## **The Adventures of Toto**

#### Introduction

This story has been written by Ruskin Bond. In this story the author recollects his childhood memories related to his pet monkey named Toto.

### Summary

Toto is a baby monkey. The author's grandfather bought him for five rupees from a tonga driver and decided to add him to his private zoo. Toto was a pretty monkey whose eyes sparkled with mischief. To hide Toto from author's grandmother, he was hidden in a little closet which opened in author's bedroom wall. He was tied there to a peg fastened onto the wall. Toto managed to pull the peg from its socket. He tore the author's school blazer and the wallpaper.

Then Toto was kept in a big cage with other pets in servant's quarters. But he did not let the other pets sleep at night.

So, the next day grandfather decided to take Toto to Saharanpur where he was going to collect his pension. Grandfather put him in a big black canvas kit-bag and closed him in. Toto tried to get out of the bag and in the process the bag rolled about the floor and caught everyone's attention. In Saharanpur, while grandfather was showing



his ticket to the ticket collector, Toto managed to poke his head out of the bag and gave him a wide grin. The ticket collector was taken aback but he recovered and charged three rupees as his fare.

Finally, his presence was revealed to the author's grandmother and he was placed in the stable with a pet donkey named Nana. On the first night only grandfather found Toto holding Nana's ears with his sharp teeth.

Toto enjoyed taking bath with warm water during cold winter evenings. One day Toto jumped into a large kettle. Water was boiling in it. When the temperature rose, he jumped up and down. By chance grandmother arrived and hauled him, half boiled, out of the kettle.

One day Toto entered the dining room. He found a plate of *pullao* on the dining table. He started eating it. Grandmother screamed and Toto threw a plate on her. One of the author's aunt rushed forward and Toto threw a glass of water on her face. When grandfather came, Toto took the dish of *pullao* and climbed over a jackfruit tree. Thereafter finishing the *pullao*, he threw the dish down and broke it.

In frustration, grandfather sold Toto back to the same tonga driver for three rupees and heaved a sigh of relief.

## Message

The story wants to convey the message that we should be friendly towards animals and should care for them.



Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow:

- He could use it to hang from a branch; and it was capable of scooping up any delicacy that might be out of reach of his hands.
  - (a) In this extract, 'he' refers to .....
  - (b) Toto's third hand is:
    - (i) his mouth
- (ii) his teeth
- (iii) his tail
- (iv) his mind
- (c) Delicacy means .....
- (d) In the extract, the word ...... suggests that the monkey was able to do the work soundly.

## **Answers**

- (a) Toto. a monkey
- (b) (iii) his tall
- (c) a type of food in a particular place
- (d) capable
- To his surprise he found Nana, without apparent cause, pulling at her halter and trying to keep her head as far as possible from a bundle of hay.
  - (a) ..... is referred to as 'Nana' in this extract.
  - (b) The above extract gives us the idea that:
    - (i) Toto was friendly to other animals
    - (II) Toto was unfriendly to other animals
    - (iii) Toto was loved and liked by other animals
    - (iv) All animals wanted to have freedom

- (c) Nana and Toto never became ......
- (d) A synonym of the word 'evident' from the extract is ........

### **Answers**

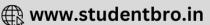
- (a) The family donkey
- (b) (ii) Toto was unfriendly to other animals
- (c) friends
- (d) apparent
- 3. "Given time, I'm sure he could have tied the torn pieces of your blazer into a rope, and made his escape from the window!"
  - (a) The above passage reflects that Toto was so clever that with the passage of time he would have made a lot of innovative ways .......
  - (b) Who is speaking these words to whom in the above extract?
    - (i) The grandfather of the narrator to the narrator
    - (ii) The grandfather of the narrator to Toto
    - (iii) The grandfather of the narrator to Nana
    - (iv) The narrator to the grandfather
  - (c) Toto could have made his escape from the window with the help of a rope prepared with the ......
  - (d) The word that means the same as 'coat' in the extract is ......

## **Answers**

- (a) to escape
- **(b)** (l) The grandfather of the narrator to the narrator
- (c) torn pieces of blazer
- (d) blazer
- 4. The poor man was taken aback; but with great presence of mind and much to Grandfather's annoyance, he said, "Sir, you have a dog with you. You'll have to pay for it accordingly."
  - (a) The 'poor man' in the extract is ......
  - (b) Explain 'accordingly' given in the above extract.
    - (i) The grandfather will have to pay the train fare of Toto according to rule.
    - (ii) The grandfather will have to pay the train fare of Toto according to the weight of Toto.
    - (iii) The grandfather will have to pay the train fare as per his wish.
    - (iv) None of the above
  - (c) State whether the given statement is True or False. The grandfather was annoyed due to payment as Toto's train fare.
  - (d) A word/phrase from the extract which means the same as 'startled' is ..........







### **Answers**

- (a) the ticket collector
- (b) (i) The grandfather will have to pay the train fare of Toto according to rule.
- (c) True
- (d) taken aback
- 5. This was just fine for a while, until the water began to boil. Toto then raised himself a little, but finding it cold outside, sat down again. He continued hopping up and down for some time, until grandmother arrived and hauled him, half-boiled, out of the kettle.
  - (a) The water was boiling in a .....
  - (b) Where was Toto until the grandmother arrived?
    - (i) Outside the kettle
    - (ii) Inside the kettle
    - (iii) Near the kettle
    - (iv) Near the gate of the house
  - (c) Toto sat down again because it was .....
  - (d) A word/phrase from the extract which is opposite in meaning to 'lowered' is ............

### **Answers**

- (a) large kettle
- **(b)** (ii) Inside the kettle
- (c) cold outside
- (d) raised



## Short Answer Type Questions 🔰

### Q 1. How did Toto came to grandfather's private zoo?

Ans. Grandfather bought Toto from a tonga driver for the sum of five rupees. The tonga driver used to keep Toto tled to a feeding-trough. Toto looked so out of place there that grandfather decided to add him to his private zoo.

# Q 2. 'Toto was a pretty monkey.' In what sense is Toto pretty?

Ans. Toto had bright eyes which sparkled with mischief beneath deep-set eyebrows. His tweth were a pearly white and were often displayed in smile. His fingers were quick and he had a long tail which served as his third hand. All these features lead the author to say that Toto was a pretty monkey.

### Q 3. How does Toto almost boil himself alive?

Ans. One day Toto found a large kitchen kettle left on the fire to boil for tea. He removed its lid. Finding the water just warm enough, he got into the wettle. This was just fine for a while. When the water began to boil. Toto hopped up and down for some time. Just then grandmother arrived and hauled him, half-boiled, out of the kettle.

# Q 4. Did Toto stay with the narrator's family forever? Why?

Ans. Toto did not stay with the narrator's family forever.

He was a great nuisance. He broke plates. He tore clothes and curtains. The family couldn't bear this loss. So, he was given back to the tonga driver for only three rupees.



# Q L Why does grandfather take Toto to Saharanpur and how?

Ans. Grandfather had tried to keep Toto's presence a secret from author's grandmother. So, he had kept Toto in a large cage along with other pets, viz. a tortoise. a pair of rabbits, a squirrel and a goat. But Toto created such a havoc and did not allow any of them to sleep. The next day grandfather had to go to Saharampur to collect his pension. To protect the household from his mischief and also to keep his presence a secret he decided to take Toto along with him. A big black canvas kit-bag with some straws at the bottom was provided and this bag became Toto's abode.

# Q 2. How did Toto take a bath? Where had he learnt to do this?

Ans. Toto was provided a large bowl of warm water during cold winter evenings. First he tested the temperature with his hand. Then gradually stepped into the bowl, first one foot, then the other, until he was into the water upto his neck. Then he would take the soap in his hands and rub it all over his body. When the water became cold, he would get out and run quickly to the kitchen fire to dry himself. He had learned this by observing the author.

# Q 3. Why does the author say, 'Toto was not the sort of pet we could keep for long'?

**Ans.** Toto couldn't be kept for long as a pet for the following reasons:

- (i) Toto's teeth were very often displayed in a smile that frightened the life out of elderly Anglo-Indian ladies.
- (ii) He tore wallpaper and wrenched the peg in the wall from its socket.
- (iii) He tore the author's school blazer in shreds.
- (iv) Toto fastened on the donkey's long ears with this sharp little teeth.
- (v) Toto did not let the other pets sleep in the night.
- (vi) Toto was always tearing things to pieces.
- (vii) Whenever one of the author's aunts came near Toto. he made every effort to get hold of her dress and would tear a hole in it.
- (viii) One day, at lunch-time, they found Toto stuffing himself with rice. When grandmother screamed, Toto threw a plate at her.
  - (ix) He would often take a plate full of food. climb on the jackfruit tree and <u>throw the plate down</u> after eating the food.

The author's family was not well-to-do and could not afford the frequent loss of dishes, clothes, etc. So, this leads the author to say that Toto was not the sort of pet which they could keep for long,





