

## ***"The Verger" by W. Somerset Maugham***

### **TEXTUAL QUESTION ANSWERS**

#### **A. Choose the correct option:**

1. **The Verger's name was –**  
→ (b) Albert Edward Foreman
  2. **The Verger had been working at St. Peter's Church for –**  
→ (c) sixteen years
  3. **The new vicar was –**  
→ (c) a newly appointed priest
  4. **The verger was removed from his job because he –**  
→ (b) could neither read nor write
  5. **Albert started his own –**  
→ (a) tobacco shop business
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#### **B. Answer the following questions briefly:**

1. **Who was Albert Edward Foreman?**  
→ Albert Edward Foreman was the verger of St. Peter's Church who had served diligently for sixteen years.
2. **What kind of a man was the verger?**  
→ He was loyal, simple, hardworking, and proud of his duties. Though uneducated, he was intelligent and resourceful.
3. **Why did the vicar want the verger to resign?**  
→ The vicar discovered that the verger could neither read nor write and felt it was inappropriate for a church official to be illiterate.
4. **How did the verger react to losing his job?**  
→ He was initially hurt but did not argue. Instead, he accepted the situation calmly and started his own business.

**5. What business did the verger start after resigning?**

→ He opened a small tobacco shop, which gradually expanded into a successful chain.

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**C. Answer the following questions in about 40–50 words:**

**1. Why did the verger not feel sad for long after losing his job?**

→ Though he was initially upset, the verger saw the loss as an opportunity. His confidence and entrepreneurial spirit helped him start a business that proved very successful, leading to financial independence.

**2. What qualities helped the verger become successful in business?**

→ His dedication, practical knowledge, keen observation, and business acumen, along with his calm and optimistic nature, helped him build a prosperous tobacco business.

**3. What is the irony at the end of the story?**

→ The irony lies in the fact that despite being illiterate, Foreman became a wealthy and successful businessman. When asked where he would have been had he been literate, he wittily replies he'd still be a verger.

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**D. Answer the following questions in about 80–100 words:**

**1. Discuss how Albert Foreman turns adversity into opportunity.**

→ When Albert Foreman is dismissed from his job as a verger due to illiteracy, he doesn't give up. Instead, he channels his disappointment into starting a tobacco shop. His business sense and hard work lead to a successful chain of shops, making him a wealthy man. This shows his resilience and ability to turn a setback into a stepping stone for success.

## 2. **What does the story say about education and intelligence?**

→ The story suggests that formal education is not the only path to success. Foreman, though illiterate, possesses intelligence, discipline, and practical knowledge. It challenges the assumption that literacy equals ability, highlighting that real-world wisdom and entrepreneurial skills can be equally valuable.

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## **ADDITIONAL SHORT & LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS**

### ◆ **Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)**

#### 1. **What job did Albert Foreman do at the church?**

→ He worked as the vergers, looking after the church's daily needs and ceremonial arrangements.

#### 2. **How did the new vicar feel about Albert's illiteracy?**

→ The new vicar was shocked and uncomfortable that a vergers couldn't read or write, believing it was unsuitable for the church's image.

#### 3. **What was Albert's attitude toward change?**

→ Albert accepted change calmly and adapted quickly. When he lost his job, he didn't complain but started a new venture with confidence.

#### 4. **How did Albert find the idea to start his business?**

→ After leaving the church, he went in search of a cigarette but couldn't find a shop nearby. That gave him the idea to open one.

#### 5. **How successful was Albert's tobacco business?**

→ Very successful. He expanded it into a chain of ten shops and became a wealthy man.

**6. Why did Albert not learn to read or write even after becoming rich?**

→ He felt he had done well without it and saw no need to change. His success reinforced his belief in practical skills over formal education.

**7. How did the bank manager react to Albert's success?**

→ The bank manager was amazed that someone so successful couldn't read or write, and he suggested he might have done even better had he been educated.

**8. What was Albert's witty reply to the bank manager?**

→ Albert said, "Then I'd be a verger at St. Peter's Church," implying that his illiteracy indirectly led to his success.

**9. What kind of story is "The Verger"?**

→ It is a humorous and ironic short story that celebrates common sense, practicality, and the spirit of enterprise.

**10. What is the main conflict in the story?**

→ The main conflict is between formal qualifications (education) and practical ability (life skills).

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◆ **Long Answer Questions (100–150 words)**

**11. Describe Albert Edward Foreman's personality.**

→ Albert Foreman is a calm, content, and dedicated man. Though uneducated, he is intelligent, practical, and highly organized. He takes pride in his work and has a natural sense of responsibility. When unfairly removed from his post, he does not become bitter. Instead, he uses the opportunity to start a business, showing resilience and adaptability. His humility, confidence, and common sense make him a likable and admirable character.

12. **What is the central message of the story “The Verger”?**  
→ The central message is that success doesn’t depend solely on formal education. Practical intelligence, determination, and confidence can also lead to success. The story challenges societal norms and highlights how a person with no formal education can outperform many who are educated, emphasizing the value of common sense.
13. **How does W. Somerset Maugham use irony in the story?**  
→ The irony lies in the fact that Foreman loses his job for being uneducated, yet this setback leads him to a more successful path. Despite being illiterate, he becomes wealthy through his own business. When told he could have been more successful if he were literate, he retorts that he would still be just a verger—a clever twist that underlines the story’s ironic humor.
14. **Explain the role of self-confidence in Albert’s success.**  
→ Albert's self-confidence is key to his success. Instead of despairing over losing his job, he calmly assesses his situation and starts a business. His belief in himself, combined with his awareness of opportunity, allows him to flourish without ever doubting his capabilities.
15. **What lesson can students learn from “The Verger”?**  
→ Students can learn that success is not defined by academic qualifications alone. Confidence, hard work, adaptability, and the courage to take initiative are equally important. The story encourages readers to value both education and life skills.