NCERT Solutions for Class 11 English chapter 4 Telephone Conversation

Q.1: State the central issue in the poem.

Ans : The central idea of the poem is related to racism and color discrimination. The dark reality of poem is showed when a person asking for shelter is asked about his skin color instead of the rent. The poem depicts what whole Africa believes in and what disadvantages men face there. The color issue is a big issue that is the main ideology of Africans.

Q.2: There are intervals of silence in the interaction between the landlady and the prospective tenant. What are the reasons for this?

Ans : The conversation between landlady and tenant is paused and she inquires about his skin color, that how dark he is. The tenants reply made her feel inferior and to cover up she attacked him on his skin color. The landlady is racist in her thoughts.

Q.3: How is colour highlighted in the poem and why? List all the words in the poem that suggest colour.

Ans : There are various colors that are used in the poem to represent various aspects. The red color is used in various things like a telephone booth, double-tiered bus, pillar box. The tenant is dark-skinned and landlady The gold rolled is used to signify link with rich people. Various colors like red, black, white, gold-toned are used in the poem to represent .

Q.4: Which are the lines in the poem that impressed you the most and why?

Ans : 'West African Sepia' is the phrase which impressed the most. This phrase is the reply by tenant to landlady. When landlady says about his skin tone he gives a befitting reply that this shows the tiny mindset of fair skin toned people. With this poet raises problem of color discrimination. In this poem, Soyinka says a person should be judged on his values and ethics and not the skin tone.

Q.5: You know what 'hide-and-seek' is. What would 'hide-and-speak' mean?

Ans : The term hide and seek is connected to black people, because of their complexion makes them feel inferior and low, while white skin people raise themselves above while dark skin tone. In childhood hide and seek was a game played by kids they would hide and would find them.

Aakash Institute