

The Tale of Custard the Dragon

TEXTUAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Thinking about the Poem

1. Who are the characters in this poem? List them with their pet names.

Ans: The characters in this poem are a little black kitten, a little grey mouse, a little yellow dog and the dragon. They lived with Belinda. Other names are Ink. Blink. Mustard and Custard respectively.

2. Why did custard cry for a safe cage? Why is the dragon called 'cowardly dragon'?

Ans: Custard cried for a safe edge because he was coward. And so the dragon is called 'Cowardly dragon'.

3. 'Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful '. Why?

Ans: Belinda tickled the dragon without mercy because the dragon was coward.

4. The poet has employed many poetic devices in the poem. For example. 'Clashed his tail like iron in a dungeon' -the poetic device here is a simile. Can you, with your partners, list some more such poetic devices used in the poem?

Ans: (a) Similes :

i) the little yellow dog was sharp as mustard.

ii) Mouth like a fireplace

iii) Belinda was as brave as a barrel full of bears.

iv) Mustard was as brave as a tiger in rage.

v) Snorting like an engine.

vi) tail like irons

vii) the pirate like a Robin at a worm.

(b) metaphor : (i) chimney for a nose.

5. Read stanza three again to know how the poet described the appearance of the dragon.

Ans: In this stanza the poet says that the dragon had big sharp teeth, spikes on top of him and scales below him. His mouth was like a fireplace and nose was liked a chimney. His toes were like daggers.

6. Can you find out the rhymes scheme of two or three stanzas of the poem?

Ans: The rhyme scheme in the first stanza is : aa bb and the second stanza is also : aa bb the same scheme is found in the rest stanzas.

7. Writers use words to give us a picture or image without actually saying what they mean. Can you trace some images used in the poem?

Ans: Yes, the poet draws the image of the physical structure of the dragon and of the pirate. He also brings dungeon and engine as images.

8. Do you find the Tale of Custard the Dragon to be a serious or a light-hearted poem? Give reasons to support your answer.

Ans: In fact, this is a light hearted poem. Because all the brave characters fled in times of danger but the coward did the real work of bravery. As soon as the danger is over they again pretend to be brave .

9. This poem, in ballad form, tells a story. Have you come across any such modern song or lyric that tells a story? If you know one, tell it to the class. Collect such songs as a project.

Ans: Do Yourself.

Writing

Have fun writing your ballad. Gather information (choose/decide an idea/theme),organise your materials under characters and story and then write. Revise and edit your ballad to make it entertaining. Use the following guidelines to write your ballad.

* Purpose of writing the ballad : to entertain and interest.

* To Whom I am writing : decide for whom you are writing.

* How should I structure features? :

.....Tell a simple narrative

..... A few major characters

..... A strong rhythm and rhyme

..... May have a refrain (single or two line (s) repeated often)

..... Divide into verses.

Ans: Do yourself.

Comprehension Questions and Answers

Q:- Read the extract and answer the questions choosing the appropriate option given below :-

1. Belinda lived in a little white house,

With a little black kitten and a little grey mouse,

And a yellow dog and a little red wagon,

And a realio, trulia, little pet dragon.

Question :-

1. The poem is written by-

- a) Ogden Nash.
- b) Cusi Sandburg.
- c) Walt Whitman.
- d) Robert Frost.

Ans: a) Ogden Nash.

2. Where did Belinda live?

- a) In a cottage.
- b) In a little white house.
- c) In a building.
- d) In a big house.

Ans: b) In a little white house.

3. Who else lived with her?

- a) A kitten and a mouse.
- b) A dog and a dragon.
- c) A cat and a dragon.
- d) (a) and (b)

Ans: d) (a) and (b)

4. What is the meaning of 'realio' trulio '?

- a) In fact.
- b) Practically.
- c) Correctly.
- d) Really, truly.

Ans: d) Really, truly.

2. Belinda was as brave as a barrel full of bears,
And Ink and Blink chased lions down the stairs,
Mustard was as brave as a tiger in a rage
But custard cried for a nice safe cage.

Question :-

1. Belinda was brave like-

- a) Bears.
- b) Barrel full of bears.
- c) Tigers.
- d) Lions.

Ans: b) Barrel full of bears.

2. Who chased lions down the stairs?

- a) Ink.

- b) Blink.
- c) Belinda.
- d) Ink and Blink.

Ans: d) Ink and Blink.

3. When was mustard brave?

- a) When he was angry.
- b) When he saw a tiger.
- c) When he watched.
- d) In time of need.

Ans: a) When he was angry.

4. Custard wanted a safe cage because –

- a) He was luxurious.
- b) He was brave.
- c) He was lonely.
- d) He was coward.

Ans: d) He was coward.

3. Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful,

Ink, Blink and Mustard, they rudely called him

Percival,

They all sat laughing in the little red wagon

At the realio, trulia, cowardly dragon.

Question :-

1. Who is the 'him' here?

- a) The dog.
- b) The mouse.
- c) The cat.
- d) The dragon.

Ans: d) The dragon.

2. How did she tickle him?

- a) Angrily.
- b) Mercifully.
- c) Mercilessly.
- d) Plainly.

Ans: c) Mercilessly.

3. What did they call the dragon?

- a) Percival.
- b) Ink.
- c) Blink.

d) Mustard.

Ans: a) Percival.

4. How did they make fun of the dragon?

a) They assaulted him.

b) They laughed at him.

c) They abused him.

d) They avoided him.

Ans: b) They laughed at him.

4. Pistol in his left hand, pistol in his right,

And he held in his teeth a cutlass bright,

His beard was black, one leg was wood;

It was clear that the pirate meant no good.

Question :-

1. Who is meant by 'his'?

a) A pirate.

b) A thief.

c) A smuggler.

d) An extremist.

Ans: a) A pirate.

2. What did he have in his arms?

- a) Swords.
- b) Pistols.
- c) Sticks.
- d) Bullets.

Ans: b) Pistols.

3. Where did he hold a cutlass bright?

- a) In his hand.
- b) On his shoulder.
- c) In his teeth.
- d) On his head.

Ans: c) In his teeth.

4. What did the pirate mean?

- a) Good.
- b) Friendship.
- c) Help.
- d) No good.

Ans: d) No good.

5. But up jumped Custard, snorting like an engine,

Clashed his tail like irons in a dungeon,
With a clatter and a clank and a jangling squirm,
He went at the pirate like a Robin at a worm.

Question :-

1. What did custard do?

- a) Slept.
- b) Hid.
- c) Jumped up.
- d) Ran away.

Ans: c) Jumped up.

2. How did he snort?

- a) Like an engine.
- b) Like a tiger.
- c) Lightly.
- d) Heavily.

Ans: a) Like an engine.

3. How did custard jump up?

- a) With courage.
- b) In fear.

c) Like a coward.

d) Foolishly.

Ans: a) With courage.

4. Who did he face?

a) The cat.

b) The robbin.

c) The dog.

d) The pirate.

Ans: d) The pirate.

6. The pirate gaped at Belinda's dragon,

And gulped some grog from his pocket flagon,

He fired two bullets, but they didn't hit,

And custard gobbled him, every bit.

Question:-

1. Why did the pirate gaped at the dragon?

a) To observe.

b) To terrify.

c) To chase.

d) To run away.

Ans: b) To terrify.

2. Why did he gulp some grog?

- a) To fight the dragon.
- b) To get more energy.
- c) To gather courage.
- d) To fight.

Ans: c) To gather courage.

3. What did the pirate finally do?

- a) Fired two bullets.
- b) Chased the dragon.
- c) Caught the dragon.
- d) Hit the dragon.

Ans: a) Fired two bullets.

4. What did the dragon do?

- a) Caught hold of the pirate.
- b) Defeated the pirate.
- c) Killed the pirate.
- d) Swallowed the pirate.

Ans: d) Swallowed the pirate.

7. But presently up spoke little dog mustard,

I'd have been twice as brave if I hadn't been flustered,

And up spoke Ink and up spoke Blink,

We'd have been three times as brave, we think

And custard said, I quite agree

That everybody is braver than me.

Question :-

1. Who proved himself to be really brave?

a) Belinda.

b) Ink.

c) Blink.

d) Custard.

Ans: d) Custard.

2. What was mustard's comment?

a) He could have killed the pirate himself.

b) He was braver than others.

c) He was twice brave had he not been nervous.

d) He was not brave.

Ans: c) He was twice brave had he not been nervous.

3. Ink and blink said that-

- a) They could have been three times brave.
- b) They were the bravest.
- c) They could kill the pirate.
- d) They were confused.

Ans: a) They could have been three times brave

4. Custard agreed that-

- a) He was the bravest.
- b) Everybody was brave.
- c) He was coward.
- d) They were braver than him.

Ans: d) They were braver than him.

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Where did Belinda live? Who lived with her?

Ans: Belinda lived in a little white house. Some other animals lived with her. They were a black kitten, a grey mouse, a little yellow dog and a little pet dragon.

2. How did the dragon look?

Ans: Custard looked like a real dragon. It had big sharp teeth and spikes on top him and scales underneath. His mouth was like a fireplace and nose was liked a chimney. He also had daggers on his toes.

3. What sound did they hear one day? How did they react?

Ans: One day they heard the sound of a pirate. Mustard growled and they all looked around. Ink cried, 'Meowch!' and Belinda cried, 'oh! ' They were curious to know who made such nasty sound.

4. How did the pirate appear before them?

Ans: The pirate appeared before them with pistols in both of his hands. He had a sword in his teeth. His beard was black but his one leg was of wood. He looked evil.

5. What did the pirate do when the dragon faced him?

Ans: When the dragon faced the pirate, the pirate looked at him to frighten him. Then he drank some liquor from his pocket flagon. He fired two bullets but they did not hit the dragon.

6. What did they do when the dragon swallowed the pirate?

Ans: Custard, the dragon swallowed the pirate. Belinda embraced custard. Mustard licked him and Ink and Blink jumped around him. They were all happy and praised custard.