous. She draws highborn suitors from every part of the world. Her golden locks look like golden fleece and make of her a golden prize.

5. Belmont has become a very important place. It is like the Coast of Colchos to which many lovers come to seek her hand in marriage.

**Morocco** :- Mislike me not for my complexion,

To shadow'd livery of the burnished sun,  
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles.  
And let us make incision for your love,  
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine,  
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine  
Hath fear'd the valiant; by my love, I swear  
The best regarded virgins of our clime  
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

**Read the above passage and answer the following questions:-**

**Questions :-**

1. What justification the Prince of Morocco offers in support of his dark complexion ?
2. What proof does he give for his bravery ?
3. What expressions are visible on his face ?
4. What are his boasts ?
5. Who is 'my gentle queen' ?

**Answers :**

1. The Prince of Morocco tells Portia not to dislike him for his dark complexion. His dark complexion is the result of the burning hot sun in his country.
2. He tells that he is ready to stand comparison with the fairest man born in the northern region. Let both of them make deep cuts in their veins to draw blood to prove her love. The test will reveal his strong love for her.
3. The Prince is bold and fearful. His face has frightened the bravest men.
4. He takes pride in telling Portia that many young maidens of his country have loved this face with a dark complexion. He will not like to change his colour, except only to win her love.
5. Portia is the gentle queen.