The King and the Tamarind Drum

Understanding the story in brief:

This is the story of a handsome king who was very proud of his looks and handsomeness. Neglecting his royal duties he always spent his time on having oil-bath and his hairstyle. He was so selfish and indifferent that his people's sufferings and hardships were no matter to him. He used to boast of his handsomeness before his courtiers in the court.. One day he went on to the extent that he compared himself to the gods and said that he was probably more handsome than all gods. It was rather unfortunate for him that a bad-tempered who was flying past not only heard his words but also was so annoyed that he decided to punish him suitably to teach him a lesson.

The god gave him two horns like a bull which would destroy his handsomeness and his false pride. The horrified king called his barber so that he might do something to cover them, but in vain. The barber who came to know about the king's horns could no longer keep the secret and revealed it to the Tamarind trunk. A drum made from the trunk intoned when the royal musician played on it in the open court and thus revealed the secret of the king to all. The king was angry and ashamed and could no longer live in the kingdom. He fled to the forest there he gradually learnt the beauty of the nature and other creatures. He slowly learnt to be kind, self-less and wise. He played on the drum which he had brought with him to the forest. The spirits of the trees were so charmed by the music produced by the king that they begged the god to forgive him as he had changed. The god removed his horns and the king went back to his kingdom and ruled wisely there after. Thus the curse and punishment of the god was so suitable and befitting that brought in him a necessary change.

LEARNING IMPORTANT WORDS

The Students are advised to learn the following words from the lesson, their spelling, meaning, pronunciation and usage. Their knowledge is useful in answering many questions such as vocabulary test, spelling test, right forms of the words and opposites.

Vain = proud, self-important, conceited.
Appropriate = suitable, proper, apt
Malicious = hateful, desiring to do harm to others.
Courtiers = the people in the king's court,
Impatiently = intolerantly, without patience or endurance.
Partially = partly, in completely
Rage = anger, fury
Gradually = slowly, slowly but surely, step by step, little by little
Forgive = excuse, pardon, let off
Knelt = kneel, go down on your knees

Words opposite in meanings:

Vain × modest, simple, humble
Handsome × ugly
Impatiently × patiently
Partially × incompletely
Remember × forget
Unfortunately × fortunately
Annoy × please, make happy
Malicious × kind, benevolent
Assembled × dispersed
Wise × foolish
Gradually × rapidly, hurriedly, quickly
Forgive × blame

Important questions from the lesson

1. Unfortunately for the king….What was unfortunate? Why was it unfortunate?

When the king boasted of his handsomeness in the court a bad-tempered who was flying by heard his words and was very annoyed.

2. How did the god punish the king? In what was the punishment appropriate?

The god punished the king by growing two horns on his head like a bull. The punishment was appropriate as it would destroy the king's handsomeness and his false pride.

3. Why do you think the king sent for the barber as soon as he discovered his horns?

The king thought that the barber could do something to hide his horns with hair. So he called the barber.

4. The king warned the barber against doing something. What was it?

The king warned the barber not to tell about his horns to any single living soul.

5. Did the barber succeed in covering the king's horns completely? How can you tell?

No, the barber could cover the horns only partially. The king had to put on his night cap to hide the rest.

6. When did the courtiers come to know about the king's horns?

When the royal musician played the tamarind drum, it intoned as " the Raja has horns on his head" then the courtiers came to know about the king's horns.

7. Why do you think the king fled to the forest?

The king was angry and ashamed of his horns. So he fled to t he forest.

8. A change came over the king when he was in the forest?
OR
What did the king learn in the forest?
The king learnt about the beauty of the nature around him. He became a kind person. He grew strong, wise and selfless. He also learnt to play the drum melodiously.

9. Why do you think the spirits of trees begged the god to forgive him?
The spirits of the trees were so charmed by the king's music that they went to the god and begged him to forgive the king. Moreover the king was also a changed person.

10. Why do you think the courtiers apologized the king?
The courtiers had earlier laughed at him for his horns and put him to shame. So they apologized the king.

11. When the king returned to the kingdom, did he punish the barber? Why?
When the king returned to the kingdom he didn't hang the barber as he had warned him earlier. He simply removed him from the job. The king had become a kind person.

Comprehension Passages (1 Mark questions):
Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow:
1. "Something will have to be done about this King." He searched in his mind for an appropriate punishment. Then his eyes fell upon a bull. "Horns".

Now answer the following questions:
1. Which king is referred here?
2. Who searched for an appropriate punishment?
3. Why do you think he wanted to punish the king?
4. What do you think he was going to do with Horns?

Answers:
1. The proud king
2. The bad-tempered god.
3. The king was very vain.
4. He was going to grow horns on the king's head as a punishment.

2. "Now go and tell the court I am unwell. I will not see anyone". He sat up looked angrily at the barber. "And remember my warning."

Now answer the following questions:

1.Who is speaking in the above passage?

2.Why do you think he would not see anyone?

3. What was his warning?

Answers:

1.The proud king is speaking in the above lines.

2….because he was unwell. But the fact is that he was angry and ashamed of his horns so he would not see anyone.

3. The king's warning to the barber was not tell anybody about his horns.

3. "I'll die if I don't tell someone," he said, "My stomach is swelling with the secret."

Now answer the following questions:

1. Whose stomach is swelling?

2. Whose secret is mentioned?

3. What was the secret?

4, What does the person think will happen to him if he doesn't tell someone?

Answers:

1.The barber's stomach is swelling with the secret.

2.The proud king's secret i.e. he had horns on his head.

3.The barber feels that he will die if he doesn't tell the secret to some one.

4." I won't stay in the palace a moment longer,: he shouted, : I'll go to the forest and live by myself.: He tore the night cap off his head and ran out of the palace, seizing the tamarind drum on his way out.

Now answer the following questions:

1.Who wont stay in the palace a moment longer?

2.Why does the speaker want to go to the forest and live by himself?

3.What did he take away with?

Answers:

1.The proud king.

2.The king was angry and ashamed of his horns. So he wanted to flee and live in the forest.

3. He took away the tamarind drum with him?

5. "Forgive him" they begged. "He has changed. Remove his horns and give him back his kingdom."

Now answer the following questions:

1.Who begged here.?

2.Who did they beg to? Why?

3.Why do you think his horns should be removed?

Answers:

1.The spirits of the trees.

2.They begged to the god who had given the horns to the king because the king had changed and become a humble and kind person..

3. As the king was no longer proud of his handsomeness his horns should be removed.

6.” Your Majesty, forgive us and come back. The kingdom needs you.”

Now answer the following questions:

1.Who is Your Majesty referred to?

2.Why should the person forgive them?

3.Who are the speakers in the above lines?

Answers:

1.The king

2.Because they had laughed at him earlier and put him to shame.

3. The courtiers