Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

**NOTES : Darjeeling**

Answer the following:

1. **What decision was taken by the author about his travel plans? What reaction did his decision get from others?**

Ans: The author decided to take the train all the way to Darjeeling from Bombay. This decision was applauded by everyone as the best way to travel when one is on a holiday. The Department of Tourism too approved of his decision and hand him the brochures. The travel agents who had arranged their bookings expressed their delight and viewed the author as if he was the first to undertake such a journey by train.

1. **What did the travel agent at Calcutta do?**

Ans: The travel agent at Calcutta delivered the tickets to the author for the onward journey to Jalpaiguri and wished him a happy journey. He further said that the author would be enjoying the onward journey by travelling by the tiny mountain railway from Jalpaiguri to Darjeeling.

1. **What did the author conclude about his fellow passengers? What were they arguing about?**

Ans: The author concluded that his fellow passengers seemed to be frequent travellers on that line. They debated and argued about the time that the author would have at hand to board the tiny train from Jalpaiguri to Darjeeling. They all had different opinions.

1. **Who gave the author the correct information about the mountain train? What was it ?**

Ans: It was a coolie who had given correct information to the author about the mountain train. He informed the author that there was no tiny train to Darjeeling at all as a disastrous landslide a couple of months ago had ripped the tracks away.

1. **How did the author finally go to Darjeeling from Jalpaiguri? How long did it take? Did he enjoy the beauty of the place during the journey?**

Ans: The author finally took a taxi to Darjeeling from Jalpaiguri. It took three hours to reach Darjeeling. The author was not able to enjoy the beauty of the place during the journey because most of the time the landscape was covered in mist. Once a while sunlight would tear through the mist and the author could get a glimpse of the whole mountainside with dark green fir trees and houses neatly stacked one over another. But before the author could savour the beauty , the vision would disappear as if a drawing was erased by a giant India- rubber.

1. **What did the author learn as they drove towards their destination?**

Ans: As the author drove towards their destination, he learned that the mist in Darjeeling was very unpredictable. It would let him have a glimpse of a village and then reveal nothing for a long time. Suddenly a bit of a tree , hut , goats were visible in a blur like an underdeveloped photograph but again disappear abruptly before the author could even realise it.

1. **While the author was engaged in his observation what did the driver do? What did he say?**

Ans: While the author was engaged in observing the scenario and the unpredictable demeanour of the mist, the driver slowed down the car and brought it to a stop. He excitedly pointed out to a house perched at a height saying that it was Tenzing’s house.

1. **Why was the driver excited? What was Tenzing doing?**

Ans: When the driver saw Tenzing, he was extremely excited and delightedly informed the author who the person was. Tenzing was cutting grass in the garden. When he saw the author and the driver, he broke into a smile which was warm and sincere.

1. **What does the author mean by ‘wonderful surroundings for a deserving hero’?**

Ans. The author was happy to see Tenzing’s house on his way to Darjeeling. Tenzing’s had a wonderful house perched at a height and its lawn and flower-beds were sloping down to the road. Tenzing was one of the first two individuals to reach Mt. Everest. This was a heroic deed and the fact that he was staying among mountains seemed to be a befitting place for him. Thus the author says the above line.

1. **What happened when the author finally reached the tourist lodge ?**

Ans: It had begun to drizzle when the author was close to his destination but by the time he did reach the Government Tourist Lodge, it had started pouring. The lobby was full of people all dressed up but not able to go due the rain.

1. **What did he see in the lobby of the lodge? What did he learn about the agony of the tourists?**

Ans: The author saw that the lobby of the lodge was full of people all dressed up but held back from enjoying the beauty of Darjeeling due to the rain. They were lounging on the sofa sets looking bored. There was a Mr Bose who told the author how unreliable the weather had proved- the rain had not ceased since the day he had reached Darjeeling with his family for a holiday. The other tourists told the author that they had com there in heavy rain a few days earlier and had remained in their rooms and were returning home the following day.

1. **Express the views of the author about Kanchenjunga.**

Ans: The morning after the author reached Darjeeling, the rain had stopped and there wasn’t even a trace of rain or mist. Kanchenjunga appeared in dazzling majesty against the blue sky looking no less than a prima donna who is fleeting by.

1. **What was the ultimate destination in Darjeeling? Describe the place briefly.**

Ans: In Darjeeling the ultimate destination was the Mall. It was half an acre of flat surface rimmed with park benches on which local beggars and holiday tycoons relaxed side by side. The place was filled with young men, pretty girls, Buddhist monks counting their prayer beads , pink-cheeked children and stout gentlemen having a ride on skinny , undersized ponies.

1. **Why was the author finding it difficult to go on his usual long brisk walks at the Mall?**

Ans: As the writer became a frequent visitor to the Mall during his long stay in Darjeeling, he had become a known face among the people there. He would grin on meeting the Tibetan carpet-seller, the pastry maker , the girls knitting sweaters for sale and the photographer who would take one’s picture with Kanchenjunga in the background. Thus his walks were now interrupted on meeting known people so he was finding it difficult to go on his usual long brisk walks.

1. **What is a must when a tourist is in Darjeeling? Why?**

Ans: When a tourist is in Darjeeling , it is a must to visit Tiger Hill. There one sees the dawn breaking and tinting the Himalayan snow ranges pink. This is a indescribably beautiful view that has made Tiger Hill world –famous.

1. **What does one have to do to take a glimpse of the breath-taking site of Tiger Hill? What is the risk involved?**

Ans: In order to take a glimpse of the breath taking site of the Tiger Hill at dawn, one has to get into a jeep at three in the morning in the freezing cold and drive in an unspeakable bad –if not downright dangerous – road to the hill top. After risking the danger involved and taking all the pain, one might not be fortunate enough to watch the spectacular sunrise as the mist plays spoilsport appearing out of the blue and sending the tourist back home disappointed.