

**Grade: 9 A LEGEND OF THE NORTHLAND SUBJECT: ENGLISH**

**ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Write the story of ‘A Legend of the Northland’ in about ten sentences.  
 The poem is a story of an old woman. She is asked by Saint Peter for alms who has become weak because of fasting and traveling. But her greed forces her not to give him anything. He becomes angry and makes her a woodpecker who bores hard, dry wood to get food. Her clothes are burnt to ashes and she is left with a cap on her head. She continues boring into hardwood for her little food.

2. Describe the landscape of the Northland as described in the poem.  
 The Northland is far away in the north. In this land of snow and ice, the days are very short. The nights are too long. When it snows, they harness swift reindeer to the sleds. Children are packed with so many layers of clothes to protect from the cold. In their funny and furry clothes, they look like cubs of bears.

3. Why does the poet tell a story which he does not believe to be true?  
 The poet wants to tell a ‘curious’ story. It is the story of St. Peter and a greedy little woman. The poet himself doesn’t believe in the truth of the story. But still he is compelled to tell this story simply for one reason. The story gives a moral lesson. Greed is an evil trait in man. It is punished in the end. The greedy little woman who didn’t want to give a small piece of cake to hungry St. Peter was cursed to be a woodpecker. She had to live with little food. We should show human qualities in our behavior.

4. A holy man should not curse the lady. Justify this statement in the context of the poem ‘A Legend of the Northland’.  
 A holy man is known for his wisdom. He teaches moral lessons to the people whether they are liberal or greedy. All are equal in his eyes. In the present story, Saint Peter is a holy man. He is also famous for his preaching. He has preached and traveled a lot. So, he is hungry. He asks the lady for some food but she does not share her food with him. Finally, the saint becomes angry and curses her. In fact, he should have shown some mercy and the example of his wisdom. Therefore, it is appropriate to say that a holy man should not curse the lady.

5. Why was the little woman cursed particularly to be a woodpecker and not another bird? How did she struggle to get her scanty food?  
 The little woman aroused the anger of a holy man. The saint spends most of his time traveling and preaching. Constant fasting had made him hungry and weak. Saint Peter asked for a small piece of cake when he saw a little woman baking cakes. The greedy woman could have easily given a piece of cake to the saint. But the selfish woman thought that even a very little piece was too large to be given away to him. She denied even this little offering. The saint cursed her to be a woodpecker. A woodpecker has to bore for a long time to get even scanty food. She was cursed to labor hard by boring into the tree to get even her scanty food as she had made the saint wait so long for such a small piece of cake.