

CHAPTER – 5
PRINCESS SEPTEMBER
❖ Comprehension Check Pg-38

Question 1:

How many daughters did the royal couple have?

Answer:

The Royal Couple had nine daughters.

Question 2:

Why were they named after the months of the year?

Answer:

The nine daughters were named after the months of a year because the Queen found it to be very difficult and confusing to remember so many names in one go.

Question 3:

The King had a peculiar habit. What was it? Why is it peculiar?

Answer:

The King of Siam had a very peculiar habit of giving gifts on his birthday instead of receiving them. It is considered to be unfamiliar because, on the occasion of a birthday, one usually receives presents and gifts as a token of love and care.

Question 4 A:

What was Princess September's reaction to the loss of her parrot?

Answer:

Princess September was extremely shattered to see her parrot lie dead on the bottom of its golden cage. She immediately burst into a flood of tears and nothing that her Maids of Honour said, comforted her.

Question 4 B:

What was her Mother's reaction to it?

Answer:

When the Maids of Honour could not comfort and stop Princess September from crying, they went to the Queen (her mother) to find a solution to her terrible emotional condition. In response to the situation, the Queen said that it was stuff and nonsense and for a day she could go to bed without having supper.

Question 4 C:

What do the reactions indicate about the nature and temperament of each?

Answer:

The reaction of the youngest of all, Princess September indicates that she was very sensitive in nature. She was very depressed at the death of her parrot whom she deeply admired.

The reaction of the Queen indicates that she was a firm woman who did not pay much heed to petty issues. The manner in which she responded to the Maids of honour reflects her rough and tough attitude.

Question 5:

What pulled the Princess out of her gloom?

Answer:

When Princess September was lying in her bed, hungry and crying continuously, she saw a little bird hop into her room. Wiping her tears as she sat up, the little bird sang a beautiful song all around the place. The little bird, thus, helped her in coming out of the gloom.

Question 6:

How did the Maids of Honour come to know that the Princess and the bird had become intimate friends?

Answer:

When the Maids of Honour brought breakfast for the Princess in the morning, the little bird quickly began eating rice out of the Princess's hand and also had his bath in her saucer. Consequently, as he again began to sing a melodious song, the Maids of Honour became aware of the intimacy that had grown between the Princess and the bird.

Question 7:

The new bird was full of new songs but the old parrots always repeated themselves. What did they say?

Answer:

The old parrots always repeated themselves saying, “God save the king” and “Pretty Polly” in seven different languages.

Question 8:

What is the king’s opinion about his Councillors? Why did he form that opinion?

Answer:

The parrots repeating Pretty Polly in seven different languages reminded the king of his councillors who also said “God save the king” in his praise all the time. Similar to the parrots, the councillors also kept on flattering the king by praises which in reality did not mean anything in any way to them.

Question 9 A:

The eight Princesses made an offer to Princess September. What was it?

Answer:

The eight Princesses in an attempt to put forward their opinion offered Princess September a lovely green and yellow coloured parrot by pooling their pocket money together.

Question 9 B:

Why, in your view, did they do it?

Answer:

The eight Princesses did so out of a feeling of discontentment. They were somewhat not comfortable due to the level of attention grabbed by the melodious little bird and the youngest princess along with the appreciation given by the King.

Question 10:

What did the sisters advise the Princess to do about her bird?

Answer:

The sisters advised the Princess to keep the little bird locked inside a cage in order to prevent him from running away, thus being sure of its presence.

❖ Comprehension Check Pg-43**Question 1:**

In the following sentence elaborate the parts given in bold. Under the circumstances, it was a very unfortunate remark for the bird to make.

Answer:

Under the circumstances- Princess September was surrounded by many thoughts and fears as she kept on waiting for the bird to return. Negative thoughts such as if something happened to the

bird, or if he might forget her or if he might take a fancy to somebody else were some of the worrisome circumstances that surrounded the Princess.

A very unfortunate remark- The remark made by the little bird about nearly not coming back that night because of his father-in-law giving a party and their constant efforts to make him stay was considered to be “unfortunate” by the Princess

Question 2 A:

What did Princess September do to ensure the safety of her pet?

Answer:

Princess September locked up the little bird inside a golden cage in order to ensure the safety of the bird.

Question 2 B:

How did the bird react to it?

Answer:

The bird was quite surprised at what the Princess did to him. He was very much averse to being locked up inside a cage and as the day passed, he felt depressed and distressed.

Question 3:

Why did the bird refuse to be taken out in her cage?

Answer:

The bird refused to be taken out in her cage as the situation was not the same anymore because the meaning of flying freely in the air was a kind of experience which could not be captured inside a cage. The bird wanted to see the trees, the lake and the green rice growing in the fields but not from the pillars of the cage.

Question 4 A:

What persuaded Princess September to give the bird his freedom again?

Answer:

When Princess September saw the bird lay nearly dead inside the cage, the next morning, she immediately opened the door of the cage. As she took him out, she realized that the freedom and happiness of the little bird were more important than her fears of losing him and was thus persuaded to give the bird his freedom back.

Question 4 B:

How did the bird react to it?

Answer:

The bird was filled with joy and happiness as he came out of the cage. He expressed his love and affection towards the Princess and promised to always come back to her and sing the loveliest songs even if he goes far away.

Question 5:

Princess September kept her window open day and night.

(i) How did it help the bird?

(ii) How did it help the Princess herself?

Answer:

(i) The window being open day and night helped the bird in coming back to the Princess whenever he felt inclined.

(ii) This was also helpful for the Princess herself because the bird always came back to her and ate from her hand. Eventually, the Princess grew extremely beautiful.

Question 6:

The eight sisters kept their windows shut. How did it affect them?

Answer:

The eight sisters always kept their windows shut and this affected them terribly. They grew extremely ugly and disagreeable and when it was time for them to get married, they were given away to the King's councillors with a pound of tea and a Siamese cat.

❖ Exercise**Question 1:**

Are the sisters unkind and cruel? Find evidence in the text to support your idea.

Answer:

Yes, the sisters are unkind and cruel.

Firstly, when they saw the melodious little bird with Princess September, they got very upset and distressed and tried to get away with him by offering a yellow and green coloured parrot to September. The idea of locking the bird in a cage was also given by the sisters. They not only suggested her to keep her windows shut and be firm with the bird but also went on to say that if the bird died inside the cage, it would be ungrateful of him and would serve him right, thus, getting her rid of him. Later on, when eventually the Princess was compelled to set the bird free, her sisters mocked at her and made fun of her giving him the freedom of going out. The mentioned instances and situations reflect the harsh and insensitive nature of the sisters who were envious of their younger sister.

Question 2:

Which, to you, is the most important idea in this story, and why?

- (i) importance of music.
- (ii) value of freedom
- (iii) beauty of nature

Answer:

- (ii) value of freedom

Explanation- The story successfully makes an attempt to capture the real meaning of freedom and liberation. It shows both the phases in a different manner wherein the adverse conditions of

the bird are shown when it is caged and captivated inside along with the happiness that the bird experiences when it is removed from the cage.

Although the young Princess, in a way to overcome her insecurities, cages the bird but soon realizes that the freedom and happiness of her loved ones are much more important than her own happiness. This incident teaches her a life lesson which changes her attitude completely and helps her grow into an extremely beautiful individual. Thus, the plot enables the readers to understand the true value of the core idea of 'freedom' and its essence in the real world.