

A Triumph of Surgery

Answers to NCERT Questions

READ AND FIND OUT

1. Why is Mrs Pumphrey worried about Tricki?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey is worried and distraught because Tricki would not eat anything. It even refused its favourite dishes. It had bouts of vomiting. It spent all its time lying on the rug and panting. It did not want to go for walks or do anything.

2. What does she do to help him? Is she wise in this?

Ans: She called the doctor to help Tricki. Yes, her decision was wise. The doctor suggested that Tricki should be hospitalised. She swooned and wailed, but she let the dog go with the doctor. Ultimately, the doctor was successful in curing Tricki.

3. Who does 'I' refer to in this story?

Ans: In this story, 'I' refers to the veterinary surgeon, Mr Herriot.

4. Is the narrator as rich as Tricki's mistress?

Ans: Though not clearly stated, there are instances in the story which suggest that the narrator is not as rich as Tricki's mistress, Mrs Pumphrey .

While the narrator is able to provide Tricki with a warm loose box as a bed, at Mrs Pumphrey's house, Tricki has a day-bed, a night bed, cushions, toys, rubber rings, a breakfast bowl, a lunch bowl, a super bowl, a whole wardrobe of tweed coats and perhaps, many more things.

When he arrives to take the dog with him, Mrs Pumphrey has her entire staff at her disposal to transfer all of Tricki's belongings to the doctor's car.

On hearing from the doctor about Tricki's gradual recovery, Mrs Pumphrey sends along two dozen eggs at a time, along with bottles of wine and brandy—all in order to help in Tricki's speedy recovery.

Finally, when she calls upon the narrator to take her recovered dog back home, she comes in a chauffeur-driven "thirty feet of gleaming black metal" (an obvious reference to a limousine).

All these instances point to the fact that the narrator is not as rich as Tricki's mistress.

5. How does he treat the dog?

Ans: The doctor gave Tricki no food, but plenty of water for two days. Slowly, the dog started showing interest in his surroundings and began mixing with the other dogs at the

surgery. On the third day, the doctor saw Tricki licking the empty supper bowls of the other dogs. Next day, a separate bowl was kept for it and the doctor was pleased to note that Tricki had run to eat its food with enthusiasm. From that day onwards, its progress was rapid. It did not require medical treatment of any kind and recovered quite well at the end.

6. Why is he tempted to keep Tricki on as a permanent guest?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey had started bringing around eggs to build Tricki's strength. Later, even bottles of wine and brandy began to arrive. The narrator and his partners started enjoying the eggs, wine and brandy meant for Tricki. According to the narrator, they were days of deep content for them—starting with the extra egg in the morning, then the midday wine, and finally finishing the day with brandy. This was the reason, why the narrator was tempted to keep Tricki on as a permanent guest.

7. Why does Mrs Pumphrey think the dog's recovery is "a triumph of surgery"?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey thought that the dog's recovery was "a triumph of surgery" because in two weeks, Tricki had recovered completely and had been transformed into a hard-muscled animal. When Tricki saw her, it leapt into her lap and licked her face. She was so excited that tears started rolling out of her eyes. She declared Tricki's recovery as a triumph of surgery to express her happiness and gratitude towards the doctor.

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What kind of a person do you think the narrator, a veterinary surgeon, is? Would you say he is tactful as well as full of common sense?

Ans: I think the narrator is a very tactful person. He knows how to deal with people. He adjusts himself well to the circumstances. He immediately understands Tricki's problem. Tricki doesn't suffer from any sort of illness. The main cause of its illness is overfeeding. He takes the dog to his surgery. There he keeps it in a natural environment. The dog gets well under his supervision and the natural environment of surgery.

2. Do you think Tricki was happy to go home? What do you think will happen now?

Ans: Yes, Tricki was very happy to go home. Tricki was also happy at the surgery. When the dog was brought into the surgery, it was ill. But in spite of it, dog got cured in two days without any medication. Proper diet and regular exercise helped a lot in its speedy recovery. The dog regained its best health and was no longer ill.

Now, I think the same pampering will start again. Mrs Pumphrey will take excessive care of the dog. There is no doubt it was her lone, but excess of anything is harmful.

3. Do you think this is a real-life episode or mere fiction? Or is it a mixture of both?

Ans: This story could be a mixture of both: real-life episode and a mere fiction. Mrs Pumphrey is a rich lady and has a pet dog. It is because of her pampering that she overfeeds her dog which results in its illness. Although, she has good intention in her mind, but excess of everything is bad. This episode can be treated as a fiction who do not take anything seriously. It can also be called real-life for those parents who take excessive care of their child.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. This episode describes the silly behaviour of a rich woman who is foolishly indulgent, perhaps because she is lonely. Do you think such people are merely silly, or can their actions cause harm to others?

Ans: This episode describes the silly behaviour of a rich woman who is foolish. This may be because of her loneliness. They are ignorant about the results of their actions. They show their excessive love and affection for someone without knowing the consequences. There is no doubt that their intentions are good, and don't have any sort of ill-will, but they are not aware that their action can cause harm to others.

2. Do you think there are also parents like Mrs Pumphrey?

Ans: Yes, there are parents who are too much possessive about their kids. The sense of overindulgence can go in either way. There are examples of parents spoiling their child by meeting each and every demand of the child. There are also examples of strict parents who put unnecessary pressure on their child for study and a particular behaviour pattern.

3. What would you have done if you were:

- i. a member of the staff in Mrs Pumphrey's household
- ii. a neighbour? What would your life have been like, in general?

Ans: If I were a member of the staff in Mrs Pumphrey's household, I would tell her not to make the dog unhealthy by her foolish behaviour. I would have advised her to cut down Tricki's food and give him light food.

If I had been her neighbour, I could have advised her more emphatically. Tricki was not ill, but it was the effect of rich food given to him. I think there would have been no adverse effect on me for being Mrs Pumphrey's neighbour.

4. What would you have done if you were in the narrator's place?

Ans: If I had been in the narrator's place, I would have done the same thing that he did. He used his common sense. I would have done the same. I would not have kept the dog at the hospital more than it was necessary.

Additional Questions

Short Answer Questions (30-40 words)

1. What makes you know that Mrs Pumphrey was a rich lady?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey was a wealthy lady as she had many servants and maids, and also had a pet. She used to feed her pet with a lot of dishes, sweets and snacks. Moreover, she had a separate room and wardrobe for her pet. All these things show that she was a rich lady.

2. Why did Mrs Pumphrey take Tricki to the doctor?

Ans: Tricki was not eating anything for the past few days. He had refused to eat and had bouts of vomiting. Moreover, he was spending his time lying on a rug; panting. He was not going for walks. All these symptoms forced Mrs Pumphrey to take Tricki to the doctor.

3. How does Dr Herriot treat Tricki?

Ans: Dr Herriot cut down Tricki's food and made him exercise. For the first three days, he did not give him food but only water. He did not give any medicinal treatment but made him all day play with the dogs. He discovered the joys of being bowled over, tramped on and so he enjoyed a lot along with his recovery.

4. Why were the household dogs not interested in Tricki initially?

Ans: Tricki was a newcomer in the house. Moreover, Tricki was very lethargic to play with them. He was not comfortable there. But after a few days, Tricki started enjoying with them. He discovered the joys of being bowled over, tramped on and squashed every few minutes. He became an accepted member of the gang.

5. Why was Dr Herriot confident that Tricki will be in hospital soon?

Ans: Tricki was tottering slowly in the house. He was not eating anything, not even his favourite dishes and besides, he had bouts of vomiting. Dr Herriot was sure that if his food was not cut down and more exercise was not given to him, he would be really ill soon.

6. Why was the entire staff of Mrs Pumphrey at work while Tricki was going to the hospital?

Ans: Tricki was Mrs Pumphrey's beloved dog, and when he was going to the hospital, the entire staff got to work. His day and night beds, favourite cushions, toys and rubber rings, and food bowls were loaded into the narrator's car by them.

7. What was the cause of Tricki's ailment?

Ans: Tricki was overfed by Mrs Pumphrey. He became hugely fat and inactive. He was pampered with a lot of cream cakes, chocolates and Hotlinks. This was the main cause of his illness.

8. Why did Dr Herriot ask Mrs Pumphrey to admit Tricki in a hospital?

Ans: Dr Herriot asked Mrs Pumphrey to admit Tricki in a hospital because instead of cutting down his food and making him exercise, she was pampering him and feeding him a lot.

9. Why did Mrs Pumphrey treat Tricki in a special way?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey was an extremely rich lady but was foolishly indulgent in pampering her dog, Tricki. She served him with cream cakes, chocolates and cod-liver oil. She did so because she treated Tricki like her son.

10. Why was Dr Herriot worried about Tricki?

Ans: Dr Herriot was worried about Tricki because he had become hugely fat and inactive. He suggested Mrs Pumphrey to cut down his food and give him some exercise, but she was reluctant to do so.

11. Why was Tricki sent to the hospital?

Ans: Tricki had become sluggish as he had grown so fat that it became difficult for him to walk. He started panting all the time, kept on vomiting and stopped eating. He seemed very ill, so he was hospitalised.

12. What was Mrs Pumphrey's reaction when Tricki showed little enthusiasm for exertion?

Ans: She was shocked and worried. She thought that Tricki was seriously ill. She thought that he had been suffering from malnutrition.

13. What did she do to bring him back to normal health? Was she successful?

Ans: To bring Tricki to normal health, she started giving him a beer and cod-liver oil. She also gave him a bowl of Horlicks at night to make him sleep. But she was not successful because all these things put an adverse effect on the little dog.

14. What was Mr Herriot's strict advice? Did Mrs Pumphrey heed his advice? What excuses did she make?

Ans: Mr Herriot's strict advice was to cut down on the sweet things and to give him plenty of exercises. But Mrs Pumphrey did not heed this advice. She thought Tricki was weak. So she was giving him cream cakes and chocolates. Tricki had very little exercise because the gardener was unwell.

15. Why did Mrs Pumphrey make a frantic call to Mr Herriot?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey made a frantic call to Mr Herriot because Tricki was seriously ill. He ate no food. He refused even his favourite dishes. He had bouts of vomiting. He liked to do nothing.

16. Describe the 'parting scene' between Tricki and Mrs Pumphrey's household.

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey was wailing. The entire staff was roused. The maids rushed in and out bringing his beds and bowls to the doctor's car. When the doctor drove the car away, everybody in the house was in tears.

17. "I think I know a cure for you." What was the 'cure'?

Ans: It was the cure to control Tricki's diet. He did not give any food to Tricki for two days. He gave him a lot of water to drink. He gave him no medicine and made him do a lot of exercises. This all made Tricki very active.

18. The household dogs at the surgery rejected Tricki as an "uninteresting object". Why?

Ans: At the surgery, the household dogs surrounded Tricki. He looked at them with dull eyes. The other dogs sniffed him, but he did not give any response. So, they found him as an uninteresting object and rejected him.

19. How did he become an accepted member of the gang and start enjoying the company of the other dogs?

Ans: After two or three days, Tricki's health began to improve rapidly. He started mixing-up with other dogs and enjoyed playing different games with them. In this way, he became an accepted member of the gang. He enjoyed their company.

20. Describe the small dog Tricki.

Ans: Tricki was a small dog of a rich lady, Mrs Pumphrey. She loved him too much. Because of overfeeding, he looked like a bloated sausage. He had become hugely fat. He had bloodshot and rheumy eyes.

21. What did Mrs Pumphrey think her dog suffer from? How did she try to help him?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey's dog Tricki was dull and listless. She thought that he suffered from malnutrition. So she gave him malt and cod-liver oil between meals. She gave him a bowl of Horlicks at night.

22. What was the real disease that Tricki was suffering from?

Ans: Actually, Tricki had no physical disease. He had a vomiting problem because of overfeeding. He was lazy because he did not have any physical exercise.

23. What was Mrs Pumphrey's reaction, when the doctor said that Tricki must be taken to the hospital for a fortnight?

Ans: Actually, Tricki had no physical disease. He had a vomiting problem because of overfeeding. He was lazy because he did not have any physical exercise.

24. How did the gang of the household dogs accept Tricki as their member?

Ans: After two or three days, Tricki mixed-up with the household dogs. He had a lot of fun and exercise there. He ran about with the dogs. He enjoyed being bowled over, tramped on and squashed. Thus, they accepted him as their member.

25. How did Tricki treat his mistress when she went to collect him?

Ans: When Tricki saw his mistress, he took off from Mr Herriot's arms. He took a tremendous leap and sailed into Mrs Pumphrey's lap. He swarmed over her. He licked her face and barked.

26. Why was Mr Herriot shocked at Tricki's appearance?

Ans: Tricki had become hugely fat. He looked like a bloated sausage. His eyes were bloodshot and rheumy. His tongue lolled from his jaws. So Mr Herriot was shocked at Tricki's appearance.

Long Answer Questions (100-150 words)

1. Herriot enjoyed the lavish meal during Tricki's stay but still, he felt compelled to inform Mrs Pumphrey about the recovery of Tricki. Why did he not keep Tricki for a longer time? Did he feel concerned for Mrs Pumphrey? Was it not in his attitude to break the trust others? Discuss.

Ans: Tricki was a fat dog, pet of Mrs Pumphrey. He became listless and seemed to have no energy. It fell ill. So, Mrs Pumphrey called the veterinary surgeon, Dr Herriot for the help. Dr Herriot took Tricki to his surgery. He kept an eye on him for two days and gave him no food but plenty of water. At the end of the second day, he started showing some interest in his surroundings and on the third day, began to whimper on the sound of dogs. While his stay at the surgery, Mrs Pumphrey started to bring a dozen of fresh eggs at a time. She also sent bottles of wine and brandy for Trick's health. Hence, Herriot enjoyed the stay of Tricki. He did not want to keep Tricki for a longer time because he felt concerned for Mrs Pumphrey. He did not want to separate the pet from his owner. He could understand Mrs Pumphrey's concern for the little dog. So he returned him back.

2. The chapter shows the silly and negligent behaviour of rich people like Mrs Pumphrey who may harm their near and dear ones by their extra caring nature. Tricki's declined health was the outcome of Mrs Pumphrey's over-caring nature. Do you think such people's actions can prove to be fatal for the health? What would you suggest to such people and why?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey was a wealthy lady with a fat pet dog named Tricki. Tricki was too dear to Mrs Pumphrey. Hence, she took extra care of him. She had pampered the dog with all kinds of comforts. The dog had many coats worn according to the weather, had different cushions for his comfort and also had various dishes to eat. Some extras between meals were given to him, some malt, cod- liver oil and a bowl of Horlicks at night to make him sleep. He was also given cream cakes and chocolates. This made him fat and lethargic. He became hugely fat like a bloated sausage. His eyes bloodshot and rheumy, stared straight ahead and his tongue lolled from his jaws. I think Mrs Pumphrey's extra-caring nature resulted in Tricki's declined health. Such an attitude can result to be fatal for the health. One should not over care for them. Exercise and proper meal are important for one's health. The same was taken care by Dr Herriot, which resulted in the speedy recovery of Tricki.

3. "He had never been known to refuse food; he would tackle a meal at any hour of the day or night". Herriot believed that Tricki's problem was his greed. Did he lack tolerance?

Ans: Dr Herriot was not entirely wrong in believing that Tricki's problem was greed. Tricki was indeed greedy, but Mrs Pumphrey only made matters worse by stuffing him with fat rich food. Herriot did not lack intolerance; he was just stating the obvious. Tricki's ill-health made him concerned, and he made the observation as a veterinary doctor. Tricki, on the other hand, needed to exercise and control on his eating habits. It would have been good if he did not greedily gobble up everything that was placed in front of him. Mrs Pumphrey herself reveals that Tricki loved cream cakes and chocolates very much. Thus, Tricki ought to have been less gluttonous and luxury-loving, and behaved more like a dog.

4. Herriot seems to be a duty-bound doctor who values other's 'emotions' than his personal interests. Elucidate the above statement.

Ans: Herriot was a duty-bound veterinary doctor. He used to visit Mrs Pumphrey's house regularly for the regular check-up of her dog Tricki. Mrs Pumphrey was a very rich lady who had pampered her dog. Dr Herriot was quite worried about Tricki's health. He knew that the dog was over-fed by his owner. He advised Mrs Pumphrey to keep him go with rich diet and give him a lot of exercises. But she didn't bother. Hence, in order to improve Tricki's health, he decided to take him away from Mrs Pumphrey. He told her that Tricki needed surgery. He made Tricki cut down his diet and made him do certain exercises which improved his health. Although he knew Mrs Pumphrey was very rich and much attached to the dog, he did not take any advantage of it. He just performed his duties.

5. How did Mrs Pumphrey keep her dog? How did she add to his problems?

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey was a rich lady. She pampered her dog Tricki and overfed him. She gave him much nutritious diet. This made him hugely fat. He looked like a bloated sausage. He became dull, flabby, lazy and restless. She thought that he had been

suffering from malnutrition. So she gave him malt and cod-liver oil between meals. She gave him Horlicks at night. In spite of the doctor's advice, she gave him cream cakes and chocolate. All these things made his condition worse. He had bouts of vomiting. He kept lying all the time on the carpet. He did not want to go out of the house even for a little time.

6. How did Herriot save Tricki's life?

Ans: Tricki was seriously ill. He refused food. He had bouts of vomiting. Mrs Pumphrey was very much worried about him. She called Mr Herriot who was a vet. Herriot knew well about Tricki's disease. He told Mrs Pumphrey that the dog must be hospitalised for a fortnight immediately. He carried the dog in his car to his surgery. There he put him in a separate room. He was given no food for two days but plenty of water. After two days, the dog felt better. He started enjoying games with other dogs. In this way, Herriot cured Tricki of his illness without any medicine or surgery.

7. Write a character sketch of Mrs Pumphrey.

Ans: Mrs Pumphrey was a very wealthy lady. She was very loving to her dog. She pampered and overfed him. She gave him much nutritious food. Tricki was very greedy. He never refused food. This made him hugely fat and lazy. Mrs Pumphrey was much worried about him. She thought that he was suffering from malnutrition, so she gave him more energy food. She almost swooned when Herriot told her that Tricki must be hospitalised for a fortnight. She thought that Tricki would pine and die, if he did not see his mistress even for a single day.

8. Write a character sketch of Tricki.

Ans: Tricki was a small dog. He was pampered and overfed by his mistress. He was given much nutritious food. He was greedy enough to refuse food at any time. He liked eating cream cakes and chocolates. This made him hugely fat. He looked like a bloated sausage. He had bloodshot and rheumy eyes. He became dull, flabby, lazy and restless. He was seriously sick. He had bouts of vomiting. He was taken to Herriot's surgery. There he was given no food for two days. He had a lot of exercises to do. This made him quite fit. He loved his mistress very much. His mistress said about him that he would pine and die, if he did not see her even for a single day.

Self-Assessment Test

Short Answer Questions

1. Why did Mrs Pumphrey call the doctor?
2. What was the main cause of Tricki's ill-health?
3. How did Mrs Pumphrey deal with Tricki's absence?

4. How was Tricki different from the other dogs in the surgery?
5. What was Tricki doing in the name of exercise?

Long Answer Questions

1. Tricki was more a member of Mrs Pumphrey's family than a mere dog. Explain, giving example from the text.
2. Mrs Pumphrey says, "This is a triumph of surgery". Why did she say so? Did she know what Tricki's ailment was?
3. Compare and contrast Tricki in the beginning and in the end of the story 'A Triumph of Surgery'.