

DATE: 22.4.2020

SUBJECT: ENGLISH (HONEYCOMB)

CLASS: VII

L-3 GOPAL AND THE HILSA FISH

SUMMARY

It was the season for Hilsa fish and it was Hilsa that everyone is talking about. In the market fishmongers were selling only Hilsa fish luring customers to buy it. Even in the royal court, courtiers were talking about Hilsa.

This made the king lose his temper. He believed that no one could stop the people from talking about Hilsa fish not even Gopal, who was the wisest man in his court. The king challenged Gopal to buy a huge Hilsa fish and bring it to the palace without anyone asking him about it. Gopal accepted the challenge.

After a few days, Gopal shaved beard from half of his face and smeared ash on himself. He wore rags and looked disgraceful. His wife was shocked and asked him not to leave home like this, but Gopal kept on telling her that he was going to buy a huge Hilsa fish. She thought Gopal had gone mad. At the market Gopal bought a huge Hilsa fish and started walking towards the palace. No one noticed the fish, but everyone was looking at Gopal walking strangely with his shabby clothes. People called him mystic and mad.

He went to meet the king but was stopped by guards. He started dancing and singing loudly in front of the royal palace. The king ordered his guards to produce the man before him. Everyone in the court was shocked seeing Gopal dressed up like a mad. The king questioned Gopal about the reason for his weird attire. Gopal reminded the king about the challenge and told him that from the market to the royal palace, no one had asked him a single word about the Hilsa fish. The king burst into laughter and accepted that Gopal had done the impossible once more.

Working with the text.

Answer the following questions.

Q1. Why did the king want no more talk about the Hilsa fish?

Ans. The king did not want any more talk about the Hilsa-fish because it was the season for Hilsa-fish and no one could stop talking about it for even five months. He was getting annoyed with all the talk about Hilsa-fish.

Q2. What did the king ask Gopal to do to prove that he was clever?

Ans. In order to prove that he was clever, Gopal was asked to buy a huge Hilsa-fish and bring it to the palace without anyone asking anything about the fish.

Q3. What three things did Gopal do before he went to buy his Hilsa-fish?

Ans. Before he went to buy Hilsa-fish, Gopal half shaved his face, smeared himself with ash, and wore disgraceful rags.

Q4. How did Gopal get inside the palace to see the king after he had bought the fish?

Ans. After he had bought the fish, Gopal reached the palace and told the guards that he wanted to see the king. When the guards did not let him in, he began to dance and sing loudly. When the king heard this, and also the comments of the people about the man, he asked for the man to be brought before him.

Q5. Explain why no one seemed to be interested in talking about the Hilsa-fish which Gopal had brought.

Ans. No one seemed to be interested in talking about the Hilsa-fish which Gopal had bought because of Gopal's ridiculous appearance. Some people found him comical, others thought he was a madman, still others thought he was a mystic. They were so engrossed in discussing his appearance that the Hilsa-fish went unnoticed.

POEM-3 THE SHED

BY FRANK FLYNN

STANZA WISE EXPLANATION:

STANZA-1

There's a shed at the bottom of our garden
With a spider's web hanging across the door,
The hinges are rusty and creak in the wind,
When I'm in bed I lie and listen,
I'll open that door one day.

Explanation: The poet in these lines is describing a shed that is at the bottom of his garden. Hardly anybody goes inside the shed, therefore, the hinges or the door joints have become rusty and make a lot of noise whenever the wind makes them move. When the poet is peacefully lying in the bed, he sometimes hears noises from the shed. The poet wishes to be able to open the door of the shed some day.

STANZA-2

There's a dusty old window around at the side

With three cracked panes of glass,
I often think there's someone staring at me
Each time that I pass,
I'll peep through that window one day.

Explanation: The poet discusses how he wishes to stare inside the shed that has dusty old window on its side. Three glass panes of the window are broken. Whenever, the poet passes through the shed, he gets the feeling as if someone was staring at him. To find out, the poet wishes to peep inside the shed.

STANZA-3

My brother says there's a ghost in the shed
Who hides under the rotten floorboards,
And if I ever dare to set foot inside
He'll jump out and chop off my head,
But I'll take a peek one day.

Explanation: In this stanza, the poet's brother talks about the presence of the ghost inside the shed and warns the poet that if he went inside the shed, the ghost would chop off his head. However, this does not much frighten the poet. He still wished one day to step inside the shed and see for himself.

STANZA-4

I know that there isn't really a ghost,
My brother tells lies to keep the shed for his den;
There isn't anyone staring or making strange noises
And the spider has been gone from his web
Since I don't know when,
I'll go into that shed one day soon,
But not just yet..

Explanation: In this stanza, the poet seems to have grown enough to understand the truth and overcome his fear. He is able to understand that there is no ghost inside the shed. He understands that there is actually nobody inside the shed, who stares at him or makes those strange noises. The spider, too, is no longer there. His brother had been telling him lies because he wanted to retain the shed for

his own self. Therefore, very soon the poet would be able to set in foot inside the shed. However, he says that this can't happen immediately.

WORKING WITH THE POEM.

I. Answer the following questions:

(i) Who is the speaker in the poem?

Ans. It is not very clear, who the speaker is. Perhaps, the speaker is the poet himself.

(ii) Is she/he afraid or curious, or both?

Ans. The speaker seems to be both curious as well as afraid to go inside the shed.

He wants to find out what is inside the shed. At the same time, he is afraid because he thinks that strange voices could be heard from here and there is possibly a ghost, who lives inside the shed.

(iii) What is she/he planning to do soon?

Ans. She/ He is planning to go inside the shed some day soon.

(iv) " But not just yet..." suggests doubt, fear, hesitation, laziness or something else. Choose the word which seems right to you. Tell others why you chose it.

Ans. " But not just yet.." seems to suggests his hesitation due to lack of preparation. Though he was confident that there were no ghosts but still he was hesitant to go inside and thought that soon he will go inside the shed but not now.
