

Chapter-11

Reading with Understanding

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand short theme based passage
2. Answer questions on those passages.

Q1) Read the following passage and answer the following questions:

The Banyan tree



The story is about a boy who lives with his grandparents in Dehradun. In his house, there is a big Banyan tree. The boy climbs the tree and enjoys his time sitting on its branches and watches the world beneath it. The boy interacts with squirrels and snails and butterflies. The boy also makes a platform sort of thing among the branches to read books. The banyan tree is older than his grandfather who is around 65 years of age. The boy finds the tree full of birds and chirping during spring time.

Well, one summer when the outside world was reeling under the shock of hot breeze, the boy climbs the tree, and settles on his makeshift platform with his books. The day was hot so all people, including the gardener, were inside. From the above, a cobra snake comes out from the cactus, and there soon arrives mongoose too. Fight between a snake and a mongoose is quite famous across the world. The boy guesses the outcome but still he braces himself for the battle of champions.

The snake is a skillful and experienced fighter while mongoose is extra fast and so swift that even cobra's poisonous fangs go unnoticed. They both begin fighting using their skills and experience. Not so far, on the clump of the cactus two birds come to enjoy the game: a jungle crow and a mayna. While snake and mongoose are fighting, the birds take a dive and collide midway. The birds want to distract snake. Well, the next time when the birds take a dive, they miss each other, as a result the crow was attacked by the cobra. The crow jumps high in the air and falls twenty feet away and dies instantly. But the relentless fight of cobra and mongoose doesn't stop until the snake is defeated. Mongoose attacks the back side of the snake and holds it tightly until it stops writhing. When the snake is dead, mongoose walks away with it into the bushes. On the other hand, mayna gives a congratulatory shriek and flies away.

All this action happens right below the eyes of the boy but none is aware except him. That day the boy enjoys the battle of champions but realizes that nature balances everything in its own way. In nature no one is immune. Cobra is a deadly creature, its one powerful snap is enough to kill any animal or human, but it loses to mongoose.

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Answer the following questions;

1. Mention the activities done by the boy in the passage? Whom does he interact with?
2. How does he enjoy himself during the spring time?
3. Which two creatures started quarrelling?
4. Give 2 adjectives each for Snake and Mongoose.

5. Who all were witnessing the brawl and Who finally emerged victorious in the fight?
6. What do you think is the moral of the story? Choose a theme for the text?
7. Find similar words from the passage.

- Communicate
- Tweet
- Surprise
- Expert
- Brawl
- Persistent
- Toxic
- Scream
- Beat
- Strong

Q2) Read the following passage and answer the following questions:



Subal Chandra has a son named Sushil Chandra; the two are called Subal and Sushil, respectively. Sushil is not a well-behaved boy, and he goes around annoying all the people of

the neighbourhood. But his father Subal is old and arthritic, so he has a hard time chasing his ill-behaved son around the neighbourhood.

One morning, Sushil claims he has a stomachache and can't go to school. Knowing Sushil's trick's, Subal tells him that he'll have to cancel his plans with his friends too, and will drink medicine instead of eating toffee. Sushil claims that his stomachache is over, but Subal refuses to hear it, and locks the boy in his room. While in his room, Sushil wishes to himself that he were grown up like his father so that he had the independence to do whatever he wanted. Subal, sitting alone, wishes to himself that he was young like his son, so that he could spend all day and all night studying.

That evening, the Goddess of Desires comes and grants the two their wishes. Subal wakes up as a small boy, with the clothes he fell asleep in much too baggy to wear. Sushil wakes up as an old man with a grey beard, his clothes so tight that they're bursting at the seams. Sushil tries to play games like climbing up trees, but finds it too difficult for his old bones, and is laughed at by passersby when, as an old man, he falls from a branch. He tries to eat toffee, but finds it much too sweet, and resolves not to feed it to the little Subal since it would make him sick.

Subal, on the other hand, claims that he can't go to school on account of a stomachache. Sushil had used that excuse too recently to accept it as the truth, so Subal goes to school. As soon as Subal gets home, Sushil is annoyed by the noise he's making, so he sits Subal down with a tutor to work on math until late at night. Sushil makes Subal stick to the same diet that Subal had as an old man, but that style of eating starves the young Subal and makes him lose weight. Sushil finds himself in pain from rheumatism and seeks medical help, but hurts himself any time he forgets he's an old man and jumps out of bed. Subal also forgets his age, and gets in trouble when he asks the schoolmaster for some tobacco.

Eventually, the two get fed up and start to wish that they were their original ages again. The Goddess of Desires visits them and asks if they've gotten what they wanted, and they say that they did, but want to go back to their previous states now. That night, she makes Sushil young again and Subal old again. The next morning when Subal asks if Sushil is learning his grammar, a perplexed Sushil says he seems to have lost his book.

Answer the following questions;

1. How were Sushil and Subal related to each other?
2. Why was Subal chasing Sushil?
3. Why do you think Sushil was locked in the room?
4. What did both Father and son wish for?

5. What miracle happened in the morning? What did they realize afterwards? Was it a good change or a bad one?
6. How did Subal and Sushil realize that they want to go back to their previous state? Give reasons.
7. Choose an appropriate title for the above passage.
8. Find similar words from the passage.

- Obedient
- Irritating
- Rejecting
- Lifting
- Settle
- Missing

Q3) Read the following poem and answer the following questions:

Fire and Ice - by Robert Frost

Some say the world will end in fire,

Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire

I hold with those who favour fire.

But if it had to perish twice,

I think I know enough of hate

To say that for destruction ice

Is also great

And would suffice.

Answer the following questions;

1. There are many ideas about how the world will 'end'. Do you think the world will end some day in future?
2. According to Frost, what do 'fire' and 'ice' symbolize?
3. Try to decode the rhyme scheme of the poem? Mention the contrasting ideas in the poem?