

The Tiger King

Supplementary Reader : Vistas

Textual question & answers :

Reading with insight :

1. The story is a satire on the conceit of those in power. How does the author employ the literary device of dramatic irony in the story."

Ans : The story ' The Tiger King' is a satire on the conceit of those in power. The king tried to change the destiny. The chief astrologer assured him that he would be killed by a tiger. He said that the tiger king was born in the sign of Bull and Bull and tiger were enemies. But the king could not accept the truth.

He banned the tiger hunting in his state for others. Anyone who tried to fling a stone at any tiger, would be debarred from the ownership of his property. He continued to hunt tiger. At last he killed the 99th tiger and felt elated. He thought that he was then safe when he killed the hundredth tiger.

But ironically, the hundredth tiger was not killed by him as he missed the target. Another hunter killed the tiger only to hide the real facts. The writer uses irony again

when the king was finally killed by a tiger, but it was not a tiger of flesh and blood, but of wood. With all his effort and power, the king could not save his life and change his destiny.

2. What is the author's indirect comment on subjecting innocent animals to the willfulness of Human beings ?

Ans : The author doesn't comment directly on the indiscriminate killing of inn animals. But in the indirect way, the writer shows great sympathy towards them. It is for man's willingness that precious animals have to lose their life.

The Maharaja, killed almost all the tigers of purbandaram. The tiger population became extinct when he had killed about 70 tigers. He then married a royal girl from such a state which had a large population of tigers. In each visit to his father-in-law's house he killed 6 or 7 tigers. Thus he managed to kill the 99th tiger. But the hundredth tiger eluded him. At last he was killed by a wooden tiger. The writer also mentioned the cruelty of the British officials who killed such a beautiful creation like tiger only to get a wild pleasure.

3. How would you describe the behaviour of the maharaja's minions towards him ? Do you find them truly sincere towards him or are they driven by fear when they obey him ? Do we find a similarity in today's political order ?

Ans : The behaviour of the maharaja's minion's towards him is driven by fear. Their only motto is to keep him in good humour. His servile followers are overawed by the power and anger of their king. Thorough obedience, docile submission and flattery are the characteristics of their nature.

For example, the chief astrologer is scared to speak the truth. He discloses the truth only after he is given assurance of safety. The dewan is docile, humourless, and servile towards the king. He shudders at the sight of the gun. He is babbled and foolish most of the times. Sometimes, of course he behaves wisely.

The shopkeeper is a strange blending of flattery and cunningness. The wooden tiger costs only two annas. He charges three hundred rupees for a price of just two annas and quarter.

There is certainly a great similarity in today's political order. We see the politicians lie prostrate before their leaders to flatter them. Their main purpose is to please their master as if they were paid servant.

4. Can you relate instances of game-hunting among the rich and the powerful in the present times that illustrate the callousness of Human beings towards wild life ?

Ans : Instance of game-hunting among the rich and the powerful are quite common. Today also, we hear about the killings of rhinos, duro and other animals and birds

which are in the way of extinction. Only to get the skin of the tigers, tusk of the elephants, horns of the rhinos, people mercilessly kill animals. The laws are passed to ban those killings. But the laws are unable to touch the rich and the powerful. One-day the news of Salman Khan who is a star of Bollywood comes, killing black bucks. He has killed the bucks just for fun. Only exemplary punishment to poachers and hunters can save innocent wild animals.

5. We need a new system for the age of ecology - a system which is embedded in the care of all people and also in the care of the earth and all life upon it. Discuss.

Ans : The world has now lacked the ecological balance that has brought new challenge even to the existence of the world. There has been a constant degradation of the environment. Human beings have become indifferent to the nature. But the care of all people includes the care of the earth.

The mountains are our life line. They are the places from where rivers flow. Glaciers are shrinking. Water level of the sea comes up. Many rare animals, birds, plants, herbs are going to extinct. The depletion of the ozone layer has put the very survival of man at stake. The green house effect has caused global warming. Mankind has now two ways. They are

(1) live and life line.

(2) choose death.

Read and Find Out :

1. Who is the Tiger King ? Why does get that name ?

Ans : The Maharaja of Pratibamdarapuram is known as the tiger king. He may be identified as his Highness Jamedar. General, Khildar, Major. He was also addressed as Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur.

He gets that name because tigers dominate his minion and life. Astrologer predicted that his death would come from a tiger.

2. What does the royal infant grow up to be ?

Ans : Day by day, the royal infant grew taller and stronger. The boy drank the milk of an English cow. He was tutored by an Englishman. He saw nothing but English films. He became the king at the age of twenty. Then he began to hunt his enemies - the tiger.

3. What will the maharaja do to find the required number of tiger to kill ?

Ans : After killing about 70 tigers, the tiger population in his kingdom became extinct. He wanted to marry in the royal family of a state with a large tiger population. The dewan found the right girl. In this way, he was able to kill 99 tigers.

4. How will the maharaja prepare himself for the hundredth tiger which was supposed to decide his fate ?

Ans : The king found it difficult to get the hundredth tiger killed. The dewan realised the seriousness of the situation and made the arrangement. A tiger had been brought from the People's Park in madras. It was left in the forest where the king was hunting. The king took careful aim at the tiger and shot it. But he did not know that he missed the target.

5. What will now happen to the astrology ? Do you think the prophecy was indisputably disproved ?

Ans : Actually, the king will not be able to kill the hundredth tiger. It survived only to be killed by a hunter. So, the king will not fulfill his mission of killing 100 tigers.

No, the prophecy is not totally disproved. Ironically, the hundredth tiger, though made of wood, takes its revenge upon the maharaja.