

## SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

*Part I*

The author was living in his grandparents' house in Dehradun. There was a huge banyan tree in the yard. The tree was home to squirrels, snails and butterflies. The author also made a platform on it for hiding and reading.

His first friend was a small squirrel. He offered it pieces of cake and biscuit. It grew bold and began to take out food items even from his pocket. During the fig season, the tree was a very noisy place made by parrots, myna, nightingales and crows. From his banyan tree platform, the author used to look down at the world below.

*Part II*

One day he saw a big cobra coming out in search of prey. Just then a mongoose also came out from the bushes. The two came face to face under the tree. (They are sworn enemies.) Both were great fighters, swift and clever.

The cobra raised its body three feet off the ground. The mongoose kept its eyes fixed below the cobra's hood. The fight between the champions began. There were three onlookers of the fight—the author, a myna and a wild crow.

The mongoose moved swifter than the snake. It bit the snake on the back. The two birds flew down to feed on the dead cobra. But they hit against each other. They made a second attempt but in vain. In the third attempt the crow was bitten by the snake and it fell dead. Myna kept sitting on the cactus plant.

The fight went on for quite some time. The cobra grew tired and weak. The mongoose caught the cobra by its mouth. The cobra coiled itself round its enemy. But it could struggle no more. The mongoose dragged it into the bushes. The myna flew down and looked into the bushes. But it had no success. It flew away.

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

## WORKING WITH THE TEXT

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## A. Complete the following sentences.

1. The old banyan tree "did not belong" to the grandfather, but only to the boy, because \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The small gray squirrel became friendly when \_\_\_\_\_.
3. When the boy started to bring him pieces of cake and biscuit, the squirrel \_\_\_\_\_.
4. In the spring, the banyan tree \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ would come there.
5. The banyan tree served the boy as a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The young boy spent his afternoons in the tree \_\_\_\_\_.

- Ans.
1. the old man was not strong enough to climb it
  2. it found that the boy carried no catapult or air/gun in his hand
  3. became bold enough to take pieces of food from his hand
  4. was full of small red figs, birds of all kinds
  5. reading room where he had made a rough platform to sit and read books
  6. leaning against the tree, reading story books.

## B. Answer the following questions.

### 1. "It was to be a battle of champions." (8)

- (i) What qualities did the two champions have? Pick out words and phrases from the paragraph above this line in the text and write them down.

Mongoose	Cobra
(a) _____	(a) _____
(b) _____	(b) _____
(c) _____	(c) _____

- (ii) What did the cobra and the mongoose do, to show their readiness for the fight?

Ans. (i)	Mongoose	Cobra
	(a) a great fighter	(a) skilled and experienced champion fighter
	(b) very clever and swift	(b) had a broad hood and poisonous teeth
	(c) made calculated move	(c) swift in speed and attack

- (ii) The cobra produced a hissing sound to challenge the mongoose to a fight. It raised three feet of its body off the ground. It spread its broad hood.

The mongoose bushed its tail. The long hair on its back also stood up.

### 2. Who were the other two spectators? What did they do? (Did they watch, or did they join in the fight?) (10)

**Ans.** In addition to the narrator, the two other onlookers of the fight were a myna and a wild crow. First of all they sat on the cactus plant to watch the outcome of the fight.

In the end they took part in the game. Both tried to pick up the cobra for their meal.

The crow got bitten and died. The mongoose dragged the snake away into the bushes. The myna also flew away.

### 3. Read the descriptions below of what the snake did and what the mongoose did. Arrange their actions in the proper order. (11, 16)

(i) ceased to struggle	• grabbed the snake by the snout
(ii) tried to mesmerise the mongoose	• dragged the snake into the bushes
(iii) coiled itself around the mongoose	• darted away and bit the cobra on the back
(iv) struck the crow	• pretended to attack the cobra on one side
(v) struck again and missed	• refused to look into the snake's eyes
(vi) struck on the side that the mongoose pretended to attack	• sprang aside, jumped in and bit

**Ans.**

Snake	Mongoose
(i) tried to mesmerise the mongoose	• refused to look into the snake's eyes
(ii) struck on the side that mongoose pretended to attack	• pretended to attack the cobra on one side
(iii) struck again and missed	• sprang aside, jumped in and bit
(iv) struck the crow	• grabbed the snake by the snout
(v) ceased to struggle	• dragged the snake into the bushes

4. (i) What happened to the crow in the end? (16)

- (ii) What did the myna do finally? (17)

**Ans.** (i) In the end the crow got bitten by the cobra and it fell dead.

- (ii) The myna flew to the ground, looked into the bushes, gave a shrill cry and flew away.

## WORKING WITH LANGUAGE

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A. 1. The word 'round' usually means a kind of shape. What is its meaning in the story?

Ans. The word 'round' in the story means 'the second course of fight'.

2. Find five words in the following paragraph, which are generally associated with trees. But here, they have been used differently. Underline the words.

Hari *leaves* for work at nine every morning. He works in the local *branch* of the firm of which his uncle is the owner. Hari's success is really the *fruit* of his own labour. He is happy, but he has a small problem. The *root* cause of his problem is a stray dog near his office. The dog welcomes Hari with a loud *bark* every day.

Ans. Leaves, branch, fruit, root, bark.

B. The words in the box are all words that describe movement. Use them to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

dived	gliding	sprang	darting
whipped...back		delving	

- When he began to trust me, the squirrel began \_\_\_\_\_ into my pockets for morsels of cake.
- I saw a cobra \_\_\_\_\_ out of a clump of cactus.
- The snake hissed, his forked tongue \_\_\_\_\_ in and out.
- When the cobra tried to bite it, the mongoose \_\_\_\_\_ aside.
- The snake \_\_\_\_\_ his head \_\_\_\_\_ to strike at the crow.
- The birds \_\_\_\_\_ at the snake.

Ans. 1. delving / to delve      2. gliding  
3. darting / darted      4. sprang  
5. whipped, back      6. dived

C. Find words in the story, which show things striking violently against each other.

- The cobra struck the crow, his snout th \_ \_ \_ ing against its body. (15)
- The crow and the myna c \_ ll \_ \_ \_ \_ in mid-air. (13)
- The birds dived at the snake, but b \_ \_ \_ \_ d into each other instead (14)

Ans. 1. thudding      2. collided      3. bumped

D. Look at these sentences.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the spring, birds of all kinds <i>would</i> flock into the banyan tree's branches.</li> <li>I <i>would</i> spend the afternoons there.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grandfather, at sixty-five, <i>could</i> no longer climb the banyan tree.</li> <li>I <i>could</i> hide myself in its branches.</li> <li>I <i>could</i> look down through the leaves at the world below.</li> <li>I <i>could</i> read there.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

'Would' tells us what the author *used* to do, or what *used to* happen.

'Could' tells us what the author was *usually able to do*, or grandfather is *now not able to do*.

Choose *would* and *could* to replace the italicised words in the following sentences.

Grandfather says, in the old days,

- elephants *were able to fly* in the sky, like clouds. They *were* also *able* to change their shapes. They *used to* fly behind clouds and frighten them. People *used to* look up at the sky in wonder.
- because there was no electricity, he *used to* get up with the sun, and he *used to go* to bed with the sun, like the birds.

3. like the owl, he *was able to* see quite well in the dark. He *was able to* tell who was coming by listening to their footsteps.

- Ans.**
1. elephants *could* fly in the sky, like clouds. They *could* also change their shapes. They *would* fly behind clouds and frighten them. People *would* look up at the sky in wonder.
  2. because there was no electricity, he *would* get up with sun and he *would* go to bed with the sun, like the birds.
  3. like the owl, he *could* see quite well in the dark. He could tell who was coming by listening to their footsteps.

### SPEAKING

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Look at these sentences.

- The tree was older than Grandfather.
- Grandfather was sixty-five years old.

How old was the tree? Can you guess?

- The tree was as old as Dehradun itself.

Suppose Dehradun is 300 years old. How old is the tree?

When two things are the same in some way, we use *as...as*.

Here is another set of examples.

- Mr Sinha is 160 centimetres tall.
- Mr Gupta is 180 centimetres tall.
- Mrs Gupta is 160 centimetres tall.
- Mrs Gupta is *as tall as* Mr Sinha.

Use the words in the box to speak about the people and the things below, using *as...as* or *-er than*

tall – taller      cold – colder      hot – hotter  
strong – stronger      short – shorter

(Notice that in the word 'hot', the letter 't' is doubled when *-er* is added.)

### 1. Heights



Zeba (155 cm)



Ruby (150 cm)



Rani (155 cm)

- Zeba is as tall as Rani.
- Zeba is taller than Ruby.
- Rani is taller than Ruby. Ruby is shorter than Zeba as well as Rani.

### 2. Weight Lifters



Vijay (50 kg)



Akshay (50 kg)



Anwar (65 kg)

- Vijay is as strong as Akshay.
- Anwar is stronger than Vijay as well as Akshay.
- Neither Vijay nor Akshay is as strong as Anwar.

### 3. City Temperatures



Shimla (6°)



Gangtok (6°)



Srinagar (2°)

- Shimla is as cold as Gangtok.
- Shimla or Gangtok are not so cold as Srinagar.
- Shimla is not colder than Srinagar.

#### 4. Lengths



Romi's pencil  
(3 inches long)



Mona's pencil  
(5 inches long)



Raja's pencil  
(3 inches long)

- (i) Romi's pencil is as long as Raja's pencil.  
(ii) Mona's pencil is longer than that of Romi or Raja.

#### 5. City Temperatures



Delhi (43°)



Chennai (39°)



Nagpur (43°)

- (i) Delhi is as hot as Nagpur.  
(ii) Chennai is not hotter than Delhi or Nagpur.  
(iii) Delhi is hotter than Chennai.

#### WRITING

(Page 138)

##### 'My Favourite Place'

Read again the paragraphs of the story in which the author describes the banyan tree, and what he used to do there. Is there a place in your house, or in your grandparents' or uncles' or aunts' houses, that you specially like? Write a short paragraph about it saying.

- where it is
- what you do there
- why you like it

**You may instead write about a place you dislike, or are afraid of.**

Ans.

##### My Favourite Place

My favourite place in the house is either the balcony or the cemented platform built round the stem of the peepal tree. I use to sit in the balcony to enjoy the sunshine on winter days and the cool breeze on summer mornings. I learn my lessons and even do my homework there. I like it because it is an isolated, quiet and open place.