

Class : VIII

Book : It so happened...

Chapter : 1  
How The Camel Got His Hump  
By- Rudyard kipling

**Summary-**

In the beginning, when the world was new and the animals were just beginning to work for Man, there was a camel who lived in the middle of a Howling Desert. He did not want to work. He ate sticks and thorns. He said "Humph" when anyone spoke to him.

The Horse went to him on Monday morning, he asked the Camel to come out and trot. But the Camel said "Humph! " and the Horse told the Man about it. Thereafter, the Dog and the Ox also came to call him to do some work. He said to them too " Humph! ". Both the animals went away sadly.

At the end of the day, the Man called the Horse, the Dog and the Ox. He asked them to work double- time in order to compensate for the Camel's work. The three animals got very angry with the Camel. They held a panchayat at the edge of the desert . There came the Djinn, after hearing the story of the three animals, the Djinn went to meet the Camel. The Djinn found the Camel in the desert who was looking at his reflection in water. The Djinn asked him to work but the Camel said "Humph! ", only. As soon as he said this he saw that his beautiful back was puffing up. The Camel told the Djinn that he could not work with that humph on his back. The Djinn told him he himself was responsible for bringing this humph on his back. He also told him that because the Camel did not work for three days, his humph would enable him to work continuously for three days. However, till date the Camel has not been able to catch up with the work he missed out at the beginning of the world.

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**QUESTION 1 : What task, do you think, were assigned to the dog and the ox?**

**ANSWER :**

The dog was assigned the task of fetching and carrying sticks, while the ox was assigned the task of ploughing the fields .

**QUESTION 2 :Why did the camel live in the middle of the desert?**

**ANSWER :**

The camel lived in the middle of the desert because he did not want to do any work. He merely ate sticks, thorns and prickles.

**QUESTION 3: What made the dog, the horse and the ox very angry?**

**ANSWER :**

The dog, the horse and the ox became very angry with the camel because the man had asked the three animals to do the camel's share of work along with their own work. This meant double work for three of them.

**QUESTION 4: How did the Djinn know the horse was complaining against the camel?**

**ANSWER :**

The description of the camel given by the horse, "long neck and long legs" made it easier for the Djinn to understand that the horse was talking about the camel. The Djinn was also in charge of all deserts and was therefore familiar with all the animals.

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**QUESTION 1: The camel was looking at his own reflection in the pool. What does it suggest to you about the camel?**

**ANSWER :**

The camel was looking at his own reflection in the pool shows that he was proud of his appearance, especially his back. He liked admiring himself.

**QUESTION 2: The camel said, 'Humph' repeatedly. How did it affect him?**

**ANSWER :**

When the camel said, 'Humph' repeatedly, despite the Djinn's warning, his back puffed up into a big hump.

**QUESTION 3: What according to the Djinn, was the use of the 'humph'?**

**ANSWER :**

According to the Djinn the hump would help the camel in storing the food and use it during his continuous work for a long period.

**QUESTION 4: "... he has never yet learnt to behave". In the light of this, what is the writer's opinion about the camel?**

**ANSWER:**

According to the writer, the camel has not yet learnt to behave. He is still unwilling to do any work. After he got the hump, the Djinn asked him to go out of the desert to help the other three animals but he was still unable to complete his pending work of those three days which he had missed and thus he has not yet changed his behaviour and habit till this day.

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**QUESTION 1: Can this story be factually true?**

**ANSWER :**

No, this story cannot be factually true. This story is a fable. It has animals as characters to impart a moral lesson.

**QUESTION 2: What according to you, is the story about?**

**ANSWER:**

The story teaches us through the character of the camel why everyone should do his/her share of work seriously.

The story also teaches us not to be like the camel that got his hump as a punishment.

**QUESTION 3:** What did you do over the weekend? Were you generally active or idle? Do yourself.

**QUESTION 4:** There are broadly two categories of workers- those who prefer to do today what they can do tomorrow and those who prefer to do tomorrow what they can do today. In which category do you belong? Do yourself.

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Class : VIII

Book : *It so happened...*

**Chapter 2**  
**Children at work**  
By- Geeta Wolf

The story "Children at work" is based on the real life experiences of slum children. This story teaches us to be empathetic with these children and help them in every possible way. The story revolves around a boy, named Velu. He was a small boy of 11 years. His father was a drunkard and used to beat him. Velu was fed up with his situation and decided to run away from home. He walked all day in Kannur and later on he boarded the Kanyakumari Express. He got into the train without a ticket and got off the train at Chennai Central Station.

Velu had never seen so many people earlier, the crowd and the way the people looked upon him, made him miserable. He sat on a bench at the platform with his small bundle beside him. He was hungry and exhausted. He had not eaten anything for two days except some peanuts and jaggery.



A small girl named Jaya asked Velu if he was new to the town. Initially, Velu was reluctant as she was a stranger to him. Jaya told him that he would not get food merely by sitting there. She offered him help in finding food. Velu had no option other than to follow her. Both had to walk a great deal. Finally, they reached a marriage hall. There was a big garbage bin, Jaya found two bananas and a vada. She gave a banana and a vada to Velu. At first, Velu refused to take the food from the bin, later he decided to take the food because he could not control his hunger any further. They ate together and Velu felt a little better.



Jaya took Velu to her hut which was made of broken metal sheets and other useless materials like old tyres, plastics and bricks. Jaya told Velu that she was a ragpicker and if Velu wanted to make money, he could do the same job.



Velu was not happy with the job but he decided to follow Jaya and work with her till he found a better job to sustain himself.

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**QUESTION 1: Velu stood on the platform but he felt "as if he was still on a moving train". Why?**

**ANSWER:**

Velu stood on the platform but felt as if he was still on a moving train because he was tired and exhausted. His legs were shaking after the long journey to Chennai. Usually, the effect of a moving train stays for some time after the long journey.

**QUESTION 2: What made him feel miserable?**

ANSWER:

Velu felt miserable and exhausted because he had run away from his village two days ago and had not eaten anything except some peanuts and a piece of jaggery for the last two days.

QUESTION 3: (i) Velu travelled without a ticket. Why?

ANSWER :

Velu travelled without a ticket because he had no money to buy a ticket.

(ii) How did he escape the ticket collector's attention?

ANSWER;

He escaped the ticket collector's attention because luckily the ticket collector did not come to the unreserved compartment.

QUESTION 4: Why had Velu run away from home?

ANSWER:

Velu had run away from home because his father used to beat him everyday. His father would also spend the money earned by Velu and his sister on drinking.

QUESTION 5: Why did he decide to follow the 'strange' girl?

ANSWER :

He decided to follow the 'strange' girl because he did not know where to go and what to do. He thought it was better to follow the girl who seemed friendly, rather than getting lost.

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QUESTION 1: Can Velu read Tamil and English? How do you know?

ANSWER:

Velu can read only Tamil but not English. He fails to read the signboards in English but he manages to read the Tamil sign, Central Jail.

QUESTION 2: "If you are not careful, you will soon be counting bars there." the girl said.

(i) What is she referring to?

ANSWER : She was referring to the Central Jail.

(ii) What does she mean when she says, "If you are not careful..."? (She says something a little later which means the same.) Find that sentence.

ANSWER :

When she said, "If you are not careful... " to Velu, she meant that he should not get caught by the police. All he had to do was to stay away from the jail and not to do any foolish act and get caught by the policemen.

The sentence, "You don't have to do anything. Just don't get caught" tells the same thing.

QUESTION 3: (i) Where did the girl lead Velu to?

ANSWER :

The girl led Velu to the back of a wedding hall where a lot of left over food was thrown in a big garbage bin.

(ii)What did they get to eat?

ANSWER :

Velu got a banana and a vada while the girl got only one banana to eat.

QUESTION 4: What work did she do? Think of a one word answer.

ANSWER :

Ragpicking.

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QUESTION 1 :(i) What material are the 'strange' huts made out of?

ANSWER :

The 'strange' huts were made out of metal sheets, tyres, wood and plastic.

(ii) Why does Velu find them strange?

ANSWER :

(ii) Velu found the huts strange because in his village, the houses were made of mud and palm leaves. The huts he saw were made up of all sorts of things and looked as if they could fall at any moment.

QUESTION 2: What sort of things did Jaya and children like her collect and what did they do with those things?

ANSWER :

Jaya and the children like her collected paper, empty bottles, plastic and glass and sold all such stuff to Jam Bazaar Jaggu, who further sold it to a factory.

QUESTION 3: Is velu happy or unhappy to find work? Give a reason for your answer.

ANSWER :

Velu was unhappy to find work because he had not run away from home to dig through garbage bins. The only work he had ever done was weeding and taking cows out to graze. However, since he did not know Chennai too well, he decided to work as a ragpicker till the time he found a better job.

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QUESTION 1: Is Velu a smart boy? Which instances in the text show that he is or isn't?

ANSWER :

No, Velu was not a smart boy. He ran away from home, leaving his sisters, to escape his father's beating. He felt miserable at the station, when he found himself alone and hungry. He knew nothing about the place he had travelled to. He expected to find work in a farm, not knowing that there were no farms. He chose to follow Jaya without knowing anything about her. He accepted ragpicking because he was not fit for any other job.

**QUESTION 2: Do you think Jaya is a brave and sensitive child with a sense of humour? Find instances of her courage, kind nature and humour in the text.**

**ANSWER :**

Yes, Jaya is a brave and sensitive girl with a good sense of humour. She is a brave girl as she herself earns her livelihood by collecting discarded materials and selling them to a dealer. She is also a sensitive and kind girl as she helps Velu in every possible way. she arranges food for him and gives him a pair of shoes. She displays a good sense of humour when she calls the dirty trickling of water Buckingham Canal.

**QUESTION 3: What one throws away as waste may be valuable to others. Do you find this sentence meaningful in the context of this story? How?**

**ANSWER :**

Yes, the story 'Children at Work' shows that what one throws away as waste may be valuable to others. The empty bottles, paper and items of plastic are thrown out by the people. The ragpickers collect and sell these rubbish to some dealers and earn their livelihood. The waste is valuable and a blessing for them and their life depends upon it.

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