

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

The chief objectives of the Viking Mission to Mars were to get pictures and samples of soil to find out if there were signs of life there.

Tilloo and his parents lived beneath our planet under artificial conditions. They were not allowed to go on the surface for two reasons. The air was too thin to breathe and the temperature was very low.

Tilloo's father was a part of that team. He used to go to work daily through a secret passage. But it was a forbidden route for the boy. Tilloo was curious to know about and see the sky. His mother would not let him go.

That day Tilloo's father was enjoying a short sleep at home. Tilloo managed to pick up his security card. He went along the forbidden passage. The magic card helped him open the door. He marched along an upward slope. But he had underestimated the security arrangements. Invisible mechanical devices photographed him and sent his picture to the Central Bureau. Soon he was caught and sent back home.

Father decided to explain everything to the boy. He said that he could stay alive on the surface because he carried oxygen to keep himself warm. His special boots enabled him to walk easily. There was a time when their forefathers lived on the surface safely and naturally. But a small change of climate upset the balance of nature on that planet. All birds, fish and animals lost their existence. Only man managed to stay alive in underground artificial conditions. They produced power from sunlight. Father's job was to keep the machines on the surface in working condition.

Next day Tilloo's father found a crowd watching the big TV screen. The computer showed something from the other planet

heading towards them. It was a spacecraft. They wondered who the strangers in that craft were.

The President made an announcement. It was reported that two spacecrafts were approaching them. They were to decide how to deal with them. Number One said that they could easily destroy those spacecrafts, but that would be unwise. He suggested that they should let them land. They were unmanned. They contained only instruments.

Number two favoured the policy of wait and watch. They must not reveal their presence. Number three supported the views.

Just then the news came that the first alien spacecraft had landed. Tilloo watched the funny thing on the TV screen from the Control Room. He noted some movement in it. A mechanical hand came out and touched the soil. Tilloo lost self control resistance. He pressed the red button. This created excitement. Father restored the red button to its neutral position. The mechanical hand stopped working.

A press conference on the earth was held. A scientist told the press about sudden defect in mechanical hand. But it was made to work again. Soil samples were collected. But the scientists were in great disappointment. The Viking Mission found no signs of life on Mars.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 69)

1. How does Tilloo manage to find his way to the 'forbidden passage'?

Ans. One day Tilloo's daddy was asleep. The boy picked up daddy's I-card. Then he walked towards the forbidden secret passage. The card helped him open the door and enter the passage.

2. What did Tilloo hope to see once he emerged from his underground home?

Ans. Tilloo hoped to see the sun or the stars after getting out of his underground home.

3. Why did Tilloo's father advise him not to try to reach the surface of the planet?

Ans. Tilloo's father told him not to try to go to the surface of the planet because he won't be able to breathe in the thin air or withstand the low temperature there.

4. What changes had occurred, which forced people to live in underground homes?

Ans. The changing heat of the sun created conditions that killed all animals and birds. The air became thin and human beings could freeze to death.

COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 71)

1. Why was everyone in the Control Room greatly excited?

Ans. Everyone in the Control Room was greatly excited because they had seen two spacecrafts coming towards their planet.

2. Was the spacecraft manned or unmanned? How do you know it?

Ans. The spacecraft that landed on the surface was unmanned. It contained only instruments. A mechanical hand tried to collect samples of soil.

3. What did Number One and Number Two suggest should be done about the alien spacecraft?

Ans. The Number One was in charge of defence. He suggested that they should wait till the craft landed on the surface. Then they could easily make it ineffective.

Number Two also suggested that they should wait and watch. It would be unwise to reveal their existence by attacking the spacecraft.

COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 73)

1. What do you think the mechanical hand was trying to do?

Ans. The mechanical hand that emerged from the alien spacecraft, was trying to collect samples of soil from the surface of Mars. The purpose was to study if there was life on it.

2. Tilloo pressed the red button and "the damage was done". What was the damage?

Ans. Tilloo pressed the red button. It is dad who made it neutral

again. But the damage was done. The mechanical hand stopped working. It became inactive.

3. Where had the spacecraft come from?

Ans. The spacecraft had come from the planet Earth. It was sent by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, America).

4. On which planet do Tilloo and his parents live?

Ans. Tilloo and his parents live on a planet with thin air, freezing cold and no animals on surface.

EXERCISES

(Page 73)

Discuss the following topics in groups.

1. If you had to live in a home like Tilloo's , what parts of life would you find most difficult? What compensations might there be?

Ans. Living underground in artificial conditions without the light/warmth of the stars and the sun, must be very troublesome and dull. The only compensation of such a home is safety and security, controlled light and heat.

2. What, if anything, might drive mankind to make their homes underground?

Ans. If the Sun grows cold, life on earth would be in danger of extinction. The temperature will go below freezing point. People will be forced to live underground with assured supply of oxygen, light and heat.

3. Do you think there is life on other planets? Can you guess what kind of people there may be on them? In what ways are they likely to be different from us?

Ans. Scientists are trying hard to find out if there is any form of life on planets around the sun. So far they have sent spacecrafts to the moon and Mars, collected samples of soil and taken snapshots. But they have not found definite proof of life on them.

The kind of people, if they exist at all on any other planet, would be quite different from us. They must have adjusted themselves to strange and unfriendly environment there.