

Chapter Review

- "Amanda!" is a humorous poem by Robin Klein. It shows a young girl, Amanda, who is nagged by her mother and escapes into her daydreams.
- The poem has two voices. Stanzas 1, 3, 5 and 7 are the mother's orders: don't bite your nails, sit straight, don't slouch, don't eat so much, and so on. Stanzas 2, 4 and 6 (in brackets) are Amanda's thoughts.
- Amanda is not listening. She dreams of being a mermaid drifting on a calm emerald sea, alone and free.
- She imagines herself an orphan, free to roam the streets and draw patterns in the dust with her bare feet, with nobody to nag her.
- She wants to be Rapunzel, living in a high tower, and she would never let down her hair for anyone. She wants peace and silence.
- At the end the mother says 'Amanda! Stop sulking!', but Amanda is not sulking. She is only longing for freedom.
- The poem is funny but also sensitive: it shows how children feel under the constant pressure of elders.

Key Terms

Slouch – To sit or walk with a drooping body.

Languid – Slow, relaxed and calm.

Orphan – A child whose parents are dead.

Rapunzel – A fairy-tale girl locked in a tower.

Sulk – To stay silent from bad temper.

Nag – To keep finding fault and giving orders.

Yearn – To long for something.

Parenthesis – Brackets used to show a different voice.

Diagrams / Flowcharts

Mother's Voice vs Amanda's Voice

Mother (Stanzas 1, 3, 5, 7)

- Commands: don't bite nails, sit straight
- Wants good manners
- Thinks Amanda is sulking

Amanda (Stanzas 2, 4, 6)

- Dreams of being a mermaid
- Wishes to be an orphan, free
- Wants to be Rapunzel, alone

Amanda's Escape

Mother gives orders



Amanda daydreams



Mermaid, orphan, Rapunzel



Wants silence and freedom



Mother says she is sulking

About the Poet

- Robin Klein (born 1936) is an Australian author who writes for children and young adults.

Poetic Devices

- Contrast and two voices: commands outside brackets and thoughts inside brackets.
- Imagery: 'languid emerald sea', 'golden silence', 'sweet freedom'.
- Allusion: Rapunzel and mermaid refer to fairy tales.
- Humour and irony: Amanda is called moody while she is only dreaming.

- Repetition of 'Amanda!' to show constant nagging.

Theme

- Children need freedom, space and imagination. Constant scolding hurts creativity.
- Parents should guide with understanding, and children should be heard.

Textbook Exercise Questions

Q.1 How old do you think Amanda is? How do you know?

Ans. Amanda is about 9 or 10. She is rebuked by her parents with the typical instructions given to young children, and her mind is naive and innocent.

Q.2 Who is speaking to her?

Ans. Most probably her mother. A mother is the first teacher, and the instructions about manners and habits suggest this.

Q.3 Why are stanzas 2, 4 and 6 in parenthesis?

Ans. They show Amanda's inner thoughts. She does not say them aloud. The brackets show her silent reaction to each set of orders and give the poem humour.

Q.4 Who is the speaker in stanzas 2, 4, 6? Is this speaker listening to the others?

Ans. Amanda herself. No, she is not listening, as she is lost in her imaginary world.

Q.5 What could Amanda do if she were a mermaid?

Ans. She could drift slowly and carelessly on a languid emerald sea, alone and free, and not depend on anyone for her happiness.

Q.6 Is Amanda an orphan? Why does she say so?

Ans. No. She says so because she wants to be left alone. She imagines that, without anyone to nag her, she could roam the streets freely and draw patterns in the dust with her bare feet.

Q.7 Why does she want to be Rapunzel?

Ans. Rapunzel lived alone in a high tower. Amanda wants such peace and solitude. She would not let down her hair for anyone to climb, as she doesn't want to be disturbed.

Q.8 What does the girl yearn for? What does the poem tell you about Amanda?

Ans. She yearns for freedom, peace and silence. She is imaginative and sensitive, and the poem shows that children everywhere feel pressured by too many instructions.

Q.9 Do you think Amanda is sulking and moody?

Ans. No. She is only longing for freedom and escaping into imagination because of the constant scolding.

Board Exam Questions (Important)

Q.1 Character sketch of Amanda (100 words).

Ans. Amanda is a young, imaginative and sensitive girl. She is tired of her mother's constant instructions and escapes into daydreams as a mermaid, an orphan and Rapunzel. She is not moody; she wants freedom, silence and peace. She is polite as she never answers back, but she lives in her own world.

*Q.2 Reference to context: "Don't bite your nails, Amanda!" (a) Who says it?
(b) How does Amanda react?*

Ans. (a) Amanda's mother. (b) Amanda does not reply; in her mind she thinks about something else, like being a mermaid. This shows that she is not paying attention.

Q.3 What does the poem say about the relationship between parents and children?

Ans. Parents want good manners and discipline, but too many instructions suppress the child's freedom and imagination. There should be understanding and space.

Q.4 Value-based: How should parents treat their children?

Ans. With love, patience and respect. They should guide but also allow freedom and time to dream.

