

THE LOST CHILD

MULK RAJ ANAND

- ❖ The story captures the reactions of a child both before and after he is separated from his parents in a fair. He desires everything that he sets his eyes on and gets enchanted by all material goods on display on the way to the spring fair and in the fair. Even though his father is a disciplinarian and does not fulfil the sweet child's demands, the child realises the value of relationships once he gets separated from his parents.
- ❖ The young, innocent child sees gaily dressed people walking or riding on horses and some were riding in carts. He also sees toys, dragon flies, insects, worms, flowers and doves on the way.
- ❖ The cooing of the doves diverted the child's attention from the raining flower petals.
- ❖ The child, who is full of joy and energy, lags behind because he is attracted by several things that he sees on the way like toys, sweetmeats, dragonflies, gulmohur flower garlands, snake charmer and the roundabout.
- ❖ While his parents sat in the shade of the grove, he was engrossed in watching the little insects and worms that came out of their hiding places to enjoy the sunshine.
- ❖ In the fair, he is easily distracted by the various stalls and other attractions present in the fair. Initially, he craved for burfi, next he wanted a garland of gulmohur flowers, yearned for some colourful balloons thereafter he got enchanted by the playing of the flute by the snake charmer and lastly longed for a ride on the roundabout.
- ❖ The obedient child moves on because he knows that his strict father would never give in to his demands and would have an excuse to deny his desires.
- ❖ He knew his parents would say that he was too old to play with the balloons hence he did not ask his parents to buy them for him.
- ❖ He was aware that his parents would refuse to buy him a garland and say that they were cheap.
- ❖ He moved away from the snake charmer as he had been forbidden by his parents to listen to the music played by the snake charmer which they called coarse. It was here that he moved farther towards the roundabout and got separated from his parents.
- ❖ In spite of his father's refusal to buy him anything in the fair, he does not throw any tantrum and seems to be a disciplined child.
- ❖ At the roundabout the child could no longer control himself and requested his parents to allow him a ride. When he receives no reply, he turns to look at his parents and realises that he had been separated from his parents and strayed far from them.
- ❖ Once the child realises that he has been lost, hot and fierce tears rolled down his eyes, his throat turned dry and his face was convulsed with fear. Panicking, he ran in all directions without knowing how to be reunited with his parents. His yellow

turban comes off and his clothes get dirty. Soon he exhausts himself and starts sobbing.

- ❖ The child met his saviour near the entrance of a temple where he was almost at the point of being trampled under the feet of the jostling crowd.
- ❖ The child lost interest in all the things he had wanted earlier as he felt fearful and insecure at being separated from his parents and just desired to be reunited with them. Even though the Good Samaritan is a kind man, the child is uncomfortable and anxious in the company of strangers. Within minutes, his life changes from being secure in the umbrella of his parents' care to being insecure and that makes him cry inconsolably.
- ❖ The nature-loving child is enchanted by the wonders of nature and is wholly responsible for his predicament as wanders off after one attraction or the other despite his mother's repeated instructions to remain focused.
- ❖ The Good Samaritan tries hard to stop the child from weeping by offering him all the goodies at the spring fair and appears to be genuinely concerned to restore the child to his parents.

NCERT QUESTIONS

A1) The little child sees gaily dressed people going to the spring fair on foot, riding on horses or travelling on bullock carts. He also sees dragon flies, toys, insects, worms, flowers and doves on his way to the fair. He lags behind because he is attracted by all the things that he sees on his way to the fair.

A2) In the fair, initially he wanted a burfi, then a garland of gulmohar flowers, after that some colourful balloons, later on he was attracted by the snake charmer and finally he wanted a ride on the roundabout.

He moves on without waiting for an answer from his parents because he knew that they would not pay attention to his demands or give him what he had asked for.

A3) At the round about, when he turned to request his parents to allow him to sit on the ride, he did not get any reply. That's when he realized that he had strayed away from his parents and got separated from them. His anxiety and insecurity can be seen from the fact that tears rolled down his cheeks, his throat became dry, his face was flushed and convulsed with fear. He ran in all directions, without knowing how to find his parents.

A4) The child lost interest in the things that he had wanted earlier because he felt fearful and insecure after being separated from his parents. All he wanted was to be reunited with them and feel the love and tenderness of his mother and his father's soothing voice.

A5) To be done by the student as per his desire.

THE ADVENTURES OF TOTO

RUSKIN BOND

- ✓ It is a story which revolves around the agony and torment faced by the author's family once they kind-heartedly adopt a monkey named Toto. The antics of the mischievous monkey play havoc with the family and finally they returned Toto to the tonga- driver.
- ✓ The grandfather was an animal lover who did not like the fact that the tonga driver kept the monkey tied to the feeding- trough throughout the day. He paid a sum of five rupees and bought it from him to add to his collection of animals he had in his private zoo.
- ✓ Toto was a pretty monkey with dried up hands which seemed as if they had been pickled in the sun for many years. His bright eyes were full of mischief under his deep-set eyebrows. His pearly white teeth frightened the old ladies whenever he grinned at them. He was very agile and used his fingers and tail to gather things he desired to eat.
- ✓ Ruskin's grandmother was not too happy with this animal loving trait of the grandfather. Hence, the grandfather hid Toto in the bedroom closet and tied him to a peg and decided to reveal his presence only when the grandmother would be in a good mood. In the meantime, mischievous Toto tore the beautiful wall paper of the closet, pulled out (wrenched) the peg from its socket and ripped (shredded) the author's school blazer which was hanging in the closet.
- ✓ Instead of getting angry, grandfather was happy with Toto's antics displayed in the closet as this revealed to him that Toto had a sharp mind and strength to pull out things. To avoid further destruction in the house and to hide Toto's presence, Grandfather secretly transferred Toto to a big cage in the servants' quarters along with his other pets.
- ✓ The naughty monkey did not allow the pets to sleep in the cage at night and consequently Grandfather had to carry Toto to Saharanpur the next day.
- ✓ Toto was placed in a canvas kit-bag which was covered with straw and he could not escape once the bag was zipped up. Neither could Toto bite through the strong canvas nor could he climb out of the bag. Yet, Toto managed to roll and jump in the bag which attracted the attention of people waiting at the railway station.
- ✓ At the railway turnstile, Toto managed to poke his head out of the bag and reveal himself to the ticket-collector. The ticket collector instantly informed Grandfather to pay three rupees as fare for Toto as that was the fare for travelling with a dog. The ticket collector insisted on calling Toto a dog and charged a ticket for his travel. Grandfather tried to tell the ticket collector that it was a monkey and not a dog but the ticket collector did not budge from his stand.
- ✓ In the railway rule book, dogs could be charged but not tortoises.
- ✓ The TC did not charge any fare for the tortoise as it was not a dog.

- ✓ When Toto was accepted by the Grandmother, he was put in the stable along with Nana the donkey as there was no need to hide him now.
- ✓ **Nana Episode**- The wicked monkey was holding on to Nana's long ears with his sharp little teeth. This episode turned Nana against Toto and they never became friends with each other.
- ✓ **Bath Episode**- On cold winter evenings, Toto took his bath in a large bowl filled with warm water. He would check the water temperature with his hand before stepping in for his bath. He would gingerly place one foot in the water followed by the other and slowly immerse himself till his neck. He would soap himself and remain in the bath till the water turned cold and then swiftly run to warm himself near the kitchen fire. One day, he got into a large kettle which had been placed on fire to prepare tea. Testing the water to be warm enough to take his bath, he entered the kettle and soon was half boiled as the water slowly started boiling and he wouldn't come out because he felt cold outside. He was finally rescued by the grandmother.
- ✓ **Pulao Episode**- The author's Grandmother had invited some people over for lunch and prepared a large dish of pulao for them. She placed the Pulao on the dining table and went out. In the meantime, Toto found the aroma inviting and started stuffing himself with rice. Seeing this, the Grandmother shouted and a startled Toto threw a plate at her. Then, one of the author's aunts rushed towards Toto and she was hit by a glass of water in her face. As the Grandfather entered the dining room, Toto picked up the pulao plate and climbed the jackfruit tree. After finishing the pulao, he threw down the plate and broke it into smithereens. After this episode, Grandfather got angry and sold Toto back to the tonga driver, at a loss, for three rupees.

NCERT

Ans 1. The author's Grandfather bought Toto from a tonga driver at a cost of five rupees. The tonga driver used to keep Toto tied to a feeding trough which made Grandfather take pity on him as he was an animal lover. He brought Toto home to add to his collection of animals in his private zoo.

Ans 2. Toto's bright sparkling eyes under deep-set eyebrows managed to catch the attention of animal lovers and his pearly teeth shone when he smiled. His hands seemed to be pickled but his tail made him look pretty.

Ans 3. Grandfather was forced to take Toto to Saharanpur as he did not want to reveal his presence to the Grandmother. Neither did he want Toto to cause more damage in the house as he had in the closet. Furthermore, he did not allow any animal of the cage to sleep at night with his antics.

Ans 4. See the Bath Episode notes. He had learnt to take his bath in this way by copying the mannerisms of the author.

Ans 5. Toto was a mischievous and malicious monkey that frightened and hurt humans and animals. He made holes in the dress of one of the author's aunts, shredded the author's blazer, broke dishes, tore wall paper, injured and scared fellow animals and family members of the author's household. He was uncontrollable, not scared of anyone in that house and could cause grievous injury to the author's family. The author's Grandfather realized that keeping Toto in the house would only add to the misery of family members and other animals of the zoo as he could not be tamed. Hence, he decided to sell Toto back to the tonga driver at a loss.



IN THE KINGDOM OF FOOLS

A.K RAMANUJAM

- ✦ In the kingdom of fools, both the king and the minister were fools.
- ✦ As they were foolish, the King made a peculiar announcement that people will work during the night and sleep during the day. Even the animals were trained to sleep during the day and work at night.
- ✦ The second peculiar rule in their city was that the cost of any item would be one duddu. Be it banana or rice.
- ✦ Anyone who would disobey this rule, would be put to death.
- ✦ The people followed this decision of the king as they did not want to die.
- ✦ A wise guru and his disciple reached this kingdom. The guru realized that it would not be safe to live in a kingdom which was ruled by a foolish and idiotic king and minister.
- ✦ The guru told the disciple that they should immediately leave but the disciple decided to stay back as he could eat as much as he wanted by spending just a duddu.
- ✦ The guru warned the disciple that the king and the minister are fools and they can come up with any foolish idea and that disciple's life might be in danger.
- ✦ The disciple was adamant to stay in this kingdom and soon grew fat eating bananas, ghee, rice and wheat.
- ✦ One day a thief entered a rich merchant's house and soon died as the old breached wall collapsed on him.
- ✦ The thief's brother complained to the king that his brother had been killed because of the rich merchant's fault.. The merchant had not built a good, strong wall
- ✦ In order to save his life, the merchant blamed the bricklayer who had built the wall. He was an old man now.
- ✦ The old builder shifted the blame on a dancing girl who had been walking up and down the street and making her anklets jingle which had distracted him.
- ✦ The dancing girl too had become old and blamed the goldsmith who had not made her gold ornaments.
- ✦ The goldsmith blamed the rich merchant who was the owner of the house whose crumbly wall had broken and killed the thief.
- ✦ The merchant begged for mercy and said that the gold ornaments were ordered by his dead father and not him.
- ✦ The King declared that the merchant will be put to death even if the crime of ordering the jewellery was committed by his dead father as he had inherited his riches so he must pay for his dead father's sins as well.
- ✦ The King ordered a new stake to be made to execute the rich merchant.
- ✦ The minister got an idea that the rich merchant was too thin to be executed on the stake so they must find a fat man who would fit the stake.

- ✦ The king sent his servants to look for a fat man and they found the disciple who had become quite fat after eating well in this kingdom.
- ✦ The disciple tried to explain to the servants that he had committed no wrong and that he was a sanyasi, but the king's servants did not pay heed to any of his pleadings.
- ✦ The disciple prayed to his guru to save him from being executed on the stake.
- ✦ The guru was able to see everything through his magical powers and arrived at this kingdom of fools to save his disciple.
- ✦ The guru first scolded the disciple and then whispered something in the disciple's ears.
- ✦ Then he addressed the king that as the guru is greater than the disciple hence, he should be put to death first before the disciple.
- ✦ Hearing this, the disciple requested the king to put him to death before the guru.
- ✦ The guru and the disciple started fighting to be put to death first. The king got confused and asked the guru why they were fighting to be put to death.
- ✦ The guru informed the king that whoever dies on this stake first will be reborn as the king of this country. Whoever dies second will become the minister.
- ✦ The King postponed the execution for the next day.
- ✦ He consulted his minister and said that they cannot allow the guru and the disciple to become the king and minister and hence they should die to be reborn as the king and minister again.
- ✦ That night the king and the minister released the guru and the disciple and took their place in jail. They were put to death by the executioners.
- ✦ When the people saw that the persons who were executed were the former king and minister, they were confused as now they had no king.
- ✦ They visited the guru and begged him to become the king. The guru agreed on the condition that he would change all the old laws and make new laws.
- ✦ Then the guru, changed day for working and night for sleeping and nothing was available for a duddu.
- ✦ The moral of the story is that the company of fools is harmful for wise people.

NCERT

Ans 1 The guru and the disciple found that the entire kingdom including the animals slept during the day and remained awake at night. Secondly, everything cost the same be it a measure of rice or a bunch of bananas.

Ans 2 The disciple decided to stay back and not leave the kingdom along with his guru as he was tempted by availability of cheap food and he could eat rice, ghee, bananas and wheat every day. It was not a good idea as he was about to lose his life if it were not for the help of his guru.

Ans 3. During the court trial, many people were tried for the death of the thief. The merchant blamed the brick layer for having built a weak wall. The bricklayer blamed the dancing girl for distracting him from his work. The dancing girl blamed the goldsmith for

not making her ornaments on time which made her to visit his shop again and again. The goldsmith in order to save himself, put the blame on the rich merchant who was getting impatient and wanted his order to be delivered at the earliest. Keeping his presence of mind. The rich merchant lay the blame on his dead father.

Ans 4 According to the king, the real culprit was the rich merchant's father who had ordered the goldsmith to deliver his order at the earliest. The King declared that the merchant will be put to death even if the crime of ordering the jewellery was committed by his dead father as he had inherited his riches so he must pay for his dead father's sins as well.

The rich merchant escaped punishment as the merchant was too thin to be killed properly on the stake.

Ans 5. The guru's words of wisdom were that it is not safe to live in a city of fools. The disciple remembers them when he is about to be killed just because he is a fat man and not because he had committed any crime.

Ans 6. The guru appeared as soon as the disciple prayed to him for help. The guru immediately took charge of the situation. He informed the king that the guru should be put to death before the disciple. The king got puzzled as both the guru and the disciple were very keen to die. He asked the guru the reason for their eagerness to die. The guru informed him that whoever dies first will be reborn as the king of this kingdom and the second to die will be reborn as the minister as the stake was new and no criminal had been executed on it.

The king did not want the guru and the disciple to become the king and minister in their next life. Hence, the king and the minister release the guru and the disciple from the prison and take their places. This incident shows the foolishness of the king and the minister and the intelligence of the guru who manages to save their lives. Later on, they both actually become the king and the minister.

THE HAPPY PRINCE

OSCAR WILDE

- The story is about a carefree and wealthy prince whose statue sits on top of a hill. The statue is covered with gold leaves and precious jewels.
- He was called the Happy Prince because he was always happy, lived an opulent (luxurious) life and was not exposed to life beyond the walls of his palace. While he was alive, he did not see the life of ordinary people living outside his palace and no sorrow was allowed to enter the palace.
- From this high point of the column, he sees the poverty, sorrow and social inequality of the people of his kingdom which he had not seen before and this compels him to help the poor and the needy.
- The friendship of the Prince and the swallow is based on love and mutual respect. They both are kind and this kindness leads to their friendship.
- The swallow learns from the Prince that when a person performs good deeds and helps others, it makes a person happy.
- The swallow decides not to fly away to Egypt and to stay permanently with the Prince once he gives away the rare sapphires from his eyes. The Prince is now blind and cannot see anything. The swallow tells him the stories of what he had seen during his travels to strange lands. The swallow also told the Prince about the sufferings of the poor and helped remove gold leaves from his statue and donate to them so that the money can feed the poor and the hungry.
- The Prince gives away his golden covering to feed the starving children. Later these children's faces grew rosy and they laughed and played in the streets.
- Assistance to the Seamstress - The seamstress embroidered beautiful flowers on satin gowns for rich ladies but her own life was unhappy. She was poor and could not afford to buy oranges for her son who was suffering from fever. She only had river water to offer to her son. The Prince tells the swallow to remove the ruby from the sword's hilt and give it to the seamstress to help her nurse her sick son back to health.
- Assistance to the Playwright- The young playwright was trying to finish a play for the Director of the Theatre. As he had no money to buy firewood and food to make himself warm, he was not able to finish his play. Hunger and cold made him feel faint. The Prince sends him a sapphire so that he could buy the firewood and eat food which would help him to finish the play.
- Assistance to the Matches Girl- The little matchgirl's matches fell down in the gutter. The matches could not be sold as they had got spoiled. Her father would beat her if she gets no money home. As she had no shoes, cap and stockings she was very cold and hungry. The Prince instructs the swallow to pluck out the other sapphire from the eye and give it to the match girl. The swallow was very sad to perform this task as this would turn the Prince blind now.

- **Assistance to the poor and hungry people of the city**- The swallow removed all the gold leaves and donated them to the poor so that they could buy food and warm clothing during the cold season.
- The climax of the story occurs when the swallow dies due to the love it has for the Prince.
- The Prince is not happy when he is covered with the gold leaves and precious stones. He gets happiness after he donates his sapphires, ruby and gold leaves to feed the hungry and provide warm clothes to them.
- Once he has donated everything, the people of the town do not consider him beautiful. In fact, the Mayor calls his statue shabby and wants it removed.
- The Art Professor says that as the statue of the Happy Prince is not beautiful as the ruby, sapphires and the golden leaves had been removed. Hence, it was not useful for the people of the kingdom. Therefore, the Professor wanted the statue to be pulled down. The writer Oscar Wilde wants to convey the message through this story that people only look at outer beauty and not at the inner beauty of a person.
- The **themes** of the story are that if a person has traits of empathy, charity, love, compassion and kindness, then he is rewarded by God even if humans don't appreciate these virtues. God asks his **angels** to get the heart of lead and the dead bird to his garden of Paradise and calls them the **two most precious things** in the city. The **second moral** of the story is that the world will be a beautiful place if humans help other human beings and share their food and other necessities of life. The story also tells us that generosity and compassion can help reduce sadness and poverty in a materialistic world. The **third moral** is that people like outward beauty and do not see inner beauty.

NCERT Qs

Ans 1. The Prince was christened Happy Prince while he was alive as he lived a happy and opulent life without knowing any sorrow, misery or unhappiness of the people of his kingdom. After his death, his statue was placed on a pedestal and from this height he could see the sufferings, misery and unhappiness of the people of his kingdom which made the kind prince sad. Later, he donates all his jewels and gold leaves to bring joy and remove hunger from the poor of his kingdom.

Ans 2. a) (See assistance to seamstress)

b) At the seamstress' house, the swallow after placing the ruby on the table, fanned the sick boy's forehead with his wings. This made the boy feel cool and he was able to sleep soundly.

Ans 3. See assistance to the playwright and the matchgirl.

Ans 4. The swallow saw that the rich were making merry in their beautiful homes while the poor were cold and hungry. The beggars sat at the gates of the rich hoping for some money while two young boys took shelter under the bridge and hugged each other to

keep away the cold. But the heartless watchman shooed them away from under the bridge and they had to walk in the rain once again.

Ans 5. The swallow decides not to fly away to Egypt and to stay permanently with the Prince once he gives away the rare sapphires from his eyes as the Prince is now blind and cannot see anything. The swallow tells him the stories of what he had seen during his travels to strange lands. The swallow also told the Prince about the sufferings of the poor.

Ans 6. The two most precious things that the angels pick up from the city are the dead swallow and the leaden heart of the Happy Prince. The angels considered them precious as both the swallow and the Prince were kind, empathetic and unselfish. The swallow stayed with the Prince even when he knew that he would die in the cold season. He assisted the blind Prince to distribute the golden leaves to the poor and the hungry. The Prince had no use of his ruby, sapphires and gold leaves if the people of his kingdom are hungry and cold. The Prince's leaden heart broke into two pieces once he heard that his friend swallow had died.

WEATHERING THE STORM IN ERSAMA

HARSH MANDER

- The lesson depicts the misery and hardships faced by the inhabitants of Ersama and Kalikuda. They faced death, destruction, hunger, hopelessness and sadness at the loss of their loved ones. They plunged into depression once the fury of the cyclone abated.
- The lesson depicts the empathy, leadership qualities, presence of mind in the face of adversity(problems) and the indomitable spirit of Prashant.
- The elders of the village got shattered and overwhelmed by the destruction and loss of life caused by the super cyclone. Prashant summoned his energy and hope when he saw the elders of the village in a broken state. He decided that he won't let the cyclone to destroy his life. He forgot his own pain at the loss of his home and belongings. He totally immersed himself to help others and provide help to the victims of the cyclone.
- The terrible super cyclone had caused devastation and untold misery to the inhabitants of the village Kalikuda. Many children had been orphaned and women widowed. Prashant did not want children to grow without love in government institutions. He knew that the women will face stigma, loneliness and depression. To remove this feeling of loneliness and lack of love, Prashant suggested that the widows should adopt the orphan children so that the children are resettled in the community itself.
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- It also teaches us to face the problems of life boldly and not to despair. (feel hopeless)

What havoc did the super cyclone wreaked in the life of the people of Orissa?

The high speed winds and excess water due to rain caused much death and destruction in Orissa. It uprooted trees, destroyed houses, killed people, cattle and domestic animals. The cyclone brought untold misery and grief to the people.

How has Prashant, a teenager, been able to help the people of his village?

- ❖ Rice from the merchant to satisfy the hunger of the people
- ❖ Children with utensils on their stomachs to signal the helicopters to give them food
- ❖ Cleared the area of filth, vomit and urine
- ❖ Dressed the wounds of the injured
- ❖ Organized sports events for children
- ❖ Told the bereaved women to look after the orphans

How have the people of the community helped one another? What role do the women of Kalikuda play during these days?

The people of the community helped each other by pressurizing the rice merchant to give his rice to the hungry people so that they could cook rice and feed themselves. They helped the widows to rebuild their shattered lives. The women joined the food for work programme and adopted the orphans.

Why do Prashant and other volunteers resist the plan to set institutions for orphans and widows? What alternatives do they consider?

Prashant and other volunteers resisted the Govt's plan as children would grow up in orphanages without the love of their parents and relatives. The widows would suffer from stigma and loneliness which would lead them into despair and depression. The elders of the village decided to resettle the orphans in the community itself. Thus, the childless widows would get children and the orphans would get the love of a mother.

Do you think Prashant is a good leader?

Prashant has the ability to motivate people (Food for work programme), think creatively (helicopter episode) which show his leadership qualities.

He also had presence of mind, empathy and indomitable spirit. Young people have the energy, courage, enthusiasm and physical strength to help people during times of distress.

Why did the women and children get deeper and deeper into grief?

The people of Kalikuda had lost their homes and loved ones in the destruction caused by the super cyclone and they saw a bleak future in front of them.

What did Prashant see when he reached his village Kalikuda?

Prashant was shocked to see the destruction of his home and felt scared when he could not see his family members. He could only see the remains of the roof of his home and some of the belongings hanging from the branches of a tree. As he wanted to find his family members, so he decided to go to the Red Cross shelter.

Why did Prashant and his friends take refuge on the roof of the house in Ersama?

Prashant and his friends took refuge on the roof of the house to escape from the brown and dirty flood waters which had entered the house.

THE LAST LEAF

O Henry

- ✓ This beautiful inspirational tale deals with unselfish sacrifice and how one man Mr Behrman sacrificed his own well-being and used his talent to save Johnsy's life. Mr Behrman feels responsible for his neighbours and his masterpiece saved Johnsy's life by returning her will to live.
- ✓ The last leaf symbolises Johnsy's will to live and the power of the mind. The mind can get depressed or be happy and it all depends on us. A person has two options before him, either to let hopelessness take over his life or remain optimistic about the future and feel that the world is full of challenges which have to be overcome.
- ✓ Mr Behrman's great masterpiece is not a typical painting but a single leaf that he had painted on the brick wall. The leaf is so life like that both Johnsy and Sue believe that it is truly the last leaf on the vine. Mr Behrman realises that he should use his artistic gift for the benefit of others. The last leaf symbolises Johnsy's will to live and turns her pessimism into optimism.
- ✓ Johnsy doesn't respond to Sue's desperate call to stay alive as she is lost in her own solitude and depression. Without her friendship, Johnsy would have fallen prey to her own sadness and died. It is Sue's attention and Behrman's act of kindness in painting that leaf that restores her to health.

- ✓ Behrman's dream is to paint a masterpiece. His dream to paint a masterpiece comes true when his painting of the leaf gives Johnsy the will to live. Behrman's masterpiece gives a message of hope to Johnsy that she should not give up the will to live just because he is suffering from pneumonia.

What was the primary obstacle to Johnsy's recovery?

Johnsy's despair and the acceptance of her impending death which she had linked to the falling of the last leaf were the primary obstacles to Johnsy's recovery.

Q What did Johnsy see from outside the window ?

Johnsy saw an old ivy creeper climbing halfway up the brick wall opposite her window. The Ivy Creeper was shedding its leaves because it was the autumn season.

Q Draw a pen portrait of Sue.

Sue was an artist who shared a small flat with a fellow artist Johnsy. Both Sue and Johnsy were not rich and earned their living by selling paintings. She is a kind and caring person who nurses Johnsy through her illness by feeding her hot soup, giving her medicines and arranging doctor's visits.

Q What lesson did the last leaf teach Johnsy?

The last leaf painted by Mr Behrman on the ivy creeper gave a message of hope to Johnsy and rekindled in her the desire to live. She learnt that one has to face the challenges and obstacles of life bravely.

Q Why did Behrman not survive the pneumonia attack?

Behrman contracted pneumonia while painting the last leaf on the brick wall opposite Johnsy's window. He had no one to give him hot soup, like Sue gave Johnsy. His old age and the fact that he did not remove his wet clothes lead to his demise(death).

Q How did Sue keep Johnsy spirit high and lift her mood?

Sue tried to lift Johnsy's spirit by talking to her cheerfully about clothes and fashion and thus tried to bring her out of her depression. She whistled while working to take Johnsy's mind off her illness. She comforted Johnsy and dealt with her cranky behaviour very patiently. Sensing the seriousness of Johnsy's health and the state of mind she sought Behrman's help.

Q Draw a pen portrait of Mr Behrman

Mr Behrman was an old painter and used to model for other artists. He wanted to make a masterpiece. He lived in the same building as Sue and Johnsy. He was not rich but was a loving and caring man. He helped and supported Johnsy when she was in depression. He drew a masterpiece (last leaf) which helped Johnsy by giving her the will to live. He sacrificed his own life in order to save Johnsy's.

Q Draw a pen portrait of Johnsy.

Johnsy was an artist who shared a small flat with a fellow artist, Sue. Both Sue and Johnsy were not rich and earned their living by selling paintings. She fell ill due to pneumonia and gradually lost her will to live. She harboured a belief that she would die when the last leaf of the ivy creeper falls. She was depressed and in despair. Her neighbour Mr Behrman gave her the will to live by painting the last leaf. Johnsy healed with the power of self-belief and love for life.

A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME

Q1) Justify the title of the of the story "A House is not a Home"

A House is the name of a place where we live, but a home is made with love, memories, shared joys and sorrows , peace and a place where you belong. The narrator Zan realises that even though he had lost his home to fire but he gained love and friendship of his schoolmates which made him feel loved, gave him security from his fears of being friendless. He also realises that the teachers and students of high school are kind, considerate and empathetic people and he gets out from the feeling of being lost in the new school. He learns that he needs to trust new people and should not cling to the past.

Q 2) Why did the narrator feel isolated in the High School?

The narrator felt isolated, awkward and despondent at high school as all his friends from the Junior School were sent to another school. He could not initially adjust in the new school and with the new teachers. He was in the senior most class in the old school and in the new school he had joined the junior most class.

Q 3) Why did the narrator keep visiting his old school?

Zan kept visiting his old school as he missed his teachers with whom he had developed a close bond. They motivated him and encouraged him to sever(cut or break) his ties with the old school and settle down in the new one.

Q 4) Why did the mother run back into the house?

The narrator's mother ran back into the burning house to pick up the small metal box full of important documents.

Q 5) Why did the narrator's mother run back into the house the second time?

The narrator's mother ran back into the burning house the second time to retrieve her dead husband's letters and pictures which were very precious to her.

Q 6) What does the author notice one Sunday afternoon?

On a cold and windy fall Sunday, the narrator noticed smoke seeping from the ceiling to the dining room.

Q 7) What is his mother's reaction? What did she do?

The narrator's mother quickly reacted to the fire in the house and ran out of the house into the front yard along with Zan and the cat.

Q 8) Why does Zan break down in tears after the fire?

The narrator breaks down in tears because he had lost his home to a fire and his pet cat was nowhere to be found. His recent move to a new school left him despondent and all these incidents together overwhelmed him and made him cry bitterly at his immense loss.

Q 9) Which all things were not burnt by the fire?

The narrator's belongings which were not burnt in the fire were photo albums, documents and some other personal items which his mother had secured from the burning house.

Q 10) Why does Zan say that "It was like Christmas for him"?

Zan's teachers and school mates in the new school collected money when they heard that Zan had lost all his belongings and home in a devastating fire. They bought school supplies, notebooks and different kinds of clothes and gifted it to him as a kind gesture. Zan was overjoyed and touched by the kindness and says that it was like Christmas. He felt loved and gained friendship of his classmates.

Q 11) Why is the author deeply embarrassed the next day in school? Which words show his fear and insecurity?

The author was deeply embarrassed the next day in school because he had worn borrowed tennis shoes. His previous day's clothes were crumpled and that was the only set of clothes available with him so he had to wear them to school. He had no backpack and no school stationery.

The words which show his fear and insecurity are outcast, zombie, weird and ripped.

Q 12) The cat and the author are very fond of each other. How has this been shown in the story? Where was the cat after the fire? Who brings it back and how?

The narrator had rescued his pet cat when she was a kitten and both of them shared a close bond. The cat was always near the narrator whenever he was at home. The narrator cried bitterly once he realised the cat was nowhere to be found after they had run out of the burning house. The cat was frightened by the blaze and had escaped to a house which was situated more than a mile away. A kind lady took pity on the cat and gave it shelter. She also took efforts to locate Zan and his mother. As their phone lines were down, she couldn't contact them. So, she tracked down their home and delivered the cat.

Q 13) What actions of the schoolmates change the author's understanding of life and people and comfort him emotionally? How does his loneliness vanish and how does he start participating in life?

A few days after Zan's house had been burnt down, schoolmates and teachers collected money to buy school supplies, notebooks, clothes and other essential items. They extended their hand of friendship and invited Zan to their homes. Zan learnt a lesson that his schoolmates are kind, generous and helpful people. Their kind gesture made him feel loved and he did not feel isolated and lonely in school. He started enjoying his stay in the new school.

Q 14) What is the meaning of "my cat was back and so was I"? Had the author gone anywhere? Why did he say that he is also back?

The loss of Zan's home, his pet cat and his belongings, made him feel despondent and he was on the verge of depression. The kind gestures of his teachers and classmates of the new school restored his faith in life and his new friends gave him hope and security. The return of his pet cat made him feel very happy and his life became peaceful and normal once again.

THE BEGGAR

ANTON CHEKOV

THEMES EXPLORED IN THE LESSON

Alcohol can ruin (destroy) a person.

Helping a person to earn honestly is better than giving alms.

Kindness and compassion can transform a person. A selfless act can have a life changing effect on another person.

Do not judge people on their appearances. When given support, people can change for the better.

VOCABULARY ENHANCEMENT

Inebriated

Gait

Toil
Glared

EXTRA QUESTIONS & NCERT

Why was Sergei angry at the beggar?

Sergei was angry at the beggar's dishonesty because he had seen him on another street pretending that he was an expelled student in need of money and now he claimed to be a school master who had lost his job due to intrigues at the school. The beggar's lies angered Sergei.

What was the beggar's real identity?

The beggar had been part of the Russian choir but had lost his place due to drunkenness.

Why did the beggar appear at Sergei's house at the first of every month?

The beggar reappeared at the first of every month because the narrator had told him that he could visit his house to cut the wood and receive half a rouble for his effort.

What job did Sergei offer Lushkoff? Why did he do so? Q5 NCERT

Sergei offered Lushkoff a job with his friend who was looking for a person to do his copying job. As Lushkoff knew how to write, so Sergei offered him this job.

Why was Sergei surprised to see Lushkoff at the theatre?

Sergei was surprised at Lushkoff's transformation. He was sober, wearing decent clothes and had got a job as a notary which earned him thirty-five roubles every month.

What information does Lushkoff share with Sergei about Olga the cook?

Lushkoff speaks very highly about the cook and informs Sergei that he is indebted to Olga for his transformation from a drunkard to a respectable man. He tells Sergei that it was Olga's kind and noble nature, empathy and compassion that truly changed him. She had done all his errands so that he could earn the money offered by Sergei. She used to cry at his miserable drunken state and worried that he would ruin his life. Olga's behaviour changed Lushkoff.

Did Lushkoff become a beggar by circumstance or by choice?

Lushkoff became a beggar both by circumstance and choice. He became a drunk by choice and circumstances later made him lose his job at the Russian Choir. His drunken state made him unfit to work hard or have skills to find a job. Hence, begging was the easiest option.

Is Lushkoff a willing worker? Why does he agree to chop wood for Sergei?

Lushkoff is an unwilling worker. He is too thin and weak to do any hard work. His drunken state does not allow him to perform regular work. He agrees to chop wood for Sergei because he had been caught lying by Sergei. Pride and shame at his words rather than hunger made him agree to chop wood.

Sergei says "I am so happy that my words have taken effect." Why does he say so? Is he right?

Sergei says these words when he met Lushkoff at the theatre. Sergei feels that his scoldings had an effect on Lushkoff and Sergei was glad to know that he was no longer a drunkard and a beggar. In fact, Sergei was happy for the fact that he had been

instrumental in his transformation. Sergei was not right in his assessment as more than Sergei's kindness and anger at their second meeting, it was Olga's empathy, kindness and helpful nature which had transformed Lushkoff.

How has Olga saved Lushkoff?

Though Olga would shout at Lushkoff but his pitiable drunken state made her cry and perform tasks for him so that he would earn some respectful money. She would chop wood on his behalf and let him earn the money to survive. Her concern and selfless help transforms Lushkoff in the end. Lushkoff reforms at the end of the story and abandons (leaves) his drunkenness which sank him into an abyss (pit) of poverty, laziness and unemployment. (He stops drinking and works hard to improve his life by leaving his laziness which helps him get employment and get out of poverty.)

Why has Lushkoff being described as a scarecrow?

Lushkoff was thin, emaciated and shabbily dressed in mismatched clothes.

Describe Sergei.

Sergei was a wealthy advocate with a kind heart. He is a wise man who wants to help Lushkoff to leave drinking and begging and take up honest living. He tries to make him earn money by performing tasks at his household rather than give him alms every month. Sergei tries to find some task in order to pay him. Later on, Sergei sends him to his friend who needed a person to do copy job. This kind act of Sergei helps Lushkoff to get a regular job and his self-worth and self-respect is restored. Sergei takes credit for his turnaround and mentions to Lushkoff that it was his push along the right path that had transformed him. Sergei believes that work will cure him of his alcoholism and the state of homelessness. But Olga is better than Sergei as she helps Lushkoff by chopping wood for him and giving him moral lessons on the evils of alcohol.

Describe Olga.

Olga the cook doesn't feature prominently in the story and Olga's role in Lushkoff's transformation comes as a surprise to the reader. She appears to be angry at Lushkoff's arrival in the house and seems to ill-treat and abuse him. Olga has a stern behavior but she is kind hearted. It is later revealed that Lushkoff's true reason for turnaround was Olga and not Sergei. Olga performs all the tasks for him and lets Lushkoff earn the money. She is empathetic, compassionate and has a selfless nature. In fact, she even cries at the pitiful state he had been reduced to due to his drunkenness. Her admonishment and kindness had more effect on Lushkoff than Sergei's generosity. Listening to Olga, her compassion and seeing her kind acts for him (cutting of wood) Lushkoff sees the error of his ways and is able to mend his life. He realizes his mistake only when he is given support by Olga. She knows that if Lushkoff somehow overcomes his difficult circumstances, he will be as good as any other person.

She never reveals nor takes credit to Sergei about her benevolent act. Thus, she is able to save his life without even being aware of it.



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