

Chapter 8: A Short Monsoon Diary

Comprehension Check

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Question 1: Why is the author not able to see Bijju?

Answer: The author was not able to see Bijju because of the mist that had covered the surroundings.

Question 2: What are the two ways in which the hills appear to change when the mist comes up?

Answer: When the mist comes up, the birds fall silent. The mist covers the hills. The forest becomes deathly still as though it were midnight.

Comprehension Check

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Question 1: When does the monsoon begin and when does it end? How do you prepare to face the monsoon?

Answer: The monsoon begins in June and ends by the end of August.

Question 2: Which hill-station does the author describe in this dairy entry?

Answer: The author has described Mussoorie in the diary entry.

Question 3: For how many days does it rain without stopping? What does the author do on these days?

Answer: It rained without stopping for eight or nine days. Since there was nowhere to go, the author paced in his room and looked out of the window at a few bobbing umbrellas.

Question 4: Where do the snakes and rodents take shelter? Why?

Answer: The snakes and rodents take shelter in roofs, attics, and godowns because they are flooded out of their holes and burrows due to excessive rain.

Question 5: What did the author receive in the mail?

Answer: The author received a cheque in the mail.

Working with Text

Question 1: Look carefully at the dairy entries for June 24-25, August 2 and March 23. Now write down the changes that happen as the rains progress from June to March.

Answer: June 24 was the first day of monsoon mist. All the birds fell silent as the mist climbed up the hills. The author calls the mist melancholy because not only does it conceal the hills, it blankets them in silence too. On June 25, there was some genuine early monsoon rain. It was warm and humid, contrary to the cold high-altitude weather that the author had been experiencing all year. It seemed to the author that the plants knew it too, and the first cobra lily reared its head from the ferns. He described the weather as 'a paradise that might have been'. On August 2, it rained all night. There had been no storm or thunder. The author experienced a feeling of "being untouched by, and yet in touch with, the rain". March 23 marked the end of winter. The blackest cloud he had ever seen spread over mussoorie and then it hailed marbles for half an hour. The hailstorm cleared the sky and he saw a rainbow forming.

Question 2: Why did the grandmother ask the children not to kill the Chuchundar?

Answer: The grandmother asked the children not to kill the Chuchundar because it was considered lucky. She said that it brought money.

Question 3: What signs do we find in Nature which show that the monsoons are about to end?

Answer: The seeds of the cobra lily turning red signified that the monsoons were about to end.

Question 4: Complete the following sentences.

(i) Bijju is not seen but his voice is heard because _____.

(ii) The writer describes the hill station and valley as _____.

(iii) The leopard was successful in _____ but had to flee when _____.

(iv) The minivets are easily noticed because _____.

(v) It looks like a fashion display on the slopes when _____.

(vi) During the monsoon season, snakes and rodents are found in roofs and attics because _____.

Answer:

(i) Bijju is not seen but his voice is heard because of the mist in the surroundings.

(ii) The writer describes the hill station and valley as a paradise that might have been.

(iii) The leopard was successful in attacking one of Bijju's cows but had to flee when Bijju's mother came screaming curses.

(iv) The minivets are easily noticed because of their bright colours.

(v) It looks like a fashion display on the slopes when ground orchids, mauve lady's slipper and the white butterfly orchids bloom.

(vi) During the monsoon season, snakes and rodents are found in roofs and attics because they have been flooded out of their holes and burrows.

Question 5: 'Although tin roofs are given to springing unaccountable leaks, there is a feeling of being untouched by, and yet in touch with, the rain.'

(i) Why has the writer used the word, 'springing'?

(ii) How is the writer untouched by the rain?

(iii) How is the writer in touch with the rain at the same time?

Answer:

(i) The word 'springing' means 'to develop suddenly'. The writer says that tin roofs are prone to developing unexpected leaks.

(ii) The writer was physically untouched by the rain as the tin roof stopped the rain from leaking in.

(iii) The writer was in touch with the rain at the same time because he could feel the rain by listening to its drumming sound on the corrugated tin roof.

Question 6: Mention a few things that can happen when there is endless rain for days together.

Answer: When there is endless rain for days together, everything becomes damp and soggy. There is no place for anybody to go to. The hillsides are lush as late monsoon flowers such as wild balsam, dahlias, begonias and ground orchids begin to appear.

Question 7: What is the significance of cobra lily in relation to the monsoon season, its beginning and end?

Answer: When monsoon begins, the first cobra lily appears from the ferns. When the seeds of the cobra lily turn red, it signifies that the monsoon is coming to an end.

Question 1: Here are some words that are associated with the monsoon. Add as many words as you can to this list. Can you find words for these in your languages?

downpour floods mist cloudy powercuts cold umbrella

English - Hindi

मूसलाधार बाढ़ धुंध बादल बिजली कटौती ठंडी छतरी

Question 2: Put the verbs in the brackets into their proper forms. The first one is done for you.

- (i) We (get out) of the school bus. The bell (ring) and everyone (rush) to class.
We got out of the school bus. The bell was ringing and everyone was rushing to class.
- (ii) The traffic (stop). Some people (sit) on the road and they (shout) slogans.
- (iii) I (wear) my raincoat. It (rain) and people (get) wet.
- (iv) She (see) a film. She (narrate) it to her friends who (listen) carefully.
- (v) We (go) to the exhibition. Some people (buy) clothes while others (play) games.
- (vi) The class (is) quiet. Some children (read) books and the rest (draw).

Answer:

- (i) We got out of the school bus. The bell was ringing and everyone was rushing to class.
- (ii) The traffic stopped. Some people were sitting on the road and they were shouting slogans.
- (iii) I wore my raincoat. It was raining and people were getting wet.
- (iv) She saw a film. She was narrating it to her friends who were listening carefully.
- (v) We went to the exhibition. Some people were buying clothes while others were playing games.
- (vi) The class was quiet. Some children were reading books and the rest were drawing.

Question 3: Here are some words from the lesson which describe different kinds of sounds.

drum	swish	tinkle	caw	drip
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(i) Match these words with their correct meanings.

- to fall in small drops
- to make a sound by hitting a surface repeatedly
- to move quickly through the air, making a soft sound
- harsh sound made by birds
- ringing sound (of a bell or breaking glass, etc.)

(ii) Now fill in the blanks using the correct form of the words given above.

- Ramesh _____ on his desk in impatience.
- Rain water _____ from the umbrella all over the carpet.
- The pony _____ its tail.
- The _____ of breaking glass woke me up.
- The _____ of the raven disturbed the child's sleep.

Answer:

(i)

- to fall in small drops – drip
- to make a sound by hitting a surface repeatedly – drum
- to move quickly through the air, making a soft sound – swish
- harsh sound made by birds – caw
- ringing sound (of a bell or breaking glass, etc.) – tinkle

(ii)

- a. Ramesh drummed on his desk in impatience.
- b. Rain water dripped from the umbrella all over the carpet.
- c. The pony swished its tail.
- d. The tinkling of breaking glass woke me up.
- e. The cawing of the raven disturbed the child's sleep.

Question 4: Complete each sentence below by using appropriate phrase from the ones given below.

sure enough	colourful enough	serious enough
kind enough	big enough	fair enough
brave enough	foolish enough	anxious enough

- i. I saw thick black clouds in the sky. And _____ it soon started raining heavily.
- ii. The blue umbrella was _____ for the brother and sister.
- iii. The butterflies are _____ to get noticed.
- iv. The lady was _____ to chase the leopard.
- v. The boy was _____ to call out to his sister.
- vi. The man was _____ to offer help.
- vii. The victim's injury was _____ for him to get admitted in hospital.
- viii. That person was _____ to repeat the same mistake again.
- ix. He told me he was sorry and he would compensate for the loss.
I said, '_____.'

Answer:

- i. I saw thick black clouds in the sky. And sure enough it started raining heavily.
- ii. The blue umbrella was big enough for the brother and sister.
- iii. The butterflies are colourful enough to get noticed.
- iv. The lady was brave enough to chase the leopard.
- v. The boy was anxious enough to call out to his sister.
- vi. The man was kind enough to offer help.
- vii. The victim's injury was serious enough for him to get admitted in hospital.
- viii. That person was foolish enough to repeat the same mistake again.
- ix. He told me he was sorry and he would compensate for the loss.
I said, 'fair enough.'