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The Tiger King

Fastrack Revision

Summary at a Glance

- ▶ 'The Tiger King' is written by Kalki Krishnamurthy that brings to light the prediction of the astrologers about the crown prince that he would be a great hero, a great warrior and champion but one day he would die. He further tells that the ten-day-old Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur opened his lips and asked the astrologers the manner of his death. The chief astrologer said that his death would come from a tiger.
- ▶ The time passed away and the Maharaja killed ninety-nine tigers. The Maharaja needed one more tiger to achieve his tally of a hundred. By this time the tigers had finished even in his father-in-law's kingdom. The question was where the hundredth tiger was to be found. One day the villagers from a hillside village in his own state informed that a tiger had killed many sheep. The Maharaja set out on the hunt at once. The tiger was not easily found. The Maharaja refused to leave the forest until the tiger was found.



► It was the third birthday of the Maharaja's son. The Maharaja bought a wooden tiger as a present. On that day father and son played with the wooden tiger. One of the slivers from the back of the tiger pierced the Maharaja's right hand. The next day, infection flared up in the Maharaja's right hand and developed into a suppurating sore in the arm. Three surgeons came from Madras. They performed the operation. The Maharaja died during the operation. In this manner the hundredth tiger took its final revenge upon the Tiger King.

Theme

Ever since man came on this earth, he has been subjecting innocent animals, either for food or self-protection or sport—or in more recent times—for business. God has created both men and animals. Animals therefore claim our love and sympathy. Cruelty to animals is immortal. It produces a callous and unfeeling heart. The Maharaja is adamant to kill the hundredth tiger and in doing so he has to meet his death.



Practice Exercise



Extract Based Questions

Directions: Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow:

1. In other words, the Tiger King is dead.

The manner of his death is a matter of extraordinary interest. It can be revealed only at the end of the tale. The most fantastic aspect of his demise was that as soon as he was born, astrologers had foretold that one day the Tiger King would actually have to die.

"The child will grow up to become the warrior of warriors, hero of heroes, champion of champions. But..." they bit their lips and swallowed hard. When compelled to continue, the astrologers came out with it. "This is a secret which should not be revealed at all. And yet we are forced to speak out. The child born under this star will one day have to meet its death."
(CBSE SQP 2023-24)

(a) Complete the sentence appropriately.

The author's purpose in using foreshadowing, is to

(b) In the given extract, what emotion were the astrologers feeling when they "bit their lips and swallowed hard"?

- (i) Humiliation (ii) Disbelief
(iii) Grief (iv) Unease

(c) Which trait are the astrologers lauding when they say "warrior of warriors, hero of heroes, champion of champions"?

(d) How is the line, "the most fantastic aspect of his demise", an example of contrast?

Answers

- (a) use it as a tool to intensify the reader's curiosity and interest in the story.
(b) (iv) Unease
(c) Bravery / Heroism / Leadership

(d) The line, 'the most fantastic aspect of his demise' is an example of contrast because the word 'fantastic' is usually associated with something positive or exciting, while the word 'demise' suggests something negative or tragic.

2. I have come forward to tell you why he came to be known as Tiger King. I have no intention of pretending to advance only to end in a strategic withdrawal. Even the threat of a Stuka bomber will not throw me off track. The Stuka, if it likes, can beat a hasty retreat from my story.

(a) Who is the author of the above extract?

- (i) Jack Finney (ii) Tishani Doshi
(iii) Kalki (iv) Susan Hill

(b) In the above extract 'I' refers to

(c) What does the narrator want to tell?

(d) Give an antonym of 'retreat'.

Answers

- (a) (iii) Kalki
(b) the narrator
(c) The narrator wants to tell why the Maharaja was known as Tiger King.
(d) An antonym of 'retreat' is advance.
3. The Maharaja and the Dewan held deliberations over this issue. As a result, a telegram was despatched forthwith to a famous British company of jewellers in Calcutta. 'Sent samples of expensive diamond rings of different designs.'
- (a) 'This issue' in the above extract refers to:
(i) the Maharaja was angry with a British officer
(ii) the Maharaja prevented a British officer from killing the tigers
(iii) the British officer did not allow the Maharaja to kill tigers
(iv) None of the above
- (b) Why did the Maharaja and the Dewan held deliberations over this issue?
(c) 'Deliberation' means
(d) How many rings were sent?



Answers

- (a) (ii) the Maharaja prevented a British officer from killing the tigers
(b) The Maharaja was afraid of losing his kingdom.
(c) discussion or thinking about something in detail.
(d) Around fifty rings were sent.
4. The Maharaja's tiger hunts continued to be highly successful. Within ten years he was able to kill seventy tigers. And then, an unforeseen hurdle brought his mission to a standstill. The tiger population became extinct in the forests of Pratibandapuram. Who knows whether the tigers practised birth control or committed harakiri? Or simply ran away from the state because they desired to be shot by British hands alone?
- (a) How many tigers were to be killed after having killed seventy tigers?
(i) 100 tigers (ii) 70 tigers
(iii) 30 tigers (iv) 60 tigers
- (b) Harakiri means
- (c) What was the unforeseen problem before the Maharaja?
- (d) What does 'standstill' mean?

Answers

- (a) (iii) 30 tigers
(b) ritual suicide
(c) The unforeseen problem before the Maharaja was that the tigers were not seen in the forests of Pratibandapuram.
(d) Stand still means a situation when there is no movement or activity.
5. Thus the Maharaja was sunk in gloom. But soon came the happy news which dispelled that gloom. In his own state sheep began to disappear frequently from a hillside village.
- (a) Why was the Maharaja sunk in gloom?
(b) What was the happy news?
(i) The hundredth tiger was near his palace
(ii) The villagers saw the tiger in the bush
(iii) The tiger was seen by the herders
(iv) The tiger was stealing the sheep from the hillside village
- (c) 'Gloom' means
- (d) Give a synonym of 'dispelled'.

Answers

- (a) The Maharaja was worried about the unavailability of the hundredth tiger.
(b) (iv) The tiger was stealing the sheep from the hillside village
(c) a state of feeling sad and without hope.
(d) A synonym of 'dispelled' is eliminated or dismissed.

6. It was first ascertained that this was not the work of Khader Mian Saheb or Virasami Naicker, both famed for their ability to swallow sheep whole. Surely, a tiger was at work. The villagers ran to inform of Maharaja. The Maharaja announced a three-year exemption from all taxes for that village and set out on the hunt at once.
- (a) Khader Mian Saheb or Virasami Naicker were known for:
(i) creating problems for the congress
(ii) facing the British rule violently
(iii) be friending the Maharaja
(iv) swallowing sheep whole
- (b) 'A tiger was at work' means
- (c) Why did the Maharaja announce a three year exemption from all taxes for that village?
- (d) What does 'ascertain' mean?

Answers

- (a) (iv) swallowing sheep whole
(b) the tiger was eating the sheep.
(c) The Maharaja announced a three-year exemption from all taxes for that village because the villagers informed the Maharaja about the tiger.
(d) 'Ascertain' means to find out or learn with certainty.
7. On the following day, the same old tiger wandered into the Maharaja's presence and stood as if in humble supplication, "Master, what do you command of me?" It was with boundless joy that the Maharaja took careful aim at the beast. The tiger fell in a crumpled heap.
- (a) 'The same old tiger' was brought from:
(i) the forest of the state of the Maharaja
(ii) the People's Park in Madras
(iii) the village of Maharaja's kingdom
(iv) the other forest which does not fall in the state of the Maharaja
- (b) In the above extract the opposite of 'cruel' is
- (c) Was the tiger killed by the Maharaja?
(d) Who is the narrator?

Answers

- (a) (ii) the People's Park in Madras
(b) humble
(c) No, the tiger wasn't killed by the Maharaja as the bullet had missed it.
(d) Kalki Krishnamurthy is the narrator.
8. "Very good. Let this be your offering to the crown prince on his birthday," said the king and took it away with him. On that day father and son played with that tiny little wooden tiger. It had been carved

by an unskilled carpenter. Its surface was rough; tiny slivers of wood stood up like quills all over it. One of those slivers pierced the Maharaja's right hand. He pulled it out with his left hand and continued to play with the prince.

- (a) Tiny little wooden tiger was brought by
- (b) The gift was made by:
- (i) a skilled craftsman
 - (ii) an unskilled craftsman
 - (iii) a company
 - (iv) an engineer
- (c) How was the tiger's surface?
- (d) Give a synonym of 'pierced'.

Answers

- (a) Maharaja to gift.
- (b) (ii) an unskilled craftsman
- (c) The tiger's surface was rough with tiny slivers all over it.
- (d) A synonym of 'pierced' is penetrated or punctured.



Short Answer Type Questions

Q 1. Who is the hero of the story, 'The Tiger King'? How may he be identified?

Ans. The Maharaja of Pratibandapuram is the hero of this story. He is identified as his Highness Jamedar-General, Khiledar-Major, Sata Vyaghra Samhari, Maharajadhiraja Visva Bhuvana Samrat, Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur. But his name is often shortened to the Tiger King.

Q 2. How was crown prince Jung Jung Bahadur brought up?

Ans. The crown prince drank the milk of an English cow, which was brought up by an English nanny, tutored in English by an Englishman and saw nothing but English films.

Q 3. What did the astrologer say he would do if the Maharaja killed the hundredth tiger?

Ans. The astrologer replied that he would cut off his tuft, crop his hair and become an insurance agent. He would tear up all his books on astrology and set fire to them.

Q 4. What did the Maharaja vow?

Ans. The Maharaja vowed he would attend to all other matters only after killing the hundred tigers.

Q 5. How did the Maharaja stand in danger of losing his kingdom itself? How did he ward off the crisis?

Or

When was the Tiger King in danger of losing his throne?

(CBSE 2015)

Ans. The Maharaja stood in danger of losing his kingdom itself when he prevented a British officer from fulfilling his desire. He warded off the crisis by sending a gift of fifty diamond rings to the wife of the officer.

Q 6. Who were famed for swallowing sheep whole in the kingdom of the Maharaja?

Ans. There were two men—Khader Mian Saheb and Virasami Naicker in the kingdom of the Maharaja who were famous for swallowing sheep whole.

Q 7. How did the hundredth tiger take its final revenge upon the Tiger King?

Ans. The Maharaja could not kill the hundredth tiger. It had fainted from a shock of the sound of the bullet. It was the wooden tiger from the toys-shop that became the cause of the Tiger King's death. One of the slivers on its body pierced the right hand of the Tiger King. Infection flared up and the prick developed pus in the arm of the king. The Tiger King died during the operation. In this manner, the hundredth tiger took its final revenge upon the Tiger King.

Q 8. Who is the Tiger King? Why does he get that name?

Ans. Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur, the Maharaja of Pratibandapuram is the Tiger King. When the prince was ten days old, the astrologers predicted that he would be killed by the tiger. Then the prince uttered, "Let tigers beware!" He decided to kill 100 tigers. So he got the name of Tiger King.

Q 9. What did the Maharaja do to find the required number of tigers to kill? (CBSE 2019)

Ans. The Maharaja killed seventy tigers within ten years. When the tiger population became extinct in Pratibandapuram, he married a girl from the state which had a large number of tigers. The Maharaja killed five or six tigers each time he visited his father-in-law. Thus, he was able to kill ninety-nine tigers.

Q 10. How did the Maharaja prepare himself for the hundredth tiger which was supposed to decide his fate?

Ans. The Maharaja had killed ninety-nine tigers. But he had to be beware of the hundredth tiger. The tiger was a savage beast after all. One had to be wary of it. But where was that hundredth tiger to be found. The villagers from a hillside village informed that a tiger was at work in the village. The Maharaja set out for hunting at once. But the tiger was not easily found. He went on camping in the forest.

Q 11. How did the Tiger King die?

Ans. It was the third birthday of the Maharaja's son. The Maharaja bought a wooden tiger as a present. On that day, father and son played with the wooden tiger. One of the slivers from the back of the tiger pierced the Maharaja's right hand. The next day, infection flared up in the Maharaja's right hand and developed into a suppurating sore in the arm. Three surgeons came from Madras. They performed the operation. The Maharaja died during the operation.

Q 12. When did the Tiger King decide to get married?

(CBSE 2020)

Or

What considerations influenced the Tiger King to get married? (CBSE 2018, 19)



Or

What was the hidden agenda behind the Tiger King's marriage with the princess in neighbouring state? (CBSE 2023)

Ans. The Tiger King decided to get married when the tiger population became extinct in the forests of Pratibandapuram and thirty tigers still remained to be shot down by the Maharaja.

Q 13. Who actually killed the hundredth tiger? Why?

(CBSE 2019)

Ans. The Maharaja could not kill the hundredth tiger as the bullet had missed it. The hunters went to get a closer look at the tiger and realised that it was not dead. One of the hunters took aim from a distance of one foot and killed the tiger. They did so because they did not want the Maharaja to know that he had missed his target as they could lose their job.

Q 14. What did the Maharaja and the dewan do to avoid the danger of losing the throne? (CBSE 2023)

Ans. To avoid the danger of losing the throne, the Maharaja and the dewan held deliberations over the issue and sent around fifty expensive diamond rings of different designs to the British officer's good lady. They had expected that she would select one or two and return the rest. She retained all of them and sent a letter of thanks.

Q 15. What did the astrologers depict about the child when he was born? (CBSE 2023)

Ans. When the child was born, the astrologers predicted that he would grow up to become the warrior of warriors, hero of heroes, champion of champions. The chief astrologer also predicted that the child was born in the hour of the bull. The bull and the tiger are enemies, therefore, the child would die because of the tiger.



Long Answer Type Questions

Q 1. The story is a satire on the conceit of those in power. How does the author employ the literary device of dramatic irony in the story? (NCERT)

Ans. Dramatic irony is a situation in a play when a character's words carry an extra meaning to the audience as they know more than the character, specially about what is going to happen. The author employs it on the two characters who are in power. The first is the Hero of the story. He is known as the Tiger King. The astrologers predicted at his birth that he would be killed by a tiger. The Maharaja killed 99 tigers in the forests of his own state and those of his father-in-law. Now the problem was how the hundredth tiger is to be found and killed. The Maharaja was informed that a tiger was at work in a village which was situated on a hillside. But that tiger could not be found out. The fury and rage of the Maharaja was at the height. Then, the Dewan

managed to bring an old tiger from the People's Park in Madras. It was with boundless joy that the Maharaja took careful aim at the beast. The tiger fell in a crumpled heap. The Maharaja was elated with joy that he had killed hundred tigers. But the old tiger was not killed. It was killed afterwards by one of the hunters.

The Maharaja bought a wooden tiger as the gift for his son's third birthday. A sliver from the wooden tiger became the cause of the death of the Maharaja. The second was a high-ranking British officer. He was equally vain. He was more interested in the photograph with carcass of the tiger than hunting it. The Maharaja refused his permission to hunt the tiger in his state. The Maharaja offered fifty diamond rings to the wife of the British officer to save his state from being lost. Thus, he managed to retain his kingdom.

Q 2. What is the author's indirect comment on subjecting innocent animals to the wilfulness of human beings?

Ans. Ever since man came on this earth, he has been subjecting innocent animals, either for food or self-protection or sport—or in more recent times, for business.

When the Maharaja was born, the astrologers predicted that he will be killed by the tiger.

When the Maharaja sat on the throne, everyone in the kingdom remembered the astrologer's prediction. The Maharaja narrated the old saying, 'you may kill even a cow in self-defence'. There could certainly be no objection to killing tigers in self-defence. The Maharaja started out on a tiger hunt.

When the Maharaja killed his first tiger, he sent for the state astrologer. Showing him the dead beast, he demanded, 'What do you say now?' The astrologer said that his majesty might kill ninety-nine tigers in exactly the same manner, but he must be careful with the hundredth tiger. The Maharaja killed ninety-nine innocent tigers to his wilfulness, while he knew that one who is born, must die one day.

Human beings are more fierce, violent and brainless than the wild beast. Thus, we see in the story 'The Tiger King' the author's indirect comment on subjecting innocent animals to the wilfulness of human beings.

Q 3. How would you describe the behaviour of the Maharaja's minions towards him? Do you find them truly sincere towards him or are they driven by fear when they obey him? Do we find a similarity in today's political order? (NCERT)

Ans. A minion is an unimportant person in an organisation who has to obey orders. They may be servants. The behaviour of the Maharaja's minions towards him is servile. They are flatterers.



The servants act according to the mood of their master. They do not want to displease the master or else they will lose their job. Maharaja's fury and rage would result in the loss of the minions' job or life. The servants of the Maharaja were not truly sincere towards him. They were driven by fear when they obeyed him. For example, the king's bullet misses the hundredth tiger. It faints from the shock and falls as a crumpled heap. The hunters found the old tiger alive. They dreaded that the Maharaja must not come to know that he has missed his target. If he did, they could lose their jobs. Even the dewan is no exception. He manages to bring an old tiger from the People's Park (Zoo) in Madras to satisfy the Maharaja's whims. We find the same thing in today's political order.

Q 4. We need a new system for the age of ecology—a system which is embedded in the care of all people and also in the care of the Earth and all life upon it. Discuss. (NCERT)

Ans. Ecology is the relation of plants and living creatures to each other and to their environment. A new system for the age of ecology is needed. The earth itself is a living organism—an enormous being of which we are parts. This system should be based on the concept of sustainable development which meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

The Brandt Commission which deal with the problem of ecology and environment raised the question—"Are we to leave our successors a scorched planet of advancing deserts, impoverished landscapes and ailing environment?"

In poor countries local forests are being decimated in order to procure firewood for cooking. The tropical forest is 'the powerhouse of evolution.' Several species of life face extinction as a result of its destruction. The World Bank estimates that a five-fold increase in the rate of forest planting is needed to cope with the expected fuelwood demand. Article 48A of the Constitution of India provides that "the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country." But the fact is that laws are never respected by bad elements and it becomes difficult to enforce them properly.

Q 5. Describe the great miracle which took place when the prince was only ten days old?

Ans. When the prince was ten days old, the astrologers predicted that the child would be a great warrior, hero and champion but one day he would die.

At that very moment an astonishing phrase came out of the lips of the prince, "O wise prophets!" Everyone was surprised and looked at each other. The prince again spoke, "O wise prophets! It was I who spoke."

The chief astrologer took off his spectacles and gazed at the baby. Then, the prince said, "All those who are born will one day have to die. It would be sensible if you could tell us the manner of that death."

The chief astrologer explained, "The prince was born in the hour of the Bull. The bull and the tiger are enemies, Therefore, death comes from the tiger."

As soon as the prince heard that his death would come from the tiger, he gave a deep growl. Terrifying words came out of his lips.

"Let tigers beware!" This was the miracle that baffled all.

Q 6. Describe the Maharaja's anxiety for the hundredth tiger? Was he successful in killing the hundredth tiger? What do you think, caused the death of the Tiger King?

Ans. The Maharaja's anxiety reached a fever pitch when there remained just one tiger to achieve his tally of a hundred.

The question was where that hundredth tiger was to be found. Maharaja was very sad. But soon a happy news came. The villagers of a hillside village in his own state ran to inform the Maharaja that a tiger was at work in their village. The Maharaja announced a three-year exemption from all taxes for that village and set out on the hunt at once.

The tiger was not easily found. The Maharaja refused to leave the forest until the tiger was found. Many days passed, the Maharaja's fury and obstinacy reached a height. One day he called the dewan and ordered him to double the land tax at once.

The dewan managed to bring an old tiger from the People's Park in Madras. On the following day, the same old tiger wandered before the Maharaja. It was with limitless joy that the Maharaja took careful aim at the beast. The tiger fell in a crumpled heap. The tiger fainted and fell. He was not dead. The hunters killed him afterwards.

It was the third birthday of the crown prince. The Maharaja bought a wooden tiger for the present. On that day father and son played with the tiger. Tiny slivers pierced the Maharaja's right hand. The infection flared in the Maharaja's right hand. It spread all over the arm. Surgeons performed an operation but the Maharaja was dead.



Chapter Test

Extract Based Question

Q 1. The next day, infection flared in the Maharaja's right hand. In four days, it developed into a suppurating sore which spread all over the arm.

Three famous surgeons were brought in from Madras. After holding a consultation they decided to operate. The operation took place.

The three surgeons who performed it came out of the theatre and announced, "The operation was successful. The Maharaja is dead."

In this manner the hundredth tiger took its final revenge upon the Tiger King.

(a) Which organ of the king was infected?

(b) The operation was performed by:

- (i) the surgeons from Mysore
- (ii) the surgeons from Madras
- (iii) the physicians from Madras
- (iv) the surgeons from Calcutta

(c) How did the King get the injury?

(d) A synonym of 'Flared' is

Short Answer Type Questions

Q 2. How did the Maharaja manage to save his kingdom?

Q 3. Why was the Maharaja called 'Tiger King'?

Long Answer Type Question

Q 4. Did the Maharaja kill the hundredth tiger? Elaborate.