Poetry UNIT 10

P.4 Ozymandias

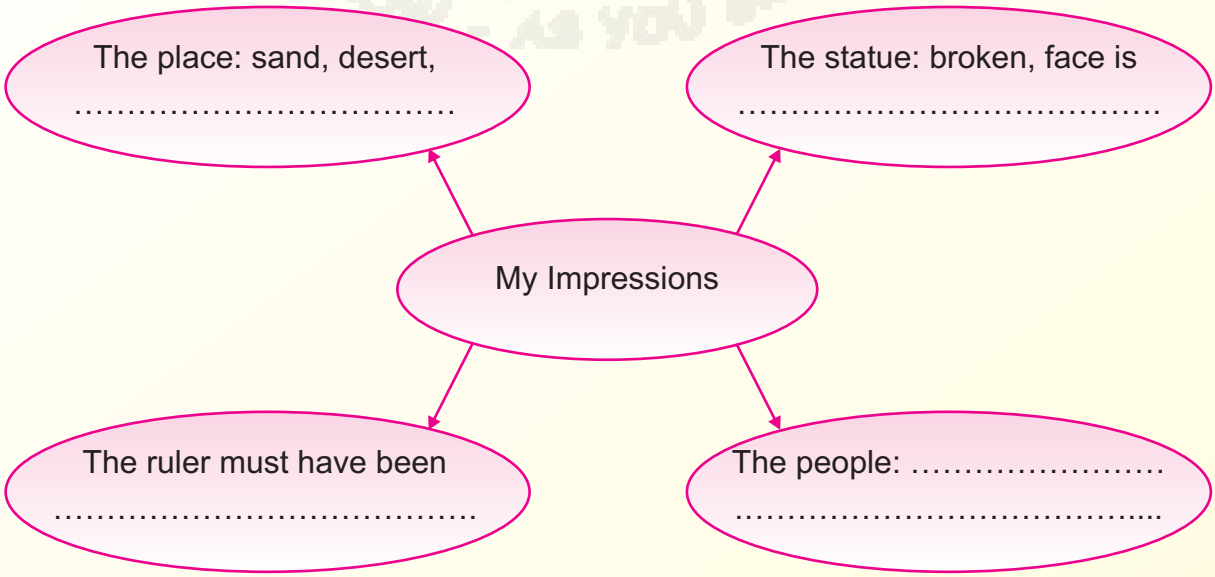
by Percy Bysshe Shelley

1. Look at the picture given below.



While on a sight-seeing tour to an old and mysterious country far away from home, you saw this statue. Discuss with your partner what this picture tells you about the people, the place and the ruler.

Note down your ideas in the web-chart.



2. Write a letter to your friend about the sight you saw and your impression of it.

3. Now read the poem Ozymandias by Percy Bysshe Shelley

OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and **trunkless**[1] legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered **visage**[2] lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and **sneer**[3] of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions **read**[4]
Which yet survive, **stamped**[5] on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing **beside**[6] remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

About the Poet

The son of a Rich Tory Squire, Percy Bysshe Shelley was educated at Eton and then sent to Oxford. Shelley came under the influence of revolutionary ideas of the English philosopher, William Godwin, whose daughter, Mary Godwin he ultimately married. In 1818, Shelley left for Italy; he drowned in the Bay of Spezia in 1822.

4. Answer the following questions by ticking the correct options.

(a) The poem is set in _____

(i) the wilderness

(ii) an ancient land

(iii) a palace

---

1 **trunkless:** without the upper body (the main part of the body of a human being or an animal, excluding the head, neck, and limbs)
2 **visage:** face
3 **sneer:** facial expression of scorn or hostility in which the upper lip may be raised
4 **read:** interpreted
5 **stamped:** sculpted
6 **beside:** else

(iv) a desert

(b) The expression on the face of the statue is one of _____

(i) admiration

(ii) anger

(iii) despair

(iv) contempt

(c) This poem throws light on the _____ nature of Ozymandias.

(i) cruel

(ii) arrogant

(iii) boastful

(iv) aggresive

(d) The sculptor was able to understand Ozymandias' _____

(i) words

(ii) expression

(iii) feelings

(iv) ambition

(e) The tone of the poem is _____

(i) mocking

(ii) nostalgic

(iii) gloomy

(iv) gloating

5. Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) *"The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed."* Whose hand and heart has the poet referred to in this line?

(b) *"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:"* Why does Ozymandias refer to himself as King of Kings? What quality of the king is revealed through this statement.

(c) *"Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"* Who is Ozymandias referring to when he speaks of ye Mighty? Why should they despair ?

(d) Bring out the irony in the poem.

(e) *'Nothing beside remains.'* What does the narrator mean when he says these words?

(f) What is your impression of Ozymandias as a king?

(g) What message is conveyed through this poem?

6. Identify and rewrite the lines from the poem spoken by the narrator, the traveller and Ozymandias:

The Narrator: _____

_____

_____

The Traveller: _____

_____

_____

Ozymandias: _____

_____

_____

7. Shelley's sonnet follows the traditional structure of the fourteen-line Italian sonnet, featuring an opening octave, or set of eight lines, that presents a conflict or dilemma, followed by a sestet, or set of six lines, that offers some resolution or commentary upon the proposition introduced in the octave. Read the poem carefully and complete the following table on the structure of the poem.

	Rhyme scheme	Theme
Octave		
Sestet		

8. **Complete the table listing the poetic devices used by Shelley in Ozymandias.**

Poetic Device	Lines from the poem
Alliteration	*...and sneer of cold command*
Synecdoche (substitution of a part to stand for the whole, or the whole to stand for a part)	*the hand that mock'd them*

9. **Imagine that Ozymandias comes back to life and as he sees the condition of his statue, realisation dawns on him and he pens his thoughts in a diary. As Ozymandias, make this diary entry in about 150 words. You could begin like this: I thought I was the mightiest of all but...**

10. **'Ozymandias' and 'Not Marble, nor the Gilded Monuments' are on Time. Compare the two sonnets in terms of the way in which Time is treated by the poets. Write your answer in about 150 words.**