

The Verger - *William Somerset Maugham*

Section One

Very short Answer Questions:1

Q. no 1. Who is the author of the prose piece, "the verger"

Ans: William Somerset Maugham is the author of the prose piece "The Verger".

Q. no 2. Who is the Verger in the lesson?

Ans: Albert Edward Foreman is the Verger in the lesson.

Q. no 3 .Where does the Verger work?

Ans: The Verger worked at St. Peter's church at Neville Square.

Q. no 4. Where is St. Peter's church located?

Ans: St. Peter's church is located at Neville Square.

Q. no 5. What was the occasion that particular afternoon?

Ans: That afternoon there had been a christening at St. Peter's church .

Q. no 6. What was the Verger's gown made of ?

Ans: The Verger's gown was made up of alpaca.

Q. no 7. who were the people that frequented St. Peter's, Neville Square?

Ans: The people that frequented St. Peter's church.

Q. no 8. For how long had the Verger been working at St. Peter's?

Ans: The Verger had been working for last sixteen years at St. Peter's church.

Q. no 9. What is vestry?

Ans: Vestry is a room attached to a church or chapel used for keeping vestments, vessels and record.

Q. no 10. where had the new vicar come from?

Ans: The new vicar had come from the East End.

Q. no 11. Give the meaning of the following terms: disconcerting, infirm, genuflect, aisle, cassock, vestry, congregation, parish, discreet, subdued, whimpering, surplice, refectory table, obsequious, deportment, knack, prudence, nipper, latitude, disarming.

Ans: disconcerting : To serve or interrupt the connection.

Infirm : frail or weak not physically or mentally strong.

genuflect : to lower one knee as an act of.

Worshipaisle : a passage between rows of seats or pews, a wing or lateral.

vestry : a room attached to a church or chapel used for keeping vestments, vessels and record.

congregation : a group of people assembled for religious worship, parishioners, Church goers.

Parish : division of diocese (a district under a bishop) having its own church and clergyman.

Discreet : judicious, civil, polite.

subdued : sombre, low spirited, depressed, dejected.

Cassock : Christian clerical clothing used by the clergyman.

whimpering : make a series of low feeble sounds expressive of fear, pain or unhappiness or whine.

surplice : a loose fitting broad-sleeved white vestment worn over the cassock by clergy and choristers.

obsequious : showing respect, complaint with the will or wishes of another in a servile manner.

deportment : posture, way of standing way of behaving or conducting.

knack : a special talent or skill.

Prudence : wisdom, knowledge of or skill in a matter.

nipper : a young boy or girl, the smallest or youngest of a family.

Latitude : latitude is the angular distance in degrees, minutes or seconds of a point North or South of the equator.

Disarming : having the effect of allaying suspicion or hostility.

refectory table : highly elongated table used originally for dining in manastries.

Short Answer type Questions -1/2

Q. no1. How do fact and fiction work in Maugham's work?

Ans:In Maugham's work fact and fiction are so intermingled that one could hardly distinguish one from other. The intensely close relationship between the

fictional and the real became a characteristics traits in his work.

Q. no 2. On what occasions did the Verger use his new gown?

Ans: The Verger used his new gowns for funerals and weddings. He used his second best for christening and other ceremonies. He wore it with complacency as it was the dignified symbol of his office.

Q. no 3. How did the Verger regard his official dress?

Ans: On the Verger regarded his official dress as the dignified symbol of his office. Without it he had the sensation of being somewhat insufficiently clad.

Q. no 4. On the day of the christening, what did the Verger compliment the new vicar on ?

Ans: The day of the christening, what did the Verger compliment the new vicar that it was a very nice christening. Even the baby stopped crying when the vicar look him and settled him in the Crook of his surpliced arm.

Q. no 5. Who were awaiting the Verger and the vicar in the vestry?

Ans: In the Verger, tow Church wardens who were elderly men, were awaiting the Verger and the vicar.

Q. no 6. How long had the two church wardens been there at St. Peter's?

Ans: The two Church wardens had been there almost as long as Albert Edward had been Verger, ie. They had been there for last sixteen years.

Q. no 7. Who had brought in the handsome refectory table at the church and from where?

Ans: The old vicar had brought in the handsome refectory table at the church. He had brought it from Italy.

Q. no 8. what was the expression on the face of the two church wardens and the vicar?

Ans: The vicar's red face bore an expression of resolute benignity while the two church warden's face bore an expression that was slightly troubled.

Q. no 9. where did the Verger head to after his meeting with the two church wardens?

Ans: After his meeting with the two church wardens. Albert Edward walked slowly back to the Verger and hung up his gown. then he walked down the aisle and locked the church door behind him. But deep in his thought he took the wrong street

Q. no 10. How much time is offered to the Verger to learn his letters?

Ans: The vicar offered three months time to the Verger to learn his letters and if at the end of that time he could not read and write then he would lose his post of Verger.

Q. no 11.why didn't Albert Foreman want to go back to doing domestic service?

Ans: Albert Foreman did not want to go back to doing domestic service because he had been his own master for so many years and had run St. Peter's Neville Square as a Verger. So he could not demean himself by going back to domestic service.

Q. no 12. What was Albert Foreman looking for in the street where he mistakenly ventured in to?
Did he find it there?

Ans: Albert Edward Foreman had been looking for a shop in the street where he could buy a packet of Gold Flakes. No he did not find it there.

Q. no 13. What Idea came to Albert Foreman's mind as he walked along the street looking for cigarettes?

Ans: while walking along the street looking for cigarettes, Albert Edward Foreman did not get it. He found it very strange and thought that he could not be the only man walking along that street and wanted a fag. So he had an idea to start a little Shop there of tobacco and sweets.

Q. no 14. What business did Albert Foreman set up and where?

Ans: Albert Edward Foreman set up in business as a tobacconist and news agent .He set up business of tobacco and sweets. He started it in a long street where there were no tobacconist.

Q. no 15. What was the reaction of Albert Foreman's wife to his new venture?

Ans: Albert Edward Foreman wife did not like his new venture. As per her it was a dreadful come down after being verger of St. Peter's.

Short Answer type Questions -1/3

Q. no 1. What did the Verger do with his old gowns?

Ans: The Verger was very much fond of his gowns as he considered them dignified symbol of his office. He had never thrown away his old gowns rather he kept them in the bottom drawer of his wardrobe. Wrapped up in brown paper. He had a succession of such old gowns, in a complete series.

Q. no 2. What was the talent of the new vicar?

Ans: The new vicar who represented educated modern generation had a special talent of handling infants. He could nearly always quite a whimpering infant by the manner in which help it . He could easily settle the baby

in the crook of his surpliced arm and it was a source of subdued pride to him.

Q. no 3. Why did the Verger miss the previous vicar?

Ans: The Verger missed the previous vicar because Albert had been in good terms with him without any complaints about his abilities.

Q. no 4. What was the 'most extraordinary circumstances' referred to by the vicar?

Ans: The 'most extraordinary circumstances' referred to by the vicar was that the Verger was illiterate. He could neither read nor write. He had been Verger of St. Peter's Neville Square for sixteen years and had never learned to read and write. He then disregarded long years of his dedicated service on the ground of his illiteracy.

Q. no 5. How did the Verger react to sudden disclosure by the vicar about his deficiency?

Ans: When vicar disclosed about the Verger's deficiency' i.e. his illiteracy the eligibility of the Verger was challenged. The Verger was shocked but he reacted without any sign of embarrassment. He remained firm in his opinion that he could always manage things very well even though he did not have any formal education. The Verger's face reddened and he felt uneasy still he did not argue. He merely refused the proposal for reading and writing and preferred to resign believing that it was too late to learn. He maintained his dignity.

Q. no 6. Why couldn't the Verger learn the letters when he was young?

Ans: The Verger couldn't learn the letters when he was young because at the early age of twelve he went into service. In the first place, the cook tried to teach him but during this period Albert did not have the knack for it. Later on he did get much time to learn letters. Moreover he had also never found the want of it because he seemed to manage very well without education. So due to lack of time and enthusiasm the Verger could not learn the letters when he was young.

Q. no 7. What was the decision taken by the vicar regarding the Verger? What kind of a man was the new vicar?

Ans: The Verger took the decisions that the Verger must learn letters within three months otherwise he would lose his job because he could not take the risk of some accidents caused due to his lamentable ignorance. It was a matter of prudence as well as of principle. The new vicar, a red faced energetic man in the early forties represented the educated modern generation. He was a stern man, who wanted to indulge in all the affairs of the church with least generosity. He was a man who maintained his pride and vanity.

Q. no 8. Why couldn't the new vicar be expected to blend in perfectly with the fashionable parishioners at St. Peter?

Ans: The new vicar could not be expected to blend in perfectly with the fashionable parishioners at St. Peter because he always maintained his pride and vanity as he had come from the east end. The new vicar was a stern man, so he could not fall at once with the discreet ways of his fashionable congregation.

Q. no 9 . Where had the Verger been in service before starting work in St. Peter's?

Ans: The Verger started his career as a page boy in the house of a merchant prince, For a year he served as a single handed butler to a widowed peeress. Then he worked as a butler with two men under him in the house of a retired ambassador and finally he joined St. Peter's church as a Verger .

Q. no 10. What is the Verger's opinion about reading?

Ans: As per verger he could manage everything we'll without education. Formal education is not of much importance in real life. A lot of time is wasted by young fellows in reading when they might be doing something useful. In his opinion rather than education practice thinking, hardwork and dedication are the key to success in life,

Q. no 11. What is the condition laid down before the Verger by the vicar and the two church wardens?

Ans: The condition laid down before the Verger by the vicar and the two church wardens was that the Verger

must learn letters within three months. Failing to do so, he would lose his job as they could not take the risk of some accident caused due to his lamentable ignorance.

Q. no 12. What was the Verger's answer to the condition laid down by the vicar?

Ans: The vicar laid down the condition before the Verger that he must learn letters within three months but the Verger refused the condition saying that he was a too old dog to learn new tricks. He could not learn letters when he was young, having grown up there was very little chance of managing to do that. Even he did not feel the need for it as he could handle all matters very well without education. He refused to accept the condition and preferred to resign believing that it was too late to learn at that stage.

Q. no 13. What reason does the vicar put forth for his decision to relieve the Verger of his duties at St. Peter's?

Ans: The new vicar who represented the educated modern generation found the situation of Verger's illiteracy as impossible. He opined that he had highest regard both of his character and capacity. Still he could not take the risk of some accident which might cause due to his lamentable ignorance. It was a matter of prudence as well as of principle. Moreover as per the vicar at a church like St. Peter's Neville Square, they could not have a Verger who could neither read nor write.

Q. no 14. What was Albert Foreman's reply to his wife on the matter of his business?

Ans: Albert Foreman's wife did not like his business as a tobacconist because it was a dreadful come down after being vergger of St. peter's so Albert replied to his wife one had to move with Times. With the passage of time, the church had changed. So he also had to adjust with changing situation.

Q. no 15. Why did the manage of the bank want to see Albert Foreman?

Ans: The Verger was making money hand over fish and kept the money in bank. So the manager of the bank wanted to meet the Verger to talk with him about the money he had deposited in the bank. He also wanted to suggest him to invest his money as he had saved a large amount in the bank.

Q. no 16. What did the manager suggest Albert Foreman?

Ans: The manager suggested Albert Foreman to invest a part of his savings on buying securities which would earn a much higher rate of interest. Albert did not want to take the risk. The manager told him that there was no cause for anxiety as they would make out a list of absolutely gilt-edged securities.

Q. no 17. Why was Albert Foreman troubled to hear about stocks and shares?

Ans: Albert Foreman was troubled to hear about stocks and shares because he hesitated to invest his money even though the bank manager assured him absolutely gilt-edged securities. As the Verger was quite a simple man he never had anything to do with stock and shares. Moreover he was illiterate, So he could not read the papers related to share market and he could not know what he was signing. He had to leave it all in bank manager's hand. All these things related to share and stocks troubled him .

Q. no 18. Explain what is meant by 'render unto Caesar what was Caesar's making money hand over fist'?

Ans: The phrase "render unto Caesar what was Caesar's" mean to work to do one's duty with honesty and dedication. As per Bible it mean giving worldly authority of the things to the people that belong to them. The phrase 'making money handover fist' mean making or earning a huge sum of money in a limited period of time or very shortly.

Q. no 19. Surprised that Albert Foreman had built up a huge fortune without being able to read or write, what did the bank manager ask him ?

Ans: The Verger was making money handover fist and kept the money in bank when the bank manager came to know that the Verger had amassed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being literate he was surprised. He asked him if he meant that he had built up that important business and amassed a fortune of thirsty

thousand without being able to read or write. He further asked him what he had been if he were educated.

Long Answer type Questions -1/4

Q. no 1. How did the Verger feel after offering to put in his resignation papers at St. Peter's?

Ans: After offering to put in his resignation papers at St. Peter's the Verger was very sad but he did not show any sign of sadness on his face. With his usual politeness he did his last duties at the church. Still he could not sustain the air

Of unruffled dignity with which he had borne the blow inflicted upon him. His lips quivered. He walked slowly his heart was heavy. Engrossed in his sad thoughts he did not take the street that led him home. He took the wrong turning. He did not know what he should do with himself after resigning from his job. Even he was not at all willing to do domestic service as he had been his own master for many years. In fact the Verger was troubled with questions related to his survival and he had never thought that he would be troubled with such questions. He wished to have his sermon by the vicar after his death for his long faithful service. But it became futile as he lost his job on the ground of illiteracy. He sighed deeply and wanted to have a cigarette in order to comfort himself and to come out from the trauma.

Q. no 2. Does the Verger regret not being able to read and write? Has it hampered his life in any way?

Ans: No the Verger did not regret being unable to read and write. It had not hampered his life in any way. He rendered his job in a dignified way with great dedication. Though he was illiterate, his illiteracy never stooge on the way of successful completion of his duty. His wife also helped him whenever he wanted to write, she wrote for him. He could manage everything well without education. He firmly refused the offer of learning on the ground that he was too old a dog to learn new tricks. His illiteracy didnt hamper him in any way because even after loosing his job he found a new way out, He set up in business as a tobacconist and news agent by dint of his hard labour, honesty and dedication. Though the Verger didnt have formal education but he was worldly wise . It helped him in gaining success.

Q. no 3. How successful was Albert Foreman's business? How did he expand it ?

Ans: Albert Foreman was in trouble after he lost his job at the church for being illiterate. But he could find a way out. After he had ceased to be the Verger, he lost no time to set up in business as tobacconist and a news agent. He started with a small shop and he did well in a year. Then he took second shop and put a manager in it. Finally. He was able to establish ten tobacco shops within ten years.

Albert Edward started his business as a tobacconist with a little Shop. He did very well in business. In a year he took second shop and put a manager in it . He open these shops in a long street where there was no tobacconist. It was a success too. Then he thought that if he could run tow he could run half a dozen so he began walking about in the streets of London and whenever he found a long street without any tobacconist and a shop to let,he took it. Within ten year he acquired no less than ten years he acquired no less than ten shops and he was making money handover fist. In this way by dint of his practical thinking, ability for hardwork and dedicated he expanded his business.

Q. no 4. Why was the bank manager surprised? Why did it seem the 'most extraordinary thing he had ever heard' ?

Ans: The bank manager was surprised to know that Albert Edward Foreman, the tobacconist had amassed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds without being literate. He could never imagine of an illiterate man earning so huge a sum of money. He was surprised at what Albert Foreman's had accomplished without the ability to read and write.

It seemed the most extraordinary thing the manager had ever heard though Foreman was illiterate but he built up a business empire and made money handover fist. At the bank the manager asked Foreman to invest his money but Foreman hesitated. The bank manager assured him absolutely gilt- edged securities. Bank

manager told him that he would do everything for him. Foreman had to sign only. But Foreman was troubled as he could not read the papers. Also being illiterate he would not know what he was signing. So he told the manager that he could not read and write, when the manager heard it, he was stunned, it seemed him the most extraordinary thing that an illiterate man could amass such a large fortune. The manager was surprised to see his calibre without education.

Q. no 5. What are the positive thoughts that come through in the story, 'The Verger' ?

Ans: In the story 'The Verger's Somerset Mangham dealt with the circumstances which could bring a change in one's life. Albert Edward Foreman, the Verger of St. Peter's Neville Square lost his job on the ground of illiteracy. He had ascended to the respectable office of the Verger by dint of his hard labour and dedicated service. Though he lost his job, he set up himself as a tobacconist and amassed a large fortune. The story how practice thinking, dedication and hard work go a long way in strengthening one's position. The Verger was a strong man who adapted to his problem and set up a business empire. In crisis a person must not give up rather he should labour hard with dedication.

Little learning but plenty of worldly wisdom obtained through intelligent observation of the world could have the way of success.

Long Answer type Questions -1/5

Q. no 1. Attempt a character sketch of the Verger.

Ans: the Verger Albert Edward Foreman was a simple man. He did his duties with honesty and dedication. He had been the Verger of St. Peter's church for sixteen years, doing all the menial and manual duties. He loved his job and there was no complaint about him until a new vicar discovered that he could not read and write. But Verger was a man on his own. When vicar told him to learn the letters failing to do which he would lose his job. The Verger maintained his dignity and refused vicar's proposal. He preferred to resign believing that it was too late to learn. He realised that his illiteracy would never interfere with his duties.

Foreman then started a tobacco shop and was amazingly successful. Even the banker was astonished to see his calibre without education. He had no less than ten shops. In fact the Verger was a strong man who adopted to his problems by becoming successful businessman. Even he did not aspire for social success and led a simple life, though he had enough money to lead to luxurious life. He realised that he was better off being illiterate. He had little learning but plenty of worldly wisdom obtained through intelligent observation of the world.

Verger had practical thinking, dedication and capacity to do hard work which strengthened his position. These were the qualities of Verger formed while working in the vicar.

Q. no 2. Describe the circumstances under which the Verger had to lose his job.

Ans: The Verger named Albert Edward Foreman was conscientiously carried out his duties in a Church for sixteen years. He had ascended to the respectable office of the Verger by dint of his dedicated service and hard labour. With the appointment of the new vicar the eligibility of the Verger was challenged. One day after christening ceremony the new vicar summoned the Verger to vestry where two churchwardens were waiting for them.

At first vicar praised the Verger for his sincerity and capability of doing the work. But then he disregarded long years of his dedicated service on the ground that the Verger could not read and write. The new vicar was shocked to know that the Verger was illiterate. Albert was shocked but he defended himself by saying that the previous vicar did not mind it, Even he could manage everything without education. But the vicar was resolute. He told the Verger that he had no right to take the risk of some accident that might happen due to the Verger's lamentable ignorance.

He asked him if he could not learn. The Verger then devied. The vicar gave the Verger an option to learn the letters failing to do which he would loose his job. Even the Verger was resolute. He refused to accept the offer and preferred to resign believing that it was too late to learn at that stage. So the Verger resigned from his

respectable office due to lack of education in this way he lost his job.

Q. no 3. What was Albert Foreman's reply to the question of the bank manager? What does his answer reflect?

Ans: The Verger was making money handover fist and kept the money in bank. The bank manager asked Foreman to invest his money. He asked him that for this he had to sign some papers after going through these papers. Verger told him that he was illiterate, he could only write his name and nothing else. The manager then asked him what he have done if he were educated. To this question, Verger replied that in that case he would have been the Verger of a church.

This answer reflect the irony of the situation. The irony of the situation. The manager expected Albert to be a greater business man had he been literate. While Foreman know that in that case he would not have lost his job of Verger, so he would have been the Verger of St. Peter's church at Neville Square. He was fired from church on the ground of his illiteracy.