Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

Assignment: Battle of Blenheim

Q. Answer the following:

1. Who were Kaspar’s grandchildren? What were they doing?

Ans: Kaspar had two grandchildren, Wilhelmine and Peterkin. Wilhelmine was playing in the green lawn beside the cottage. Peterkin was rolling some large, round object which he had found near the rivulet.

1. What was Old Kaspar doing one summer evening?

Ans: Old Kaspar was sitting in the sun before his cottage door one summer evening.

1. The old man mentions ‘that great victory’. Which victory does he refer to? Why does he call it so?

Ans: ‘That great victory’ refers to the Battle of Blenheim. The old man had been too young to remember anything about the battle but he knows that his family home, like those of thousands of others, had been destroyed. He also talks about the aftermath of the war. Inspite of that he keeps saying that it was a great victory because that is what his mind, like the others of his generation, has been indoctrinated with the belief that it was a great victory.

1. What did Old Kaspar’s grandson find? Where did he find it?

Ans: Old Kaspar’s grandson, Peterkin found a smooth, large and round object near the rivulet. He found the object near the rivulet while he was playing there.

1. What was Kaspar’s reaction when he saw the object found by his grandson?

Ans: When Old Kaspar saw the object which Peterkin had found, he shook his head and gave a natural sigh. He said that it was the skull of someone who had died fighting in the battle of Blenheim.

1. What did the children want to know from their grandfather?

Ans: The children wanted to know more about the war, from their grandfather. When their grandfather told them that the war had resulted in destruction and death of several, both children could not understand what good came out of all the doom. They asked their grandfather the reason of the battle.

1. In which three ways has the battle of Blenheim been described?

Ans: The three ways in which the battle of Blenheim has been described by Old Kaspar is ‘a great victory’, ‘a famous victory’ and a ‘great fight.’

1. Highlight the destruction caused by war in the poem ‘After Blenheim.’

Ans: Kaspar gave a very vivid description caused by the battle. He spoke about the way his family home was destroyed and they had to flee to save their lives. He said that even women who had just given birth as well as their new born babies were ruthlessly killed. He further goes on to tell about the way bodies of soldiers were strewn across the battlefield and lay rotting in the sun.

1. Who was Duke of Marlbro and who was Prince Eugene? Why were they praised?

Ans: Duke of Marlbro was from the English army and Prince Eugene was of Savoy. They were praised after the battle as they were the heroes of the battle of Blenheim and as they had played a very vital role in defeating their enemy- the French.

1. Explain the lines ‘With fire and sword the country round was wasted far and wide.’

Ans: These lines indicate that the entire countryside of Blenheim was devastated due to the fierce battle. The enemy rampaged around with their deadly weapons killing civilians alike setting fire to many homes and uprooting people across the town of Blenheim.

1. What was Old Kaspar’s granddaughter’s reaction to the description of the battle? What did Kaspar say?

Ans: When Old Kaspar gave a description about the destruction caused by the battle, Wilhelmine reacted by saying that it was a very wicked thing referring to the praise given for so much killing that had happened. Kaspar said that it was not wicked at all and such consequences were a normal part of war.

1. What do the last two lines of the poem signify?

Ans: The last two lines signify the fact that the generation to which the old man belonged to never challenged the futility of the war. They easily accepted that it was a necessary evil inspite of all the harm it caused to humanity.

1. What is the message conveyed through this poem?

Ans: The message conveyed through the poem is that war brings nothing but destruction and it is futile. No war ever brings good but only leads to loss of life and property and sorrow.