**Symbiosis School, Nasik.**

**Std: X Term I (2020-21)**

**Subject: English Language & Literature - Worksheet – 39**

**Lesson : Poem 10 – The Tale of Custard the Dragon**

**By Ogden Nash**

**Concept Based Answers**

**Answer 1:**

Belinda lived in a little white house with her four pets and a wagon. She had a black kitten named Ink, a grey mouse named Blink, a yellow dog named Mustard and a coward dragon named Custard.

**Answer 2:**

Custard looked really dangerous with spikes on his top and scales underneath. His mouth was like a fireplace and nose like a chimney. His toes looked like daggers.

**Answer 3:**  
No. Custard barely matched his appearance as he looked ferocious but he actually was a coward. He always cried for a nice and safe cage and everyone laughed at him for his cowardice.

**Answer 4:**  
Belinda was as brave as a barrel full of bears. Ink and Blink were brave enough to chase lions away. Mustard’s bravery was like a tiger’s rage. It was only Custard, who was a coward, everyone else was very brave.

**Answer 5:**  
Belinda and her three pets, excluding Custard, were very proud of their bravery but they were not really brave. It was only Custard, who had the courage to face the pirate so he was the real brave.

**Answer 6:**

When the pirate came, Belinda cried for help and became pale with fear. Mustard ran away with a terrified cry and Ink trickled to the bottom of the house while Blink disappeared in his mouse hole. Custard jumped in front of the Pirate to fight him.

**Answer 7:**

Custard jumped in front of the pirate to fight him. The pirate fired two bullets at him but missed both of them. Then Custard gobbled whole of the pirate and left no trace of him.

**Textual Question Answers**

Q1- Who are the characters in this poem? List them with their pet names.

A1 Following are the characters of the poem:

1. A little girl named Belinda.
2. A little black kitten whose name is ink.
3. A little gray mouse named blink.
4. A dog named mustard because he is yellow in colour.
5. A coward dragon whose name is Custard.

Q2- Why did Custard cry for a nice safe cage? Why is the dragon called “cowardly dragon”?

A2- Custard cries for a safe cage because he is A coward. He is called cowardly dragon because other characters are defined to be very brave in the following manner:

1. Belinda is described to be as brave as a barrel full of bears
2. Ink and blink can chase lions down the stairs
3. Mustard was as brave as a tiger in rage.

Q3- “Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful...” Why?

A3- Belinda tickled him unmerciful because custard the dragon was a coward. He always demanded a safe cage. That is why all of them made fun of him.

Q4- 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?

A4- The poet has used many poetic devices to enhance the beauty of the poem. Like, to create rhyme with ‘Belinda’, he used the word ‘winda’ instead of ‘window’. Other such rhyming words are ‘household’ used with ‘mouseholed’ and ‘wagon’ with ‘dragon’. Not only this, he also uses poetic device of repetition for example the word ‘little’ is used many times to describe her house and her pets. There is also the use of poetic device of refrain because we can see the repetition of line “And her realio, trulio little pet dragon” in many stanzas.

Q5- Read stanza three again to know how the poet describes the appearance of the dragon?

A5- The looks of the dragon are explained in a way that it has big sharp teeth and spikes on top. This means its skin is pointed on the top. On the lower part it has scales which are bony plates meant to protect the skin. His mouth has been compared to a fireplace because it is assumed that the dragons can release fire from the mouth. Even his nose is compared to a chimney which is used to pass out the smoke. His feet are like a sharp knife i.e. a dagger.

Q6- Can you find out the rhyme scheme of two or three stanzas of the poem?

A6- Rhyme scheme of the second and third stanza is aabb.

Q7-- 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?

A7- Following are the words used to give us picture or image:

1. Mouth like a fireplace
2. Chimney for nose
3. Barrel full of bears
4. Brave as a tiger in the rage
5. He went at the pirate like a robin at a worm

Q8- Do you find The Tale of Custard the Dragon to be a serious or a light-hearted poem? Give reasons to support your answer.

A8- The Tale of Custard the Dragon is a light hearted poem. All the characters have names which are rhyming with each other. They all are defined to be very brave except the dragon. But in reality the dragon proves to be the real hero. When they are attacked by the pirate, the dragon gulps him. Though all the other characters were not brave enough to handle the pirate but still they define themselves as more powerful than the dragon after the incident is handled by the dragon alone. Though, the dragon was defined as a coward by the poet right from the beginning of the poem.