

Chapter 10: An Alien Hand

Comprehension Check

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Question 1:

How does Tilloo manage to find his way to the 'forbidden passage'?

Answer:

Tilloo was too keen to find the way to the forbidden passage. So, one day he managed to take his father's security card. He evaded his mother's eyes and made way to the forbidden passage.

Question 2:

What did Tilloo hope to see once he emerged from his underground home?

Answer:

After emerging from his underground home, Tilloo hoped to see the sun, if it was daytime. He hoped to see the stars if it was night time. He had heard and read so much about it. But he could not do so. He was escorted back home to an anxious and angry mother.

Question 3:

Why did Tilloo's father advise him not to try to reach the surface of the planet?

Answer:

Tilloo's father explained to him that he worked on a surface where an ordinary person could not survive. It is because the air there is too thin to breathe in. Moreover, the temperature also is too low. So, to go to the surface, one should be well-equipped.

Question 4:

What changes had occurred, which forced people to live in underground homes ?

Answer:

Initially people used to live on the surface but the time had changed. The very sun which provides them sustenance turned hostile. This change upset the balance of nature. So, it was not possible to survive on the surface of the planet.

Comprehension Check

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Question 1:

Why was everyone in the Control Room greatly excited ?

Answer:

The people in the Control Room were very excited. It was because they were watching on the TV screen something which they guessed was a spacecraft from some other planet.

Question 2:

Was the spacecraft manned or unmanned ? How do you know it?

Answer:

The spacecraft was unmanned. On the computer, the activity was being closely monitored. It was found that there was no living being on the spacecraft. There were only instruments.

Question 3:

What did Number One and Number Two suggest should be done about the alien spacecraft?

Answer:

Number One was in charge of defence. He suggested that destroying the spacecraft in space was not wise. It was because of a shortage of fuel. He told that it could be made unoperational only when it would land. Number Two suggested that everything should be watched passively. It was wise not to reveal their existence by destroying the aircraft.

Comprehension Check

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Question 1:

What do you think the mechanical hand was trying to do?

Answer:

Mechanical hand was coming out of the spacecraft to take the soil from the planet. It was collecting soil to examine and determine if there were signs of life on the planet.

Question 2:

Tilloo pressed the red button and "the damage was done". What was the damage?

Answer:

As soon as Tilloo pressed the red button, a shrill whistle was produced. This led to the damage when the mechanical hand stopped working. Thus the damage was the mechanical hand being unoperational.

Question 3:

Where had the spacecraft come from?

Answer:

The spacecraft had come from the planet Earth. It was sent under NASA's Viking Mission. It was sent to obtain the images and samples of the Martian surface in search of possible signs of life.

Question 4:

On which planet do Tilloo and his parents live?

Answer:

Tilloo and his parents live on the planet Mars. They lived there beneath the surface of the planet under artificial conditions.

Exercises

Discuss the following topics in groups :

Question 1:

If you had to live in a home like Tilloo's what parts of life would you find most difficult? What compensations might there be ?

Answer:

If I had to live in a home like Tilloo's, I would have found it quite difficult. The whole atmosphere would have been artificially created. So, I would have certainly missed the natural fresh air. I also would have missed the flora and fauna. But the compensation could be that there would have been no pollution or traffic jams. The climate too will be always pleasant because it would be controlled scientifically.

Question 2:

What, if anything, might drive mankind to make their homes underground ?

Answer:

If at all force of nature compels mankind to live and make their homes underground, life would be entirely different. The main source of energy would be solar power. Computerisation would be much more advanced. The robots will be used much more so that they can survive on the surface also. Satellites and web cameras will be quite common. What can drive mankind to make their homes underground could also be the population explosion on earth or change in the natural environment.

Question 3:

Do you think there is life on other planets ? Can you guess what kind of people there may be on them ? In what ways are they likely to be different from us?

Answer:

Man is exploring tirelessly as to whether there are signs of life on some other planet. But so far life on any other planet has not been discovered. Man has probed Moon and Mars, but has found no proof of life there. We can, however, just guess how the people, if found on any other planets, would look like or what food they might take or what their way of life can be. But they must be quite different than us.

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