

Chapter 10: Kathmandu

Thinking about The Text

Activity

Question 1:

On the following map mark out the route, which the author thought of but did not take, to Delhi.



Answer:

Route is shown by dotted line

1. Kathmandu to Patna by bus & train
2. Patna to Allahabad by boat/Ganges
3. Allahabad to Delhi by boat/Yamuna

Question 2:

Find out the possible routes (by rail, road or air) from Kathmandu to New Delhi/ Mumbai/Kolkata/Chennai.

Answer:

For self-attempt. Students may take the Atlas of the country and see or find themselves the air, road routes from Kathmandu to New Delhi/Mumbai/ Kolkata/ Chennai.

Some possible routes are:

By Road

1. Kathmandu—Viratnagar—Patna
2. Kathmandu—Nepalganj—Gorakhpur

By Rail

Patna—Delhi
 Gorakhpur—Delhi
 Patna—Kolkata
 Gorakhpur—Varanasi—Kolkata
 Patna—Mumbai
 Gorakhpur—Allahabad—Mumbai
 Patna—Khadarpur—Chennai
 Gorakhpur—Allahabad—Nagpur—Chennai

Question 1:

Answer these questions in one or two words or in short phrases.

1. Name the two temples the author visited in Kathmandu.

in Rome and the temples the other voices in Rome.

Answer:

Pashupatinath and Baudhnath Stupa.

2. The writer says, "All this I wash down with Coca Cola." What does 'all this' refer to?

Answer:

Com-on-the-cob and marzipan.

3. What does Vikram Seth compare to the quills of a porcupine?

Answer:

The flutes tied on the top of the flute seller's pole.

4. Name five kinds of flutes.

Answer:

The reed neh, the recorder, the Japanese shakuhachi, the deep bansuri, the breathy flutes of South America, the high pitched Chinese flutes.

Question II:

Answer each question in a short paragraph.

1. What difference does the author note between the flute seller and the other hawkers?

Answer:

The author finds a difference in selling the articles. The flute seller does not shout out his wares. He makes a sale in a curiously offhanded way as if this was incidental to his enterprise.

2. What is the belief at Pashupatinath about the end of Kaliyug?

Answer:

People believe that when a small shrine emerges fully on Bagwati river, the goddess inside will escape, and the evil period of the Kalyug will end on earth.

3. The author has drawn powerful images and pictures. Pick out three examples each of

1. the atmosphere of 'febrile confusion' outside the temple of Pashupatinath (for example: some people trying to get the priest's attention are elbowed aside...)
2. the things he sees
3. the sounds he hears

Answer:

1. The author describes the monkey's fight vividly and graphically. A fight breaks out between two monkeys. One chases the other, who jumps onto a shivalinga, then runs screaming around the temples and down to the river.
2. The author observes a princess of the Nepalese royal house. Everyone bows to her. He sees monkeys. He sees felt bags, Tibetan prints and silver jewellery. He looks at flute sellers, hawkers of postcards, shops selling western cosmetics, etc.
3. He hears film songs from the radios, car horns, bicycle bells, stray cows low and vendors shout out their wares. He also listens to the various flutes played by the flute seller.

Question III:

1. Compare and contrast the atmosphere in and around the Baudhnath shrine with the Pashupatinath temple.

Answer:

At Pashupatinath there is an atmosphere of 'febrile confusion'. Priests, hawkers, devotees, tourists, cows, monkeys, pigeons and dogs roam through the grounds. There are so many worshippers that some people trying to get the priest's attention are elbowed aside by others pushing their way to the front. At the

Baudhnath stupa, the Buddhist shrine of Kathmandu, there is a sense of stillness. Its immense white dome is ringed by a road. Small shops stand on its outer edge. Most of the shops are owned by Tibetan immigrants. There are no crowds and this is a haven of quietness in the busy streets around.

2. How does the author describe Kathmandu's busiest streets?

Answer:

The author says that Kathmandu is vivid, mercenary, religious, with small shrines to flower-adorned deities along the narrowest and busiest streets. There are fruit sellers, flute sellers, hawkers of postcards, shops selling western cosmetics, film rolls and chocolate or copper utensils and Nepalese antiques. Film songs blare out from the radios, car horns sound, bicycle bells ring, stray cows low, vendors shout out their wares. The author buys a com-on- the-cob roasted in a charcoal brazier on the pavement. He also buys coca cola and orange drink.

3. "To hear any flute is to be drawn into the commonality of all mankind." Why does the author say this?

Answer:

The author says this because he is aware of the fact that music appeals to senses. It gives pleasure to every listener. The flute seller does not sell only one kind of flute. He has various types of flutes that represent different customs and culture. The flute seller is a wise sales person. He does not shout out his wares. He plays melodious tunes which fascinate others. Mankind does not have multiple appearances and shapes. It is universal and cosmopolitan. Music soothes everyone's heart irrespective of their caste, colour and creed. So the author says that to hear any flute is to be drawn into the commonality of all mankind.

Thinking about language

Question I:

Read the following sentences carefully to understand the meaning of the italicised phrases. Then match the phrasal verbs in column A with their meanings in column B.

1. A communal war broke out when the princess was abducted by the neighbouring prince.
2. The cockpit broke off from the plane during the plane crash.
3. The car broke down on the way and we were left stranded in the jungle.
4. The dacoit broke away from the police as they took him to court.
5. The brothers broke up after the death of the father.
6. The thief broke into our house when we were away.

Answers:

A	B
(i) break out	(d) to start suddenly, (usually a fight, a war or a disease)
(ii) break off	(a) to come apart due to force
(iii) break down	(f) stop working
(iv) break away (from someone)	(b) end a relationship
(v) break up	e) to escape from someone's grip
(vi) break into	(c) break and enter illegally; unlawful trespassing

Question II:

1. Use the suffixes -ion or -tion to form nouns from the following verbs. Make the necessary changes in the spellings of the words.

Example: proclaim-proclamation

cremate	_____	act	_____
exhaust	_____	invent	_____
tempt	_____	immigrate	_____
direct	_____	meditate	_____
imagine	_____	dislocate	_____
associate	_____	dedicate	_____

Answer:

Cremation	action
Exhaustion	invention
Temptation	immigration
Direction	meditation
Imagination	dislocation
Association	dedication

2. Now fill in the blanks with suitable words from the ones that you have formed.

- i. Mass literacy was possible only after the of the printing machine.
- ii. Ramesh is unable to tackle the situation as he lacks
- iii. I could not resist the to open the letter.
- iv. Hardwork and are the main keys to success.
- v. The children were almost fainting with after being made to stand in the sun.

Answer:

- i. invention
- ii. imagination
- iii. temptation
- iv. dedication
- v. exhaustion.

Question III:

Punctuation

Use capital letters, full stops, question marks, commas and inverted commas wherever necessary in the following para-graph.

an arrogant lion was wandering through the jungle one day he asked the tiger who is stronger than you you O lion replied the tiger who is more fierce than a leopard asked the lion you sir replied the leopard he marched upto an elephant and asked the same question the elephant picked him up in his trunk swung him in the air and threw him down look said the lion there is no need to get mad just because you don't know the answer

Answer:

An arrogant lion was wandering through the jungle one day. He asked the tiger, "Who is stronger than you?" "You, O! lion," replied the tiger. "Who is more fierce than a leopard?" asked the lion. "You, sir," replied the leopard. He marched up to an elephant and asked the same question. The elephant picked him up in his trunk, swung him in the air and threw him down. "Look", said the lion, "there is no need to get mad just because you don't know the answer."

Question IV:

Simple Present Tense

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

(i) The heart is a pump that (send) the blood circulating through our body. The pumping action (take place) when the left ventricle of the heart (contract). This (force) the blood out into the arteries, which (expand) to receive the on coming blood.

(ii) The African lungfish can live without water for up to four years. During a drought it (dig) a pit and (enclose) itself in a capsule of slime and earth, leaving a tiny opening for air. The capsule (dry) and (harden), but when rain (come), the mud (dissolve) and the lungfish (swim) away.

(iii) Mahesh : We have to organise a class party for our teacher. (Do) anyone play an instrument?

Vipul : Rohit (play) the flute.

Mahesh : (Do) he also act ?

Vipul : No, he (compose) music.

Mahesh : That's wonderful!

Answer:

(i) sends, takes place, contracts, forces, expands

(ii) digs, encloses, dries, hardens, comes, dissolves, swims

(iii) does, plays, does, only composes.

Speaking

Question 1:

Discuss in class the shrines you have visited or know about. Speak about one of them.

Answer:

Do it yourself.

Question 2:

Imagine you are giving an eyewitness account or a running commentary of one of the following:

1. a game of football, cricket or hockey, or some sports event
2. a parade (e.g. Republic Day) or some other national event

Speak a few sentences narrating what you see and hear. Use the simple present and the present continuous tenses. For example:

- He passes the ball but Ben gets in the way...
- These brave soldiers guard our frontiers. They display their skills here

Answer:

For self-attempt

Writing

Diary entry for a travelogue

Question 1:

The text you read is a travelogue where the author, Vikram Seth, talks about his visit to two sacred places in Kathmandu.

Imagine that you were with Vikram Seth on his visit to Pashupatinath temple, and you were noting down all that you saw and did there, so that you could write a travelogue later.

Record in point form

- what you see when you reach the Pashupatinath temple
- what you see happening inside the temple
- what you do when inside the temple
- what you see outside the temple

- what your impressions are about the place.

Answer:

28th August, 20XX

Dear Diary,

Today I feel pleasure to note down my experience to the visit to Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu with Vikram Seth. The visit was indeed exciting for me, though there was too much tumult at Pashupatinath Temple. I saw crowds of priests, hawkers, devotees, tourists at the temple. We offered a few flowers to God. Inside the temple I saw a large number of worshippers trying to get the priest's attention and some of them were elbowed aside by others who were pushing their way to the front.

Outside the temple, I saw a party of saffron-clad westerners struggle for permission to enter the temple. The policeman did not allow them to enter the temple because they were not Hindus.

There is no doubt that the place is worth visiting. We feel aesthetic satisfaction by visiting such religious place.

Mayank

Question II:

Here is your diary entry when you visited Agra. Read the points and try to write a travelogue describing your visit to Agra and the Taj Mahal. You may add more details.

January 2003—rise before dawn—take the Shatabdi Express at 6.15 am from Delhi— meet a newly-married couple on train— talk about Himachal Pradesh—get off the train—enter the once-grand city, Agra— twisted alleys—traffic dense—rickshaws, cars, people—vendors selling religious artifacts, plastic toys, spices and sweets—go to the Taj Mahal—constructed entirely of white marble—magical quality—colour changes with varying of light and shadow— marble with gemstones inside—reflection of the Taj Mahal in the pond—school-children, tourists—tourist guides following people.

Answer:

A Visit to Agra

It was January 2003. I woke up before dawn and took the Shatabdi Express at 6.15 a.m. from Delhi bound for Agra. I met a newly married couple who belonged to Himachal Pradesh. We talked with one another and got off the train. I entered the once grand city, Agra. I saw the dense traffic, numerous rickshaw pullers, cars, people and vendors selling religious artifacts, plastic toys, spices and sweets. I went to the Taj Mahal which is one of the seven wonders of the world. It was entirely of white marble and had a magical quality of colour changing with varying of light and shadow. The white marble of Taj Mahal has gemstones of multi coloured engraved in it. The reflection of the Taj Mahal could be seen in the pond. There were many tourists, school children and tourist guides.