

## Chapter 9: Madam Rides the Bus

## Oral Comprehension Check

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## Question: 1

What was Valli's favourite pastime?

## Answer:

Valli's favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house and looking at the street outside.

## Question: 2

What was the source of unending joy for Valli? What was her strongest desire?

## Answer:

The sight of the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town, filled each time with a new set of passengers, was a source of unending joy for Valli. Her strongest desire was to ride the bus.

## Question: 3

What did Valli find out about the bus journey? How did she find these details?

## Answer:

Valli found out that the bus journey to the town took 45 minutes and the one-way fare costed 30 paise. She listened carefully to the conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus and asked a few discreet questions here and there. This way she picked up various small details about the bus journey.

## Question: 4

What do you think Valli was planning to do?

## Answer:

Valli was planning to go to the town and then return back by the same bus. The fare was 30 paise one way and the ride took forty five minutes. In this way, she planned that she would be back by 2:45 pm if she took the bus at 1:00 pm.

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## Question: 1

Why does the conductor call Valli 'madam'?

## Answer:

The conductor called Valli 'madam' because she behaved like a woman. She declined his help and was very quick in her answers to the conductor's questions. This made the conductor call her madam.

## Question: 2

Why does Valli stand up on the seat?

(or)

What does she see now?

## Answer:

Valli wanted to look outside the bus. She found her view blocked by the canvas blind that covered the lower part of the window. In order to have a better view she stood up on the seat and peered over the blind. She saw a canal, palm trees, grassland, mountains, green fields and the sky.

### Question: 3

What does Valli tell the elderly man when he calls her a child?

#### Answer:

Valli replied that there was nobody in the bus who was a child. She told her that she had paid her fare of 30 paise like

### Question: 4

Why didn't Valli want to make friends with the elderly woman?

#### Answer:

Valli did not want to make friends with the elderly woman because she looked quite repulsive. She had big earholes and was wearing ugly earrings. Apart from this, she was chewing betel and her mouth was also filled with betel juice.

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### Question: 1

How did Valli save money for her first journey? Was it easy for her?

#### Answer:

Valli had very painstakingly saved every stray coin that came her way by resisting every temptation to buy peppermints, toys, balloons, etc. It had been very difficult for her. Even at the village fair she resisted the temptation to be on the merry-go-round. Thus, she had been able to save sixty paise for her first bus journey.

### Question: 2

What did Valli see on her way that made her laugh?

#### Answer:

Valli saw a young cow, tail high in the air running very fast right in the middle of the road in front of the bus. The driver sounded his horn again and again so that the cow moves away. But the more he honked, the more frightened the animal became and faster it galloped. This all seemed very funny to Valli and she laughed and laughed till there were tears in her eyes.

### Question: 3

Why didn't she get off the bus at the bus station?

#### Answer:

Valli had planned that she only wanted to ride on the bus. She would spend thirty paise on her fare, go to the town and then come back by the same bus before her mother woke up. She didn't have time or money to go to see the town.

### Question: 4

Why didn't Valli want to go to the stall to have a drink? What does this tell you about her?

#### Answer:

Valli had saved only sixty paise for the trip.

She didn't want to waste any money on it as she had to come back by the same bus at any cost. So, when the conductor suggested her to get down and have a drink she refused. He offered to bring one for her but she still refused. This is that she was a well-mannered girl.

## Thinking about the Text

### Question: 1

What was Valli's deepest desire? Find the words and phrases in the story that tell you this.

### Answer:

Valli's deepest desire was to go on a bus ride. The words and phrases in the story that tell this are 'source of unending joy', 'stare wistfully', and 'kindle in her longings, dreams and hopes'.

### Question: 2

**How did Valli plan her bus ride? What did she find out about the bus, and how did she save up the fare?**

### Answer:

Over many days and months, Valli listened carefully to conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus and asked a few discreet questions here and there. She came to know that the town was six miles from her village, the bus fare was thirty paise and the bus trip took forty-five minutes. She also thought that if she stayed in the bus and came back by the same bus it would only cost her sixty paise. She painstakingly saved each and every penny she got, resisting all temptation to buy peppermints, toys, etc and even a ride on the merry-go-round at the village annual fair so as to save sixty paise. It was a secret trip which she had planned without the knowledge of her parents.

### Question: 3

**What kind of person is Valli? To answer this question, pick out the following sentences from the text and fill in the blanks. The words you fill in are the clues to your answer.**

### Answer:

- i. "Stop the bus! Stop the bus!" And a tiny hand was raised .
- ii. "Yes, I go to town," said Valli, still standing outside the bus.
- iii. "There's nobody here ," she said haughtily. "I've paid my thirty paise like everyone else."
- iv. "Never mind," she said, "I can . You don't have to help me. "I'm not a child, I tell you," she said, .
- v. "You needn't bother about me. I ," Valli said, turning her face toward the window and staring out.
- vi. Then she turned to the conductor and said, "Well, sir, I hope ."
- vii. Valli was a confident girl who did not think that her age was a limitation to her travelling alone to the town. She considered herself a grown up and acted like one. She was courageous, strong-willed, independent, good natured and mild mannered girl.

### Question: 4

**Why does the conductor refer to Valli as 'Madam'?**

### Answer:

The conductor called Valli 'Madam' as she behaved like a grown up and did not think that she was a child. She also refused his help and told him that she can manage on her own.

### Question: 5

**Find the lines in the text which tell you that Valli was enjoying her ride on the bus.**

### Answer:

Valli thoroughly enjoyed her ride in the bus. The following lines from the text tell us about it. She saw so many things on her way—a canal, palm trees, grasslands, distant mountains. "Oh! it was all so wonderful," that's what she felt. "Sometimes the bus seemed on the point of gobbling up another vehicle that was coming towards them or a pedestrian crossing the road. Somehow it passed smoothly, leaving all obstacles behind and then she saw a cow running very fast, in front of the bus. This all seemed very funny to Valli and she laughed and laughed till tears flowed from her eyes."

### Question: 6

**Why does Valli refuse to look out of the window on her way back?**

### Answer:

Valli refused to look out of the window on her way back as she saw the dead body of the cow who was running towards the bus when she was going to town. This made her sad and frightened.

### Question: 7

What does Valli mean when she says... "I was just agreeing with you what you said about things happening without our knowledge".

#### Answer:

While making this statement, Valli was trying to hide the fact about her bus ride. She was also feeling elated at making a successful attempt at her plan.

### Question: 8

The author describes the things that Valli sees from an 8 years old's point of view. Can you find evidence from the text for his statement?

#### Answer:

Yes, for example when the author says, 'she was fascinated by the bus' and 'watching the bus fill with a new set of people each time was a source of unending joy for her'. When the author describes the bus, he stresses on the colour and look of the new bus 'like silver' because a child is attracted towards colour. 'The seats were soft and luxurious'. The description that the author gives when Valli looked outside are also typical of a 8 year old. 'The blue sky' and 'acres and acres of green field', show the enthusiasm a child. A cow running in front of the bus fascinated the child whereas the sight of dead cow brought tears in her eyes and she refused to look outside the window on her return journey. This also describes the behaviour of an 8 year old child aptly.

### Writing

### Question: 1

Have you ever planned something entirely on your own, without taking grown ups into your confidence? What did you plan and how? Did you carry out your plan?

#### Answer:

It was during my summer vacations. I wanted to plan a special birthday for my mother. So, I roped in my younger sister in my plan to celebrate her birthday. We saved our pocket money and didn't go for our weekly outings for some time. In this way, we were able to save five hundred rupees for the birthday party. Now, we had to arrange everything without our mother's knowledge. On her birthday we pretended as if we didn't remember her birthday at all. Instead we requested our father to take her to the market. In the meantime, we arranged everything like cake, decorations, flowers and even invited two of her best friends. When she came back she was surprised. It was the best birthday she ever had in her life.

### Question: 2

Have you made a journey that was unforgettable in some way? What made it memorable?

#### Answer:

I have gone on many trips and excursions, but one journey which I can't forget is my trip to Hemkund and Badrinath. The scenery over there was mesmerising and as you leave Delhi, you enjoy cool fresh air and see breath taking lush green fields. The bus ride takes you on winding narrow roads, with river flowing on one side and mountains on the other side. To reach Hemkund Sahib, one has to travel 14 kms by foot. Everywhere there are crowds of devotees, chanting holy names and moving up the hill. When I reached the shrine, it was enveloped in clouds. The water in the holy tank was ice cold. The moment you step in it your tiredness vanishes. After that we went to Badrinath by bus. It was also a very nice place. There were many hot springs over there.

### Question: 3

Are you concerned about traffic and road safety? What are your concerns? How would you make road travel safer and more enjoyable?

#### Answer:

India has a wide network of roads. Everyday crores of Indians travel on these road by bus, car, cycle, cycle rickshaw, scooter, moped, truck, etc. Even pedestrians use these roads. As people don't follow road safety rules, every year many people lose their lives due to fatal road accidents. It is also seen that 90 per cent of these fatal accidents involve youngsters who like to drive at very high speed, don't wear helmets and seat belt, talk on mobiles while driving or love to do stunts inspired by movies. Despite many directions issued by the traffic police all their advice falls on deaf year. It is our duty to follow all the rules and regulations and to keep safety measures in our mind while driving. Safe driving is best driving and the rules are framed keeping our security in mind.

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