BA English Major (BAFEG)
Understanding Poetry (BEGM–161)

BEGM -161

Course Code: BEGM-161/2026-27

Max. Marks: 100

Answer the following question.

Explain with reference to the context in 300 words each.

Section A

10 x 2=20

a. Appeared in idle dream that could not live
where meditation was, I turned away.
And walked along my road in happiness.

b. Sometimes a rain comes
Slowly across the sky that turns
Upon it grey cloud, breaking way into light.

Section B

a. Critically analyze the poem “The Colours of Truth”. 20

b. Attempt a critical analysis of the poem “Ode to Bombay”. 20

c. Attempt a critical appreciation of the poem “Postcard from Kashmir”. 20

d. Critically analyze the poem “The Negro Speaks of Rivers”. 20

a. Appeared in idle dream that could not live
where meditation was, I turned away.
And walked along my road in happiness.

Answer

These lines are from William Wordsworth's The Ruined Cottage, a narrative poem associated with the story of Margaret and her ruined home. A traveller hears from an older man, often called the Pedlar or Wanderer, how Margaret's husband went away, how poverty and loneliness overwhelmed her, and how her cottage gradually fell into neglect. The extract occurs near the end of this deeply moving account, when the Wanderer reflects upon sorrow and the healing influence of nature.

The expression "idle dream" does not mean that Margaret's suffering was unreal. It means that despair need not exercise permanent control over the thoughtful mind. The preceding description of weeds, grass and raindrops surrounding the abandoned cottage has created an unexpected atmosphere of tranquillity. These ordinary natural objects suggest that life continues even after human loss. When the Wanderer meditates upon them, he finds an inward peace that changes his response to ruin.

The contrast between grief and happiness is therefore central. Margaret's fate deserves compassion; nevertheless, sympathy must not become hopelessness. Through quiet reflection, the Wanderer learns to respect the past without allowing it to destroy his capacity for living. The word "road" is both an actual path and an image of the continuing human journey. His happiness is not careless pleasure or an indifference to Margaret. It grows out of remembrance, sympathetic understanding and acceptance of change.

The passage expresses Wordsworth's Romantic belief that nature can educate human feeling. Instead of giving a simple moral lecture, the poet connects landscape with a gradual change of consciousness. The tone becomes calm after the earlier narration of suffering. Thus these lines bring the poem towards a reconciliation of sorrow, memory and hope, making the conclusion emotionally complex rather than merely cheerful.