



## B. Long Answer Type Questions

Question 1. What do you learn about the system of education in old British schools from the play 'The Browning Version'?

Answer: 1<sup>st</sup> old British schools much stress was laid on the study of classical languages—Latin and Greek. Students of the lower fifth form were made to learn a classic play like the Agamemnon. Since the stress was on the acquisition of language, the students found it dis-interesting and very unpleasant. They could specialise only after completing fifth form.

There was a system of punishment. For a simple error one had to repeat fifty lines. Students were also "kept in" or called for 'Extra work'. They were mortally afraid of teachers like Mr Crocker-Harris who would abide by rules and show no human feelings. At the same time, the school had teachers who were sadists and others who would break the rules and tell results to the students. Students like Tap low were afraid of hard masters like Mr Crocker-Harris, still they liked him.

Question 2. What impression do you form about Mr Crocker-Harris on the basis of reading the play 'The Browning Version'?

Answer: Whatever we learn about Mr Crocker-Harris is through reactions of other characters and their comments on him. Even this method of indirect presentation helps us to gather a fair picture of the strict and stern middle-aged master. He is in a class by himself and is totally unlike the other teachers. He is a man of principles and sticks to the rules. Unlike other teachers, he does not divulge the results of the form to the students, since it is the domain of the headmaster. He is not a sadist. He does not beat the students. Even then the students are mortally afraid of him. It is because he is quite strict and shows no emotion, even of anger. He remains calm and composed. He teaches classical languages Greek and Latin. Even his jokes are classical. Students fail to understand them. He is duty conscious. He is leaving the school at the end of term and is quite busy on the last day in his own affairs, still he asks Tap low to come in for 'extra work'. In short, he impresses us with his fine qualities of head and heart.

Question 3. "This humorous piece is an extract from a play." What according to you makes this extract humorous?

Answer: The play presents a funny situation. Frank, a young science teacher, finds sixteen year old Tap low waiting for his master Mr Crocker-Harris. This lower fifth form student has been asked to come in to do extra work on the last day of the school. Mr Crocker-Harris is leaving the school for good the next day. Being quite busy in settling his own affairs, he has not yet arrived there. Tap low's fears of adverse remarks about his result make us smile. The interaction between Mr Frank and Tap low is quite amusing. The young science teacher encourages Tap low's comments on Crocker-Harris. The manner in which Tap low imitates his master's voice, manner of speaking and diction are quite amusing. The sudden arrival of Millie Crocker Harris in the midst of an imitation of a joke surprises Frank and makes Tap low nervous. Their reactions are quite amusing. Tap low's unwillingness to leave the place and his fears of consequences in case his master returns before his arrival seem genuine but funny. He feels relieved only when Millie

offers to take the blame. All these actions seen exaggerated and funny.

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