

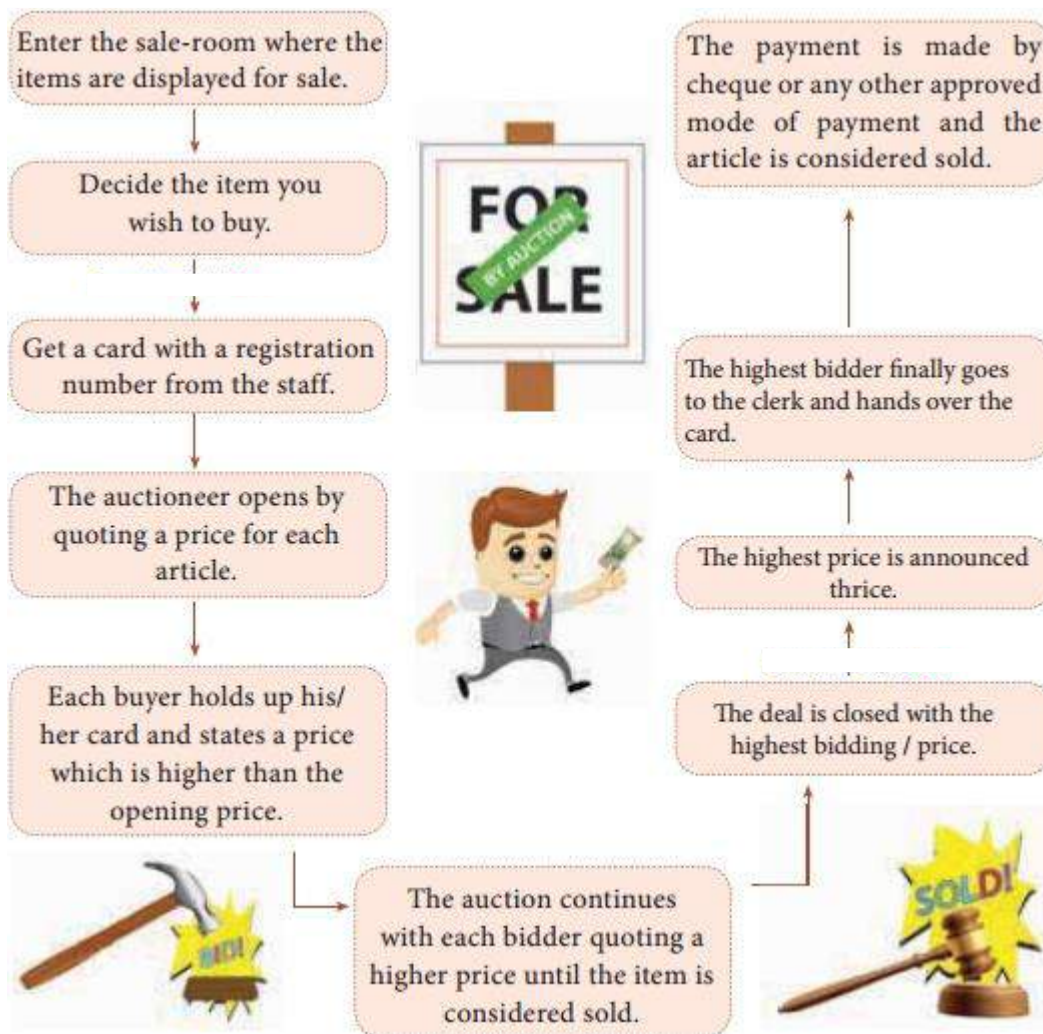
Unit-IV

Tight Corners (Prose)

Warm Up

Many of us have unused, old but valuable items at home. If we wish to get rid of them, we can sell them at an auction. Items like paintings, jewels, household articles, vehicles, even houses can be auctioned.

The flowchart below will help you understand how an auction is conducted.



Textual Questions

Question (a)

Describe the activity that was going on in the sale – room at King Street.

Answer:

Christie Auction house was full. The auction house was selling Barbizon pictures and getting tremendous sums for each. Some were sold for two thousand and some for three thousand pounds. It was surprising to observe that all the sold items were little bit of things like forest scenes, pools at evening, shepherdesses and the regular subjects.

Question (b)

What can you say about the author's attitude when he high-handedly participated in the auction?

Answer:

The author behaved like a gambler. He risked high banking on serendipity alone. In reality, he should have a minimum balance of 500 pounds in his bank account to be eligible to be a bidder in the auction. But he had only sixty three pounds. He didn't have rich acquaintances or relatives who could bail him out of a financial crisis of such a serious nature at a short notice. So, the author's participation in the auction in a high handed manner demonstrates his audacity combined with absurdity.

Question (c)

Why was the author sure he would not be caught?

Answer:

He was sure he would not be caught as he decided that he was not going to run any risks of bidding huge amounts.

Question (d)

What made the author ignore his friend's warning?

Answer:

The author was confident that he couldn't run any risks by a playful participation in the auction. So, he ignored his friend's warning.

Question (e)

How had the author managed the auction without getting involved in the deal?

Answer:

The author managed the auction as they had been started modestly at fifty guineas and then there was a gradual crescendo. So he was contributing his part very safely.

Question (f)

What came as a shock to the author?

Answer:

Unlike previous lots, one painting's launch price was four thousand pounds. When, the millionaires were too stunned to react, the author had sheepishly said "and fifty". The auctioneer clinched the deal in the author's favour. This was a rude shock to the author because he did not wish to buy any painting."

Question (g)

What did the falling of the hammer indicate?

Answer:

The falling of the hammer indicated that the bidding got over by four thousand and fifty guineas.

Question (h)

What made the friend laugh heartily?

Answer:

The author's friend realized that he had got into a pickle and there was no possible escape. Looking at the crisis from outside made him laugh heartily.

Question (h)

What kind of excuses did the narrator think he could make?

Answer:

The narrator thought of confessing his poverty to one of Christies staff and had the picture. put up again. He thought of pretending to have made a mistake in bidding.

Question (j)

Why did the friend desert the narrator, a second time?

Answer:

The author's friend was so much tickled by the comedy of the situation that he deserted the author for a second time to have a hearty laugh alone.

Question (k)

How does the narrator describe the man who approached him?

Answer:

The man who approached the author wore a green baize apron and spoke in a husky cockney tone. He had come to find out if he would accept the offer of fifty guineas for his expression of interest for Daubigny.

Question (l)

How does the Narrator show presence of mind in the sudden turn of events?

Answer:

The author should have been grateful for the stranger's offer to bail him out of potential insolvency. He could have embraced him and even accepted fifty farthings for restoring him from a mental agony. But he asked the mediator if that was the most he could offer. This was nothing but worldly guile. The man offered to find out saying there was no harm trying for a bit more. The author gave his ultimatum that he would take a hundred. He got a cheque for hundred guineas.

Question (m)

The narrator would not forget two things about his friend. What are they?

Answer:

It was because of his friend he came there into Christie's. Though he escaped

from the tight corner he faced there, the mental stress which he had. The behaviour of his friend at that moment could not be forgotten.

1. Choose the most appropriate answer for the following questions:

Question (a)

'Tight Comer' means a

- (i) difficult situation
- (ii) crowded comer
- (iii) tragic incident
- (iv) fierce fight

Answer:

- (i) difficult situation

Question (b)

Barbizon refers to a

- (i) kind of paint
- (ii) type of architecture
- (iii) a region in Britain
- (iv) a French school of painting

Answer:

- (iv) a French school of painting

Question (c)

The narrator visited the sale-room as he

- (i) wished to see an auction
- (ii) had a painting to sell
- (iii) was persuaded by his friend
- (iv) wanted to buy a painting

Answer:

- (iii) was persuaded by his friend

Question (d)

The narrator had been a safe contributor at the auction, as

- (i) there were bidders quoting higher prices
- (ii) he had a sound financial background

- (iii) his friend had lent him money
- (iv) he did not make any bidding

Answer:

- (i) there were bidders quoting higher prices

Question (e)

'And I got it.' Here 'it' refers to the

- (i) the picture
- (ii) the price
- (iii) an award
- (iv) the card

Answer:

- (iv) the card

2. Answer the following questions:

Question (a)

What is a tight corner? What happens when one finds oneself in a tight corner?

Answer:

Tight corner is a difficult situation. When one finds oneself in a tight corner, one worries and thinks seriously about the ways of getting out of it.

Question (b)

What is the difference between a physical and a mental tight corner?

Answer:

Physical tight corners are those situations which threaten the lives of an individual. Mental tight corners are worries for which no solution is in sight. It upsets the individuals and confounds them.

Question (c)

Why did the narrator visit Christie's?

Answer:

The narrator visited Christie's to watch the process of auctioning.

Question (d)

The narrator heard his own voice saying, 'and fifty'. What does this suggest?

Answer:

The narrator heard his voice saying "and fifty". This suggested that he offered to buy the painting by paying four thousand fifty guineas.

Question (e)

What was the narrator's financial condition?

Answer:

The narrator had just sixty three pounds in his bank account. The tragic fact was that he did not even have 500 pounds which was the security deposit to be eligible to bid for the paintings.

Question (h)

The narrator could not pretend to have made a mistake in bidding. Why?

Answer:

The narrator had made bids for many paintings. Now he could not confess his poverty. So, he could not pretend to have made a genuine mistake.

Question (g)

What could have been the best way for the narrator, to get himself out of the tight corner?

Answer:

The author could have confessed his poverty and requested the auctioned picture to be put up again for "sale" again to get himself freed from the auction.

Question (h)

Why did the narrator feel he could have welcomed a firing party?

Answer:

The author had made many bids in a low margin and got escaped. But he got trapped by saying “and fifty” when a picture was put up for sale with a starting price of 4000 guineas. No one else raised the stake. The auctioneer rang the bell and the author realized with alarm how on earth he could ever raise that much money. He thought he could find a firing party to shoot him down. Death is better than public disgrace.

Question (i)

What was the bidder’s offer to the narrator?

Answer:

The bidder offered 50 guineas to the narrator to give up his claim of the painting.

Question (j)

How did the narrator take advantage of the situation?

Answer:

The author asked the mediator of the bidder if that was the most he could offer. The mediator said that there was no harm in asking for a little more. Then the narrator gave his ultimatum that he would take hundred. This showed how guile the narrator was though the stranger was inadvertently rescuing him from a tight corner.

3. Form a meaningful summary of the lesson by rewriting the numbers in the correct sequence:

(1) The narrator had only 63 pounds with him and did not know how to manage the situation. []

(2) The narrator thought of all his relations from whom he could borrow. []

(3) Unfortunately, he had made the highest bid. []

(4) The narrator entered Christie’s as his friend persuaded him to visit the sale room. []

(5) Every time someone else made a higher bid and hence the narrator was not caught. []

(6) The narrator on a sudden impulse added 50 more guineas, to the amount offered. []

(7) His friend joined him then but left immediately unable to control his laughter. []

(8) He even thought of borrowing from money lenders and considered the possibility of confessing the truth to the staff at Christie's. []

(9) The picture was declared sold to the narrator. []

(10) After some time a picture was put up and a bid for 4000 guineas was raised. []

(11) A sudden stroke of luck befell the narrator when he heard that the gentleman who had made the bid of 4000 guineas would offer him the additional 50 guineas and buy the picture. []

(12) The narrator kept bidding just for fun. []

(13) The picture was given away to the other bidder and the narrator was saved from humiliation. []

(14) His friend had left the place roaring with laughter at the narrator's predicament. []

(15) The narrator was too happy at the offer but demanded 100 guineas instead of the 50. Now there was no need for him to make any payment. []

Answer:

(1) The narrator entered Christie's as his friend persuaded him to visit the sale room.

(2) The narrator kept bidding just for fun.

(3) Every time someone else made a higher bid and hence the narrator was not caught.

(4) After some time a picture was put up and a bid for 4000 guineas was raised.

(5) The narrator on a sudden impulse added 50 more guineas, to the amount offered.

(6) Unfortunately, he had made the highest bid.

(7) The picture was declared sold to the narrator.

(8) The narrator had only 63 pounds with him and did not know how to manage the situation.

(9) The narrator thought of all his relations from whom he could borrow.

(10) He even thought of borrowing from moneylenders and considered the possibility of confessing the truth to the staff at Christie's,

(11) His friend had left the place roaring with laughter at the narrator's predicament.

(12) A sudden stroke of luck befell the narrator when he heard that the gent who had made the bid of 4000 guineas would offer him the additional 50 guineas and buy the picture.

(13) The narrator was too happy at the offer but demanded 100 guineas instead of the 50. Now there was no need for him to make any payment.

(14) The picture was given away to the other bidder and the narrator was saved from humiliation.

(15) His friend joined him then but left immediately unable to control his laughter.

4. Answer the following questions in a paragraph of about 100 – 150 words.

Question (a)

Narrate the circumstances that led to the narrator getting into a tight corner, by his own folly.

Answer:

The narrator entered Christie's salesroom just because his friend persuaded him to do so. There was a sale of Barbizon pictures for a huge sum of money. The narrator was well aware of the fact that he had only sixty-three pounds in the bank and did not have any security to borrow more than that.

Though he knew well that he couldn't participate in the auction, he started bidding just for fun. His friend gave him a warning. He didn't mind it. At first, there was no risk in his bidding as it started modestly and there was a gradual crescendo. Later the start of the bid itself was high.

The narrator might have stopped his bidding at least at that moment. It was because of his foolishness he raised the bidding to four thousand and fifty guineas which he knew was the top price of the day. More than that the picture was of no use to him. Thus it was very clear that because of his false judgment he got caught in a tight corner.

Question (b)

Trace the thoughts that went on in the mind of the narrator when picture after picture was put up and sold at the auction.

Answer:

The author was enthusiastically participating in the bid at Christie with very little money on him. He sailed smooth for a long time raising the stakes on many paintings and carefully staying behind other competitors. It was fun watching till he got trapped in a net, set by his own tongue. When one particular painting was offered for 4000 guineas, the bidders maintained an uncomfortable silence when the author heard himself foolishly saying "and fifty". The auctioneer banged the hammer finalizing the deal in the narrator's favour.

It was then the narrator realized with alarm that he had no money on him. Suddenly he lost interest in fun bidding. He started thinking fast for a way out of the tight corner he had created for himself. Many small and big paintings were offered and sold out fast. The Barbizon pictures were selling fast like hot cakes for 2000 to 3000 guineas. The author was running over the names of friends, relatives and even money lenders who might bail him out of the tight corner. He even speculated on the possibility of confessing his poverty to the staff of Christie and request them to put up the picture again for sale. Such a genuine mistake could have been rectified at the early stages of auction. As he had enthusiastically participated in the bid for many paintings,

the auctioneers wouldn't buy his justification for the "genuine mistake". As bidders stood in a queue to hand in their cheques/cash to collect their paintings, the narrator stood deliberately at the end. He never felt such a fool or had colder feet all his life.

"People do not wish to appear foolish; to avoid the appearance of foolishness, they are will to remain actually fools but wait in patience for the right time

Question (c)

Explain how the narrator got out of the tight corner that he was in.

Answer:

The narrator got caught in a tight corner of paying a huge amount for the bidding which he started for fun. After the end of the sale, he was standing at last for the payment. His friend joined him but left him immediately as he could not control his laughter.

The narrator never felt such a fool in all his life. A sudden stroke of luck befell the narrator when he heard that the agent who had made the bid of 4000 guineas would offer him the additional 50 guineas and buy the picture. The narrator was very happy at the offer.

Suddenly an idea sparkled in his mind and he demanded a hundred guineas instead of the fifty. This was how he was rescued from the humiliation at the auction house.

As the narrator, make a diary entry about the tight corner you faced at Christie's and how you were saved from the dire situation.

I entered Christie's saleroom after lunch as my friend persuaded me to do so. Barbizon pictures were for sale there. I started bidding just for fun. I know that I had only sixty-three pounds in a bank and was confident that I would bid in a safe zone. After some time a picture was put up and a bid for 4000 guineas raised.

It is in this context. I made a false judgment and offered 50 guineas more. I was shocked when the picture was declared sold to me I didn't know how to pay for it. My friend couldn't control his laughter and left me. I thought of very many ways to come out of my tight corner. There was a sudden stroke of luck.

The gent who made the bid of 4000 guineas was ready to offer who made additional 50 guineas and buy the picture considered it to be a good chance and demanded 100 guineas. Really it was a narrow escape. I couldn't forget this incident in my lifetime.

Question (d)

As the narrator, make a diary entry about the tight corner you faced at Christie's and how you were saved from the dire situation.

Answer:

Thursday, 17th Nov. 20xx

I was lunching at a club in King James's street. While passing along Kingstreet later, my friend suggested that we peeped in at Christie's where an auction of Barbizon pictures was going on. The prices of the paintings were pertaining to forest scenes, pools at evening, shepherdesses, and the regular subjects were tremendous for each ranging from two to three thousand guineas each. The remarkable thing was that nothing was sold at three figures. After watching the auction for fun for a while I found myself bidding.

I had exactly sixty three pounds in my account in the bank. I knew that any bidder must have a minimum of five hundred pounds in the bank to stand as security to bid for the artistic works. I enthusiastically participated in many bids as the starting price for each painting was a modest fifty to hundred guineas. Things went on well for me for quite sometime. But a cruel fate

awaited me. A short red-faced man electrified the room by fixing the starting price at 4000 guineas. There was a rustle of excitement followed by terrible silence. But I found myself saying “and fifty”. The dealer looked at the opener and at the company. To my surprise and horror, the dealer shot his bolt.

My heart stopped and my blood congealed. I was in possession of the picture I did not want to buy. I was the top purchaser in the auction with just 63 pounds in the bank account. I turned to my friend for some moral support but he had deserted me to have a hearty laugh at a distance. With great alarm, I saw many other Barbizon pictures being put up and sold. The auction came to an end. The bidders stood in a queue to pay the price and collect the pictures. I stayed behind at the end of the queue as I could not recall the name of any uncle, aunt or even a relative who could offer me 4050 guineas to buy the painting. I wished that a firing squad could give me a welcome relief by shooting me down. I preferred death to public disgrace. But something divine turned my tragedy into a comedy.

Just then one gentleman enquired if I was the gentlemen who bought “big Daubigny”. I admitted. The mediator asked if I could take 50 guineas for my interest and give up my claim. I would have hugged him and wept for joy of relief from the tight corner. But I had the guile/presence of mind to ask, “Is that the most he would offer?” The mediator said that there was no harm in trying for a bit more. I said, “Tell him I will take hundred” myself and my friend started laughing. But when I saw the cheque for hundred guineas, I became grave. My friend said to me that it was he who brought me to Christie. I admitted, “I shall never forget it. It is indelibly branded in letters of fire on my heart”

Unit-IV

Macavity – The Mystery Cat (Poem)

Warm Up

A. French proverb goes thus: ‘The dog may be wonderful prose, but only the cat is poetry.’ You may have observed that all animals possess a number of

unique qualities. Fill in the columns with words and phrases associated with each of the following animals.

Dog	Cat	Wolf	Elephant

Answer:

DOG	CAT	WOLF	ELEPHANT
Barks	meows	howls	trumpets
open fight	stealthy	groups	groups
aggressive	pretends to be gentle	rough	gentle
faithful	ungrateful	wild	civilized
fights for food	quickly steals food	predatory	graceful

B. People admire some of these animal qualities. What are they? Have you noticed some of them in yourself or in others? Share your views with the class.
Cats are stealthy and walk without making noise.

My friend Vimal / Mala is cat-like. He / She surprises me often appearing suddenly. Jackal is clever and persuades others like Ratna / Raja to work for him. Whenever a difficult assignment is given, he / she praises the gifted student and gets his/ her work done. Elephant is graceful and known for strong memory. Murugan / Neela is very gentle and has terrific memory. One

must be very cautious with such persons. Even a small hurt will be in their memory for long.

Textual Questions

A. Based on your understanding of the poem, answer the following question in a sentence or two.

Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw
For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.
He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's despair:
For when they reach the scene of crime – Macavity's not there!

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
He's broken every human law, he breaks the law of gravity.
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare,
And when you reach the scene of crime – Macavity's not there!

You may seek him in the basement, you may look up in the air
But I tell you once and once again, Macavity's not there!
Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are sunken in.

His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is highly domed;
His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are uncombed.
He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake;
And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity.
You may meet him in a by-street, you may see him in the square
But when a crime's discovered, then Macavity's not there!



He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at cards.)
And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland Yard's.
And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is rifled,
Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been stifled,

Or the greenhouse glass is broken, and the trellis past repair
Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! Macavity's not there!
And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone astray,
Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the way,

There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the stair
But it's useless to investigate, Macavity's not there!
And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret Service say:
'It must have been Macavity!' but he's a mile away.

You'll be sure to find him resting, or a licking of his thumbs,
Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.
Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,
There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity.

He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:
At whatever time the deed took place, MACAVITY WASN'T THERE!
And they say that all the Cats whose wicked deeds are widely known,
(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention Griddlebone)

Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the time
Just controls their operations: the Napoleon of Crime

Question (i)

What is Macavity's nickname?

Answer:

Macavity's nickname is the Hidden Paw.

Question (ii)

Why is the Flying Squad frustrated?

Answer:

The Flying squad is frustrated because every time they rush to the spot of crime to arrest Macavity, he is not there.

Question (iii)

Which law does Macavity break?

Answer:

Macavity not only breaks the human law but also breaks the law of gravity.

Question (iv)

What makes the fakir stare in wonder?

Answer:

Macavity's power of levitation makes the fakir stare in wonder.

Question (v)

Describe Macavity's appearance.

Answer:

Macavity is a tall and thin ginger cat whose eyebrows are deep with lines. He

has sunken eyes which gives him a devil look. His coat is untidy and his whiskers are uncombed.

Question (vi)

Where can you encounter Macavity?

Answer:

One may meet Macavity in a street or in the square. But he vanishes when a crime is committed.

Question (vii)

Why does the poet say Macavity is 'outwardly' respectable?

Answer:

The poet says that Macavity is outwardly 'respectable' because he pretends to be a good one. But his actions disprove it.

Question (viii)

Why is Macavity called the 'Napoleon of Crime'?

Answer:

He is agile and cautious. He is a monster of depravity

Question (ix)

Which two characters does the poet refer to as examples of wicked cats?

Answer:

Macavity will escape a mile away from the scene of the crime.

Question (x)

Mention any two qualities of Macavity.

Answer:

Similar to Napoleon he was a strategist and military leader. Macavity controlled the operations of all the wicked cats in London.

B. Read the poem once again and complete the summary using the words given in the box.

larder	whiskers	respectable
criminal	devil	thought
sunken	division	agents
detective	alibi	desperate
fakir	qualities	gravity
greenhouse		

Macavity – The Mystery Cat’ is a humorous poem, where the poet T.S. Eliot describes the mysterious

(a) _____ of a shrewd vile cat. He commits a crime at every possible opportunity. He is an elusive master (b) _____ who leaves no evidence after he commits a crime. Even the Scotland Yard, the London (c) _____ agency is unable to arrest him. The Flying Squad is (d) _____ because every time they rush to the crime spot to seize Macavity, he is not there. He breaks the human law as well as the law of (e) _____. He baffles even a (f) _____ with his powers of levitation. Macavity appears tall and thin with (g) _____ eyes. He is always preoccupied with some serious (h) _____. His coat is dusty and his (i) _____ are unkempt. Macavity is a (f) _____ in the guise of a cat. He appears to be outwardly (k) _____ but his actions disprove it. Macavity loots the (l) _____, ransacks the jewel-case, and breaks the (m) _____ glass but wonder of wonders he is not to be found anywhere there. He is always a mile away from the scene of crime, happily relaxing or doing difficult (n) _____ sums. He is clever at making up an (o) _____ every time he plots a crime. All the notorious cats are nothing but the (p) _____ of Macavity, the Napoleon of Crime.

Answer:

- (a) qualities
- (b) criminal
- (c) detective
- (d) baffled
- (e) gravity
- (f) fakir
- (g) sunken
- (h) thought

- (i) whiskers
- (j) fiend
- (k) respectable
- (p) agents
- (l) larder
- (m) greenhouse
- (n) division
- (o) alibi

C. Read the poem and answer the following in a short paragraph of 8 to 10 sentences each.

Question (i)

What are the mysterious ways in which Macavity acts?

Answer:

Macavity is an elusive master criminal who leaves no evidence after he commits a crime. He baffles Scotland Yard police and the flying squad as he disappears before their arrival to the scene of crime. He defies law of gravity and his powers of levitation make me fakir stare with wonder. Macavity loots the larder. He ransacks the jewel case. He is an elusive criminal who escapes from the spot of crime before the flying squad or Scotland Yard reach there. He breaks every human law and laws of gravity. He breaks greenhouse glasses. He steals stealthily into the kitchen and empties milk. When an important treaty in the embassy is missing or when the admiralty loses some plans or drawings, the investigation terms conclude that it is the work of Macavity. But Macavity, as a wonder of wonders, would be miles away relaxing somewhere.

Question (ii)

Give an account of Macavity's destructive mischief.

Answer:

Macavity is a "Friend in feline shape". He loots the food from the larder. Jewel's case gets ransacked. Milk gets robbed. A Pekinese dog is stifled. Greenhouse glass is broken. The important agreement in the embassy is torn and important drawings in the admiralty are lost. The investigation team may find a scrap of paper in the stairs but Macavity always makes good his escape

after doing all the above destructive activities. Besides, he is the Napoleon of crime controlling the operations of all cats in London.

Question (iii)

Describe the appearance and qualities of Macavity.

Answer:

Macavity is tall and thin. His eyes are sunken in. His brow is deeply lined with thought. His head is highly domed. His coat is dusty and his whiskers unkempt. He makes movements like a snake. He is a fiend in feline shape. He is a monster of depravity. He is a cat of deceitfulness and suavity. When one thinks he is half-asleep, he is wide awake. He is an elusive, agile and phantom-like cat.

D. Read the given lines and answer the questions that follow.

(i) Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw...

Question (a)

Does the poet talk about a real cat?

Answer:

No, Macavity is not a real cat.

Question (b)

Why is he called the Hidden Paw?

Answer:

He is called a "Hidden paw" because even Scotland Yard is unable to arrest him after he commits any crime. He does not leave his footprints in the spot of crime.

(ii) He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's despair: For when they reach the scene of crime Macavity's not there!..

Question (a)

What is 'Scotland Yard'?

Answer:

'Scotland yard' is the headquarters of London Metropolitan police service.

Question (b)

Why does the flying squad feel disappointed?

Answer:

The flying squad reaches the scene of crime very fast. But Macavity is not at all there. The flying squad is disappointed because they are unable to arrest the crafty criminal.

**(iii) He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake;
And when you think he's half asleep, he's always wide awake...**

Question (a)

Explain the comparison made here.

Answer:

The poet compares the movement of the cat to that of a snake. He employs a simile here.

The movement is quiet but swift.

Question (b)

What does he pretend to do?

Answer:

He pretends to be half asleep when he is fully awake. .

Question (c)

Identify the figure of speech in the first line.

Answer:

Simile.

(iv) For he's a fiend in feline, shape, a monster of depravity.

Question (a)

How is the cat described in this line?

Answer:

Macavity is described as a “demon in the shape of a cat”.

Question (b)

Explain the phrase ‘monster of depravity’.

Answer:

Satan is called the master of depravity. T.S. Eliot calls Macavity, the master of depravity. He means that the cat is an embodiment of evil. He is wicked, all the time involved in doing something evil.

(v) And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland Yard’s.

Question (a)

What seems to be a challenge for the Scotland Yard?

Answer:

Scotland Yard police, known for its efficiency to nab criminals in record time, is unable to link any crime to Macavity. He has an alibi whenever a crime is committed. Arresting Macavity with clinching evidence for his involvement in a crime is a challenge for Scotland Yard.

Question (b)

Why do they need his footprints?

Answer:

They need Macavity’s footprints to prove to the court of law that he was present at the scene of the crime.

(iv) It must have been Macavity!’ but he’s a mile away.

Question (a)

What is Macavity blamed for?

Answer:

Macavity is blamed for most of the crimes which leave the Scotland police and flying squad fuming and fretting because he just vanishes after every crime is committed. Besides, he leaves no proof or evidence behind.

Question (b)

Where is he?

Answer:

He is in a by-street or in the square when a crime is discovered. He always has one or two alibi.

(vii) There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and suavity.

Question (a)

Which cat is being talked of here?

Answer:

Macavity is being talked of here.

Question (b)

How is he different from the rest?

Answer:

Other cats are lazy and just stay in the kitchen and take the food offered by their master. But Macavity is agile and defies law of the land and laws of gravity. Despite doing all wicked things, he pretends to be innocent. So the poet claims one can never come across such a cat of "Deceitfulness and suavity"

E. Explain the following lines with reference to the context.

Question (i)

His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare

Answer:

Reference: These words are from the poem "Macavity – the mystery cat" written by T.S. Eliot. Context: T.S Eliot says, these words describing the skills of Macavity – The mystery cat. Explanation: Macavity does all kinds of mischiefs, petty thefts. He breaks things also. But before anyone could link the crime to Macavity he makes good his escape, floating in the air, jumping from building to building. His powers of levitation baffle even a fakir who has mystical powers.

Comment: The truth behind levitation is well brought out.

Question (ii)

And when you think he's half asleep, he's always Wide awake

Answer:

Reference: These words are from the poem "Macavity – the mystery cat" written by T.S. Eliot.

Context: The poet says these words about the ability of the mysterious cat to hoodwink everyone.

Explanation: Macavity is a master of deceitfulness and suavity. When he appears to "be half-asleep with his half-closed eyes, he would be wide-awake. He is an enigma to everyone. **Comment:** Macavity is indeed a mystery.

Question (iii)

And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland Yard's

Answer:

Reference: These words are from the poem "Macavity the mystery cat" written by T.S. Eliot. **Context:** The poet says these words about the clever escape Macavity makes after every crime is committed.

Explanation: Scotland yard police is known all over the world for its capacity to investigate crimes and nab criminals in record time. But many crimes happen in London. Before Scotland Yard or the flying squad could reach the spot of crime, the criminal vanishes without leaving any trace of the evidence. Scotland yard police wants to nab him with evidence. But his foot prints are nowhere to be found. So, Scotland Yard is unable to arrest Macavity.

Comment: The mysterious moves of Macavity stuns even the Scotland Yard.

Question (iv)

There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the stair.
But it's useless to investigate...

Answer:

Reference: These words are from the poem “Macavity- the mysterious cat” written by T.S. Eliot.

Context: The poet says these words while discussing the leftover evidence of crime. **Explanation:** The Scotland yard police and the flying squads are guardians of peace in London. They keep watching. But whenever Macavity does a crime, he leaves before the police arrives. The clues like an empty larder, rifled jewel case, the disappearance of a treaty or drawings from the office or admiralty may lead to some shredded bits of paper lying on the floor or the staircase. But these bits of paper can’t help the police nab Macavity. They know it is the work of Macavity but they are helpless.

Comment: Not a trace is left behind by mysterious Macavity.

Question (v)

He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare

Answer:

Reference: These words are from the poem, “Macavity – the mystery cat” written by T.S. Eliot.

Context: The poet says these words while describing the deceitful and clever nature of Macavity.

Explanation: Macavity breaks the laws of the land regularly. But gets away before the long arm. of the law reaches the spot of crime. He always has an alibi (one or more to spare) to escape from being caught. This proves his cleverness.

Comment: The wit of Macavity needs high commendation.

F. Eliot has used many figures of speech to present the poem to the readers in an interesting way. He has attributed human qualities to a cat in this poem.

i. Identify the literary devices used in the following lines:

a. He sways his head from side to side, with movements like a snake.

b. They say he cheats at cards.

ii. Give four instances where the poet has used alliteration in the poem.

iii. What is the rhyme scheme used in the poem?

iv. Pick out all the pairs of rhyming words used in the poem.

Answer: Do it yourself.

Unit-IV

With the Photographer (Supplementary)

Warm Up

Photographs capture memorable moments. They fill us with nostalgia. Discuss the following questions.

Question 1.

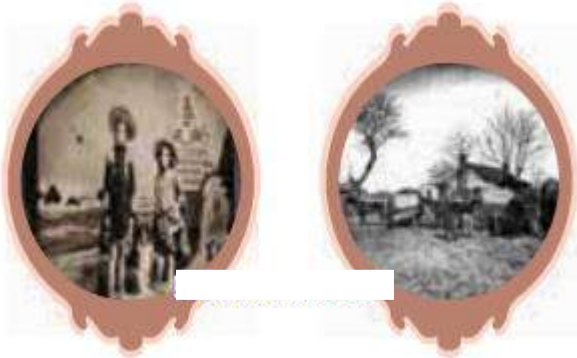
What are the occasions when photographs are taken

e.g. birthday parties	

Answer:

e.g. birthday parties	Weddings
Convocation	Functions

Annual day	Sports day
Tour	Meetings



Question 2.

Why are photographs taken?

e.g. to freeze our favourite moments	

Answer:

e.g. to freeze our favourite moments	to cherish memorable moments
To record best things	to freeze beauty
To document function	to lodge complaints with evidence

Textual Questions

1. Based on your understanding of the story, answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.

Question (a)

Why did the author go to the photo studio?

Answer:

The author wanted his photograph taken. He wanted to leave it behind with his friends and relatives after his death. So, he went to a photographer.

Question (b)

Describe the photographer.

Answer:

The photographer was a drooping' man in a gray suit. He had dim eyes as a natural scientist.

Question (c)

Bring out the significance of what Leacock was reading at the photographer's.

Answer:

The poet had to wait. To kill the time, he read Ladies companion for 1912 and the girls' magazine for 1902 and the infants' journal for 1888. He read the old magazines which were meant for people who lived long ago.

Question (d)

Why did Leacock assume that the photographer was praying?

Answer:

The photographer hid himself behind the camera under a cloth. He did not move or say anything for quite' sometime. So, the author assumed that the photographer was praying.

Question (e)

How did the inner room get light?

Answer:

There was a frosted window. A sheet of factory cotton hung against it. A beam of sunlight filtered through it. Thus the studio got the needed light.

Question (f)

Why did the photographer take a longtime to photograph Leacock?

Answer:

The photographer wanted to prove his skills in photography. Somehow, the author's face didn't appear to be good enough for a photo. So, he gave many instructions like "open the mouth, close it, droop your ear, roll your eyes, turn your face up" and went on correcting the pose. This took a lot of time.

Question (g)

What angered the author?

Answer:

The author's facial features and body was severely criticized by the photographer. He gave plenty of instructions. He himself held the author's face and twisted it. He said, "I don't like the head ... The ears are bad". He was asked to expand the lungs, contract the waist, turn the face upward. All this added to the author's annoyance. He became really angry.

Question (h)

Why did the photographer feel happy after taking the photograph?

Answer:

The photographer felt happy after taking the photograph. The author was angry and was about to get up from his place. The animation on his face was caught in the photograph.

Question (i)

Why did Leacock visit the studio on Saturday?

Answer:

The photographer had asked the author to come and collect the proof on Saturday. So, the author went to the studio on Saturday.

Question (j)

How did the author react on seeing his photograph?

Answer:

The author was upset to see his photo. It carried little likeness of him. He even asked the photographer if it was himself on the photo.

Question (k)

What changes had the photographer effected on Leacock's face in the picture?

Answer:

The photographer had retouched the author's eyes. His eyebrows were removed and put in new ones. The mouth was adjusted a little. The author had a consolation that his ears were recognizable. The photographer declared his intention of removing it and fixing them anew.

Question (l)

What was the human side to the photographer?

Answer:

The photographer stated, "I think the face would be better three – quarters full. The author was glad to find that he had such a human side to him.

Question (m)

Why was the photographer proud to receive Leacock on Saturday?

Answer:

While handing over the proof of the photo, there was a certain pride in the photographer's manner. He believed that with his technical expertise, he had corrected all the ugly features and made the photo presentable. So, he was naturally proud.

Question (n)

What was the only similarity between Leacock's face and his photograph?

Answer:

The author's ears were almost the same in the photograph.

2. Based on your understanding of the lesson, complete the sentences given below to make a summary of the story 'With the Photographer' in a paragraph.

- (1) The narrator went to the photographer to
- (2) The photographer made the author wait for
- (3) While waiting in the studio the narrator kept reading
- (4) The photographer told him to
- (5) The narrator got angry because
- (6) The photographer was pleased after
- (7) He was called on Saturday to
- (8) On seeing the photograph the narrator
- (9) The photographer had made changes
- (10) The photograph did not look like
- (11) The narrator was frustrated as
- (12) He left the studio saying

Answers:

- (1) take a photograph of himself
- (2) an hour
- (3) old useless magazines
- (4) sit down
- (5) the photographer repeatedly said his face was wrong
- (6) developing the negative
- (7) see the proof
- (8) was annoyed
- (9) in the author's face
- (10) himself
- (11) he could not share it with his friends
- (12) that it was a worthless bauble for him

3. Answer the following questions in a paragraph of 100 -150 words each:

Question (a)

Stephen Leacock's visit to the photo studio turns out to be an annoying experience for him. Discuss citing relevant instances from the story.

Answer:

Stephen Leacock's went to the photograph to take his photograph. The photographer made the author wait for an hour. While waiting in the studio the narrator kept reading some magazines. After an hour, the narrator was called in. The photographer told him that the face was quite wrong.

The photographer wanted to prove his skill. He took the author's head in his hands and twisted it sideways and looked at it. He didn't like the author's head. He asked to open the mouth and then to close. He felt that the author's ears were bad so he asked him to drop them a little more.

He asked the author to roll his eyes under the eyelids, to put the hands on knees, to turn the face a little upward to expand the lungs, to bend the neck, to contract the face. The photographer was continuously criticizing the author's face as he felt that the face was not appropriate for a photograph. The author felt humiliated at this. He couldn't bear it. Thus because of the humiliation and insult of his face, the author was angry with the photographer.

Question (b)

"To me it is but a worthless bauble. "Why did the photographer's touch of technical expertise appear a worthless bauble to Leacock?

Answer:

The author wanted to have himself photographed. The purpose was to leave behind the image or picture of his likeness to his family and relatives. It would remind them of him after he is dead. The photo could reconcile his absence or loss to them. But the photographer had retouched the eyebrows, eyes, mouth etc. All these features did not resemble the author. In a depressed mood, the author said his ears were almost the same.

But the photographer said he could completely replace his ears using a new technique. When the author saw the photo it was technically sound but when it came to likeness, it was a disaster. The purpose of taking the photo was lost. The poet asked the photographer to do all sorts of corrections and keep it with himself and for his friends as a technically sound photo. But for himself, it was a worthless bauble. The author broke into tears and left the studio.