

# The Adventures of Toto - Ruskin Bond

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## Answers to NCERT Questions

### THINK ABOUT IT

#### 1. How does Toto come to grandfather's private zoo?

**Ans:** The author's grandfather bought Toto from a tonga-driver for a sum of five rupees. He used to keep it tied on to a feeding trough. Grandfather was an animal lover, who felt that the monkey looked uncomfortable and out of place, and therefore, decided to take the pretty little fellow to his private zoo.

#### 2. "Toto was a pretty monkey. In what sense is Toto pretty?"

**Ans:** Toto had bright eyes, sparkling with mischief beneath deep set eyebrows, pearly white teeth with which he smiled very often and a tail that added to his good looks. His hands had dried up due to exposure to the sun, but his quick and wicked fingers made up for them. He used to hang and scoop up any delicacy that his hand could reach. The mischief and mannerism of Toto is what made him pretty.

#### 3. Why does grandfather take Toto to Saharanpur and how? Why does the ticket collector insist on calling Toto a dog?

**Ans:** Toto was very destructive and intolerant of the other inmates of the zoo. His presence in the house was unknown to the grandmother. Grandfather had to go to Saharanpur, the following day, so he decided it would be safer to take Toto along with him. He was put inside a big black canvas kit-bag, from which he could not escape when closed. He tried desperately to get out of the bag, attracting a lot of attention, but all his efforts were in vain. But the naughty fellow peeped out of the bag and smiled at the ticket collector at the railway turnstile. The collector insisted on collecting a fee for the monkey, probably classifying it as a quadruped, that falls into the category of dogs. Grandfather was not convinced but handed over a fee of rupees three for Toto.

#### 4. How does Toto take a bath? Where has he learnt to do this? How does he almost boil himself alive?

**Ans:** In the cold winter evenings, grandma used to give him a large bowl of warm water to bathe. He would test the temperature of the water with his hands and step into the bowl one part of the body at a time, until the water would rise upto his neck. When he was comfortable, he would rub himself all over with soap. He would rush to dry himself by the kitchen fire, as soon as the water lost its warmth. He had learnt to do this by observing the author. On one occasion, Toto nearly boiled himself alive, as he got in and out of a kettle that was placed on a live fire.

#### 5. Why does the author say, "Toto was not the sort of pet we could keep for long?"

**Ans:** Toto had already shown that he was not compatible with the other animals in grandfather's private zoo. He crossed all pardonable limits of misbehaviour one afternoon, when he sat on the dining table eating up the pullao that was supposed to be for the family. When reprimanded, he took the dish and perched himself on a tree, and continued to eat to his fill. To annoy grandma, who screamed at him, he threw down the dish and chattered with pleasure, when he saw it break into a hundred pieces.

This was the reason for the author saying that, "Toto was not the sort of pet we could keep for long."

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### **Short Answer Questions (30-40 words: 2 Marks each)**

#### **1. Why was Toto not introduced to grandmother?**

**Ans:** Grandmother did not appreciate the introduction of new animals and birds into the zoo. So, the author and his grandfather decided that they would keep Toto's presence in the house a secret to avoid causing any form of discomfort to her, till the time she was in a good mood to accept him around.

#### **2. Where was he fastened initially? How did Toto keep himself occupied in the closet?**

**Ans:** Toto was fastened to a peg in a little closet that opened into the author's bedroom wall. A few hours later, when they came back to release him, the two men were in for a major shock. Toto had peeled off the ornamental wallpaper that was pasted on the wall, the peg on to which he had been fastened had been wrenched out of the wall, and the author's blazer was reduced to shreds.

#### **3. Why was grandfather pleased with Toto's performance?**

**Ans:** Grandfather was pleased with Toto's performance and concluded that Toto was clever. He said that the little monkey would have converted the shredded blazer into a rope and escaped through the window, if he had been given adequate time.

#### **4. How did Toto behave with his companions at the servant's quarters?**

**Ans:** Toto was transferred into a big cage in the servant's quarters. There was a tortoise, a pair of rabbits, a squirrel and the author's pet goat as companions. All of them lived with a lot of congeniality. But Toto was not ready to let them live peacefully. He kept disturbing the animals all through the night and was not allowing them to sleep.

#### **5. Why did grandfather get annoyed with the ticket collector? How did he get back at him?**

**Ans:** Ruskin Bond's grandfather got angry with the ticket collector for charging a fee for Toto and classifying him as a dog. He got back at him by taking out a tortoise from his

pocket and asking him with a lot of sarcasam, the amount he'd have to pay for the tortoise, as all animals were being charged by him.

**6. How did Toto's life change after grandmother accepted him? Could he befriend Nana?**

**Ans:** Toto was given a comfortable home in the stable along with Nana, the family donkey. On the first night at the stable, when grandpa went to check on him, he found Nana pulling on to Toto's halter without any provocation from the latter, trying to keep her head away from the bundle of hay. They continued teasing each other but could never become good friends.

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**Long Answer Questions (100-150 words: 8 Marks each)**

**1. How can you say that Toto was mischievous?**

**Ans:** Toto was picked up by the grandfather because he was greatly attracted by the mischief in his eyes. He proved the grandfather's judgement right in every act of his, during his stay at the author's house. He wrenched out the peg from the wall that was used to fasten him, tore Ruskin Bond's school blazer into shreds. At the servant's quarters, he disturbed the other animals that lived there very happily. While on a journey to Saharanpur and back with grandpa, he tried every possible trick to come out of his canvas bag, and peeped out of it at the station making grandpa pay a fare of three rupees to the station master, who classified Toto as a dog.

Toto's next companion was Nana, the donkey, with whom he could not get along. He nearly got boiled in a live kettle, when he had got into the water meant for tea. Had grandma not reached on time, Toto would have been killed. The final drama was his tryst with the pullao that was made for the family. He threw a plate at grandma and a glass of water at an aunt because they reprimanded him. He picked up the container from the dining table, perched on to a tree, ate up the whole food, and threw down the container, breaking it into pieces. Not a day passed when Toto's mischief was not on display at the Bond household.

**2. As Toto, make a diary entry, expressing your grief at being plucked away from your family.**

**Ans:**

Thursday, 14 April 20XX

8 p.m.

Dear Diary,

I am very sad today. I am back with the cruel tonga driver. I spent a few days with an old man and his family. I had a good time. But in my desperate attempts to annoy them,

hoping they would release me into the jungle, I troubled them endlessly. Fed up with me, they handed me back to this cruel man. He will begin torturing me. What can I do? I strayed out of the jungle one day while playing with my siblings and friends. It was then that I got captured by the tonga driver. He does not give me food, he makes me do tricks, ties me on to the wheel of his tonga to entertain people when I scramble behind him. My injuries had just begun healing. I regret misbehaving with the old grandmother and the other animals in that house. I can't stop crying. Please help me get back to the jungle, Oh God!

Good night

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## **Self- Assessment Test**

### **Short Answer Questions**

1. Explain Toto's visit to Saharanpur and back.
2. How does Toto take a bath?
3. Grandfather loves animals. Explain.
4. Why was the presence of Toto kept a secret from grandmother?
5. How did Toto invite the wrath of ticket collector?

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### **Long Answer Questions**

1. As Ruskin Bond, express your views regarding Toto and his adventures.
2. Is it right to confine animals and restrict their freedom?
3. Give the character sketch of Ruskin Bond's grandfather.