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How the Camel got his hump

Rudyard Kipling

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

The world had just begun. The animals had started working for humans. The Horse, the Dog, and the Ox pulled loads and served man. But there was only one animal Camel that refused to work. It lived in the desert and ate thorny plants. When anybody spoke to him, he said 'Humph!'.

One Monday morning the Horse came to the Camel. He told the desert animal to work like them. So did the Dog and the Ox. But they had no success. Then the three complained to Man against the Camel. But Man grew angry and asked them to work double to compensate Camel's work. So the animals were not happy. They held a panchayat. The Camel laughed at them and went away.

Soon the Djinn or the Spirit in charge of deserts came there. He listened to their complaint and agreed with them. He decided to punish such an idle animal. He found the Camel looking at his own reflection in the pool of water. He had made the three other animals do extra work since Monday morning. When the Djinn asked him to clarify, the Camel only said 'Humph!' He showed no willingness to work.

The Djinn put a curse on the Camel. Soon the Camel's back puffed up into a big hump. It was Thursday. The Camel was told to work for three days without eating anything, because his food was stored in his hump. But the hump on his back made it difficult for him to carry the load. The Djinn said that it would serve as a storehouse of food. He also said that it would disappear when the Camel would learn to behave properly.

The Camel went away to join the Three. From that day he has been wearing a hump but there was no escape from work. He has, however, still not learned to behave.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

COMPREHENSION CHECK (Page 3)

1. **What tasks, do you think, were assigned to the dog and the ox?**

Ans. The dog was assigned the task of fetching and carrying. The ox was made to plough the fields.

2. **Why did the camel live in the middle of the desert?**

Ans. The camel lived in the middle of the desert because it didn't want to work.

3. **What made the dog, the horse and the ox very angry?**

Ans. The dog, the horse and the ox were angry because man, their master, told them to work double time to make up for the camel's idleness.

4. **How did the Djinn know the horse was complaining against the camel?**

Ans. The Djinn was the master of deserts. So he was able to know easily who the animal with a long neck and long legs was.

COMPREHENSION CHECK (Page 5)

1. **The Camel was looking at his own reflection in the pool. What does it suggest to you about the camel?**

Ans. This statement suggests that the camel loved its own image in the pool. Perhaps he considered himself handsome looking.

2. **The camel said, "Humph" repeatedly. How did it affect him?**

Ans. The word 'Humph' annoyed the Djinn. He turned 'humph' into the hump on the camel's back.

3. **What, according to the Djinn, was the use of the 'humph'?**

Ans. The camel's hump contained food material. It helped the desert animal go without any food for three days.

4. **"... he has never yet learnt to behave." In the light of this, what is the writer's opinion about the camel?**

Ans. The writer is of the opinion that the camel has not changed its nature and habits to this day.

EXERCISE (Page 6)

Discuss the following topics in groups.

1. Can this story be factually true?

Ans. No, the story is not factually true. It is just an imaginary one.

2. What according to you, is the story about?

Consider the following:

- (i) How the world began.
- (ii) Why everyone should do his/her share of work seriously.
- (iii) How animals are important to humans.
- (iv) How the camel got his hump.

Ans. (iv) How the camel got his hump.

3. What did you do over the weekend? Were you generally active or idle? Please check your back before starting to discuss or answer the question.

Ans. On weekend I got up late and relaxed. Late evening I watched my favourite TV serial. I played cricket in the afternoon. I have checked my back and there is no hump.

4. There are broadly two categories of workers— those who prefer to do today what they can do tomorrow, and those who prefer to do tomorrow what they can do today. Where do you belong?

Ans. I personally believe in doing my work promptly and well in time.