

Chapter – 8

A Short Monsoon Diary

Comprehension Check

Q1. Why is the author not able to see Bijju?

Answer. The author could not see Bijju because of the mist that concealed the hills. He could only hear his voice but could not see him.

Q2. What are the two ways in which the hills appear to change when the mist comes up?

Answer. When the mist comes up, the birds fall silent. The mist covers the hills. The forest becomes deathly still as though it were midnight.

Q3. When does the monsoon season begin and when does it end? How do you prepare to face the monsoon?

Answer. The monsoon begins in June and ends by the end of August.

Q4. Which hill-station does the author describe in this diary entry?

Answer. Mussoorie.

Q5. For how many days does it rain without stopping? What does the author do on these days?

Answer. It rained without stopping for eight or nine days. Since there was nowhere to go, the author paced in his room and looked out of the window at a few bobbing umbrellas.

Q6. Where do the snakes and rodents take shelter? Why?

Answer. The snakes and rodents take shelter in roofs, attics, and godowns because they are flooded out of their holes and burrows due to excessive rain.

Q7. What did the author receive in the mail?

Answer. The author received a cheque in the mail.

Working With The Text

Q1. Look carefully at the diary entries for June 24-25, August 2 and March 23.

Now write down the changes that happen as the rains progress from June to March

Answer. June 24 was the first day of monsoon mist. All the birds fell silent as the mist climbed the hills. The author calls the mist melancholy because not only does it conceal the hills, it blankets them in silence too. On June 25, there was some genuine early monsoon rain. It was warm and humid, contrary to the cold high-altitude weather that the author had been experiencing all year. It seemed to the author that the plants knew it too, and the first cobra lily reared its head from the ferns. He described the weather as 'a paradise that might have been'. On August 2, it rained all night. There had been no storm or thunder. The author experienced a feeling of "being untouched by, and yet in touch with, the rain". March 23 marked the end of winter. The blackest cloud he had ever seen spread over Mussoorie and then it hailed marbles for half an hour. The hailstorm cleared the sky and he saw a rainbow forming.

Q2. Why did the grandmother ask the children not to kill the Chuchundar?

Answer. The grandmother asked the children not to kill the Chuchundar because it was considered lucky. She said that it brought money.

Q3. What signs do we find in Nature which show that the monsoons are about to end?

Answer. The seeds of the cobra lily turning red signified that the monsoons were about to end.

Q4. Complete the following sentences.

(i) Bijju is not seen but his voice is heard because _____.

(ii) The writer describes the hill station and valley as _____.

(iii) The leopard was successful in _____ but had to flee when _____.

(iv) The minivets are easily noticed because _____.

(v) It looks like a fashion display on the slopes when _____.

(vi) During the monsoon season, snakes and rodents are found in roofs and attics because _____.

Answer. (i) Bijju is not seen but his voice is heard because of the mist in the surroundings.

(ii) The writer describes the hill station and valley as a paradise that might have been.

(iii) The leopard was successful in attacking one of Bijju's cows but had to flee when Bijju's mother came screaming curses.

(iv) The minivets are easily noticed because of their bright colours.

(v) It looks like a fashion display on the slopes when ground orchids, mauve lady's slipper and the white butterfly orchids bloom.

(vi) During the monsoon season, snakes and rodents are found in roofs and attics because they have been flooded out of their holes and burrows.

Q5. 'Although tin roofs are given to springing unaccountable leaks, there is a feeling of being untouched by, and yet in touch with, the rain.'

(i) Why has the writer used the word, 'springing'?

(ii) How is the writer untouched by the rain?

(iii) How is the writer in touch with the rain at the same time?

Answer. (i) The word 'springing' means 'to develop suddenly'. The writer says that tin roofs are prone to developing unexpected leaks.

(ii) The writer was physically untouched by the rain as the tin roof stopped the rain from leaking in.

(iii) The writer was in touch with the rain at the same time because he could feel the rain by listening to its drumming sound on the corrugated tin roof.

Q6. Mention a few things that can happen when there is endless rain for days together.

Answer. When there is endless rain for days together, everything becomes damp and soggy. There is no place for anybody to go to. The hillsides are lush as late monsoon flowers such as wild balsam, dahlias, begonias and ground orchids begin to appear.

Q7. What is the significance of cobra lily in relation to the monsoon season, its beginning and end?

Answer. When monsoon begins, the first cobra lily appears from the ferns. When the seeds of the cobra lily turn red, it signifies that the monsoon is coming to an end.

Q8. Here are some words that are associated with the monsoon. Add as many words as you can to this list. Can you find words for these in your languages?

 downpour floods mist cloudy powercuts cold umbrella 

Answer. Do Attempt it.

Q9. Look at the sentences below.

- (i) Bijju wandered into the garden in the evening.**
- (ii) The trees were ringing with birdsong.**

Notice the highlighted verbs.

The verb wandered tells us what Bijju did that evening. But the verb was ringing tells us what was happening continually at same time in the past (the birds were chirping in the trees).

Now look at the sentences below. They tell us about something that happened in the past. They also tell us about other things that happened continually, at the same time in the past.

Put the verbs in the brackets into their proper forms. The first one is done for you.

- (i) We (get out) of the school bus. The bell (ring) and everyone (rush) to class. We got out of the school bus. The bell was ringing and everyone was rushing to class.**
- (ii) The traffic (stop). Some people (sit) on the road and they (shout) slogans.**
- (iii) I (wear) my raincoat. It (rain) and people (get) wet.**
- (iv) She (see) a film. She (narrate) it to her friends who (listen) carefully.**
- (v) We (go) to the exhibition. Some people (buy) clothes while others (play) games.**
- (vi) The class (is) quiet. Some children (read) books and the rest (draw).**

Answer. (i) We got out of the school bus. The bell was ringing and everyone was rushing to Class.

(ii) The traffic stopped. Some people were sitting on the road and they were shouting slogans.

(iii) I wore my raincoat. It was raining and people were getting wet.

(iv) She saw a film. She was narrating it to her friends who were listening carefully.

(v) We went to the exhibition. Some people were buying clothes while others were playing games.

(vi) The Class was quiet. Some children were reading books and the rest were drawing.

Q10. Here are some words from the lesson which describe different kinds of sounds.

drum swish tinkle caw drip

(i) Match these words with their correct meanings. (a) to fall in small drops (b) to make a sound by hitting a surface repeatedly (c) to move quickly through the air, making a soft sound (d) harsh sound made by birds (e) ringing sound (of a bell or breaking glass, etc.) (ii) Now fill in the blanks using the correct form of the words given above. (a) Ramesh _____ on his desk in impatience. (b) Rain water _____ from the umbrella all over the carpet. (c) The pony _____ its tail. (d) The _____ of breaking glass woke me up. (e) The _____ of the raven disturbed the child's sleep.

Answer. (i) (a) to fall in small drops — drip
 (b) to make a sound by hitting a surface repeatedly — drum
 (c) to move quickly through the air, making a soft sound — swish
 (d) harsh sound made by birds — caw
 (e) ringing sound (of a bell or breaking glass, etc.) — tinkle
 (ii) (a) Ramesh drummed on his desk in impatience.
 (b) Rain water dripped from the umbrella all over the carpet.
 (c) The pony swished its tail.
 (d) The tinkling of breaking glass woke me up.
 (e) The cawing of the raven disturbed the child's sleep.

Q11. And sure enough, I received a cheque in the mail. Complete each sentence below by using appropriate phrase from the ones given below.

sure enough	colourful enough	serious enough
kind enough	big enough	fair enough
brave enough	foolish enough	anxious enough

(i) I saw thick black clouds in the sky. And _____ it soon started raining heavily. (ii) The blue umbrella was _____ for the brother and sister. (iii) The butterflies are _____ to get noticed. (iv) The lady was _____ to chase the leopard. (v) The boy was _____ to call out to his sister. (vi) The man was _____ to offer help. (vii) The victim's injury was _____ for him to get admitted in hospital. (viii) That person was _____ to repeat the same mistake again. (ix) He told me he was sorry and he would compensate for the loss. I said, '_____.'

Answer. (i) I saw thick black clouds in the sky. And sure enough it started raining heavily.

(ii) The blue umbrella was big enough for the brother and sister.

(iii) The butterflies are colourful enough to get noticed.

(iv) The lady was brave enough to chase the leopard.

(v) The boy was anxious enough to call out to his sister.

(vi) The man was kind enough to offer help.

(vii) The victim's injury was serious enough for him to get admitted in hospital.

(viii) That person was foolish enough to repeat the same mistake again.

(ix) He told me he was sorry and he would compensate for the loss. I said, 'fair enough.'

Speaking

Q1. Do you believe in superstitions? Why, or why not? Working with your partner, write down three superstitious beliefs that you are familiar with.

Answer. Truly speaking, I don't believe in superstitions. These are blind beliefs. The ignorant and conservative people observe them. Superstitions have no scientific base or proof. The common superstitions are: (i) 13 is an ominous number. (ii) Don't start a new project on Saturday. (iii) Stop if a black cat crosses your path.

Q2. How many different kinds of birds do you come across in the lesson? How many varieties do you see in your neighbourhood? Are there any birds that you used to see earlier in your neighbourhood but not now? In groups discuss why you think this is happening.

Answer. We come across different kinds of birds in this lesson. These are minivets, drongos, treecreepers and crows. We see sparrows, pigeons, and nightingales in our neighbourhood. Earlier we used to see big birds like kites and parrots in our neighbourhood. But these have become extinct now.

Writing

Q1. The monsoons are a time of great fun and even a few adventures: playing in the rain and getting wet, wading through knee-deep water on your way to school, water flooding the house or the classroom, power cuts and so on. Write a

paragraph describing an incident that occurred during the rains which you can never forget. or Write a poem of your own about the season of spring when trees are in full bloom.

Answer. Do Attempt it

Working With The Poem

Q1. Discuss with your partner the following definition of a poem. A poem is made of words arranged in a beautiful order. These words, when read aloud with feeling, have a music and meaning of their own.

Answer. Very true. Poetry is different from prose because it arranges best words in a musical order. However, a poem being short, musical and interesting is easy to learn by heart and to remember for a long period.

Q2. 'The poetry of earth' is not made of words. What is it made of, as suggested in the poem?

Answer. The poetry of earth is made of the chirping of birds in trees, and a grasshopper's sound. They sing joyfully without a long break.

Q3. Find in the poem lines that match the following.

- (i) The grasshopper's happiness never comes to an end.
- (ii) The cricket's song has a warmth that never decreases.

Answer. (i) He has never done with his delights.

(ii) The cricket's song in warmth increasing ever.

Q4. Which word in stanza 2 is opposite in meaning to 'the frost'?

Answer. "warmth".

Q5. The poetry of earth continues round the year through a cycle of two seasons. Mention each with its representative voice.

Answer. The two major seasons in a year are summer and winter. Both are rich in music. In summer, the representative voice is that of the birds and the grasshoppers. In winter, the cricket is the prime singer.