

Grade VIII

Lesson 1. How the Camel got his Hump

Supplementary Reader

Supplementary of the Chapter

The World in the Beginning and the Animals.

In the beginning when the world was new, the animals were beginning to do work for Man. There also lived a camel in the middle of the Howling desert. He did not work at all. He only ate sticks, thorns and prickles. Whenever somebody came to meet him, he would merely reply, “humph”.

Since the camel did not work, the other animals were very unhappy with him. One-by-one, they came to call him. First, came the horse. He told the camel to come with him and do some work like the other animals. The camel only said “humph”. The horse went back and reported this to the Man.

Thereafter, the dog and the ox also came to call the camel. He, likewise, only said “humph”. And both the animals went away sadly.

Work pressure and the Panchayat.

At the end of the day, the man called the horse, the dog and the ox. Since the camel was not working, he asks the three of them to do double work in order to compensate the loss of work. The three animals became very angry with the camel. They were asked to do more work simply because the camel would not do his share of work. They held a Panchayat at the edge of the desert to decide. Seeing this, the camel laughed at the three and went by.

The Djinn met the Camel

At this point, there came the Djinn. After hearing the story of the three animals, the Djinn decided to set the camel right. The Djinn tried to explain the camel that being idle was a bad thing and the other three animals were over loaded because of him. The camel merely says ‘humph’.



The camel looks at his back and humph with proud and tells the Djinn that he cannot work with that humph on his back. At this, the Djinn replied, that humph on his back. At this, the Djinn replied, that the camel himself is responsible for bringing this humph on his back. He also told him that because the camel did not work for three days; his hump would enable him to work continuously for three 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 on.

NCERT Corner

Check 1

1. What tasks, do you think, were assigned to the dog and the ox?

The dog was given the task to fetch and carry things. The ox, on the other hand, was asked to plough the fields.

2. Why did the camel live in the middle of the desert?

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

3. What made the dog, the horse and the ox very angry?

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

4. How did the Djinn know the horse was complaining against the camel?

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 in charge of all deserts and was therefore familiar with all animals.

Check 2

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

The camel was looking at his image in the pool because he loved his image. It suggests that the camel only cared about himself.



2. The camel said, “Humph’ repeatedly. How did it affect him?

The Djinn explained to the camel how his ‘humph’ had turn into a hump on his back because he merely said ‘humph’ and did no work.

3. What, according to the Djinn, was the use of the ‘humph’?

According to the Djinn, because of his hump, the camel could work continuously for 2-3 days. The hump on the camel’s back was a storehouse of food and water.

4. “..he has never yet learnt to behave”. In the light of this, what is the writer’s opinion about the camel.

According to the writer, the camel has never learnt to behave and he still is an arrogant and non-cooperative animal.

Check 3

Discuss the following topics in groups.

1. Can this story be factually true?

No. This story cannot be factually true. This story is a fable. It has animals characters to impart a larger lesson.

2. What, according to you, is the story about? Consider the following.

- i. How the world began?
- ii. Why everyone should do his/ her share of work seriously?
- iii. How animals are important to humans?
- iv. How the camel got his hump?

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

The camel’s hump is seen as a punishment and therefore the story teaches us not to be like the camel that got his hump because of his insensitivity.

3. What did you do over the weekend? Where you generally active or idle? Please check your back before starting to discuss or answer the questions.

I was completing my pending tasks over the weekend.



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. Where do you belong?

It is better to do today what you can do tomorrow because time flies away quickly. I belong to the first category.

Chapter Practice

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. What did the camel eat?

The camel used to eat thorns, sticks and prickles.

2. What was the task assigned to the horse?

The horse had a saddle on his back, his task was that he could carry goods or Man from one place to another.

3. What work did Man assign to the horse, the dog and the ox at the end of the day?

At the end of the day, the Man asked the three animals to do double-work to compensate for the work loss on account of the camel.

4. What question did the horse ask the Djinn?

The horse asked the Djinn if it was "right for anyone to be idle."

5. Since how many days had the camel done no work?

Since three days the camel had done no work. It was Monday when the horse came to call the camel. Till Thursday, when the Djinn met the camel, the camel had been idle.

6. Does the camel realise his mistake by the end of the story?

No. The camel does not realise his mistake. He had not learnt to behave well till the end of the story.

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Short Answer Type Questions

1. What were the different tasks assigned to the three animals?

The horse was assigned the task to carry load and goods and even man from one place to another. The dog was assigned the task of fetching things. The task of ploughing the fields was assigned to the ox.

2. Why does the man not come to call the camel for work?

The man does not go to call the camel for work because he understood that if the camel would have been capable of work, it would have come for work on his own. It had been three days and the camel had not shown up even once for work.

3. Did the Djinn look at the camel's hump as a punishment for not working?

During his conversation with the camel, the Djinn tries to explain the camel that he had brought the hump on himself by choosing not to do his share of work. This makes it evidently clear that the Djinn views the camel's hump as his punishment for not working.

4. What did the Djinn mean by "I'll humph him"?

The Djinn was in charge of the entire desert. He promised the three animals that he will "humph him (the camel)", i.e. he would set him right by reprimanding and scolding the camel. The 'humph him' in this phrase could also mean reduce the hump that the camel has acquired by not working.

Long Answer Type Questions

1. Imagine you are the camel. Write a diary entry describing his feelings on being reprimanded by the Djinn.

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I am very disturbed at what has happened in the desert today.

As if those three were not enough, namely the horse, the dog and the ox; today the Djinn too came to reprimand and scold him.

I do not feel like doing any work, then why should I be compelled for work. These daily reminders make me feel worse. I am fond of lazing around and admiring my beauty that I can see in the pool water.



I have recently developed a hump and I am very proud of it. I fail to understand why the Djinn should call it a punishment or a hindrance I would do some work tomorrow to ease out the matter and then again I could be free to do as I will Camel.

2 How do we get to know which task was assigned to which animal?

When the horse came to meet the camel, he had a saddle on his back and he asked the camel to trot like the other animals. This means that the horse was being used for running from one place to another.

The dog came to meet the animal with a stick in his mouth. The dog asked the camel to fetch things like all other animals.

This indicates that the dog was assigned the task of fetching and carrying things.

The ox, likewise, came with a yoke on his neck, asking the camel to plough like the other animals; indicating the task assigned to him.

Value Based Questions

1. What is the moral of the story?

The story discusses the worth of hard work. All other animals, the horse, the dog and the ox, respectively had been doing their work sincerely, except for the camel.

The camel, is therefore, disliked by all the other animals.

The Djinn also feels the need to reprimand the camel. Towards the end of the story we learn that the Camel had got his hump because he had refused to do his share of work.

The Djinn sees the camel's hump as a punishment for him.

2. Do you think it is good to impose our share of work on the others?

No. Definitely not. Imposing our share of work on the others is not a good thing. Everyone should do his/her share of work. We should not exploit others by making them do the work that we are meant to do.

Working collectively and with sincerity also increases the efficiency of doing a certain work.

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