



I. A Baker From Goa

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Oral Comprehension Check

1. What are the elders in Goa nostalgic about?

Answer:

The elders in Goa were nostalgic about the good old Portuguese days, the Portuguese, and their famous loaves of bread.

2. Is bread-making still popular in Goa? How do you know?

Answer:

Yes, bread-making is still popular in Goa. The author has described about the existence of time-old furnaces and their still burning fire. The Goan society is still having moulders, bread mixers and bakers.

3. What is the baker called?

Answer:

The bakers are known as pader.

4. When would the baker come everyday? Why did the children run to meet him?

Answer:

The baker came twice every day, once when he set out in the morning on his selling round, and then again, when he returned after emptying his huge basket. The children ran to meet him not because of their love of the loaf, which was bought by the maid-servant of the house. They actually longed for the bread-bangles, which they chose carefully. Sometimes, it was a sweet bread of special make.

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Oral Comprehension Check

1. Match the following. What is a must

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (i) as marriage gifts? | - cakes and bolinhas |
| (ii) for a party or a feast? | - sweet bread called bol |
| (iii) for a daughter's engagement? | - bread |
| (iv) for Christmas? | - sandwiches |

Answer:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (i) as marriage gifts? | - sweet bread called bol |
| (ii) for a party or a feast? | - bread |
| (iii) for a daughter's engagement? | - sandwiches |

(iv) for Christmas?

- cakes and bolinhas

2. What did the bakers wear: (i) in the Portuguese days? (ii) when the author was young?

Answer:

(i) In the Portuguese days, the bakers had a peculiar dress known as the kabai. It was a single-piece long frock reaching down to the knees.

(ii) When the author was young, he saw the bakers wearing a shirt and trousers, which were shorter than full-length ones and longer than half pants.

3. Who invites the comment – “he is dressed like a pader”? Why?

Answer:

Anyone who wears a half-pant which reaches just below the knees invites the comment that “he is dressed like a pader”. This was so because the bakers were known as pader and they wore such half pants.

4. Where were the monthly accounts of the baker recorded?

Answer:

The monthly accounts of the baker were recorded on some wall in pencil.

5. What does a ‘jackfruit-like appearance’ mean?

Answer:

A ‘jackfruit-like appearance’ means a plump physique. Such a physique was linked to the bakers because they never starved. Baking was a profitable profession. The baker, his family, and his servants always looked happy and prosperous and had a ‘jackfruit-like appearance’.

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1. Which of these statements are correct?

(i) The pader was an important person in the village in old times.

(ii) Paders still exist in Goan villages.

(iii) The paders went away with the Portuguese.

(iv) The paders continue to wear a single-piece long frock.

(v) Bread and cakes were an integral part of Goan life in the old days.

(vi) Traditional bread-baking is still a very profitable business.

(vii) Paders and their families starve in the present times.

Answer:

(i) Correct

(ii) Correct

(iii) Incorrect. The paders still exist in Goan villages.

(iv) Incorrect. The paders wear shirts, and trousers that are shorter than full-length ones and longer than half pants.

(v) Incorrect. Bread and cakes are still an integral part of Goan life.

(vi) Correct

(vii) Incorrect. Baking is still a very profitable business in Goa.

2. Is bread an important part of Goan life? How do you know this?

Answer:

Bread is an important part of Goan life. Marriage gifts are meaningless without the sweet bread known as the bol. For a party, bread is a must, while for Christmas, cakes and bolinhas are a must. Sandwiches must be prepared by the lady of the house on her daughter’s engagement. The author says that everybody loves the fragrance of loaves. The elders were given loaves and the children were given bread-bangles, which they longed for. Also, the fact that bakery is a profitable profession shows that the love for bread is enormous in Goa.

3. Tick the right answer. What is the tone of the author when he

says the following?

- (i) The thud and the jingle of the traditional baker's bamboo can still be heard in some places. (nostalgic, hopeful, sad)
- (ii) Maybe the father is not alive but the son still carries on the family profession. (nostalgic, hopeful, sad)
- (iii) I still recall the typical fragrance of those loaves. (nostalgic, hopeful, naughty)
- (iv) The tiger never brushed his teeth. Hot tea could wash and clean up everything so nicely, after all. (naughty, angry, funny)
- (v) Cakes and bolinhas are a must for Christmas as well as other festivals. (sad, hopeful, matter-of-fact)
- (vi) The baker and his family never starved. They always looked happy and prosperous. (matter-of-fact, hopeful, sad)

Answer:

- (i) Nostalgic
- (ii) Nostalgic
- (iii) Nostalgic
- (iv) Funny
- (v) Matter-of-fact
- (vi) Matter-of-fact

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