

TEXTBOOK- FOOTPRINTS WITHOUT FEET

UNIT 1- A Triumph of Surgery - by James Herriot

ABOUT THE AUTHOR- James Alfred Wight is popular as James Herriot, a British veterinary surgeon and writer too. He has written this story 'A triumph of Surgery.'

Summary –The story starts when Mrs Pumphrey, a rich and emotional lady takes her pet dog, Tricki for a walk outside. Dr. Herriot, a veterinary doctor saw the dog and is in a shock as the dog looks like a bloated sausage having leg at each end. He had blood- red and rheumy eyes. His tongue lolled from his jaws. Mrs. Pumphrey told the doctor that as Tricki looked listless, she gave him extras between meals. The narrator, Mr. Herriot, advised her to cut Tricki's food right down and to give him more exercise. But Mrs Pumphrey is not able to refuse the dog.

Soon Tricki fell sick and the doctor was called. Tricki had left eating and kept vomiting and panting. The doctor made a plan and told Mrs. Pumphrey that Tricki must undergo treatment of the ailment in his hospital, even knowing the fact that Mrs. Pumphrey will never leave the dog.

He took the dog along and puts a bed for him in his surgery. For two days, the dog did not move much and also did not eat anything but was given plenty of water to drink. On the third day he wanted to go outside and there he started playing with the bigger dogs. The dog is left with all other dogs so that it can play and get the much needed physical exercise. He had to compete with other dogs to get food, otherwise, he had to remain hungry. He also licked the bowls of other dogs to eat the remaining food. His condition started improving rapidly.

Mrs. Pumphrey started sending eggs to the hospital as she thought that Tricki needed energy foods after recovery. But Mr. Herriot and his partners started eating those eggs as morning breakfast. Also, for improving Trick's blood, Mrs. Pumphrey started sending wine in bottles. But again, Mr. Herriot consumed those. Not only this, when she started sending brandy in bottles they consumed that also.

When Tricki was at home he was having a luxurious life and was overfed. But when he came to the doctor he became all right due to the natural lifestyle. After a period of enough physical activities, the dog loses much of its fat and becomes hale and

hearty. The doctor did not give him any medical treatment . All day,he frolicked with the other dogs cheerfully and started convalescing rapidly.

Mrs. Pumphrey enquired about Tricki on phone many times a day. She was suffering from the pangs of his separation. After few days, the doctor took a wise decision and called up Mrs. Pumphrey as she was much worried, for taking Tricki back home as he had recovered. She reached the surgery by car.

The doctor brought Tricki in his arms Tricki was very happy to see his mistress and jumped into the car. When Mrs. Pumphrey saw her active dog, she thanked the doctor and felt that it was a triumph of surgery, that his surgery had been successful as Tricki was now cured.

The story signifies that the parents should not be indulgent which may harm their children.

A TRIUMPH OF SURGERY - JAMES HERRIOT

TEXTBOOK PG. NO. 1 AND 3

Q.1 Why is Mrs. Pumphrey worried about Tricki?

Ans. Mrs. Pumphrey is worried about Tricki because she feels he is suffering from a serious health issue such as malnutrition, as he becomes listless and seems to have no energy. Before being hospitalized, he would not eat anything and had refused even his favourite dishes. He had bouts of vomiting . He spent all his time lying on a rug and panting. He did not want to go for walks or do anything.

Q.2 What does Mrs. Pumphrey do to help him? Is she wise in this?

Ans. Mrs. Pumphrey starts giving Tricki malt, cod-liver oil and Horlicks , apart from his main meals to improve his condition. She also serves him cream cakes and chocolates. He has no exercise. She is not wise in doing so as overfeeding worsens his condition and made him very fat and lazy. Later when he had _bouts of vomiting and refused to eat anything, she called the doctor for help which was a wise decision as the doctor suggested that Tricki should be hospitalized and the doctor was successful in curing Tricki.

Q.3 Who does 'I' refer to in this story?

Ans. 'I' refers to the narrator, Mr. James Herriot, a veterinary surgeon.

Q.4 Is the narrator as rich as Tricki's mistress?

Ans. No, the narrator is not as rich as Mrs. Pumphrey. We can say so as he seems fascinated by how lavishly Mrs. Pumphrey spends on the maintenance of the dog. He is unusually surprised by the enriching items she sends for Tricki, as he cannot afford them for himself.

Q.5 How does he treat the dog?

Ans. The doctor kept Tricki under strict observation, gave Tricki no food, but plenty of water for two days. At the end of the second day, he started showing interest in his surroundings and began mixing with the other dogs. On the third day, the doctor saw Tricki licking the empty supper bowls of the other dogs and was pleased to see him run to have his meal. From then on, his progress was rapid. He had no medical treatment of any kind but was set free to run and play with the other dogs for physical activities to improve his health.

Q.6 Why is he tempted to keep Tricki on as a permanent guest?

Ans. Mr. Herriot was tempted to keep Tricki on as a permanent guest because of the good food and wine he was enjoying in Tricki's name. He did not want to lose the luxurious inflow of fresh eggs, wine and brandy.

Q.7 Why does Mrs. Pumphrey think that the dog's recovery is 'a triumph of surgery'?

Ans. In two weeks, Tricki had recovered completely and had been transformed into a hard-muscled animal. On seeing her, he leaped into her lap, started licking her face and barking in excitement. Tears of joy and gratitude rolled in her eyes. She declared Tricki's recovery as 'a triumph of surgery' as his revival without any medical treatment was a great achievement, according to her.

Q.8. What made James Herriot expect a call from Mrs. Pumphrey? (CBSE 2015)

Ans. James Herriot's encounter (meeting) with Mrs. Pumphrey and Tricki made him expect a call for help. He was sure that the extra diet and no physical activity would soon put Tricki's health in danger. And just as anticipated (expected), Mrs. Pumphrey called the vet a few days later.

Q.9. Do you think Tricki was enjoying his stay at the hospital? (CBSE 2014)

Ans. Yes, Tricki was definitely enjoying his stay at the hospital. He had befriended the gang of shabby household dogs. He had a new joy in being bowled over, trampled on and squashed. He had become more energetic playing and running along with the other dogs. He was having a great time.

Q.10. VALUE BASED QUESTION (8 MARKS)

A) Pen down incidences in support of values one should inculcate from Mr. James Herriot. (CBSE 2015)

Ans. Mr. Herriot was a capable veterinary surgeon who treated Tricki. He was a very compassionate doctor and a wise human being. He showed his capabilities almost immediately when he advised Mrs. Pumphrey to put Tricki on a strict diet after understanding his symptoms. He can also be said to be tactful as he knew exactly how to free Tricki from the spoiling love of Mrs. Pumphrey for his betterment. He adopts a practical approach to treat Tricki instead of operating upon him. He successfully allays Mrs. Pumphrey's anxiety about Tricki's recovery patiently. He was in all a good human being and a successful professional.

One can inculcate the habits and characteristics of Mr. James Herriot as he was an animal lover and knew that over pampering could make someone idle and dull. He loved his profession and he treated his patient with love and care.

B) Do you think parents like Mrs. Pumphrey exist? If yes, is it a good thing to pamper children? Why or why not? (CBSE 2012)

Ans. Yes, parents like Mrs. Pumphrey definitely exist. These people spoil their children by making sure all their demands are met. They spoil their children in the name of love and care. They not only overpamper them but also spoil their social habits. This kind of behavior is very harmful for children. It can sow the seeds of greed and dependency on parents and hinders (blocks) them from becoming responsible citizens. They never learn to value anything as they get everything very easily without any hard work. Overpampered children often fail to face the hardships of life. Pampering children in excess is not just bad for humans but also is bad for animals as we see in the story 'A Triumph of Surgery'.

Q.11 Read the extracts and answer the questions

A) I tried to sound severe. “You must harden your heart and keep him on a strict diet” (CBSE 2014)

a) Why did the speaker try to sound severe?

Ans. The speaker tried to sound severe to make Mrs. Pumphrey take his advice seriously and act on it.

b) For whom was the advice given and why?

Ans. The advice was given for Tricki because he had become obese and listless.

c) Find the word in the extract which has the same meaning as ‘serious’.

Ans. The word is ‘severe’.

d) What is the antonym (opposite) of hardened.?

Ans. The opposite word is softened.

B) “Poor old lad”, I said. “ You haven’t a kick in you but I think I know a cure for you.”

a) Why does the speaker say “Poor old lad”?

Ans. The speaker addresses Tricki so because he is unwell and listless.

b) What cure did the speaker know?

Ans. The speaker knew that the cure for Tricki’s illness is to put him on a strict diet.

c) What is the meaning of ‘a kick’ in the extract?

Ans. The phrase means any alertness.

d) Find out the word from the extract which means ‘heal’.

Ans The word is ‘cure’.