

Treasure Chest : A Collection of Poems

1. A Work of Artifice

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (a) | 3. (b) | 4. (d) | 5. (d) |
| 6. (c) | 7. (d) | 8. (b) | 9. (b) | 10. (b) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) The bonsai is a small decorative tree that is grown in a pot. It is prevented from reaching its normal size. In the poem it stands for a woman oppressed and suppressed in a male-dominated society.
- (ii) It could have grown fully outside in nature, on the side of a mountain. It could have grown there up to eight feet high. Its branches continue to be pruned. It prevents its growth.
- (iii) The gardener stands for a man – a lover or a husband – in the poem. He continues to prune the bonsai tree and does not let it grow. He believes that it has to remain small and weak to look attractive.
- (iv) The bonsai tree is not allowed to grow to its full potential deliberately. In the poem, it stands for a woman. Like the bonsai tree, woman in male-dominated world is prevented from growing and showing her capabilities fully. She is made to accept her subordinate position by keeping her confined to the four walls of her home.
- (v) The main idea projected in the poem is that if anything or anybody is not allowed to grow, it will remain underdeveloped and weak. This is true in the case of bonsai tree and a woman in the male-dominated society.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) The function of the gardener is to prune the branches of the bonsai tree to keep it small and attractive. The gardener, as a symbol of dominated male, prevents the growth of the woman, thus keeping her under his control. It is regressive and harmful for the woman and society in general.
- (ii) The gardener speaks in a happy and condescending tone. We think the ‘gardener’ is an arrogant and dominating person.
- (iii) The ‘gardener’ is wrong in the sense that everything and everybody has the right to grow. To keep something or somebody deliberately underdeveloped is definitely wrong.
- (iv) The last two lines suggest that in a male-dominated world man feels self-satisfied in his wrong belief that woman is by nature weak, small and domesticated, and that she should accept her position as such.

- (v) The word 'croons' means to sing quietly in a happy mood. It implies that the man, represented by the gardener, is happy and self-satisfied by keeping his woman weak and underdeveloped.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The speaker is a gardener who stands for a domineering male. The bonsai tree is being addressed. The tree represents suppressed woman in a male-dominated society.
- (ii) In the metaphorical context of the poem, the pot comes to represent the limited space allowed to women to operate. A woman has to lead much of her life in the limited space of her home.
- (iii) Men condition women to accept their subordinate position in society. They prevail upon her to accept that she is weak by nature, born to do domestic chores. Thus, they prevent her natural growth.
- (iv) The last two lines are ironic. They convey the idea that conditioning of women to accept their servility should begin quite easily so that they come to accept their role easily and naturally.
- (v) Women play the stereotypical role as decoration pieces by making themselves look attractive to men, and do everything to please them. They are tricked to perform this role by making them accept that they are weak, small and domesticated by nature.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) Woman in male-dominated world is referred to here. Earlier, the focus was on the bonsai tree. There is, thus, clear shift in the poem here. The bonsai tree, we come to know, stands for the woman who is prevented from her normal growth.
- (ii) In some cultures, like the Japanese, women's 'feet' were bound to make them small and look pretty. The binding of feet here symbolises limiting the woman's opportunities to grow.
- (iii) Women are made to look attractive to please men, as also to keep them under delusion that their prime duty is to look pretty and attractive.
- (iv) Men do everything to limit the physical, mental and spiritual growth of women. Ironically, they look to women for loving and healing touch. Without women, they feel small and limited.
- (v) The poet seems to lament the fact that women accept their subordinate role in society willingly and even cheerfully. She expects women to realize their potentialities and break all mental shackles which prevent their growth.

2. Skimbleshanks : The Railway Cat

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (b) | 3. (c) | 4. (a) | 5. (c) |
| 6. (c) | 7. (c) | 8. (b) | 9. (b) | 10. (a) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) One of the passengers on the train is the speaker. He observes that the train is about to start but Skimble, the cat, its incharge, is missing. It is not normal.
- (ii) The Night Mail is ready to depart on its usual time. However, its incharge Skimble who is to give the signal is missing. All are in suspense about the whereabouts of Skimble.
- (iii) Skimble is never late. He comes to give signal to the train in time.
- (iv) Skimble who is to give signal to the train to leave is nowhere to be seen. The time of its departure is fast approaching. This causes commotion among all the passengers.
- (v) Skimble being the incharge of the train ensures that everything goes well on the train. He looks after the comforts of all passengers. He ensures that there is no lawlessness anywhere.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) The Night Mail was ready to depart but Skimble, its incharge was missing. Without his signal, the train would not leave. So there was restlessness among the passengers.
- (ii) The cat is no ordinary animal. He is called Skimble and is the official incharge of the Night Mail. It is he who supervises everything on the train.
- (iii) The train is heading for the northern part of the Northern Hemisphere. No particular city of its destination is mentioned because the cat's whole railway network seems to be crazy.
- (iv) The cat's watching the passengers 'without winking', drinking a cup of tea with a drop of scotch, and his parting remark 'I'll see you again' by waving his long tail are some of his amusing actions.
- (v) At times we feel that the cat does represent some dictator who keeps a constant eye on everybody and every action of theirs. This is confirmed when we come to know how the cat watches the face of each passenger and tries to know what they are thinking.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) Skimble, the cat, is most important on the Northern Mail. He is the incharge of the train. The train cannot depart without his signal. Thus it is he who supervises everything on the train.

- (ii) Skimble, the cat, watches all the passengers carefully. He has full control over everything going on in the train. His discreet presence everywhere reminds us of a dictator.
- (iii) Skimble, the incharge of the train supervises everything minutely. He does not allow chaos anywhere. Thus he ensures that nothing goes wrong on the train.
- (iv) The cat helps the passengers to get down. He waves his long brown tail which seems to say, "I'll see you again". Thus he sees off his passengers.
- (v) The cat, Skimble, is a serious, disciplined being. He wants a peaceful atmosphere and no disturbance for anyone. So he dislikes any hilarity and noisy merriment.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) 'The little den' indicates the small cabin in the train compartment. It is made cosy with a clean floor, clean bed and an adjustable light.
- (ii) In the small cabin of each compartment, called 'the little den', there is a comfortable bed to sleep in. There is an arrangement for adjustable light. A small basin is also provided for face washing. Moreover, there is a device to shut the window to prevent cold wind from outside.
- (iii) Skimble, ensures that all the passengers get a clean and peaceful surrounding, timely tea to their taste and have a sound, undisturbed sleep.
- (iv) Skimble is a very devoted and conscientious being. He is strict and watchful. He does not do anything wrong on the train in his charge.
- (v) The poet personifies the cat as a hilarious and agile creature. Some of his actions like watching the passengers without a wink, drinking tea with a drop of scotch to keep himself alert and waving his tail as a goodbye gesture are quite hilarious.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) The Night Mail was ready to depart but its incharge, Skimble, the cat, was missing. The train could not leave without his giving the signal. This made the passengers and the crew restless.
- (ii) The cat performs all his duties as a supervisor very efficiently. He ensures all comforts to the passengers. He made certain that nothing goes wrong during the journey.
- (iii) Skimble keeps a strict watch on everybody and everything. He does not allow any chaos. He looks after the needs of each and every passenger.
- (iv) The cat ensures a peaceful atmosphere. He makes sure that the passengers get timely tea according to their taste and have a good, undisturbed sleep.
- (v) The cat's watching of what each passenger thinks and does and his discreet presence everywhere makes us feel that he is not conceived as a mere feline creature. He reminds us of Big Brother in a dictatorship.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) The cat plays the role of the train supervisor. He ensures the timely departure of the train. He provides every comfort to the passengers. He has full control on everything and everybody on the train. He does not do anything wrong.
- (ii) The speaker views the role of the cat as an efficient supervisor, and perhaps as the Big Brother who watches and controls everything and everybody in his regime.
- (iii) The cat ensures a peaceful atmosphere and timely tea to them. He also makes sure that they have a nice, undisturbed sleep.
- (iv) The cat does not allow anyone to break any rule, make a noise or merriment and do anything that disturbs others.
- (v) The cat sees off the passengers by waving his long brown tail as if saying, "I'll see you again". The gesture seems to be amiable, not sinister.

3. I Remember, I Remember

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (c) | 3. (d) | 4. (b) | 5. (a) |
| 6. (c) | 7. (b) | 8. (a) | 9. (b) | 10. (b) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) The poet recalls his childhood in nostalgic mood. He laments the loss of his childhood as he feels the childhood period is a blissful period without cares and worries while the adulthood is full of stress and tension.
- (ii) The sun is presented as a living being. The memory of the window of his house through which it (the sun) would peep and wake him up punctually is associated with it.
- (iii) The poet wishes that he should have died in his childhood, as that would have prevented him from experiencing so much tension and stress of adulthood.
- (iv) The poet compares and contrasts the two periods of his life. His childhood was full of cheerfulness and freedom while his adulthood is full of despair, tension and boredom.
- (v) The poet views swinging in his childhood an act of sheer ecstasy and freedom. The rush of air he felt on his face then was as fresh as it must have been to the flying swallows.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) The poet has wished that he should have died in his childhood, because that was the only time when he was absolutely happy and tension free.
- (ii) Flowers, as seen by the poet in his childhood, looked so bright and dazzling as if they were made of light itself.

- (iii) Laburnum is a small tree with hanging bunches of yellow flowers. A laburnum was planted by the poet's brother. The poet feels excited that laburnum was still 'alive'.
- (iv) The poet's thrill as he moved on a swing in his childhood reminds us of childhood being a period of freedom.
- (v) The poet refers to the fir tree tops because in childhood he used to think that these tree tops were very close to the sky. That 'childish ignorance' he has lost at the cost of his so-called wisdom in his adulthood.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The poet's brother planted a laburnum on his birthday. That the plant was still living after many years was a matter of excitement to the poet.
- (ii) On the swing the poet as a child would feel ecstatic, thrilled and free.
- (iii) In childhood, one is totally happy, excited, curious and free from all cares and worries. In adulthood, one is full of tensions, anxieties and apprehensions. In childhood one is ignorant. In adulthood one gains knowledge but loses natural cheerfulness and flights of fancy.
- (iv) In adulthood the poet's life is full of the fever of cares and worries, which no cool waters in the summer pools can bring down. In other words, adulthood cares and worries are inevitable and cannot be done away with.
- (v) Yes, the poet wants to escape from the present harsh realities because he always feels tense and worried.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) The poet recalls his childhood in a sentimental and nostalgic state of mind. The cares and worries of adulthood has made him nostalgic about his childhood when life was quite cheerful and carefree.
- (ii) The childhood viewpoint was that the tops of fir trees were so tall as to touch the sky.
- (iii) The poet views his adult wisdom no better than his childhood ignorance. With his so-called wisdom he now finds himself more distant from heaven than he was in his boyhood.
- (iv) The poet finds little joy in the realization that now as a grown man he is more distant from God than he was as a boy.
- (v) The rhyme scheme used here is abcbdefe.

4. A Doctor's Journal Entry for August 6, 1945

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (c) | 3. (a) | 4. (d) | 5. (b) |
| 6. (a) | 7. (a) | 8. (b) | 9. (c) | 10. (b) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) The speaker is a doctor. He was in the garden of his house. The pleasant morning, calm, beautiful and warm, pleased him.
- (ii) Suddenly strong flashes, one after the other, appeared. The thought of magnesium flares came across the speaker's mind. He could not think that they were flashes before the nuclear explosion.
- (iii) The walls and the roof collapsed into timber and debris. The speaker's clothes just disappeared.
- (iv) The speaker called his wife aloud in panic. He feared she was no more.
- (v) The doctor was badly injured. His right side was bleeding. His cheek was torn. The artery in his neck seemed to have punctured. His wife was frightened and bloodstained. Her elbow seemed to have been dislocated.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) A nuclear bomb had exploded that calm morning, causing all-round destruction, killing and injuring a large number of people.
- (ii) The doctor noticed that the right side of his body was bleeding. His cheek was torn. A sharp piece of glass had pierced his body. He feared the artery in his neck had been punctured.
- (iii) The doctor thought he would die as a result of excessive blood loss due to the injury to his artery in the neck.
- (iv) The doctor decided to come out of their house. As he and his wife came out of their house, they fell, tripped by the head of a dead person.
- (v) The speaker's nakedness should have been a cause of shame to himself. However, he felt no shame as he was totally dazed and numbed.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The speaker was in the garden of his house. He was afraid for his life because blood was gushing out of his artery in the neck.
- (ii) As his wife was in a very bad condition, the speaker had to assure her that they would be fine.
- (iii) On the way they saw horrible scenes. A house collapsed before their eyes. There was a dead man crushed by a gate. A fire rose from the debris and was soon spread by the wind.
- (iv) The doctor was so dazed and numbed that he felt no shame at his nakedness.
- (v) The doctor noticed that the wounded people were heading towards the hospital with outstretched arms to avoid touching the painful wounds causing more pain.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) The speaker was a doctor by profession. His wife was with him. They were going to the hospital to seek some medical aid as they were badly wounded.
- (ii) He was in a naked condition. He felt no shame as he was hardly conscious of his nakedness. He was quite dazed and benumbed.
- (iii) This statement reveals that the speaker was dazed and benumbed by the shock of the event. He was not in a normal state of mind, so he felt no shame.
- (iv) He wanted his wife to leave him and go ahead as he was unable to keep pace with her due to his injuries and weakness. Perhaps, he wanted to be alone for some time.
- (v) He observed that the woman and her child were both naked as if they had come straight from the bath.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) The doctor's wife did not want to leave him alone. So she was reluctant to go ahead.
- (ii) The statement reveals that though his mind was quite alert and agile, his body was quite weak and tired. Though his mind wanted him to run to the hospital for aid, his body failed him.
- (iii) The people looked like ghosts and scarecrows. They had injured and distorted bodies as a result of the nuclear explosion.
- (iv) Some people were moving with outstretched arms. They wanted to avoid touching their painful wounds with their arms, as the pain increased with any touch.
- (v) All the victims of the holocaust were in deep shock and silence. They were all in naked condition.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) On that fateful day a nuclear bomb had exploded. The speaker was badly injured and shocked. He found himself naked as all clothes on his body were gone.
- (ii) The speaker asked his wife to come out of the house immediately as the house could collapse any time.
- (iii) He observed that people who were badly injured were silently going towards the hospital for medical treatment. They were all shocked and naked. They looked like ghosts and scarecrows.
- (iv) The doctor's reaction was that the woman and her child seemed to have come from the bath. This was not appropriate reaction, as both were naked, like others. Their clothes had disappeared.
- (v) The shock of incident was so intense that all the people had gone into deep silence. It was the silence of shock. It was a mystery that even those who had painful injuries uttered no word or gave any cry of anguish.

5. The Night Mail

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (c) | 3. (a) | 4. (d) | 5. (d) |
| 6. (c) | 7. (d) | 8. (b) | 9. (a) | 10. (d) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) The Night Mail is moving towards Scotland. It carries letters, cheques, postal orders and other such documents.
- (ii) The mail train carries letters, for the rich as well as poor. It shows that the postal service is non-discriminating.
- (iii) The mail train starts its journey by a steady climb up the hills. It is a long journey through several regions.
- (iv) The train passes through hills, plains and moor land. It passes through farm houses. It passes by the narrow sea-strips and the industrial area of Glasgow.
- (v) The poet describes Glasgow area where huge buildings, machinery like cranes can be seen lying on open grassy fields.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) The figure of speech used in Line 1 is personification. Birds turn their heads, like human beings, to see what was coming.
- (ii) The train-coaches pulled along by the train are personified as persons with no expression or will of their own. They just follow where they are being lead.
- (iii) The sheep-dogs run along the track. They want the train to change its course but they fail in their intention.
- (iv) The sleeping people remain unaware of the passing train. They seem to have become habitual to its arrival.
- (v) The train carries many kinds of letters : love letters, official letters, job applications, letters of invitations, letters from relatives, condolence messages, so on and so forth.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The train is heading for Scotland. The train starts its slow but steady ascent as it passes through the hilly area. Though the slope is sharp, the train is on time.
- (ii) Glasgow is an industrial area. Huge cranes and furnaces have been set on the grassy lands. It shows how industries are fast coming up, harming the peaceful countryside and agriculture.
- (iii) The figure of speech used in line 5 is simile. Huge machinery and furnaces are compared to huge chessmen, pawns in the game of earning more and more money by the industrialists.

- (iv) The things carried by the train are letters of all kinds, messages, invitations, cheques, postal orders, etc.
- (v) The poet tells us that the people of Scotland are still asleep, having nightmares and pleasant dreams. When they wake up, they will long for letters carried by the train. They wait for some knock at the door by the postman.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) The train starts climbing hills slowly but steadily. It passes through hills, plains and the moor land.
- (ii) Glasgow is described as a region dotted with huge machinery and furnaces, as it is an industrial area.
- (iii) Besides letters the train carries many things, like cheques, postal orders, receipts and newspapers.
- (iv) The train is carrying official letters, love letters, letters of invitation, letters from relatives, etc.
- (v) People wait anxiously for the train because all of them long to be remembered by someone somewhere.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) The train has passed through various regions before reaching Glasgow. It has passed through hills, plains and moor land.
- (ii) The train is carrying letters of all kinds, cheques, postal orders, newspapers, etc.
- (iii) The line tells us that some letters are informal and friendly, some are spiteful, some are simply boring and some written in an adoring matter to some loved ones.
- (iv) Letters are written on paper of all colours – pink, violet, white, blue etc. Some of them are typed, some others are hand written with spelling mistakes. Each letter from the way it is written and the paper on which it is written reveals some trait of the letter writer – whether he/she is friendly, formal, careless, spiteful, etc.
- (v) Glasgow's people are still sleeping as the train reaches its destination. When they wake up, they expect to receive some letter. They anxiously wait for the knock of the postman at their door.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) During the night the train starts its journey by a slow but steady climb up the hills. Then it passes by farm houses in the plains and the moorland. Despite the difficult climb and slow speed, it is still on time.
- (ii) It has carried all types of letters, cheques, postal orders, newspapers, job applications, official receipts etc.
- (iii) The people have been dreaming of horrible monsters or friendly tea parties at famous restaurants – Cranston or Crawford. When they wake up, they expect to receive a letter from someone dear to them.

- (iv) Rhetorical question is used in the last line. It is used to make a point rather than to get an answer.
- (v) The poet emphasises the importance of human connections — the need to be remembered by someone — by asking a rhetorical question.

Treasure Chest : A Collection of Short Stories

1. Bonku Babu's Friend

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|----------|-----------|------------|----------|---------|
| (i) (d) | (ii) (d) | (iii) (b) | (iv) (c) | (v) (d) |
| (vi) (b) | (vii) (a) | (viii) (d) | (ix) (c) | (x) (c) |
| (xi) (c) | | | | |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) It was difficult for the students to imagine what Bonku Babu would say or do if he got cross. It was so because it had never happened i.e., Bonku had never lost his temper.
- (ii) The tradition of teasing Bonku Babu continued among the students even though the old batch of students was replaced by the new batch of students.
- (iii) Some students drew his cartoon on the blackboard; some others put glue on his chair, or they lit a chasing rocket and set it off behind Bonku Babu on the night of Kali Puja.
- (iv) Normally Bonku Babu did not get upset by the pranks of students, but on certain occasions he condemned the student with the words.
“Shame on you, boys!”
- (v) Bonku Babu was a sheepish fellow who never lost his temper. Although the students teased him yet he kept his temper under control.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) When the topic of ghosts came up Bonku Babu boldly declared that he was not afraid of ghosts.
- (ii) Bonku’s declaration that he was not afraid of ghosts gave the regulars a golden opportunity to put his boldness to test. They planned to send one man disguised as a ghost to frighten Bonku Babu.
- (iii) The lean, thin figure that attacked Bonku and landed on his back was actually one of the friends of the regulars. He had smeared black ink over itself to give the impression of being an apparition. It was done to frighten Bonku.
- (iv) Bonku could not recognise the man who was pretending to be an apparition because he had smeared black ink all over his body and his face.

- (v) Bonku Babu was injured as a result of this encounter with the apparition who had landed on his back. His neck ached for three days. Moreover in this encounter Bonku's new Kurta was torn. It also had black stains all over.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) Dirty jokes were played on Bonku Babu by his students. Someone drew his cartoon on the blackboard; some other one put glue on his chair. In the house of Sripati Babu the regulars played jokes on him. One of them pretended to be a ghost to frighten Bonku.
- (ii) Bonku Babu was afraid of Sripati Babu who was an influential lawyer. Bonku feared if he did not come his friend Sripati would mind it. So he came to these meetings.
- (iii) Bonku was so much afraid of Sripati Majumdar because the latter was an important man in the school committee and in the village. Bonku could not afford to annoy him at any cost.
- (iv) Bonku Babu tried to keep away from the group because all the regulars treated him disrespectfully. They humiliated him even without any provocation. This was too much for him. So he tried to stay away from the group.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) Sripati Babu had said that if someone from a different planet came, he would certainly not land on this god forsaken place. Aliens are quite sensible. If an alien comes on land he would land in some western country. All agreed to it.
- (ii) He wanted to make Bonku a butt of ridicule. So he nudged Nidhu Babu and commented that the alien would certainly like to come to the place where there is a unique specimen like Bonku Babu. By nudging Nidhu Babu he got his silent support.
- (iii) No, he does not mean it. He speaks in ironical tone. He means the opposite of what he says. He implies that no alien would come to a place where a man like Bonku lives.
- (iv) According to Ram Karni Bonku would be a suitable creature for keeping in a museum or in a zoo. This comment is made to humiliate Bonku Babu.
- (v) Speakers participating in the discussion are mean fellows who have decided to target Bonku Babu for their humiliating remarks. They are taking undue advantage of simplicity and diffidence of Bonku Babu.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) Bonku Babu did not reply to these remarks because he was by nature gentle, cowardly and diffident. He did not want to use such derogatory words for anyone though he felt that all of them had their shortcomings.
- (ii) Bonku thought that Bhairav Chakravarty's eyes were like those of a tortoise. Bhairav was talking in such a tone but he himself deserved to be kept in a zoo.

- (iii) Bonku thought that a zoo could be filled up by transporting all the specimens of Sripati Babu because they had looks like those of animals. Sripati's chin looked like that of a camel; Bhairav's eyes were like the eyes of a tortoise. Nidhu looked like a rat, Ramkanai like a goat and Chandi looked like a fritter mouse.
- (iv) Bonku had come to the meeting, hoping to enjoy himself in the company of Sripati Babu and his friends. He had certainly not expected this type of humiliating treatment from them. He felt pained.
- (v) Ramkanai commented that it was a moonless night. Moreover it was saturday, very auspicious for ghosts and spooks. The comment was made to remind all the persons what had happened earlier when Bonku was attacked by a spook. This comment made everyone laugh.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) The light referred to in the second line is the light which Bonku saw in the middle of the bamboo grove. Near a small pond, a large area was glowing with pink light. The light was coming from an object which looked like a glass bowl turned upside down.
- (ii) Bonku saw a dull light shining on every branch and every leaf. Down below, the area behind the pond was lit by a much stronger light. Bonku thought that fire had broken out but he was wrong as the light was still.
- (iii) The ground behind the pond was lit by a very strong pink light. It appeared that fire had broken out there. But it was not fire, it was the light coming from an object which looked like a big glass bowl turned upside down.
- (iv) Bonku's ears began to ring because he heard a loud humming sound. It was a long steady noise which could not be stopped. Actually it was the sound coming from the strange object that had landed there.
- (v) Bonku Babu moved forward to have a better look at the object due to his curiosity. But suddenly he felt as if an electric current had passed through his body. He was rendered completely immobile.

PASSAGE 7

- (i) An alien came out of that strange object. First his head looking like a smooth ball, came out. Then came out the body of the alien.
- (ii) The alien appeared to be a weird creature. His arms and legs were surprisingly thin. Except his head, his body was covered with shiny, pink outfit.
- (iii) Instead of ears, the alien had tiny holes on each side of his head.
- (iv) On the face of the alien there were two holes, where there should have been a nose. He had a gaping hole instead of a mouth. His eyes were round and bright yellow. They seemed to be glowing in the dark.
- (v) After coming out of object, the alien spoke to Bonku in a strange language. Bonku could not understand what the strange creature had said and what it meant. The alien,

observing that Bonku had not understood him, spoke in English. He asked Bonku who he was.

PASSAGE 8

- (i) The strange creature had told Bonku that he was supposed to go to Pluto but his instruments were not working properly, so he had to land on the earth.
- (ii) The strange creature told Bonku that he was Ang from the planet Craneous. He added that he was a far superior being than humans.
- (iii) Bonku was wonder struck when the creature said that he was a more superior being. Bonku wondered that he was only four feet tall and had thin limbs and weird face, still he claimed that he was superior to humans.
- (iv) The strange creature told Bonku that he knew 14000 languages whereas Bonku knew only three languages or more precisely two and a half. Thus he proved that he was superior to Bonku.
- (v) The strange creature i.e., the alien knew 14000 languages. There was no language in the solar system which he did not know. Moreover he told Bonku that he was 833 years old.

2. Oliver Asks for More

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

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|----------|-----------|------------|----------|---------|
| (i) (b) | (ii) (c) | (iii) (c) | (iv) (d) | (v) (c) |
| (vi) (b) | (vii) (a) | (viii) (c) | (ix) (b) | (x) (c) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) The poor people did not have any money. They did not have any place to live in. Such type of people lived in workhouses.
- (ii) The babies born in the workhouse were named from A to Z. The last one was named Swubble. The present one was named Twist, and the next one would be Unwin.
- (iii) Oliver's young mother was lying ill in the room. There was also a doctor and an old woman who were standing by her side.
- (iv) First, she wanted to have a look at her newly born child. Secondly, she did not want to live any more. These were her two wishes.
- (v) The old woman reacted by saying that she was too young to die. The doctor put the child in the arms of the dying mother.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) 'She' referred to in the first line is the dying young mother. Earlier, she had expressed the wish that she did not want to live any more.

- (ii) After kissing the baby the woman fell back dead. The words 'Poor dear' convey the feelings of pity and sympathy for the young unwed mother.
- (iii) The doctor was told that the baby's mother was brought to the workhouse the previous night. She was lying in the street. Nobody knew where she came from and where she was going.
- (iv) When the doctor looked at the dead woman's ringless hand, he easily concluded that she wasn't married. It was the usual story during those days.
- (v) When the doctor went away for dinner, the old woman sat in front of fire, took the baby in her lap and dressed it in very old clothes. Such clothes were used for those babies who were born in workhouses.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The organisers of the workhouse were unable to find out who the baby's father was. They did not know even the name of his mother.
- (ii) Mr Bumble was an important officer in the town. He invented a name for the baby. The baby was given the name Oliver Twist.
- (iii) 'We' mentioned in the passage are the important persons of the town. They named the new babies in order from A to Z.
- (iv) Oliver looked pale, lean and thin at the age of nine. He looked so because he was underfed at the workhouse. He also didn't have warm clothes to cover his body.
- (v) The usual food of workhouse boys was thin soup thrice a day. However, Sunday used to be a special day when they received a piece of bread each.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) The master hit Oliver with a spoon because he had asked for more. In fact they were not permitted to do so.
- (ii) He called Mr Bumble for help. Hearing that Oliver had asked for more, Mr Bumble took him away and shut him in a dark room.
- (iii) This sentence is spoken in a ridiculous tone. It is thus spoken because it was quite unexpected of any boy to ask for more. The boys were expected to be satisfied with whatever little they were given.
- (iv) The notice said that five pounds would be given to anybody who would take Oliver Twist.
- (v) The boys in the working house were treated very badly. The house keepers like Mr Bumble were very callous. They exploited the boys. Nobody was expected to raise a voice against them.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) 'he' referred to in the first line is the doctor who was present by the side of the young woman when her son was born. She was lying ill at that time.
- (ii) The absence of ring on the finger shows that the young woman was unmarried. Her partner had deserted her at the crucial time.
- (iii) When 'he' had gone home, the old woman sat down on a chair in front of fire. Then she began to dress the baby.
- (iv) The newly born baby was dressed in very old clothes used for babies who were born in the workhouse.
- (v) The last line shows the society of that time in poor light. The affluent section of the society didn't bother about the poor and the destitute. They had no sympathy for these people and thus they openly flouted the Christian values.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) Oliver had mustered up courage to request for more soup as he still felt hungry. He did so at the behest of all the boys in the workhouse.
- (ii) Mr Bumble beat Oliver in front of everybody so that it would be an example for them. Then no body would dare ask for more.
- (iii) Oliver could not sleep in the darkness of the room at night. He was cold, lonely and frightened. Moreover, the stick wounds would not let him sleep.
- (iv) Mr Sowerberry was a lean and thin fellow who wore black clothes. He earned money by making coffins.
- (v) Mr Sowerberry informed Mr Bumble that he made coffins for two women who had died in the workhouse the previous night.

3. The Model Millionaire

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

- | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|----------|---------|
| (i) (b) | (ii) (c) | (iii) (b) | (iv) (c) | (v) (b) |
| (vi) (b) | (vii) (c) | (viii) (b) | (ix) (b) | (x) (b) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) 'He' referred to in the first line is the protagonist of the story i.e., Hughie Erskine. He was handsome with brown hair, clear cut profile and grey eyes.

- (ii) 'He' i.e. Hughie Erskine had various accomplishments to his credit. However, he lacked the quality of making money although he tried various businesses.
- (iii) Hughie's father had bequeathed him his cavalry sword and a History of the Peninsular War in fifteen volumes.
- (iv) Hughie had failed in all the ventures he had undertaken in order to sustain his life. The only means of sustenance now was 200 pounds allowed by an aunt.
- (v) 'He' is compared with a butterfly which is charming but a delicate insect. The comparison fits Hughie Erskine's personality. People talk about bulls and bears on the stock exchange indicating rise and fall of prices of different stocks.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) 'He' was good-looking with crisp brown hair, clear cut profile and grey eyes. In short he was a fascinating man who never said a bad thing to anybody.
- (ii) While in India, the colonel had lost his temper and his digestion and never recovered from either of them.
- (iii) Laura's father, a colonel desired that Hughie must have ten thousand pounds with him before thinking of his engagement with Laura. This was the hindrance.
- (iv) The colonel was extremely fond of Hughie. Still he did not allow him to marry his daughter because he was not satisfactorily settled in life.
- (v) The sentence : "and he was ready to kiss her shoe-strings" shows that 'he' was madly in love with Laura.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) 'he' referred to in the first line is the beggar-man whose painting Alan Trevor was making. He looked a strange fellow with a spotted face and a red ragged beard.
- (ii) 'he' dressed a rich man, Baron Hausberg, in such a manner that he looked like a perfect beggar. Moreover, the painting prepared by Hughie perfectly matched beggar's condition. It proved that whenever he took up the brush, he was a real master in his art.
- (iii) Hughie believed that a painter should know the people who are beautiful, are an artistic pleasure to look at and an intellectual repose to talk to.
- (iv) 'His' opinion about the beautiful people was that they should be people like Baron Hausberg who are ready to shed their ego and present themselves even as beggars to be represented in a painting.
- (v) According to him, people of fine, refined tastes and women who are appreciated by one and all are the ones who really rule the world.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) Hughie feels that a model too shows patience and suffers pain in the same way as the creator of a painting does. Thus he should have a percentage in its sale.

- (ii) A model has to sit or stand casually without bothering about the surroundings. On the other hand, a painter cannot create anything unique if he does not fully concentrate. So his work is more difficult than that of a model.
- (iii) The line brings forth a significant meaning. It means Art cannot attain glorious heights unless an artist puts his heart and soul into the creation of a work.
- (iv) A servant enters the studio. He has arrived to convey an important message to Alan Trevor that the frame maker wants to speak to him.
- (v) When Alan goes out, the beggar-man feels relieved. He feels tired as he has been standing in the same pose for a long time. So he occupies a wooden bench behind to take rest for some time.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) Hughie Erskine was moved by the old beggar-man's misery. He handed over a sovereign to him. The old man was taken aback and a smile spread across his dry lips.
- (ii) Hughie had done a great and noble act of human kindness and charity by giving a sovereign to Trevor's poor model. So when he left, he blushed a little at what he had done.
- (iii) Hughie narrated the incident to Laura how he had helped his friend's poor beggar-model. Laura was impressed by his noble gesture. However, she scolded him for his extravagance. The scolding was charming indeed as it came from his beloved Laura.
- (iv) Hughie had done an act of extreme human kindness by giving a gold coin to the poor beggar-model. Consequently, he was left with very little money and now, he could not afford a carriage. So he 'had to walk home'.
- (v) When Hughie met Alan at night at Palette Club, he wanted to know if he had finished his painting satisfactorily. That was the information Hughie wanted to have from Alan.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) The word 'him' used in the first line is for the model, Baron Hausberg. Hughie expects him to be at his home when he returns.
- (ii) Hughie had lots of old clothes at home and they were not of much use to him now. He intended to give those to the poor beggar-model as he was dressed in nothing but rags.
- (iii) When Hughie expressed his desire to donate his old clothes to Trevor's poor model, the latter replied that the poor man looked splendid in rags. Trevor is appreciating his model because he looked a model of perfect beggar.
- (iv) Hughie informed Trevor that lots of his old unused clothes were lying at his home. Now, in a further gesture of large heartedness, he wanted to offer those clothes to the poor man. This was the offer.
- (v) The rags worn by Trevor's model showed his poverty which melted Hughie's heart. However what looked poverty to Hughie, seemed a fascinating spectacle to Trevor because that gave him the look of a perfect beggar model.

PASSAGE 7

- (i) Hughie is under the impression that Trevor's old, beggar model is extremely poor. Hughie stuns him by conveying the information that the old man is one of the wealthiest men in Europe.
- (ii) Alan informs Hughie that the old man is in reality very affluent. He can buy all London. He has a house in every capital, dines in gold plates and can prevent Russia going to war. This is his financial prowess.
- (iii) Baron Hausberg is Alan's great friend because he buys all the paintings prepared by Alan and thus saves him from any kind of financial crisis.
- (iv) Baron Hausberg expressed his desire to be painted as a poor, wretched beggar. That was the work Baron Hausberg assigned to Alan Trevor.
- (v) The rags worn by the 'old beggar' did not belong to him. Infact that was an old suit which Trevor had bought while he was in Spain.

4. The Home-Coming

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

- | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|----------|---------|
| (i) (c) | (ii) (b) | (iii) (a) | (iv) (b) | (v) (d) |
| (vi) (d) | (vii) (b) | (viii) (c) | (ix) (d) | (x) (c) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) Phatik, the ring-leader of the village boys, thought of a new plan to make mischief. It was regarding a heavy piece of log.
- (ii) The log was lying on the mud-flat of the river. It was lying there for future use. It was to be shaped into a mast for a boat.
- (iii) Phatik decided that all the village boys would work together to displace the log from its original place. Then they would roll it away into the river water.
- (iv) The act of mischief by the village boys would anger and surprise the owner of the piece of heavy wood. They would enjoy by doing this.
- (v) It was Phatik's younger brother Makhan who posed an obstacle to carrying out the mischievous plan. He walked up to the log and sat down silently on the log.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) As all the boys pushed log into the river water, Makhan fell into the mud. As they shouted with delight, Makhan got up, scratched Phatik's face, kicked him and went away home, crying.
- (ii) A middle aged man, with grey hair and dark mustache, stepped on shore. Phatik came to know later on that this man was in fact his maternal uncle.

- (iii) The 'man' asked Phatik where the Chakravortis lived. The boy pointed in one direction vaguely as he continued to chew grass. No, his reply "over there" wasn't satisfactory.
- (iv) Phatik was of the opinion that everybody at home was biased against him. So his behaviour was rude with the members of his family and he repeated it with the stranger too although it was uncalled for.
- (v) It was a servant who came down from home. He told Phatik that his mother wanted him but he refused to move. The servant, a strong man, was forced to pick him up roughly and carry him away.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) The grey haired stranger referred to here in Bishamber, the maternal uncle of Phatik.
- (ii) Phatik's mother was angry because of Phatik's behaviour. He had beaten Makhan and pushed her aside when she tried to stop him.
- (iii) She welcomed her brother warmly. She bowed to the ground and touched his feet respectfully.
- (iv) While the stranger i.e. Bishamber was in Bombay, his sister i.e. Phatik's mother had lost her husband.
- (v) As soon as Bishamber came back to Calcutta he made enquiries about his sister. When he learnt that she had lost her husband, he came to meet her. This shows that he was a caring brother.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) 'they' referred to in the first line are Phatik and his maternal uncle Bishamber. They had just arrived from the village.
- (ii) Phatik met his aunt for the first time. She wasn't pleased to see him. It meant unnecessary addition to her family.
- (iii) Phatik's aunt thought she was already burdened with the responsibility of her own three sons. The addition of another boy terribly upset her. So she was unhappy.
- (iv) Phatik's aunt thought that it was an act of indiscretion to bring him to Calcutta. He should have thought carefully before taking such a step.
- (v) The impression the reader gets regarding Phatik's aunt is she seems to be of an irritable nature. She is not ready to adjust herself to the new situation of looking after the fourth boy of fourteen. It is impossible to shower affection on a grown up boy than as on a little boy.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) The biggest nuisance is a boy at the age of fourteen. It is so because he is neither ornamental nor useful.

- (ii) When a boy of fourteen talks like a grown up person, he is called impertinent. He is asked not to meddle with the affairs of grown up persons.
- (iii) At the crucial age of fourteen he grows out of clothes with indecent haste i.e., his clothes becomes tight. His voice becomes hoarse and he breaks and quivers. His face too becomes unattractive, suddenly growing angular.
- (iv) Shortcomings of a boy of fourteen cannot be excused because he is expected to behave like a grown up person. Even his unavoidable lapses cannot be tolerated. Since he grows up physically, he is also expected to grow up mentally at the same pace.
- (v) At this age a young lad's heart most craves for recognition and love. If anyone shows him consideration, he becomes his devoted slave.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) If a boy of fourteen is continuously scolded, he feels insulted. It becomes torture to live in a strange home with strange people.
- (ii) For a boy of fourteen, the height of bliss is to live in his own home. Moreover, receiving the kind looks of women in new home is like living in paradise.
- (iii) Phatik, being a sensitive boy of fourteen, soon realised that he was unwelcome in his aunt's house. It was insulting for him to be rebuked repeatedly by an elderly lady.
- (iv) Whenever his aunt asked him to do something, he would overdo it. Then his aunt would tell him not to act foolishly. He should rather pay attention to his lessons.
- (v) A boy of fourteen is habitual of living in his home in a particular manner. He is comfortable in dealing with his mother and other members of the family. Adjustment with new people in a new home becomes difficult for him. No wonder, he becomes a big nuisance for them.

PASSAGE 7

- (i) Phatik was the most backward boy in the school. He could never reply teacher's questions. He patiently suffered blows on his back like an overladen ass.
- (ii) Just as an ass suffers silently when his master puts extra weight on its back without eliciting any protest, similar was Phatik's way of enduring punishment.
- (iii) The above line clearly shows that Phatik was deeply disillusioned with city life at his aunt's house. He constantly thought of his village by standing wistfully by the window and gazed at the roofs of the distant houses.
- (iv) While the other children played on the open terrace of any roof, Phatik's heart was filled with deep pain. On such occasions, he longed for his village, home and friends with whom he indulged in acts of mischief.
- (v) Gathering all his courage one day, Phatik asked his uncle when he could go home. His uncle's reply was that he would take him there during holidays.

PASSAGE 8

- (i) Phatik's aunt said that he had brought a lot of trouble for the family. It would be appropriate if he was sent home. On hearing this, he began to weep.
- (ii) 'they' referred to in the second line are the two constables who brought Phatik back to his aunt's home. Phatik had tried to run away to his village on his own.
- (iii) Phatik had high fever and a doctor was called in. He opened his eyes, looked towards the ceiling and asked his uncle if holidays had come. He was restless to go home. Bishamber was moved and tears came into his eyes.
- (iv) Bishamber sat by Phatik through the night, holding his lean and burning hands in his own. It shows his attachment and affection for his sister's son.
- (v) Phatik was half-conscious because of high fever. He had become delirious due to it. In such a state, he dreamt of his mother who was always ready to beat him although not without reason.

5. The Boy Who Broke the Bank

(a) Text-based Multiple Choice Questions

- | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|----------|---------|
| (i) (c) | (ii) (d) | (iii) (a) | (iv) (c) | (v) (c) |
| (vi) (c) | (vii) (d) | (viii) (a) | (ix) (d) | (x) (b) |

(b) Comprehension Passages

PASSAGE 1

- (i) Nathu is a sweeper boy who works in Pipalnagar bank. He was grumbling because he had not been paid his regular salary although it was twentieth of the month.
- (ii) No, the dust did not disappear. After rising in a cloud above Nathu's head, it settled down again on the steps.
- (iii) As Nathu was banging the pan against the dustbin, Sitaram the washerman's son happened to come. Sitaram was going to deliver the freshly pressed clothes to the owners in their houses.
- (iv) Sitaram who passed by asked Nathu if he was still annoyed because the bank people were still refusing to pay him an increment of two rupees a month. Nathu was asking for it since long.
- (v) Nathu is very much upset. He was asking for an increment of two rupees a month but he had not been given his regular salary only though it was 20th of the month. He was thinking of leaving the job of the bank.

PASSAGE 2

- (i) Nathu had told Sitaram that he had not received his regular pay though it was 20th of the month and he was thinking of leaving the job.

- (ii) Before leaving Sitaram assured Nathu that he would keep a lookout for any job that might suit him. Since Nathu had casually talked about leaving the job, he forgot about it easily.
- (iii) Mrs Srivastava is referred to as the lady of the house. Sitaram had heard by chance that Mrs Srivastava was in need of a sweeper. At once he said that he knew of a sweeper boy who was looking for work.
- (iv) Sitaram told Mrs Srivastava that he knew of a sweeper boy who was looking for a job. He also told her that the sweeper boy could start from the next month. At present he was working with the bank but they were not giving him salary so he wanted to leave.
- (v) Mrs Srivastava was very happy to receive this information. She asked Sitaram to tell the sweeper boy to meet her next day.

PASSAGE 3

- (i) 'She' referred to in the first line is Mrs Bhushan, a friend of Mrs Srivastava. She showed Mrs Srivastava a sample of the cloth she was going to buy.
- (ii) Mrs Srivastava told her that Seth Govind Ram's bank was in a bad way. The bank employees were not being paid their regular salaries.
- (iii) The sweeper boy referred to here is Nathu. His complaint was that he had not been given his regular pay although it was 20th of the month.
- (iv) Mrs Bhushan was shocked to receive this information. She concluded from this that if the bank could not pay the sweeper his salary, it must be in a bad way. None of the other employees would be getting their pay.
- (v) It appears that Mrs Bhushan is a non-serious talkative woman who cannot digest anything. She is a rumour monger. As soon as she receives this information she tells her husband that Pipalnagar bank is about to go bankrupt.

PASSAGE 4

- (i) Mrs Bhushan finally found her husband sitting in front of Kamal Kishore's photographic shop. He was talking with Kamal Kishore.
- (ii) Mr Bhushan had not been able to find his wife because she was in the habit of going from one shop to another. She never remained stationary in one shop.
- (iii) Mrs Bhushan told her husband that Pipalnagar bank was about to go bankrupt. She had learnt it from Mrs Srivastava that one of the employees was not paid his salary. From this she had concluded that the bank was about to fail.
- (iv) On receiving this information Kamal Kishore called out to barber Deep Chand who was his friend. He passed on this information to his friend because he had an account in the bank. Kamal wanted that his friend should be on his guard.
- (v) No, Kamal Kishore did not have an account in the bank. Immediately, he passed on this information to his barber friend Deep Chand because he had account in Pipalnagar bank.

PASSAGE 5

- (i) Kamal Kishore's neighbour referred to here is Deep Chand, the barber. By profession Deep Chand is a barber.
- (ii) When Deep Chand received the latest news about the bank, he was cutting the hair of an elderly gentleman. He was so startled that his hand shook. As a result of it he nipped his customer's right ear.
- (iii) When the elderly customer's ear was nipped he cried with pain and distress. He was pained because of the cut and distressed because he had heard the awful news. He ran across the road to the general merchant's shop to enquire on telephone if the news was true.
- (iv) In this shop the elderly man dialled Seth Govind Ram. The Seth was not at home, he was in Kashmir. He concluded that the Seth had run away.
- (v) Actually, Seth Govind Ram was in Kashmir enjoying a holiday. He knew nothing about what had happened in Pipalnagar.

PASSAGE 6

- (i) There had never been floods, earthquakes or drought in Pipalnagar. This shows that life in this village had been smooth.
- (ii) Some people boasted of their farsightedness saying that they had already taken their money out of the bank. Some others boasted of their wisdom saying that they never put their money in the bank.
- (iii) According to the people the bank had collapsed due to the excesses indulged in by Seth Govind Ram.
- (iv) We feel that the people of Pipalnagar are illiterate rumour mongers. In the absence of truth, they resort to different kinds of conjectures.
- (v) People who had taken out their money and those who had never put their money in the bank were feeling happy at the collapse of the bank.

PASSAGE 7

- (i) The word 'it' stands for the 'money' which people had put in the bank. The panic-stricken customers thought that if they did not get their money back now, they would never get it.
- (ii) Some angry customer or mischief monger would have thrown the brick that broke the window pane.
- (iii) Nathu felt disgusted when he saw the refuse and the piece of glass and stones on the steps of the bank. He raised his hands in horror as he had to clean it.
- (iv) He is feeling so upset because it is his duty to clean the refuse and the steps of the bank. He is sad because it has increased his work.
- (v) Soon after Sitaram came and talked to Nathu. He asked Nathu if he was ready to take up a new job from the first of the next month.