**Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)**

**Answer the following :**

1. Describe the setting of the house of Monkswell Manor and the elements of the Great hall.

The house does not give the look of an ancient house. It has tall windows up Centre with two arches opening up, one to Right and one to Left. Up left is the door to the library. Down Left the door to the dining room and to right is an open fireplace. The hall is furnished as a living room. The curtains and furniture are shabby and old fashioned. There is a combined desk and bookcase Left, with a radio and a telephone on it and a chair beside it. There is another chair up Right Centre by the window, a Canterbury containing newspapers and magazines by the fireplace. A table lamp stands on the sofa table.

1. What happens when the curtain rises in the beginning of Act 1 Scene 1?

When the curtain rises in the beginning of Act 1 Scene 1, there is a complete darkness on the stage. The music fades and gives place to a sharp whistle of the tune of ‘Three Blind Mice’. Then a woman’s loud scream is heard, followed by a mixture of male and female voices. Then a police whistle sounds followed by several other police whistles, all of which slowly go silent.

1. Who was murdered at the start of the play and where did the murder take place? Describe the person whom did the police want to interview in connection with this murder?

The murdered woman was a Mrs. Maureen Lyon. According to Scotland Yard the crime took place at twenty-four Culver Street, Paddington. In connection with the murder, the police warned to interrogate a man seen in the neighbourhood. The man was seen wearing a dark overcoat, light scarf and a soft felt hat.

1. Who is Mrs. Barlow?

Mrs. Barlow is the caretaker and housekeeper of Monkswell Manor.

1. Describe Mollie Ralston and Giles? What is their relation? What is Mollie’s connection to Monkswell manor and how does she manage it?

Mollie Ralston is a tall, beautiful and young woman with naïve looks, and is in her twenties. Giles is a rather proud attractive young man in his twenties. They are husband and wife. Mollie has inherited Monkswell manor from her aunt, and runs it as a guest house along with Giles.

1. What was Giles complaining about?

Giles had to go to the village to get a chicken-netting, but the one he got was not the right type of netting. He went to another store but that was completely useless. Practically a whole day was wasted. He was half frozen. The car was skidding badly. The snow was falling heavily.

1. Why does Giles say “We are rather stupid in this business”?

Giles complains about daily women employees being a nuisance because they have to do everything themselves. Mollie reminds him it is a partnership. Giles agrees as long as he doesn’t have to cook. Mollie reminds him cooking is her field and chides him for the misspelled signboard of the guest house, calling it a disaster and pointing out the mistake of the missing ‘S’. Giles reminds her to check if the rooms are ready and if she has taken the rent in advance. Mollie confirms the room allocation and says that she may have forgotten to take the rent in advance to which Giles comments and says, ”We are rather stupids in this business.”

1. What does Giles suggest regarding the managing of the guest house? What is the rent they have fixed for the guests who come there?  
   Giles suggests that they should have taken a correspondence course in Hotel keeping as they were sure to get into some trouble in some way. The rent they charge their guests is seven guineas every week.
2. Who is Christopher Wren? Describe him. What are his thoughts about Mollie Ralston?  
   Christopher Wren is a rather wild looking neurotic young man. His hair is long and untidy and he wears a woven artistic tie. He has a trusting and almost childish nature. When he meets Mollie, he says that she is not what he had imagined her to be. He had been thinking of her as the wife of a retired General of the Indian Army. He expected her to be terribly serious and Memsahibish (haughty like a Mem).
3. What is Christopher’s opinion about the interior of the house? Why does he say so?

He says that the place is quite heavenly. The desk is lovely in size and shape. However when he points at the sofa table he realizes that it was an imitation. The table looks real according to him and he declares that he is going to love the place. He also enquires about a purple upper-class mahogany sideboard with great solid carved fruits on it and later about centre mahogany table.

1. What does Christopher say to Giles about the weather? Does Giles like him? Which room is Christopher staying in?  
   Christopher says to Giles that the terrible weather takes them back to the time of Dickens, Scrooge and irritating Tiny Tim. Giles does not like him for his comments. After confirming with Mollie he takes Christopher to the Oak room where he is supposed to be staying.
2. What is Christopher’s view of people?  
   Christopher likes knowing everything about people as he says they are very interesting. Mollie replies that some are trusting and others are not. Christopher however disagrees saying that they never really know what everyone is like or what they are really thinking. He adds that the only people who really know what other people are like artists. It is probably because these artists are very inquisitive in nature and more observant. So if they are portrait painters it gets expressed on the canvas.
3. What does Christopher tell Mollie about his profession?  
   Mollie inquires if Christopher is a painter to which he replies that he is an architect. He says his parents baptized him hoping he would become an architect. He then says that his prefabricated houses may become a part of history.
4. What does Christopher say about Englishwomen?  
   According to Christopher Wren praises often embarrass them. European women accept praises as usual things, but the feminine spirit in Englishwomen is totally drained in them by their husbands. There is something very rude and unpleasant about English husbands.