

Chapter 6: I Want Something in a Cage

Comprehension Check

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Question 1:

Write 'True' or 'False' against each of the following statements.

- (i) Mr. Purcell sold birds, cats, dogs and monkeys
- (ii) He was very concerned about the well-being of the birds and animals in his shop.
- (iii) He was impressed by the customer who bought the two doves.
- (iv) He was a successful shopowner, though insensitive and cold as a person.

Answer:

- (i) True
- (ii) False
- (iii) False
- (iv) True.

Question 2:

Why is Mr. Purcell compared to an owl ?

Answer:

He is compared to an owl because the way he looked through his large glasses gave him an appearance of an owl.

Question 3:

From the third paragraph pick out.

- (i) words associated with cries of birds,
- (ii) words associated with noise
- (iii) words suggestive of confusion and fear.

Answer:

- (i) Twitters, squeals, cheeps and squeals.
- (ii) Scampered, flicker, stir, rustling
- (iii) Frightened, bewildered and blindly seeking.

Question 4:

".....Mr. Purcell heard it no more than he would have heard the monotonous ticking of a familiar clock." (Read para beginning with "It was a rough day...")

- (i) What does 'it' refer to ?
- (ii) Why does Mr. Purcell not hear 'it' clearly ?

Answer:

- (i) 'It' refers to the chirping, squealing and mewing all around Mr. Purcell in his birds selling shop.

(ii) Mr. Purcell is so much used to hear the fluttering and sounds of the birds that it becomes a matter of routine for him. The sounds are so much vibrating around him is that Mr. Purcell does not hear these clearly.

Comprehension Check

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Question 1:

Do you think the atmosphere of Mr. Purcell's shop was cheerful or depressing ? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer:

I think the atmosphere around the shop of Mr. Purcell was quite dull and dreary. The shop was filled with frantic circles and frightened voices. The twittering and squeals and squeaks of birds ever made the matter worse and monotonous.

Question 2:

Describe the stranger who came to the pet shop. What did he want?

Answer:

The stranger who came to the pet shop was wearing a cheap ill-fitting suit. He had a shuttling glance and close-cropped hair. He wanted something in a cage.

Question 3:

(i) The man insisted on buying the doves because he was fond of birds. Do you agree?

(ii) How had he earned the five dollars he had ?

Answer:

(i) The man was not that much fond of birds. In fact he insisted on buying doves because he wanted to set the doves free. He seemed to be imprisoned for a long time. That is why he wanted to make the doves realise the importance of freedom.

(ii) The man had earned five dollars in a long period of ten years' hard labour. He had earned fifty cents a year.

Question 4:

Was the customer interested in the care and feeding of the doves he had bought? If not, why not? :

Answer:

I don't think the customer was interested in the care and feeding of the doves. This is because he set them free immediately after buying them.

I Want Something in a Cage Exercises Question and Answer

Exercises

Discuss the following topics in groups :

Question 1:

Why, in your opinion, did the man set the doves free?

Answer:

The man seemed to have been imprisoned for a long time. It was his love for freedom which inspired him to spend his hard earned money on buying the doves. He seemed to value freedom more than anything else. That is why, just after buying the doves, the man did not even pause for a moment to set the doves free.

Question 2:

Why did it make Mr. Purcell feel "vaguely insulted"?

Answer:

Mr. Purcell felt vaguely insulted because he had given the pair of doves at a good discount. He thought that the customer desperately needed the doves. He failed to understand as to why the man who had bargained for the best pair of doves had set them free.

Champpstreet