

CHAPTER- 7

MADAM RIDES THE BUS

- Vallikkannan

2 MARK QUESTIONS

1. What was Valli's favourite pastime?

Answer:

Valli's favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house and watching what was happening in the street outside.

2. What was a source of unending joy for Valli? What was her strongest desire?

Answer:

The sight of the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town, filled with a new set of passengers each time it passed through the street near her house was a source of unending joy for Valli. Her strongest desire was to take a ride on the bus someday.

3. Why does the conductor call Valli ‘madam’?**Answer:**

The conductor called Valli ‘madam’ because she was behaving like a woman in an audacious and smart manner. She did not accept his help to get on the bus and was very quick in replying to the conductor’s questions. Amused by her antics and behaviour, the conductor teased her by calling her ‘madam’.

4. What does Valli tell the elderly man when he calls her a child?**Answer:**

When the elderly man on the bus referred to Valli as a child, she instantly replied that there was nobody on the bus who was a child. She further stated that she had paid her fare of thirty paise like other passengers on the bus.

5. What was Valli’s deepest desire? Find the words and phrases in the story that tell you this.**Answer:**

Valli’s deepest desire was to take a ride on the bus that she saw every day from her house. The words and phrases in the story that depicts her desire are ‘an overwhelming desire’, ‘source of unending joy’, ‘stare wistfully’, and ‘kindle in her longings, dreams and hopes’.

4 MARK QUESTIONS

1. What did Valli find out about the bus journey? How did she find out these details?

Answer:

Valli found out that the bus journey to the town from her village was six miles and took approximately forty-five minutes. The fare for a one-way journey cost 30 paise. She listened to the conversations carefully between her neighbours and the people who regularly took the bus trip and asked a few questions to gain some information and small details about the bus journey.

2. What do you think Valli was planning to do?

Answer:

Valli was planning to travel on the bus and go to the town and return home on the same bus. She heard the onward journey fare was thirty paise that took approximately forty-five minutes to reach the town. In this way, she planned to stay in her seat and pay another thirty paise for the return trip. This meant that she could take the one o'clock afternoon bus, reach the town at 1.45 p.m. and return home by 2.45 p.m.

3. Why does Valli stand up on the seat? What does she see now?**Answer:**

Valli was enchanted by the view of the beautiful scenery outside the bus and was trying hard to look outside. But her view was blocked by the canvas blind that covered the lower part of the window. In order to catch a better glimpse, she stood up on the seat and peered over the blind. She saw the narrow road as the bus was going along the bank of a canal, palm trees, grassland, distant mountains, green fields and the blue sky. On the other side, there was a deep ditch, and many acres of green fields stretched far and wide as much as her eyes could see.

4. Why didn't Valli want to make friends with the elderly woman?**Answer:**

Valli was not interested in making friends with the elderly woman because she looked quite repulsive to her. She had big earlobes with bigger holes and wore ugly earrings. Besides, she was also chewing betel nut, and her mouth was also filled with betel juice that was likely to spill all over her lips. Seeing all this, Valli thought that the elderly woman was not sociable enough to be friends with.

5. How did Valli save up money for her first journey? Was it easy for her?**Answer:**

Valli had saved every stray coin meticulously that came her way. She resisted every temptation to buy peppermints, toys, balloons, etc., to

save enough money for the bus trip. It had been really difficult for her as she had to control her urges and resist the temptation to be on the merry-go-round in the village fair. After making a lot of sacrifices, she was able to save sixty paise for her first bus journey.

6. What did Valli see on her way that made her laugh?

Answer:

Valli was overjoyed upon seeing a young cow, tail high in the air, running very fast right in the middle of the road just in front of the bus. The driver sounded his horn loudly repeatedly so that the cow moved away from the path. But the more he honked, the cow became more frightened and galloped as fast as possible. Seeing all this, it appeared very funny to Valli, and she laughed out loud until tears rolled down her eyes.

7. Why didn't she get off the bus at the bus station?

Answer:

Valli's plan was only to take the bus ride and not roam around the town. She had painstakingly accumulated sixty paise for her onward and return bus journey. She knew that she had limited money to travel by bus and would spend thirty paise fare on her onward journey, go to the town and then return by the same bus before her mother woke up from her afternoon nap. She neither had the money to roam around the town nor had time to explore it, so she didn't get off the bus at the bus station.

8. Why does the conductor refer to Valli as ‘madam’?**Answer:**

The conductor called Valli ‘madam’ as she behaved like a grown-up woman and responded irritably to being referred to as a child. She was an eight-year-old girl and considered herself old enough to travel alone on the bus. Besides, she also refused his help when he extended his hand to help her get on the bus, she replied commandingly that she could manage to get on the bus on her own.

9. Why does Valli refuse to look out of the window on her way back?**Answer:**

Valli refused to look out of the window on her way back to her village because she was upset seeing the dead body of the cow that was running towards the bus while she was going to town. The poor animal was hit by some fast-moving vehicle on the road. She was overcome with sadness and extremely frightened to look outside the bus window as the memory of the cow was haunting her.

10. What does Valli mean when she says, “I was just agreeing with what you said about things happening without our knowledge.”

Answer:

When Valli’s mother casually mentioned that there are certain things that happen around them without their knowledge, Valli instantly agreed with her mother’s words and said, “I was just agreeing with what you said about things happening without our knowledge.” She was happy about her adventurous bus trip to the town, which she had taken without the knowledge of her parents.

8 MARK QUESTIONS

1. Why does Valli stand up on the seat? What does she see now?

Answer:

Valli was enchanted by the view of the beautiful scenery outside the bus and was trying hard to look outside. But her view was blocked by the canvas blind that covered the lower part of the window. In order to catch a better glimpse, she stood up on the seat and peered over the blind. She saw the narrow road as the bus was going along the bank of a canal, palm trees, grassland, distant mountains, green fields and the blue sky. On the other side, there was a deep ditch, and many acres of green fields stretched far and wide as much as her eyes could see.

2. How did Valli plan her bus ride? What did she find out about the bus, and how did she save up the fare?

Answer:

Valli had been carefully listening for many days to the conversations between her neighbours and the people who regularly used the bus and asked a few discreet questions. She learnt from them that the town was six miles away from her village and the bus charged thirty paise as fare for the onward journey, and it took forty-five minutes to complete a one-way bus trip. She also made up her mind to stay on the bus and return on the same bus, which would cost her sixty paise to and fro. She was determined not to get down from the bus to roam around the town as she didn't have enough money. Hence, she saved sixty paise meticulously and resisted all kinds of urges and temptations to buy peppermints, toys, etc. and even a ride on the merry-go-round at the village's annual fair. It was Valli's secret

adventurous bus trip that she had planned without her parents' knowledge.

3. What kind of a person is Valli? To answer this question, pick out the following sentences from the text and fill in the blanks. The words you fill in are the clues to your answer.

(i) "Stop the bus! Stop the bus!" And a tiny hand was raised

_____.

(ii) "Yes, I _____ go to town," said Valli, still standing outside the bus.

(iii) "There's nobody here _____," she said haughtily. "I've paid my thirty paise like everyone else."

(iv) "Never mind," she said, "I can _____. You don't have to help me. "I'm not a child, I tell you," she said,

_____.

(v) "You needn't bother about me. I _____," Valli said, turning her face toward the window and staring out.

(vi) Then she turned to the conductor and said, "Well, sir, I hope _____."

Answer:

Valli was a confident eight-year-old girl who believed that her age was not a limiting factor for her to travel alone in the bus to the town. She considered herself to be a grown up person and also acted like one.

(i) "Stop the bus! Stop the bus!" And a tiny hand was raised **commandingly**.

(ii) “Yes, I **simply have to** go to town,” said Valli, still standing outside the bus.

(iii) “There’s nobody here **who’s a child**,” she said haughtily. “I’ve paid my thirty paise like everyone else.”

(iv) “Never mind,” she said, “I can **get on by myself**. You don’t have to help me. ”I’m not a child, I tell you,” she said **irritably**.

(v) “You needn’t bother about me. **I can take care of myself**,” Valli said, turning her face toward the window and staring out.

(vi) Then she turned to the conductor and said, “Well, sir, I hope **to see you again**.”

4. Find the lines in the text which tell you that Valli was enjoying her ride on the bus.

Answer:

Valli thoroughly enjoyed her bus ride to the town. The following lines from the text are proof that exhibits her excitement:

- “Valli devoured everything with her eyes.”
- “The bus was now going along the bank of a canal. The road was very narrow. On one side, there was the canal and, beyond it, palm trees, grassland, distant mountains, and the blue, blue sky. On the other side was a deep ditch and then acres and acres of green fields — green, green, green, as far as the eye could see.”
- “Oh, it was all so wonderful!”
- “Everyone laughed, and gradually Valli too joined in the laughter.”

- “Suddenly, Valli clapped her hands with glee. A young cow, tail high in the air, was running very fast, right in the middle of the road, right in front of the bus.”
- “Somehow, this was very funny to Valli. She laughed and laughed until there were tears in her eyes.”
- “Valli wasn’t bored in the slightest and greeted everything with the same excitement she’d felt the first time.”

5. The author describes the things that Valli sees from an eight-year-old’s point of view. Can you find evidence from the text for this statement?

Answer:

Yes, the author had described various things from an eight-year-old’s point of view. Some of these include – ‘she was fascinated by the bus’ and ‘watching the bus fill with a new set of people each time was a source of unending joy for her’. The author described the colour and look of the new bus with ‘its outside painted a gleaming white with some green stripes along the sides. Inside, the overhead bars shone like silver.’ Through this description, the author wanted to express how a child would be attracted towards the colour of the bus. ‘The seats were soft and luxurious’. This description implies that the author wanted to show the excitement of a child traveling in the luxury of a bus for the first time. ‘The blue sky’ and ‘acres and acres of green field’, show the zeal and enthusiasm of a child. Further, when Valli sees the cow running in front of the bus, this fascinated her too, whereas the sight of a dead cow brings tears to her eyes. The memory of the cow haunted her, and she refused to look outside the window on her return journey. These were some of the lines which beautifully described the typical reactions and behaviour of an eight-year-old child in an ideal manner.

SUMMARY

Chapter 7 of the Class 10 English NCERT textbook is titled "Madam Rides the Bus." The chapter is a delightful story written by Vallikkannan, and it portrays a humorous and heartwarming encounter between a young boy and an old lady on a bus journey.

The narrative begins with the author, Valli, who is a young schoolboy in a village. Valli is curious and adventurous, always seeking new experiences. One day, he decides to take a ride on the bus to the nearby town, an adventure he has never undertaken before. His eagerness to explore the world beyond his village drives him to embark on this journey.

As Valli boards the bus, he notices an old lady, whom he refers to as "Madam," sitting quietly by herself. Intrigued by her, Valli decides to engage in conversation with her. However, he discovers that Madam is deaf and cannot hear him. Undeterred, Valli continues to communicate with her through gestures and expressions.

The bus journey becomes an amusing and heartening experience as Valli tries to convey his thoughts to Madam. He pantomimes various actions and uses creative gestures to make her understand his messages. The passengers on the bus, as well as the conductor, observe this interaction with amusement.

The chapter unfolds as a tale of innocence and the universal language of gestures that transcends verbal communication. Valli's attempts to

connect with Madam highlight the power of human connection and the warmth that can be found in even the simplest of interactions.

Ultimately, the bus reaches its destination, and Valli bids farewell to Madam. The chapter concludes with a sense of fulfillment for Valli, who not only successfully navigated the bus journey but also forged a unique bond with the elderly woman despite the communication barrier.

In summary, "Madam Rides the Bus" is a charming story that captures the essence of human connection and the ability to communicate beyond words. Valli's adventurous spirit and his heartwarming interaction with Madam make this chapter an endearing exploration of the beauty found in simple, genuine connections between people.

POEM – THE TALE OF CUSTARD THE DRAGON

- Ogden Nash

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

Answer:

The characters in this poem are Belinda, a little girl and her pets: a little black kitten, a little grey mouse, a little yellow dog, a little pet dragon and a pirate.

The names of the pets are listed below:

Character	Pet Name
Kitten	Ink
Mouse	Blink
Dog	Mustard
Dragon	Custard

2. Why did Custard cry for a nice safe cage? Why is the dragon called “cowardly dragon”?

Answer:

Custard cried for a nice safe cage because it was a coward and used to get scared easily. It is called a “cowardly dragon” because everyone in the house is very brave. Belinda was as brave as a barrel full of bears, Ink and Blink could chase lions down the stairs, Mustard was as brave as a raging tiger, but Custard always cried for a nice safe cage as it feared a lot and wanted to stay safe from any danger.

3. “Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful...” Why?

Answer:

Belinda tickled Custard, the dragon, unmercifully because it was always very scared and cried for a nice safe cage. She rubbed her fingers, creating a tingling sensation that would disturb the dragon, and everyone would laugh at its cowardice.

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 partner, list some more such poetic devices used in the poem?

Answer:

The poet has extensively used similes throughout the poem. One such simile was “mouth like a fireplace”. Also, he has repetitively used the word ‘little’ in the first stanza to emphasize that everything in

Belinda's house, including her pets, was little in size. In the seventh stanza, the poet uses an incorrect spelling as a poetic device, such as 'winda' instead of 'window' that rhymes with Belinda's name in the previous line. Furthermore, the poet also uses alliteration in the tenth stanza in the sentences "Clashed his tail" and "With a clatter and a clank". In the eleventh stanza, the poet used the terms, "The pirate gaped" and "gulped some grog" as some of the poetic devices in the poem.

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

Answer:

The poet describes the appearance of the dragon, Custard as one which had big sharp teeth and spikes on top of its body and scales underneath. Its mouth was like a fireplace with a chimney-like nose and sharp dagger-like toes.

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

Answer:

The rhyme scheme of two or three stanzas of the poem is 'aabb'.

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?

Answer:

Writers often use words and phrases that do not directly convey a meaning but are indicative of their related meanings. Such words or phrases are basically used to trigger our imagination into thinking and visualizing them like a painting with a hidden meaning. The poet has used some images in the poem such as: ‘mouth like a fireplace’, ‘chimney for a nose’, ‘brave as a barrel full of bears’, ‘brave as a tiger in a rage’, ‘went at the pirate like a robin at a worm’, etc.

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.

Answer:

‘The Tale of Custard the Dragon’ is a very light-hearted and funny poem which was written in such a way that everyone enjoys it. The poem was composed with a fixed rhyme scheme that makes it interesting and enjoyable to read. The poet has also used the wrong spelling, ‘winda’ instead of ‘window’, to maintain the rhyme scheme with ‘Belinda’ in the seventh stanza. The poet also describes the features of Belinda and her pets in a humorous manner. He compared Belinda’s bravery to a barrel full of bears, her kitten, Ink and mouse, Blink to be so brave that they could scare a lion down the stairs and her dog, Mustard, was brave like a raging tiger. On the contrary, her dragon Custard is the only one who has been projected to be a coward who looks for a cage for itself and was made fun of often by others for its cowardice. However, when the pirate attacked the little house, and everyone was scared, it was the same ‘cowardly’ dragon who saved everyone and jumped snorting like an engine on the pirate. It

clashed its tail and charged towards the pirate like a robin at a worm and ate him. Although everyone made fun of the little dragon, it proved to be the bravest of all. Hence, the poem is dramatically ironic, which is funny and reflects the fun and humorous side of the poet.

SUMMARY

Chapter 6 of the Class 10 English NCERT textbook features the poem "The Tale of Custard the Dragon" by Ogden Nash. The poem is a whimsical narrative that tells the story of a seemingly cowardly dragon named Custard and his unexpected heroism.

The poem introduces the characters in a household, including Belinda, a little girl, and her pets—a brave little dog named Ink, a brave little mouse named Blink, and a cowardly dragon named Custard. The initial stanzas describe each character's personality, highlighting Custard's reluctance to engage in any form of bravery.

As the narrative unfolds, a pirate, wicked Sir Big Beard, enters the scene, threatening the household. Belinda calls upon her pets to defend the house and its occupants. Ink, the dog, and Blink, the mouse, bravely face the intruder, but Custard, true to his timid nature, hides under the bed.

Unexpectedly, Custard's true nature is revealed when, in a surprising twist, he defeats the menacing pirate. It turns out that Custard had been faking his cowardice all along, waiting for the opportune moment to showcase his bravery. With a roar and a flame, Custard frightens Sir Big Beard away, saving the day.

The poem concludes with the revelation that Custard, despite his outward appearance of cowardice, had a brave heart when it truly mattered. The characters celebrate Custard's heroism, and the poem

imparts a lighthearted message about the unexpected courage that can reside in even the most unlikely individuals.

Ogden Nash's playful use of language, rhyme, and rhythm adds to the whimsical tone of the poem, making it an enjoyable and entertaining read. "The Tale of Custard the Dragon" combines humor with a valuable lesson about not underestimating others based on appearances, making it a memorable and engaging piece for readers of all ages.