

Grade VII

Lesson 6. I Want Something in a Cage

Supplementary Reader

Soul of the Chapter

Mr Purcell and his Noisy Shop

Mr Purcell was a small and fussy man. He had red cheeks and a tight little stomach. He owned a pet shop, which sold cats, dogs, monkeys and birds. He also sold fish food and bird seeds along with showy and gilded cages. He considered himself to be professional man.

With so many pets and caged birds, there was an all pervading noise in Mr Purcell's shop: whispered twitters, sly rustling, squeals, cheeps and sudden squeaks. The customers who came to the shop would not mind the noise for they found several cute birds behind the cages. Mr Purcell could not but be proud of his collections.

The Day the Stranger Customer Came to his Shop

On the day when the strange customer came to the shop, Mr Purcell had followed the same old routine. It was a cold morning and the air was thick a grey frost. Mr Purcell was sitting on his high stool, reading his newspaper, when the strange customer entered the shop. Unlike the usual days, he did not hear the bell over the door jingle. Despite various noise in his shop, it had never happened that Mr Purcell did not hear the bell ring, the bell always jingled when a customer entered.

Every morning, after having opened the shop, Mr Purcell would place himself on a high stool and read the daily newspaper. In accordance with the different news items, Mr Purcell's face would reflect myriad emotions and expressions.

The Strange Customer

The moment the strange customer entered the shop, Mr Purcell knew that the customer disliked him. The man wore shiny shoes, but his suit though new was ill-fitted and cheap. He ignored the owner of the shop and cast a quick glance over the contents placed on the shelves. On being asked by Mr Purcell, the man said that he wanted "Something in a cage. Something that was small." Not bring very clear about what he wanted, Mr Purcell offered him a while rat. However, he turned it down saying that he wanted something that had wings.

The Price of the Bird and the Strange Questions

Mr Purcell, then, indicated birds and he selected two doves. On being asked about the price of the doves, Mr Purcell informed him that they were on sale for "fifty-five." The customer, however, brought out a five dollar notes and told Mr Purcell that was all he had. Mr Purcell realising that it was still a profitable deal, agreed to it. Mr Purcell handed over the cage with a pair of doves to his customer.

The strange customer, then, asked a very strange question to Mr Purcell. He asked Mr Purcell if he would know how much time he spent to earn five dollars. Mr Purcell, unable to answer, asked the customer to provide the details. The strange man told Mr Purcell that it took him ten years of hard labour to earn those five dollars. The man went on to say that in the place where he spent that time, one only manages to earn five dollars and a cheap suit along with a warning to never be caught again.

The Strange Art

Finally, Mr Purcell breathed a sigh of relief as his customer left. At the same time, staring out of the window, he saw his customer holding the cage above his shoulders and unlocking it. Mr Purcell saw his customer release both the doves, one after the other. Mr Purcell was shocked. A little while ago the customer had desperately wanted the doves and was negotiating so as to attain them. In the next moment, he released them, without a reflection. Mr Purcell could not understand this strange act, but felt vaguely insulted.

NCERT FOLDER

Check 1

1. Write 'True' or 'False' against each of following statement.

- (i) Mr Purcell sold birds, cats, dogs and monkeys_____.
- (ii) He was very concerned about the well-being of the birds and animals in his shop_____.
- (iii) He was impressed by the customer who bought the two doves _____.
- (iv) He was successful shop owner, though insensitive and cold as a person_____.

(i) True

(ii) True

(iii) False

(iv) True

2. Why is Mr Purcell compared to an owl?

Mr Purcell was compared to an owl because of his large glasses that magnified his eyes.

3. From the third paragraph pick out

- (i) **Words associated with cries of birds,**
 - (ii) **Words associated with noise,**
 - (iii) **Words suggestive of confusion and fear.**
- (i) Twitters, squeals, squeaks and cheeps.
 - (ii) Scampered, twittered, rustling.
 - (iii) Frantic, frightened, bewildered.

4. "...Mr Purcell heard it no more than he would have heard the monotonous ticking of a familiar clock." (Read para beginning with "it was a rough day...")

- (i) **What does 'it' refer to?**
 - (ii) **Why does Mr Purcell not hear 'it' clearly?**
- (i) 'It' refers to the noise created by various birds and animals, such as chirping, squeaking and mewing.
 - (ii) Mr Purcell did not hear 'it' clearly because he was now used to these sounds. These sounds for Mr Purcell, therefore, were no different from the monotonous ticking of a familiar clock.

Check 2

1. Do you think the atmosphere of Mr Purcell's shop was cheerful or depressing? Give reasons for your answer.

The atmosphere of Mr Purcell's shop was quite depressing. Words such as 'frantic', 'frightening', 'bewildered' and so on are indications of something fearful. Also, the narrator's voice draws a contrast between the atmosphere of the shop and what the customers believed it to be.

2. Describe the strange who came to the pet shop. What did he want?

The stranger who came to the pet shop was a strange man who wore a new suit, but his suit was ill-fitted and cheap. He was also impervious to the presence of the shop owner. He wanted to buy something small and something in a cage. Finally, he liked the pair of doves. It seemed that this customer had just been released from the jail.

3. (i) The man insisted on buying the doves because he was fond of birds. Do you agree?

(ii) How had he earned the five dollars he had?

(i) The man insisted on buying the doves because he wanted something small and something that was caged. The chapter, however, does not showcase the man's fondness of doves because he was unclear about what he wanted to buy.

(ii) According to the man, he had earned the five dollars through a lot of hard labour done over ten years. It seemed that the man had earned this money in prison.

4. Was the customer interested in the care and feeding of the doves he had bought?

If not, why not?

No, the man was not interested in the care and feeding of the doves he had bought.

When Mr Purcell offered to explain him what he should be feeding the doves, he dismissed his advice. Moreover, immediately after stepping out of the shop, he unlocked the doves from the cage and let them fly.

Exercises

1. Why, in your opinion, did the man set the doves free?

The man set the doves free probably because he did not wish to see them behind bars. It seemed that he himself was behind prison for ten years. Therefore, the idea of being free was very dear to him and this is how he wished to express his happiness after coming out of the prison; by letting free 'something caged.'

2. Why did it make Mr Purcell feel 'vaguely insulted'?

Mr Purcell felt insulted because he had given the pair of doves to the man at a lower price. Since, the man had desperately desired the doves but did not have enough money to buy them, Mr Purcell had agreed to let him have them at a lower profit. Mr Purcell could not comprehend why he had bargained desperately if he had to let them go.

CHAPTER PRACTICE

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. **What did the owner of the pet shop consider himself to be?**

The owner of the pet shop considered himself to be a professional man.

2. **What unusual event occurred on the day the strange customer came to Mr Purcell's shop?**

The bell over the door of the shop always jingled whenever a customer entered. That particular day, for the first time, the bell had failed to ring.

What was Mr Purcell's habit on seeing a customer?

Out of habit, Mr Purcell, on seeing a customer would rub his hands briskly together, smile and nod to welcome his customers.

3. **What was the first thing Mr Purcell offered to his customer?**

Mr Purcell showed a white rat to the customer when he asked for "something small, something caged."

Short Answer Type Questions

1. **"They give you five dollars... and tell you not to get caught again." Who were the "they"?**

The piece of advice, "not to get caught again" is usually given by police to the prisoners who have completed their term in the jail. The man also referred to having earned five dollars in ten years for hard labour. This labour could be the work prisoners did in the prison. 'They' could be the police.

2. **What was peculiar about the customer who bought the doves?**

The man, after stepping out of the shop, stared at his purchase for a few moments and then let loose both the doves.

This was quite a peculiar act as he had bought them at a reduced price by showing his eagerness for them, but then he suddenly let them go.

Long Answer Type Questions

1. What was the atmosphere in Mr Purcell's pet shop?

There was a sense of foreboding in Mr Purcell's pet shop. The movement of the birds in his shop was described as frantic, frightening, bewildered and unusual. The shop also had less light. The strange customer's visit in the shop is described as casting a gaze around the "shadowy shop". After the customer left, it seemed that the uncanny act of the customer had added on to the haunted aspect of the shop.



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Grade VII

Lesson 6. Diary Entry

DIARY ENTRY

Diary writing is a form of composition that is extremely personal and therefore informal. A person writes or records his/her personal experiences, feelings, emotions, day to day happenings or any other event of life that he/she wants to talk about. Generally, a diary becomes like a real entity for the person and a guiding friends.

Things which we can't talk about with everyone or openly are written in it. Personal secrets, wishes, desires, fears, hopes, sorrows, joys all are recorded in it by an individual. So, it is kept secret by the person. Many great people used to write diaries and we can get a glimpse of their past lives through it.

Anything and everything related to the person can be written in it and one should write truthfully whatever one is writing. Cool facts, important information, advice, tips, ideas etc can be written and since, it is a secret from the outer world one can write truthfully whatever one is feeling.

Guidelines for Writing the Diary Entry

- ❖ It is an informal record so the language used is informal and personal.
 - ❖ Personal pronouns are used.
 - ❖ Although there is no fixed time period for writing it yet it can be written at night so that there is a mention of entire day's happenings.
 - ❖ Always write truthfully. The diary will always listen to you, won't judge you, it will never reveal your secrets. So, you can write without worrying whatever you want to.
 - ❖ Format of diary entry is quite simple and flexible. Date, day and time are mentioned at the beginning as shown below. A diary can given a name but that is purely optional.
 - ❖ In the body, a person writes about an event or idea along with the feelings associated with it. One can also mention how that can affect one's future plans.
 - ❖ At the end one signs off with one's name or signature.
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DIARY ENTRY

Sample Diary Entry

Day and Date → Saturday, 18th October, 20xx

9:30pm time towards

towards the left side

← the right side

Dear Diary(Optional) → Dear Diary,

Today was a very eventful day as my parents gave me a surprise. They gave me a Diwali gift.

It is the best gift that I have received so far,

← Body Text

Can you guess what is it? Well, it is an i-phone.

Contains a personal

Now, I can play my favourite games. I can also talk to my best friend, Alka without any hassle.

account of all happenings of the

It has a very good camera and I am sure it will provide an excellent social networking experience

day. The language is informal.

Through whatsapp, Facebook etc. I don't have words to thank my parents.

Goodnight diary

First name → Poonam

Remember that your diary is a part of you and the point of keeping a diary is so that you can refer back to it in the future. So, you can be as creative as you want to and write with full freedom of expression.



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DIARY ENTRY DISTRIBUTE SWEETS TO ORPHANGE

Solved Questions

1. You went to an orphanage to distribute sweets, colours etc on the occasion of Holy in your locality. Describe your feelings and the experience of this visit in a diary entry.

Friday ,13th February, 2015

10:00pm

Dear Diary,

Today was an amazing day for me. I along with some of my friends, went to our locality's orphanage to distribute goodies, sweets, colours etc among its inmates. This Holy, all of us decided to celebrate in a different manner and what better and noble way to celebrate than to share happiness and bring smiles on the faces of less fortunate children.

They were so happy and excited to see us and chat with us. An aura of smile enveloped them when we gave them the goodies. They thanked us with heart and asked us to come on Holi too. I felt deeply satisfied and so joyous.

It was really a life changing experience for me as from then on I decided to do my part always for society by indulging in such acts.

Goodnight

Radhika.



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