

## Chapter 10: The Banyan Tree

## WORKING WITH THE TEXT

## A. Complete the following sentences.

1. The old banyan tree "did not belong" to grandfather, but only to the boy, because .....
2. The small grey squirrel became friendly when .....
3. When the boy started to bring him pieces of cake and biscuit, the squirrel .....
4. In the spring, the banyan tree, ..... and would come there.
5. The banyan tree served the boy as a .....
6. The young boy spent his afternoon in the tree .....

## Answer:

1. the 65 old man could not climb on it.
2. it found that the boy did not carry any catapult or air gun in his hand.
3. became bold enough to take pieces of food from his hand.
4. was full of small red figs, and birds of all kinds would come there
5. platform to sit and spend the afternoon
6. leaning against it, reading story books

## B. Answer the following questions.

## Question 1. "It was to be a battle of champions."

- i. What qualities did the two champions have? Pick out words and phrases from the paragraph

Mongoose – Cobra

(a) \_\_\_\_\_ – (a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_ – (b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_ – (c) \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer:

Mongoose – Cobra

(a) A super – (a) Skilled and fighter experienced fighter

(b) Clever – (b) Strike with the speed of light

(c) Aggressive – (c) Fangs were full of poison

- ii. What did the cobra and the mongoose do, to show their readiness for the fight?

**Answer:** The cobra produced a hissing sound and moved his tongue in and out to challenge the mongoose, It raised itself off the ground and spread its broad hood. The mongoose moved his tail and the long hair on his spine stood up.

## Question 2. Who were the other two spectators? What did they do? (Did they watch or did they join in the fight?)

**Answer:** Apart from the author, the two spectators were a myna and a jungle crow. First, they sat on the cactus to watch the outcome of the fight. Later, they tried thrice to take part in the proceedings and dived at the cobra, but failed. The crow died at the end after the cobra attacked it. The mongoose dragged the dead snake into the bush and the myna flew away.

## Question 3. Read the descriptions below of what the snake did and what the mongoose did. Arrange the actions in the proper order.

- i. Ceased to struggle – (a) grabbed the snake by the snout
- ii. Tried to mesmerise – (b) dragged the snake the mongoose into the bushes
- iii. Coiled itself around the mongoose – (c) darted away and bit the cobra on the back
- iv. Struck the crow – (d) pretended to attack the cobra on one side
- v. Struck again and missed – (e) refused to look into the snake's eyes

vi. Struck on the side that the mongoose pretended to attack – (f) sprang aside, jumped in and bit

**Answer:**

- i. Tried to mesmerise the mongoose - (e) refused to look into the snake's eyes
- ii. Struck on the side that the mongoose pretended to attack – (d) pretended to attack the cobra on one side
- iii. Struck again and missed – (c) darted away and hit the cobra on the back
- iv. Struck the crow – (f) sprang aside, jumped in and bit
- v. Coiled itself around the mongoose - (a) grabbed the snake by the snout
- vi. Ceased to struggle – (b) dragged the snake into the bushes

## WORKING WITH LANGUAGE

**A.**

**Question 1.** The word 'round' usually means a kind of shape. What is its meaning in the story?

**Answer:** Here, it means a phase in the fight between the mongoose and the snake.

**Question 2.** Find five words in the following paragraph, which are generally associated with trees. But here, they have been used differently. Underline the words.

Hari leaves for work at nine every morning. He works in the local branch of the firm of which his uncle is the owner. Hari's success is really the fruit of his own labour. He is happy, but he has a small problem. The root cause of his problem is a stray dog near his office. The dog welcomes Hari with a loud bark every day.

**Answer:** Hari leaves for work at nine every morning. He works in the local branch of the firm of which his uncle is the owner. Hari's success is really the fruit of his own labour. He is happy, but he has a small problem. The root cause of his problem is a stray dog near his office. The dog welcomes Hari with a loud bark every day.

**B.**

The words in the box are all words that describe movement. Use them to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

dived, gliding, sprang, darting, whipped...back, delving

1. When he began to trust me, the squirrel began ..... into my pockets for morsels of cake.
2. I saw a cobra ..... out of a clump of cactus.
3. The snake hissed, his forked tongue ..... in and out.
4. When the cobra tried to bite it, the mongoosa ..... aside.
5. The snake ..... his head ..... to strike at the crow.
6. The birds ..... at the snake.

**Answer:**

1. delving
2. gliding
3. darting
4. sprang
5. whipped, back
6. dived

C.

Find words in the story, which show things striking violently against each other.

1. The cobra struck the crow, his snout th \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ ing against its body.
2. The crow and the myna c \_\_\_ ll \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ in mid-air.
3. The birds dived at the snake, but b \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ d into each other instead.

Answer:

1. thudding
2. collided
3. bumped

D.

Look at these sentences.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the spring, birds of all kinds <i>would</i> flock into the banyan tree's branches.</li> <li>● I <i>would</i> spend the afternoons there.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Grandfather, at sixty-five, <i>could</i> no longer climb the banyan tree.</li> <li>● I <i>could</i> hide myself in its branches</li> <li>I <i>could</i> look down through the leaves at the world below.</li> <li>● I <i>could</i> read there.</li> </ul>
<p>'Would' tells us what the author <i>used to do</i>, or what <i>used to happen</i>.</p>	<p>'Could' tells us what the author was <i>usually able to do</i>, or grandfather is <i>now not able to do</i>.</p>

Choose would and could to replace the italicised words in the following sentences.

Grandfather says, in the old days,

1. elephants were able to fly in the sky, like clouds. They were also able to change their shapes. They used to fly behind clouds and frighten them. People used to look up at the sky in wonder.
2. because there was no electricity, he used to get up with the Sun and he used to go to bed with the Sun, like the birds.
3. like the owl, he was able to see quite well in the dark. He was able to tell who was coming by listening to their footsteps.

Answer:

1. Elephants could fly in the sky, like clouds. They could also change their shapes. They would fly behind clouds and frighten them. People would look up at the sky in wonder.
2. Because there was no electricity, he would get up with the Sun and he would go to bed with the Sun, like the birds.
3. Like the owl, he could see quite well in the dark. He could tell who was coming by listening to their footsteps.

**SPEAKING**

A. Look at these sentences.

- The tree was older than grand father.
- Grandfather was 65 years old.

How old was the tree? Can you guess?

- The tree was as old as Dehra Dun itself. Suppose Dehra Dun is 300 years old. How old is the tree?

When two things are the same in some way, we use as...as.

Here is another set of examples.

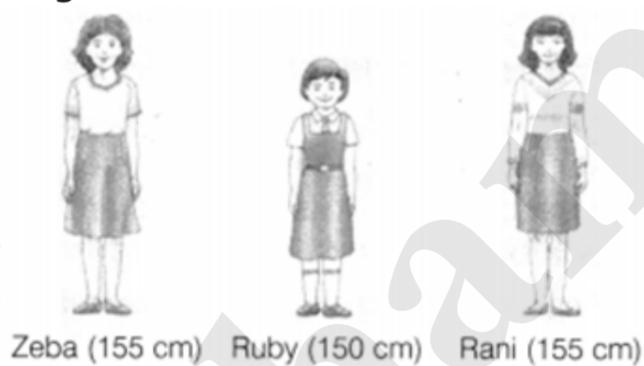
- Mr Sinha is 160 cm tall.
- Mr Gupta is 180 cm tall.
- Mrs Gupta is 160 cm tall.
- Mrs Gupta is as tall as Mr Sinha.

Use the words in the box to speak about the people and the things below, using as... as or -er than.

tall - taller, cold - colder, hot - hotter,  
strong - stronger, short - shorter

(Notice that in the word 'hot', the letter 't' is doubled when -er is added.)

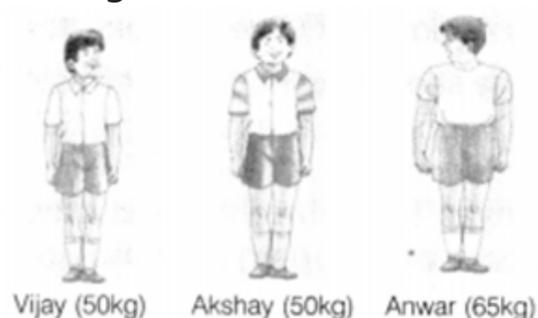
### 1. Height



**Answer:**

- Zeba is as tall as Rani.
- Zeba is taller than Ruby.
- Rani is taller than Ruby.
- Ruby is shorter than Zeba as well as Rani.

### • Weight Lifters



**Answer:**

- Vijay is as strong as Akshay.
- Anwar is stronger than Vijay as well as Akshay.
- Neither Akshay nor Vijay is as strong as Anwar.

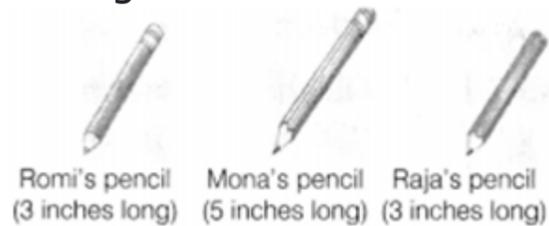
- **City Temperatures**



**Answer:**

- Shimla is as cold as Gangtok.
- Srinagar is colder than Shimla as well as Gangtok.
- Shimla is not colder than Srinagar.

- **Lengths**



**Answer:**

- Romi's pencil is as long as Raja's pencil.
- Mona's pencil is longer than Raja's pencil.
- Romi's pencil is shorter than Mona's pencil.

- **City Temperatures**



**Answer:**

- Delhi is as hot as Nagpur.
- Delhi is hotter than Chennai.
- Chennai is not as hot as either Delhi or Nagpur.

**'My Favourite Place'**

Read again the paragraphs of the story in which the author describes the banyan tree and what he used to do there. Is there a place in your house or in your grandparents' or uncles' or aunts' houses, that you specially like? Write a short paragraph about it, saying

- where it is?
- what you do there?
- why you like it?

You may instead write about a place you dislike or are afraid of.

**Answer:** My favourite place I have an uncle in Mumbai. I visit him with my family generally in vacations. He is a painter and has a big room where all his paintings are kept. His colours and brushes are kept in the room. He spent long hours in his room, watching and admiring his paintings. Sometimes, I also try to draw some sketches. I like this place because I like drawing and painting. I have requested him to teach me this art.