Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

Assignment: The Purple Children

1. How has the author described the young girl?
2. What reason did the girl give for being out late in the night?
3. What made the sentry allow the girl through the gate?
4. What happened after the girl found the cat? What did the sentry and the girl hear?
5. Mention the series of actions that took place till the sentry called the Major.
6. What was the Major’s observation about the fugitive’s work?
7. What does the Major decide to find out the fugitive?
8. What happened after the Major marched in the hall of assembled senior forms?
9. ‘The sentry looked at the dye in is turn, and was filled with regret.’ What does this line signify?

**Answer Key**

1. She was slight, young not more than fifteen years old. She wore a black frock and her thin small wrists issued pale and strange from the sleeves. Her face was silvery oval and had dark shining eyes.

2. The girl told the sentry that she was in the house but her cat got out when she went to bring wood and that she couldn’t catch her.

3. The sentry thought the little girl was only a kind and was harmless. He also thought that the girl could possibly not make trouble if he allowed her through the gate. The girl also convinced the sentry by telling him no one would find out about it and that she would go home if she could not find the cat.

4. After the girl found the cat, she looked up at the sentry with a wild smile and thanked him for his kind gesture. She kept looking at him still and did not move when they both heard the sudden light impact of feet as though someone had dropped from the high wall of Town Hall.

5. After hearing the sound, the sentry spun round and went up the cellar steps and saw the figure of a boy run towards the gate. The sentry ran after him and heard the girl’s scream, who ran past him and flung the cat at him, as he was readying the gun. He fired the gun blindly and the spray splattered darkly over her cheek and her spread hands but was successful in running into the darkness with her partner.

6. The Major thought that the fugitive had worked extremely fast as he had left about ten feet of the flagstaff coiled round with barbed wire. The Major also said that the fugitive must have spent a longer time practising the movements involved before he could reproduce them at that speed.

7. The Major decides to find the girl first as they will find the boy eventually. The Major decides to try the grammar school for the same and then visit the homes of all those girls who do not answer the register.

8. There were fifty-three young heads with marvellous unanimity. The Major was looking for a marked outcast but he saw that all the delicate, olive faces were splattered from forehead to chin with the resplendent purple of royalty and mourning.

9. The sentry was filled with regret as he fired the gun at the girl. He was sympathetic towards the fugitives as he understood their side of the fight to free themselves, and felt bad about spraying the dye which made the girl easily recognisable. Though he had sympathy for the fugitives, he was bound to his duty as a sentry which made him fire the gun.