

4.5 A Battle to Baffle

WARMING UP

1. Form suitable groups and discuss the following.

You have heard / read stories of Akbar and Birbal, Tenali Raman, Mulla Nasruddin.

Recollect and write down the names of those stories.

Pick out those aspects of a story that you find a common in all their stories.

(1) Humour

(2) Supernatural events

(3) Wisdom

(4) Suspense

(5) Magic

(6) Beauty of Nature

(7) Wit

(8) Play upon words

(9) Sad end

(10) Violence

Ans. (The answer is given directly.)

The common aspect found in their stories :

humour, supernatural events, wisdom, suspense, magic, beauty of nature, wit and play upon words.

2. Read the different types of sentences in Reported Speech and note the differences in the Direct and Indirect forms

1. (a) Direct: The old man said, "What is the time?"

(b) Indirect: The old man asked what the time was.

2. (a) Direct: Mother said to her, "Are you hungry now?"

(b) Indirect: Mother asked her if she was hungry, then.

3. (a) Direct: Teacher said, "Be quiet students."

(b) Indirect: Teacher ordered the students to be quiet.

4. (a) Direct: Mother said, "How pretty she looks!"

(b) Indirect: Mother exclaimed with delight that she looked very pretty.

You will observe that -

(1) The Reporting Verb changes according to the type of sentence in the speech.

(2) Change of Tens

(3) Change of the word order in the sentence.

3. Use a dictionary and find the differences in the following terms related to drama

Ans. (1) A play: A dramatic work staged in a theatre in front of an audience.

- (2) One-act Play: A play that has only one act.
- (3) Skit: A short funny play that makes a joke of something.
- (4) Mime: A type of theatre using no words but only movements of the hands and body and facial expressions.
- (5) Farce: A humorous play in which the characters become involved in unlikely and complicated situations. Uses physical humour and silliness.
- (6) Opera: A dramatic work in one or more acts in which all characters communicate through song and the story is told through song put to music.
- (7) Tragedy: A play dealing with tragic events and having an unhappy ending.
- (8) Comedy: A play characterized by humour; has a happy or cheerful ending.

Read the following words and use them in sentences of your own.

Renown, defiance, exiled, predicament, diffident, benign

Ans. (1) The Chief Guest at our annual function was a man of great renown.

(2) In an act of defiance, the little girl threw away the expensive toy.

(3) The Prince stepmother for 10 years. was exiled by his

(4) The king turned to his minister to get him out of the predicament.

(5) The mother wanted to voice her fears, but could not do so.

(6) Birbal could always manage to get himself out of a tight corner

3. Pick out dialogues of Tenali Raman that prove that he had the following qualities.

Ans. (1) wit and wisdom: (i) So this is the 'tila-kashta-mahisha-bandhana'

(2) self-confidence : (i) Let us begin by discussing the merits of 'tila-kashta mahisha-bandhana'.

(3) humility: Your words of praise are my greatest reward, your Highness

4. Answer the following questions in short.

(a) What was Pundit Shahane's claim as a scholar?

Ans. Pundit Shahane's claim as a scholar was that he had mastered all the scriptures.

(b) What was Pundit Shahane's claim as a scholar?

Ans. Pundit Shahane visited Vijaynagar to challenge the knowledge of all the Pundits in the kingdom.

(c) What do you learn about Pundits of Vijaynagar?

Ans. The Pundits of Vijaynagar were frightened and nervous when their knowledge was challenged. They were insecure and did not have confidence themselves.

(d) What punishment did the emperor threaten the Pundits with?

Ans. The punishment that the Emperor threatened the Pundits with was that they would be exiled from Vijaynagar.

(e) Why was Tenali Raman summoned to the court?

Ans. Tenali Raman was summoned to the court to find a solution to the predicament.

(f) On what condition did Tenali Raman agree to take up the challenge?

Ans. The condition put forward by Tenali Raman was that when Pundit Shahane arrived the next day, everybody had to accept and honour him (Tenali Raman) as the Chief Pundit, for one day.

(g) Why was Tenali Raman taken to the court in a palanquin?

Ans. Tenali Raman made his entry to the Emperor's Court in a palanquin, with two pundits following him and carrying a huge bundle in silken cloth.

(g) Why was Tenali Raman taken to the court in a palanquin?

Ans. Tenali Raman probably wanted to impress and frighten Pundit Shahane, and hence he went to the court in a palanquin.

(i) What did the bundle in silken cloth contain?

Ans. Ans. Tenali Raman put his hands on a huge bundle next to him and pretended that it contained the scriptures 'tila-kashta mahisha-bandhana' and he wanted to discuss its merits. He was in fact, only mentioning what the bundle contained. However, the Pundit thought he was referring to some scriptures that he had never even heard of, and hence could not discuss its merits. He immediately gave up. Thus, Tenali Raman outwitted him. The theme of the skit is the challenge to see whether Tenali Raman could outwit the proud Pundit Shahane. This was the 'battle'. The way to win this battle was to 'baffle' (confuse) the Pundit. Hence, the title 'A Battle to Baffle' is apt.