

Chapter – 1

Honeycomb

Comprehension Check I

1. Why did the king want to know answers to three questions?

Answer:

The king thought that he would never fail if he knew the right answers to his three questions. It reflects his foresight as a king to be prepared for new ventures, his wisdom at seeking the right counsel and his ambition to succeed.

2. Messengers were sent throughout the kingdom

(i) to fetch wise men.

(ii) to find answers to the questions.

(iii) to look for the wise hermit.

(iv) to announce a reward for those who could answer the questions.

Answer:

(iv) to announce a reward for those who could answer the questions.

The king wanted wise men from all over the kingdom to come forward with answers to the three questions, hence he sent messengers throughout the kingdom announcing a handsome reward.

Comprehension Check II

1. Complete the following sentences by adding the appropriate parts of the sentences given in the box.

1) Many wise men answered the king's questions, _____

2) Someone suggested that there should be a council of wise men

3) Someone else suggested that the king should have a timetable

- 4) The king requested the hermit _____
5) The king washed and dressed the bearded man's wound,

Answer:

- 1) Many wise men answered the king's questions, but their answers were so varied that the king was not satisfied.
- 2) Someone suggested that there should be a council of wise men to help the king at right time.
- 3) Someone else suggested that the king should have a timetable and follow it strictly.
- 4) The king requested the hermit to answer three questions.
- 5) The king washed and dressed the bearded man's wound, but the bleeding would not stop.

Working with the Text

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

Answer:

Some wise men that had come forth to answer the questions were of the opinion that some tasks could be urgent and couldn't wait for the decision of the council and the hence the best way of reaching a decision on time was to look into the future. Thus, the king was advised to go to magicians.

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

Answer:

In answer to the second question, some people considered the advice of the king's councillors while some found the priest's advice to be

most necessary. Some people also suggested the doctors and soldiers as apt advisers.

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

Answer:

In answer to the third question, some wise people said science, others chose fighting and others said that religious worship would be the most important thing for the king to do.

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

Answer:

No, the wise men did not win the reward because the answers to the king's questions were so different from one another that he was not satisfied and decided to seek the advice of a renowned hermit instead.

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

Answer:

The king and the hermit removed the wounded man's clothing, cleaned the wound and covered it to stop the heavy blood loss. The king re-dressed the wound until the blood finally stopped flowing and carried him inside the hermit's hut to rest the night.

6.

(A) Who was the bearded man?

Answer:

The bearded man was the sworn enemy of the king. The king had put his brother to death and taken away his property. The man had

planned to kill the king on his way back but was identified by the king's bodyguard and gravely wounded.

(B) Why was he ask for the king's forgiveness?

Answer:

The bearded man felt deeply grateful to the king for saving his life. He asked forgiveness, swearing himself and his sons to the faithful service of the king.

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

Answer:

The king was glad to have made peace with his enemy. As a gesture of goodwill, the king promised to send his servants and his personal doctor to tend to the bearded man's wound and return his property as well.

8. What were the Hermit's answers to the three questions? Write each answer separately. Which do you like the best? Why?

Answer:

(a) The most important time is now because it is the only time we have any power to act. The past has gone and the future is yet to come, it is only in the present we can take charge of things and do something.

(b) The most important person is the person you are with at a particular moment because the future is uncertain and we don't know who will stay with us and for how long.

(c) The most important task is to do your best for that person in that moment.

The answer I like the best is that present is the most important time. It is the only time we have in hand to correct the mistakes of our past and work towards a better future. The hermit's answer underlines the value of time and doing our best for everyone around us.

Working with Language

1. Match items in list A with their meanings in list B.

A	B
(i) wounded	give back
(ii) awoke	small patch of ground for plants
(iii) forgive	small patches of ground for plants and
(iv) faithful	severely injured
(v) pity	pardon
(vi) beds	loyal
(vii) return	to feel sorry for

Use any three of the above words in sentences of your own. You may change the form of the word.

Answer:

A	B
(i) wounded	<i>severely injured</i>
(ii) awoke	<i>got up from sleep</i>
(iii) forgive	<i>pardon</i>
(iv) faithful	<i>loyal</i>
(v) pity	<i>to feel sorry for</i>
(vi) beds	<i>small patches of ground for plants</i>
(vii) return	<i>give back</i>

Wounded: The wounded dog was taken to a vet.

Faith: The bank gave him a heartfelt farewell for his 35 years of faithful service.

Beds: The gardener tends to the flowers beds with care.

2. Each of the following sentences has two blanks. Fill in the blanks with appropriate forms of the word given in brackets.

Example: He has promised to help me. Do you think he will remember his promise? (Promise)

(i) The _____ said that only fresh evidence would make him change his _____? (judge)

(ii) I didn't notice any serious _____ of opinion among the debaters, although they _____ from one another over small points. (differ)

(iii) It's a fairly simple question to _____, but will you accept my _____ as final? (answer)

(iv) It isn't _____ that _____ should always be the mother of invention. (necessary)

(v) Hermits are _____ men. How they acquire their _____, no one can tell. (wise)

(vi) The committee had _____ to make Jagdish captain of the team. The _____ is likely to please everyone. (decide)

(vii) Asking for _____ is as noble as willingness to _____. (forgive).

Answer:

(i) The judge said that only fresh evidence would make him change his judgement? (judge)

(ii) I didn't notice any serious difference of opinion among the debaters, although they differed from one another over small points. (differ)

(iii) It's a fairly simple question to answer, but will you accept my answer as final? (answer)

(iv) It isn't necessary that necessity should always be the mother of invention. (necessary)

(v) Hermits are wise men. How they acquire their wisdom, no one can tell. (wise)

(vi) The committee had decided to make Jagdish captain of the team. The decision is likely to please everyone. (decide)

(vii) Asking for forgiveness is as noble as willingness to forgive. (forgive)

Speaking and Writing

1. Imagine you are king. Narrate the incident of your meeting the hermit. Begin like this :

Answer:

The wise men answered my questions, but I was not satisfied with their answers. One day I decided to go and meet the hermit, famous of his wisdom, in the forest. I put on plain clothes to the hermitage and left the horse with the bodyguard at some distance from the hut. Walking towards the hermitage, I found the wise man digging flower beds. He was old, weak and looked tired, taking deep breaths as he laboured. I went up to meet him and asked him the three questions — what is the right time to do something, who're the people I needed most and what is the most important thing that I should do. The hermit listened in silence and went on digging. Pitying the old man, I decided to do the digging myself and let him rest. After digging two beds, I repeated my questions but the hermit did not answer and I was ready to take a disappointed leave. Just then a bearded man, bleeding profusely, came running towards us. We washed the wound and I did the dressing until he stopped bleeding, taking him inside to rest. Being tired for the day's work I too fell asleep. Next day, I discovered that the wounded man that in fact planned on killing me. Humbled with the care I had taken of him, he sincerely asked for my forgiveness and was glad to forgive him. Ready to take my leave, I asked the hermit one last time to answer my questions and was told that I know the answer already — 'Now' is the most important time, the person one is with at the moment is the most important person and to do that man

good is one's most important duty. After deeply considering his answer, I was satisfied and took his leave.

2. Imagine you are the hermit. Write briefly the incident of your meeting the king. Begin like this :

Answer:

One day I was digging in my garden. A man in ordinary clothes came to see me. I knew he was the king. I greeted him and went about my work. He had three questions to which he was anxious to know the answers. Watching me grow tired of work, he took the spade from me and started digging himself. He repeated his question after an hour or so. Growing tired and disappointed with my silence he was about to leave when a bearded man came running towards us, He was wounded and bleeding profusely. The king dressed his wounds, gave him water and carried him inside to rest .Since it was quite late, the tired king also went to sleep on the floor. Next day, the wounded man begged the king to forgive him as he disclosed himself as the king's sworn enemy. The man had planned to kill the king but was discovered and wounded by the king's bodyguard. The king was glad to have made peace with his enemy and forgave him. The king before taking leave repeated his questions and at last I told him he that he knew the answers already. Reflecting upon the events of the day, his conduct and my answer, the king was satisfied and went back to his kingdom.

The Squirrel - Working with the Poem

1. Why does the poet say the squirrel "wore a question mark for tail"?
Draw a squirrel, or find a picture of a squirrel sitting on the ground.
How would you describe its tail?

Answer:

The squirrel's tail appears upturned in the form of a question mark. Hence, the poet says the squirrel "wore a question mark for tail".



(Note: A sample drawing of a squirrel is shown)

2. Do we usually say that an animal 'wears' a tail? What do we say? (Think: Does an animal wear a coat? Consult a dictionary if you like, and find out how 'wear' is used in different ways.)

Answer:

No, usually we say the animal has a tail. It is a poetic expression to say that an animal 'wears' a tail.

3. "He liked to tease and play." Who is teasing whom? How?

Answer:

The squirrel liked to tease and play with the poet and her friends. It would sit up straight eating nuts, teasing the children from the top and if they ran around the tree, it would go away.