

**DATE :** 30.03.2020

**SUBJECT :** English (Honey Comb)

**CLASS:** VII

**BY:** Mrs Sheetal Barmaiya

### L-1 THREE QUESTIONS

**BY Leo Tolstoy**

**Introduction to the author:** Leo Tolstoy was a renowned writer, known for his moralistic views and humane beliefs. He wrote many great short stories and most of them revolve around ethical principles and values by which every person should live. In a sense, everything related to the search for the true meaning of life.

**Theme :** The story takes the form of a parable, and it concerns a king, who wants to find the answers to what he considers the three most important questions in life.

**Characters:** the king , the hermit , the wounded man

#### **Summary**

Once there was a king, who thought that to be a successful ruler, he must know the answer of three questions. The questions were:

What is the right time to begin something?

Which people should he listen to?

Which is the most important thing for him to do?

The king sent messengers in all directions to find people who could answer these questions. Many wise men came, but their answers were all different. For the first question, some of them felt that the king should follow a timetable, while there were others, who felt that it is not possible to decide the right time for doing something in advance.

Similarly, for second question, some wise men said that the king should follow his councillors, while others thought it was the priest, whom the king should listen to. Then there were those who felt that it was the doctor, the king should obey while there were many in favour of the soldiers. For the third question, some wise men said science should be the highest priority for the king while others said religion.

The king was not satisfied with these answers as they were so different from each other. He didn't give any reward to anyone and thought to seek consultation of a wise hermit who lived in the jungle. The hermit will see only ordinary people so the king dressed up like a normal man, leaving behind his horse

and his bodyguards and went to the hermit's hut. The hermit was an old man and was busy digging the ground in front of his house. The king told the hermit that he has come in search of answers for his three questions and repeated them.

The hermit didn't respond and continued digging the ground. Some time passed and the king seeing the hermit to be tired offered his help. The king continued digging the ground till evening. In the evening, the king again requested the hermit to answer his questions, but at that moment someone came running towards the hermit's hut.

The king then went to look for the hermit who was sowing seeds in the beds that they have dug the day before. He requested the hermit for the last time to answer his questions. To this, the hermit replied that the king has already found the answers. If he would not have pitied hermit's condition the day before, then the man would have attacked him on his way and he might have lost his life. So, the most important time was when he was digging the bed and the hermit was the most important man.

A man came running towards them with a hand on his wounded stomach. The king cleaned the wound and dressed the wound controlling the flow of blood. The man felt better and asked for some water. Hermit and the king took the man inside the house. The man was lying quiet inside the house and the tired king too fell asleep on the ground.

In the morning, when the king opened his eyes, he saw the wounded man asking for forgiveness. The man told the king that he had come to take revenge from him because the king had killed his brother and had taken away all his property. He wanted to kill the king while returning from the hermit's place.

But the king's bodyguard found him and wounded him. He would have died if the king would not have helped him. He regretted his thoughts of killing the king and promised to be his faithful servant. The king was pleased to turn his enemy into a friend. He forgave him and returned all his property. When the wounded man arrived, the most important time was when he was caring for him else he would have died of his wounds without the two of them, reconciling for their acts. So at that moment, the wounded man was the most important man and nursing him was the most important business. The hermit said to the man that the most important time is 'Now' because it is the only time, when we have the power to act. The most important person at a particular moment is we ourselves because future is unknown to all of us and there is always an uncertainty about meeting anyone else. The most important job is to do good to others because we have been sent to this world for this noble cause.

**Students kindly read thoroughly the given summary.**

**Kindly note down the following word meanings & Q/A in your English copy.**

**Word meaning:**

1. Council: a group of people chosen to give advice or to make rules
2. Councillors: members of the council
3. Hermit: a person who lives alone and leads a simple life
4. Wood/woods: a small forest

5. Affairs: things ;matters; business
6. Beds: small patches of ground for plants
7. Fainted: lost consciousness
8. Re-dressed: dressed again
9. Seized: took by force
10. Faithful: loyal and true

**Answer the following questions:**

Q1. Why was the king advised to go to magicians?

Ans. Some of the wise men thought in order to decide the right time for doing something, it is necessary to look into the future and only magicians could do that. So they advised the king to go to magicians.

Q2. In answer to the second question, whose advice did the people say would be important to the king?

Ans. In answer to the second question, some people suggested to seek the advice of councillors, others said the priest ,a few others said the doctor and yet others said his soldiers.

Q3. What suggestions were made in answer to the third question?

Ans. In answer to the third question, some said science was the most important business, while others believed it was fighting, and yet others believed religious worship.

Q4. Did the wise men win the reward? If not, why not?

Ans. No, the wise men didn't win the reward because their answers were so different from each other and the king was not satisfied with their answers.

Q5. How did the king and the hermit help the wounded man?

Ans. The king washed the wound and covered the wound of the man with his handkerchief and kept on dressing it until the bleeding stopped completely. The king also offered the wounded man water to drink. The king with the help of the hermit, brought the wounded man inside the hut and allowed the man to spend his night in the hut. This is how they helped the wounded man.

Q6(i) . Who was the bearded man?

Ans. The bearded man was the enemy of the king. He wanted to take revenge from the king because the king put his brother to death and seized all his property.

Q6 (ii). Why did he ask for the king's forgiveness?

Ans. The bearded asked for the king's forgiveness because he wanted to kill the king but the king has saved his life. He was grateful to the king now.

Q7 . The king forgave the bearded man. What did he do to show his forgiveness?

Ans. The king showed his forgiveness by promising the man that he would send his own doctor and servants to look after him and also promised to return him all his property.

Q8. What were the hermit's answer to the three questions? Write each answer separately. Which answer do you like the most?

Ans. The most important time, the hermit said is 'Now'. It is the only time when one has any power to act .

The most necessary person is the person you are with at a particular moment.

The most important business is to do that person good, because we were sent into this world for that purpose alone.

I like the third answer the most because doing someone in need is like serving God and it makes us a good person and brings a sense of satisfaction and contentment.

### **COMPREHENSION CHECK (PAGE 10)**

Q1. Why did the king wanted to know answers to three questions?

Ans. The king wanted to know the answers to the three questions because he thought he would never fail once he knew the answers to the three questions.

\*\*\*\*\*

# POEM -1 THE SQUIRREL

By Mildred Bowers Armstrong

He wore a question mark for tail,

An overcoat of gray,

He sat up straight to eat a nut.

He liked to tease and play,

And if we ran around his tree,

He went the other way.

## SUMMARY

In the poem 'The Squirrel' the poet Mildred Bowers Armstrong describes a squirrel that he observes in his garden. The poet describes how the squirrel, covered in gray fur, sits in an upright position on a tree branch eating a nut. His tail looks like a question mark because of its bent shape. The happy and lively squirrel loves to play with the poet and her friends. Whenever they ran around his tree, he would run to the other side of the tree. The poet tells us about the nature of the squirrel that it is innocently naughty and likes to tease anyone who comes near her.

## Working with the Poem

### Answer the following Questions:

Q1. Why does the poet say the squirrel “wore a question mark for tail”? How would you describe its tail?

Ans. The poet says that a squirrel wore a question mark for tail because its tail look like a question mark when it sits on the ground eating a nut. I will describe its tail as if it is a stick having a hook at the top.

Q2. Do we usually say that an animal ‘wears’ a tail? What do we say?

Ans. No, we do not usually say that an animal wears a tail .We usually say an animal has a tail.

Q3. “He liked to tease and play”. Who is teasing whom? How?

Ans. The squirrel is teasing the poet and his friends. When the poet and his friends ran around his tree, he went the other way.

\*\*\*\*\*