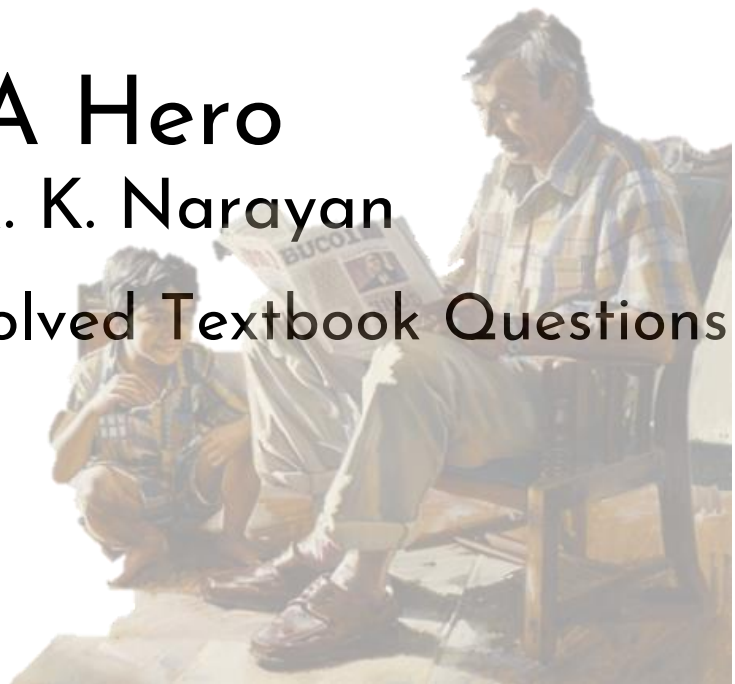


# A Hero

- R. K. Narayan

Notes and Solved Textbook Questions



# INDEX

Sr. No.	Contents	Page Number
1.	Chapter Summary	2 - 2
2.	Check your Understanding Questions - Solved	3 - 5
3.	Textbook Exercise Questions - Solved	6 - 10

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

Swami, a boy in the second form (7<sup>th</sup> standard), usually slept in the same room as his grandmother.

One day, his father read a newspaper article about a boy who bravely fought a tiger. Wanting Swami to be courageous, the father made Swami sleep alone in his office. His father ignored the protests of the mother and grandmother.

Swami was scared of sleeping alone in the dark.

As the night advanced.....
i. Swami slept under the bench for safety and covered his head with a blanket. His heart beat faster in fear.
ii. Silence in the house deepened.
iii. A ray of light from the streetlamp cast shadows on the wall.
iv. There were noises of the clock ticking, trees rustling, people snoring, and insects humming.
v. Frightening stories about devils and ghosts that Swami remembered: a. His friend Mani who had seen the devil under a banyan tree. b. Munisami's father spitting blood because the devil slapped his cheek. c. His fourth-class friend who disappeared suddenly and was said to be taken by a ghost to Siam or Nepal.

Swami fell into a restless and nightmare-filled sleep. He had nightmares of:

- A tiger chasing him.
- The noise of the tiger claws scratching the ground and a loud thud.
- His feet stuck on the ground unable to escape.
- His eyelids not opening and being unable to escape from the nightmares.

Swami woke up and heard something rustling and saw a dark shape moving. Thinking it was the devil coming to take him and hurt him, Swami hugged the body and bit it with all his might.

Swami had actually bitten the leg of one of the most notorious house-breakers in the district! Hearing the noises, Swami's father, the cook and a servant rushed in and caught the burglar.

Swami was congratulated in the following ways:

- i. His classmates looked at him with respect.
- ii. His teacher patted his back.
- iii. The Headmaster said that Swami was a true scout.
- iv. The police were grateful to Swami.

The inspector suggested that Swami become a police officer when he grew up, but Swami wanted to be an *engine driver*, a *railway guard* or a *bus conductor*.

Swami went back to sleeping with his grandmother. His father was displeased but didn't make him change his sleeping arrangements again.

# Check your Understanding Questions - Solved

## Check your Understanding - 1

**1. Swami's father drew his attention to a report in the newspaper. What was the report about?**

**Answer:** Swami's father read a report in the newspaper about the bravery of a village lad. A boy, while returning home, had faced a tiger on a jungle path. He fought the tiger, then climbed up a tree and stayed there for safety till some people killed the tiger.

**2. The report said that the boy (who fought with the tiger) stayed on the tree for half-a-day. Why did he do so? (Choose the right answer)**

**a. He wanted to watch the tiger from the top of a tree.**

**b. He wanted someone to kill the tiger.**

**c. He wanted to take rest for some time.**

**Answer:** b. He wanted someone to kill the tiger.

**3. Swami said that a very strong and grown-up person might have fought with the tiger. Do you think he made this remark out of his**

**(a) experience**

**(b) wisdom**

**(c) belief? (Choose the most appropriate word)**

**Answer:** (c) belief

**4. "Can you prove you have courage?" Swami's father said. (Answer the following questions)**

**a. Was he joking? Or, serious?**

**Answer:** Swami's father was serious about his question.

**b. Was it a challenge? Or, a command?**

**Answer:** It was initially a challenge but when Swami seemed resistant to it, his father commanded him.

**5. The place where Swami usually slept was ..... (Fill in the blank)**

**Answer:** Beside his granny, in the passage.

**6. What is disgraceful, according to Swami's father?**

**Answer:** Swami, a boy in the second form, sleeping beside his mother or grandmother like a baby was disgraceful according to his father.

## Check your Understanding - 2

**1. What do you think was the practice of granny before she went to bed?**

**Answer:** Before she went to bed, granny would talk to Swami and even tell him stories.

**2. Was Swami really sleeping? Or, was he pretending?**

**Answer:** No, Swami wasn't really sleeping. He pretended to sleep to avoid being forced to sleep alone in his father's office.

**3. To Swami, his father looked like an.....(Fill in the blank)**

**Answer:** Apparition

**4. Why do you think Swami looked at his granny and his mother while following his father to the room?**

**Answer:** Swami probably wanted to communicate his reluctance and fear. He looked at his granny and his mother hoping they could intervene on his behalf and stop his father from making him sleep alone.

**5. "There might be scorpions behind your law books," said Swami.**

**a. Had he seen them earlier? Or, were there scorpions really?**

**Answer:** Swami had most likely not seen any scorpions behind his father's law books. He probably was imagining them and other fearful things.

**b. Was it a trick to escape from his father? (Answer all the questions.)**

**Answer:** Yes, it was most likely a trick that Swami used to try and escape from his father. He probably said there were scorpions thinking that his father would consider his safety and not force him to sleep alone in the office.

### **Check your Understanding - 3**

**Swami wished that the tiger hadn't spared the boy, which means...**

**(Choose the right answer)**

**a. he didn't want the boy to be alive.**

**b. he didn't want the tiger to be alive.**

**Answer:** a. he didn't want the boy to be alive.

**2. As silence deepened in the room, what was Swami reminded of?**

**Answer:** A silence deepened in the room, Swami's heart beat faster in fear. He remembered all the stories of devils and ghosts he had heard. For instance, he remembered his friend Mani who frequently saw the devil in the banyan tree, Munisami's father spitting blood because the devil slapped his cheek when returning home late one night. He also remembered his fourth standard friend who disappeared suddenly and was said to have been taken by a ghost to Siam or Nepal.

**3. Which place in the room did Swami think was safe, compact and reassuring?**

**Answer:** Under the bench in his father's office seemed like a safe, compact and reassuring place for Swami.

**4. Swami touched.....in the room instead of granny. (Fill in the blank appropriately)**

**Answer:** the wooden leg of the bench

**5. Swami saw a moving creature in the room. It was.....**

**a. his shadow**

**b. a scorpion**

**c. a man (Fill in the blank)**

**Answer:** c. a man.

### **Check your Understanding - 4**

**1. Who cried, "Aiyo! Something has bitten me"?**

**Answer:** The dark presence that Swami thought was the devil cried out the given sentence.

**2. Who did father, cook and a servant stumble upon?**

**Answer:** Father, the cook and the servant stumbled upon the burglar who had fallen.

**3. Why were congratulations showered on Swami?**

**Answer:** Swami had accidentally caught a notorious house breaker of the district. Hence, the grateful police and others who knew Swami showered him with congratulations.

**4. Do you think Swami really wanted to join the police? If not, what did he want to be?**

**Answer:** Swami didn't want to join the police and instead wanted to be an engine driver, railway guard or a bus conductor.

**5. Did Swami muster up courage to sleep alone after the burglar incident?**

**Answer:** No, Swami went back to sleeping beside his grandmother after the burglar incident.

**6. Who supported Swami - His mother or his granny?**

**Answer:** Swami's mother supported him sleeping in his usual place. She told his father to leave Swami alone

## Textbook Exercise Questions - Solved

**1. A report about a boy in the newspaper was an unexpected event in Swami's life. Justify.**

**Answer:** In the story A Hero, by R K Narayan, Swami's father read a story of a brave boy who faced and fought a tiger. Thinking Swami needed to be more courageous, his father forced Swami to sleep alone in the office. Swami's night was filled with nightmares and scary memories. He bit down on the leg of a dark presence thinking it was the devil. It turned out to be a burglar however, and Swami had accidentally helped capture a notorious housebreaker of the district. Swami's bravery received congratulations from the police, his schoolmates, teachers and the headmaster. He went back to sleeping beside his grandmother and his father accepted his decision. Thus, the report about a boy in the newspaper started a series of reactions that led to an unexpected event in Swami's life.

**2. Swami made a comment on the newspaper report. Was he right? How did his view differ from that of his father?**

**Answer:** After hearing about the newspaper report, Swami commented that it must have been a strong grown up who fought off the tiger. He wasn't right about this according to the information in the newspaper article. Swami's father disagreed with Swami, believed that the newspaper was right and that a boy had fought off a tiger.

**3. What desperate attempts did Swami make to escape from his father?**

**Answer:** When Swami's father propositioned that Swami prove his bravery by sleeping alone in the office room, Swami was immediately scared. He first mumbled "yes" weakly and tried to change the subject to cricket. When that didn't work, Swami tried negotiating with his father that he'd start sleeping alone the next month. When his father still wouldn't budge, Swami tiptoed to his bed early and pretended to fall asleep, pulling a blanket over his face.

**4. Why did Swami conclude that his father's proposition was frightful?**

**Answer:** Swami was used to sleeping beside his grandmother. He was afraid of the dark and afraid of sleeping alone. Thus, he concluded that his father's proposition was frightful.

**5. As the night advanced, Swami felt that something terrible would happen to him. What would it be? How would it happen?**

**Answer:** As the night advanced, Swami remembered all the frightening stories he had heard. The darkness, silence and random noises added to the eerie atmosphere. Swami was convinced that devils would carry him away. He slept under the bench and covered himself completely as it felt safer.

**6. There was absolute silence in the room. In spite of it, some noises reached Swami's ears. What were they?**

**Answer:** As the night advanced and the silence in the house deepened, Swami heard several noises like the clock ticking, trees rustling, people snoring, and vague insect humming.

**7. Narrate Swami's dreadful experience when he was lying under the bench.**

**Answer:** Swami was terrified of sleeping alone. When he lay on the bench, he remembered several stories of ghosts and devils and decided to sleep under the bench as the space felt safer, more compact and reassuring. He covered himself with a blanket and unknowingly fell into a nightmare-filled sleep. He dreamt of a tiger

chasing him and being unable to escape as his feet were stuck to the ground. He heard the scratching of tiger claws on the ground followed by a thud but couldn't open his eyes and felt stuck in the nightmare. When he finally opened his eyes, he tried reaching out for his grandmother for comfort but only touched the wooden bench leg. His fear intensified. Swami heard some rustling and saw a dark figure moving in the room. Assuming it was the devil who had come to take him away, Swami decided to fight back. As the dark shape reached near him, Swami hugged it with all his might and bit into its leg. The dark shape turned out to be a notorious burglar of the district.

**8. How was Swami honoured by his classmates, teacher and the headmaster?**

**Answer:** Swami was congratulated by several people for having helped catch the burglar. His classmates looked at him with respect, his teacher patted his back and his headmaster said that Swami was a true scout.

**9. Why did father want Swami to sleep alone in the office room?**

**Answer:** Swami's father wanted Swami to be independent and brave. Hence, he wanted Swami to prove he was courageous by sleeping alone in the office room.

**10. Who do you think was wiser, Swami or his father? Justify your preference.**

**Answer:** According to me Swami was wiser. He was clear that he didn't want to sleep alone in the dark and voiced his opinion. Knowing his father's forceful nature, he tried alternatives to avoid being made to sleep alone. His father, however, refused to listen to him. When he was alone in the office room, despite being very scared, Swami waited it out bravely and even attacked someone whom he thought was the devil. Swami's father wanted Swami to prove some point that the child wasn't ready for. Being an adult, his father should have been more considerate of his son's feelings. This makes me think that his father wasn't very wise and hence Swami was wiser.

**11. Why did Swami feel relieved at the end?**

**Answer:** The day after Swami helped catch the burglar, Swami went back to sleeping at his usual place. His father was displeased but his mother stood up for Swami and told his father to leave him alone. His father agreed to not force Swami which was a relief for him.

**12. Suppose you are Swami of the story. Write a brief letter to your friend describing how you helped to catch a burglar in your house.**

**Answer:**

Dear Harish,

How are you? You won't believe what happened to me yesterday! You will probably read about it in the newspaper, but I wanted to tell you exactly how I helped catch the notorious burglar.

Yesterday, my father read an article about a brave boy who fought a tiger and wanted me to sleep alone to prove my bravery! You know I always sleep next to my grandmother and that I'm scared of the dark and of sleeping alone. I tried to avoid it but my father would not listen. I even tried to go to bed early and pretend to sleep, but he came and woke me up! He agreed to leave the office door open, but man, it was so dark! I remembered all the horrible stories we had heard. Remember what happened to Munisami's father? I finally slept under the bench and that's when I heard this rustling noise. I thought I was going to be taken by the devil for sure! I even saw a dark shape moving towards me! Can you imagine? Well, if I was going to be taken anyway. I wasn't going down without a fight! So, I grabbed the dark



shape and bit it with all my strength. Then I heard a noise of someone crying out in pain and falling! Luckily father, the cook and the servant came running and when the lights turned on - it was a burglar!

Today, school was filled with people congratulating me on how brave I was. The inspector even told me to become a police man when I grow up. I just said yes to be polite, but you know what our plans actually are. Anyways, have you heard of anything so crazy! Who knew one night of sleeping alone would be so adventurous?! Anyways, I need to go sleep now before father reaches home. Write back to me about what you think. Has a burglar ever entered your house? I look forward to your response.

Your loving friend,  
Swami,

**13. Some words describing the characters of the story 'A Hero' are given in brackets. Put them in the appropriate columns.**

(caring, protective, innocent, tricky, authoritative, disciplined, helpless, nervous)

**Answer:**

Swami's father	Mother	Granny	Swami
Authoritative	Caring	Innocent	Tricky
Disciplined	Protective		Helpless
			Nervous

## Enrich your Vocabulary

**Task 1. Homophones - Homophones are words that sound the same but have different meanings and different spellings. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words.**

1. We had ----- many apples to carry. (too / two)

Answer: too

2. I ----- a horse at the Marina beach. (road / rode)

Answer: rode

3. Did you have a ----- for lunch? (pear / pair)

Answer: pear

4. The books are over ----- on the shelf. (their / there)

Answer: there

**Task 2. Fill in the blanks by choosing the appropriate word and complete the story.**

**Answer:**

This is a story (storey / story) told by a knight (night / knight). Once he received a letter. When he read (red / read) it through (through / threw), he could not believe his own eyes. For (Far/For), it was written by (buy/ by) none other than the queen of the land. She asked him to meet her at (at/ yet) a secret place. The knight was in a fix. But he thought of (of/ off) a plan to tide over this

problem. He went (vent/ went) to the meeting place, not alone, but along with his fair (fair/ fare) wife. Can you guess what happened then?

**Task 3. Scramble the letters to form words. See the meaning clues in brackets.**

1. a t r t e f l ----- (praise)

Answer: Flatter

2. b o u d t ----- (suspect)

Answer: Doubt

3. r a g t e d y ----- (unhappy ending)

Answer: Tragedy

4. r a g f e n m t ----- (a piece)

Answer: Fragment

5. r a e t l ----- (careful)

Answer: Alert

6. c a c s r i y t ----- (short supply)

Answer: Scarcity

7. y m t s a t h p e i c ----- (not cruel)

Answer: Sympathetic

## **Read and respond**

**Task 1: A man went to an astrologer.**

**Astrologer:** Come my child, your name is Suraj Khanna.

**Khanna:** Yes, indeed!

**Astrologer :** You have two sons and two daughters.

**Khanna :** How true!

**Astrologer :** You bought four kilos of sugar and five kilos of rice yesterday, and there are five members of your household remaining after your parents passed away.

**Khanna :** I am impressed. But can you tell me about my future?

**Astrologer :** Okay then. Come back with your horoscope booklet tomorrow. And, here, take your ration card back.

**Answer the questions below:**

**1. Mr. Khanna was surprised at the astrologer's prediction. What made him feel so?**

**Answer:** The astrologer was very accurate about Mr. Khanna's family situation which surprised him.

**2. Why wasn't the astrologer able to predict Mr. Khanna's future?**

**Answer:** The astrologer didn't have Mr. Khanna's horoscope booklet and hence wasn't able to predict his future.

**3. In the conversation given above, who do you think has better common sense?**  
**Answer:** I think the astrologer had better common sense.

**Task 2:** My brother, an Army doctor, was part of the UN peacekeeping mission in the Congo. At the end of the one-year term, his Congolese commander awarded him a letter of merit that ended with "..... and he worked hardly to restore normalcy in the region."

**Which word in the passage above gives the opposite meaning of what was meant to be said?**  
**Answer:** The word 'hardly'.

## **Learn grammar through communication**

**Use of Modals:**

**Some sentences are given below:**

- a. Rewrite them beginning with the clue given in brackets.
- b. Identify the language function.

**One example is given.**

**E.g.:** Is it alright if I sit here? (Begin with 'could.....')

**Function - Seeking permission.**

**Sentence rewritten:** Could I sit here?

**1. Please return my library books.**  
(Begin with 'will' -----)

**Answer:** Function - Request

**Sentence rewritten:** Will you please return my library books?

**2. The files are heavy. I'll carry them for you.**  
(Begin with 'would' -----)

**Answer:** Function - Offering help

**Sentence rewritten:** Would you like me to carry the heavy files for you?

**3. That's your essay. Perhaps you will have no objection if I see it.**  
(Begin with 'May' -----)

**Answer:** Function - Request

**Sentence rewritten:** May I see your essay?

**4. Let me switch on the fan, OK?**  
(Begin with 'Do you' -----)

**Answer:** Function - Suggestion

**Sentence rewritten:** Do you want me to switch on the fan?

**5. 'Bring the books to my office.'**  
(Begin with 'would' -----)

**Answer:** Function - Order

**Sentence rewritten:** Would you bring the books to my office?

---