

CBSE Class 9 English Language and Literature
Moments Chapter-3 Iswaran the Storyteller
Test Paper-01

Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follows:

1. “He resisted the curiosity to look out lest he should behold a sight which would stop his heart. But the wailing became louder and less feline.”
 - a. Who is ‘he’ in the given extract?
 - b. Where was the wailing sound coming from?
 - c. What is the meaning of ‘feline’?
 - d. Why ‘he’ resisted the curiosity?
2. “Meanwhile all the teachers had climbed up to the terrace of the school building; from there they helplessly watched the depredations of the elephant. There was not a soul below on the ground. The streets were empty as if the inhabitants of the entire town had suddenly disappeared.”
 - a. Who said this to whom?
 - b. Why does the speaker say this?
 - c. Why had all the teachers climbed up the terrace?
 - d. What is the meaning of ‘depredations’?

Short answer type question from this lesson (30-40 words)

3. Who is Mahendra in the given story?
4. How was Iswaran useful to Mahendra?
5. What harm does the elephant causes in the story narrated by Iswaran?
6. How does Iswaran describes the female ghost to Mahendra?
7. What happens to Mahendra on hearing Iswaran’s ghost story?
8. Why did the elephant collapse?

Answer the following questions in about 100 words:

9. Explain the daily routine of Mahendra and Iswaran.
10. Explain, in brief, why does Mahendra resign from the job and leaves the haunted place?

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Answers

1.
 - a. 'He' refers to Mahendra.
 - b. The wailing sound was coming close from his window. It is thought by Mahendra that it was the female ghost's sound.
 - c. 'Feline' means relating to cats or other members of the cat family.
 - d. Because Mahendra thought that the ghost was making the moan and if he would see her his heart would stop.
2.
 - a. Iswaran said this to Mahendra.
 - b. Iswaran was saying a story to his master as usually he does.
 - c. Because the elephant was grunted and wandered about, pulling out the football goal-post, tearing down the volleyball net, kicking and flattening the drum kept for water, and uprooting the shrubs.
 - d. 'Depredation' means attacks which are made to destroy something.
3. Mahendra was a junior supervisor in a firm which offered on hire supervisors at various types of construction sites: factories, bridges, dams, and so on. Mahendra's job was to keep an eye on the activities at the work site. He had to keep moving from place to place every now and then as ordered by his head office. He was a bachelor. His needs were simple and he was able to adjust himself to all kinds of odd conditions.
4. Iswaran was quite attached to Mahendra and followed him uncomplainingly wherever he was posted. He cook food for Mahendra, washed his clothes and chatted away with his master at night. He could weave out endless stories and anecdotes on varied subjects. Iswaran also had an amazing capacity to produce vegetables and cooking ingredients, seemingly out of nowhere.
5. The elephant escaped from the timber yard and began to roam about, stamping on bushes, tearing up wild creepers and breaking branches at will. It broke the fences down like matchsticks, smashed all the stalls selling fruits, mud pots and clothes. The elephant entered a school ground breaking through the brick wall, pulling out the football goal-post, tearing down the volleyball net, kicking and flattening the drum kept

for water, and uprooting the shrubs.

6. Iswaran says that he is brave but he is afraid of one horrible ghost of a woman which appears off and on at midnight during the full moon. It is an ugly creature with matted hair and a shriveled face, like a skeleton holding a foetus in its arms.
7. Mahendra went to bed with a certain unease. Every night he peered into the darkness outside through the window next to his bed, trying to make sure that there was no movement of dark shapes in the vicinity. He had always liked to admire the milk-white landscape on full-moon nights. But then on, he avoided looking out of his window altogether when the moon was full.
8. Iswaran mustering all his force, whacked its third toenail which, temporarily paralyses the nervous system. The elephant looked stunned for a moment; then it shivered from head to foot and collapsed.
9. Mahendra would be up early in the morning and leave for work after breakfast, carrying some prepared food with him. Meanwhile Iswaran would tidy up the shed, wash the clothes, and have a leisurely bath, pouring several buckets of water over his head, muttering a prayer all the while. It would be lunchtime by then. After eating, he would read for a while before dozing off. The book was usually some popular Tamil thriller running to hundreds of pages. Its imaginative descriptions and narrative flourishes would hold Iswaran in thrall. His own descriptions were greatly influenced by the Tamil authors that he read. When he was narrating even the smallest of incidents, he would try to work in suspense and a surprise ending into the account.
10. On an auspicious day — according to tradition people prepare various delicacies to feed the spirits of ancestors, Iswaran made a delicious dinner. That night Mahendra enjoyed the dinner and complimented Iswaran on his culinary skills. Iswaran unexpectedly, launched into a most garish account involving the supernatural. He says that the area in which they were staying was once a burial ground. And he describes, one horrible ghost of a woman which appears off and on at midnight during the full moon. It is an ugly creature with matted hair and a shrivelled face, like a skeleton holding a foetus in its arms.

This made Mahendra shiver and one night, Mahendra was woken up from his sleep by a low moan close to his window. At first, he put it down to a cat. But the sound was too guttural for a cat. Lowering himself to the level of the windowsill he looked out at the white sheet of moonlight outside. There was a dark cloudy form clutching a bundle.

Mahendra broke into a cold sweat and fell back on the pillow.

Next day Iswaran remembered the female ghost and said that he came running hearing the sound of moaning that was coming from Mahendra's room and before Iswaran finish the sentence Mahendra's spine chilled and he hurried to office to resign.