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Question 1. What does the young man mean by “great honey-coloured ramparts at your ear?” Why does he say young men are “thrown into despair” by them?

The young man is praising Anne’s beautiful honey-colored hair, calling it a rampart—a protective wall. Her hair acts like a barrier, preventing young men from seeing beyond her outward beauty to her inner self. Because her golden hair is so captivating, young men become hopelessly in love with her outward appearance and despair when they realize they cannot have her.

Question 2. What colour is the young woman’s hair? What does she say she can change it to? Why would she want to do so?

Anne’s hair is yellow like honey. She says she could change it to black, brown, or carrot—meaning any colour she wants. She says this to show that outer beauty is changeable and superficial. She wants young men to look past her appearance and love her for who she really is inside.

Question 3. What qualities make objects like a car, phone, or dress desirable? If you were selling something, which qualities would you highlight?

Objects are desired based on qualities that suit our needs—appearance, comfort, and durability are especially important. If I were selling a dress, I’d highlight how attractive and comfortable it is, and emphasize its durability so customers feel it’s a worthwhile purchase.

Question 4. Do we love others for their qualities or for themselves alone? Are some people more lovable than others?

This question is for students to discuss and reflect on themselves.

Question 5. Yeats asks how we can separate the dancer from the dance. Can we separate a person from their appearance or mannerisms? How have relationships changed as people change over time?

This question encourages personal reflection and discussion among students.