

## 6

## Expert Detectives

Sharada Dwivedi

## SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

## I

The story has half a dozen characters in it. Three of them are children – the narrator, his younger brother Nishad (Seven) and sister Maya. They become expert detectives. Their mother is a doctor with her clinic. Mr. Nath, the principal character and who lives in Shankar's house alone, is under her treatment. Ramesh takes tea and meals from the restaurant to Nath's room. Nath pays cash and also tips to the bearer well.

The children go ahead to collect information about Nath. They think Mr Nath is a mysterious person. He has no friend there. Nishad has a bit of sympathy for Nath. His approach in this case is sensible.

The narrator is sure that Mr. Nath is an escaped crook or criminal. Nishad is doubtful. He wants to discover the truth. And he collects a lot of information in the case. The narrator has got a ready answer to all Nishad's doubts. He thinks that Nath is a rich man. He has perhaps got millions of rupees locked in some trunks in his room. He notes dark scars also on Nath's face. Nath might have got them during a shot out with the police. But Nishad contradicts him. Mummy had told him that they were burn scars.

One day Seven goes alone to his Mamma's clinic at Girgaum. He gets upset to see Mr. Nath who looks so thin, poor and starving. He goes to Nath's room and puts a bar of chocolate in the man's hand. He collects one more clue about Mr. Nath's routine. Ramesh told him that on every Sunday he carries two lunches to Mr Nath's room and the same visitor is with him each time.

## II

The narrator makes a long list of all the information they have collected about their target. He reads it out to Nishad.

- They don't know what Mr. Nath's first name is, they must discover it.
- The other tenants at Shankar house say that Nath is mad, strange and unfriendly.
- He doesn't talk to anyone.
- He is under Mamma's medical treatment so he has to be polite to the children.
- He receives no letters.
- He has been living in Room 10 for more than a year. He doesn't work to earn his livelihood.
- He has no visitors Only on Sunday a fair, white man comes to him for lunch.
- Food and tea are taken to his room by Ramesh from the restaurant distributors.

Nishad doesn't pay much attention to the narrator's list of facts. He only pities that the poor man is without any friend. The narrator argues that the Sunday visitor must be Nath's partner in crime, and comes on Sunday to give a part of ill-gotten money to Mr. Nath. As for Ramesh, Mr. Nath bribes him to keep quiet about his criminal activities.

Nishad doesn't quite agree with the narrator. He says he will not cooperate in their investigation if they did not stop calling Mr. Nath an escaped criminal. In his opinion, the purpose of their enquiry is to find out why Mr. Nath is so thin and lonely. He declares that he likes Mr. Nath and he will try to befriend him.

The narrator laughs at the madness of Nishad. He warns him that the police would take him also to jail along with his friend. Nishad walks out of the room quietly.

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

### COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 89)

#### 1. What did Nishad give Mr. Nath? Why?

**Ans.** Nishad thought that poor Mr. Nath was starving. So he gave him a bar of chocolate.

#### 2. What is "strange" about Mr. Nath's Sundays?

**Ans.** The strange thing about Mr. Nath's Sundays is that he has a regular visitor on that day.

#### 3. Why did Nishad and Maya get a holiday?

**Ans.** Nishad and Maya got an unexpected holiday from school. It rained so heavily that all the streets were flooded. So the school declared a holiday.

### WORKING WITH THE TEXT

(Page 93)

#### 1. What does Nishad find out about Mr. Nath from Ramesh? Arrange the information as suggested below.

- What he eats
- When he eats
- What he drinks and when
- How he pays

**Ans.** Ramesh gives the information to Nishad that Mr. Nath eats the same food every day—two chapattis, some dal and a vegetable. He eats only two meals a day—lunch and dinner. He drinks tea, one cup in the morning and one in the afternoon. He pays cash for his meals. He pays tips generously.

#### 2. Why does Maya think Mr. Nath is a crook? Who does she say the Sunday visitor is?

**Ans.** Maya has several reasons to suspect that Mr. Nath is a criminal. He has so many scars on his face. These may be the bullet injury marks. He has no friends except a Sunday visitor. He has no regular job, yet he pays cash for his meals and tea. Maya suspects that Mr. Nath has lots of money or he gets a share in the loot from his Sunday visitor.

#### 3. Does Nishad agree with Maya about Mr. Nath? How does he feel about him?

**Ans.** No, Nishad doesn't agree with Maya. He thinks that Mr. Nath is a poor, lonely, polite and friendly person.

## WORKING WITH LANGUAGE

(Page 93)

### 1. The word 'tip' has only three letters but many meanings. Match the word with its meanings below.

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| (i) finger tips                               | – be about to say something         |
| (ii) the tip of your nose                     | – make the boat overturn            |
| (iii) tip the water out of the bucket         | – the ends of one's fingers         |
| (iv) have something on the tip of your tongue | – give a rupee to him, to thank him |
| (v) tip the boat over                         | – empty a bucket by tilting it      |
| (vi) tip him a rupee                          | – the pointed end of your nose      |
| (vii) the tip of the bat                      | – if you take this advice           |
| (viii) the police were tipped off             | – the bat lightly touched the ball  |
| (ix) if you take my tip                       | – the end of the bat                |
| (x) the bat tipped the ball                   | – the police were told, or warned   |
- 
- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Ans.</b> (i) finger tips                   | – the ends of one's fingers         |
| (ii) the tip of your nose                     | – the pointed end of your nose      |
| (iii) tip the water out of the bucket         | – empty a bucket by tilting it      |
| (iv) have something on the tip of your tongue | – be about to say something         |
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| (vi) tip him a rupee                          | – give a rupee to him, to thank him |
| (vii) the tip of the bat                      | – the end of the bat                |
| (viii) the police were tipped off             | – the police were told or warned    |
| (ix) if you take my tip                       | – if you take this advice           |
| (x) the bat tipped the ball                   | – the bat lightly touched the ball  |

2. The words *helper*, *companion*, *partner* and *accomplice* have very similar meanings, but each word is typically used in certain phrases. Can you fill in the blanks below with the most commonly used words? A dictionary may help you.

- (i) business \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) my \_\_\_\_\_ on the journey  
 (iii) I'm mother's little \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iv) a faithful \_\_\_\_\_ such as a dog  
 (v) the thief's \_\_\_\_\_  
 (vi) find a good \_\_\_\_\_  
 (vii) tennis/ golf / bridge \_\_\_\_\_  
 (viii) his \_\_\_\_\_ in his criminal activities

- Ans. (i) business *partner*  
 (ii) my *companion* on the journey  
 (iii) I'm mother's little *helper*  
 (iv) a faithful companion such as a dog  
 (v) the thief's *accomplice*  
 (vi) find a good *helper*  
 (vii) tennis/golf/bridge *partner*  
 (viii) his *accomplice* in his criminal activities

3. Now let us look at the uses of the word *break*. Match the word with its meanings below. Try to find at least three other ways in which to use the word.

- (i) The storm broke – could not speak; was too sad to speak  
 (ii) daybreak – this kind of weather ended  
 (iii) His voice is beginning to break – it began to burst into activity  
 (iv) Her voice broke and she cried – the beginning of daylight  
 (v) The heat wave broke – changing as he grows up  
 (vi) broke the bad news – end it by making the workers submit

- (vii) break a strike – gently told someone the bad news  
 (viii) (Find your own expression. Give its meaning here.)  
 Ans. (i) The storm broke – it began to burst into activity  
 (ii) Day break – the beginning of daylight  
 (iii) His voice is beginning to break – changing as he grows up  
 (iv) Her voice broke and she cried – could not speak; was too sad to speak  
 (v) The heat wave broke – this kind of weather ended  
 (vi) Broke the bad news – gently told someone the bad news  
 (vii) Break a strike – end it by making the workers submit  
 (viii) Break one's word – not to abide by one's promise

### SPEAKING

(Page 95)

1. Play detectives with each other. Find a person in your class (or some other acquaintance) to speak to. Find out the answers to the questions given below. Be careful to ask your questions in a polite and in offensive way. Do not force the person to answer you. Then allow the person to ask you the same questions.

- (i) Name?  
 (ii) What newspapers or magazines does the person read?  
 (iii) How long has the person lived at the current address?  
 (iv) What does she/he do during the day, i.e. the daily routine?  
 (v) What do neighbours and friends say about the person?  
 (vi) Who are his/her visitors and what are his/her eating habits? (You can ask a few others about this.)  
 (vii) What do you think about the person?

Ans. Do yourself.

## WRITING

(Page 95)

1. Who do you think Mr. Nath is? Write a paragraph or two about him.

**Ans.** Mr. Nath is a patient of the doctor mother of Maya and Nishad. He has scars on his face. These are fire-burns. He is ashamed of moving about freely with those ugly scars. So he keeps aloof.

Perhaps he is undergoing possible surgery. He is lonely. He allows only his brother to visit him on Sundays. Maya takes him for an escaped criminal. But her brother, Nishad, disagrees with her. His attitude is sympathetic and sensible towards Mr Nath.

2. What else do you think Nishad and Maya will find out about him? How? Will they ever be friends? Think about these questions and write a paragraph or two to continue the story.

**Ans.** Nishad and Maya however agree to cooperate in their enquiry about Mr. Nath. They manage to get a chance to open his trunk. But they find only clothes and books in the trunk instead of money. One day they question their mother how Mr Nath got the scars, and why he was so reserved. They start a dialogue with Mr Nath also. They find the man very friendly, sweet and loving.

3. Conducting a Survey.

See NCERT Textbook Pages 95-96

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## ★ Mystery of the Talking Fan

Maude Rubin

## SUMMARY OF THE POEM

Once there was an electric fan that made a lot of noise. The poet could not make out what was wrong with the fan. One day he called an electrician. He put oil in the noisy fan. As a result, the fan became noiseless.

Movement became smooth and silent. The mystery what the fan was demanding was solved.

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

## WORKING WITH THE POEM

(Page 97)

1. Fans don't talk, but it is possible to imagine that they do. What is it, then, that sounds like the fan's chatter?

**Ans.** Fans are lifeless objects. They cannot talk sensibly. But the motor inside the fan sometimes starts making harsh sound. The poet calls that sound the fan's chatter.

2. Complete the following sentences.

(i) The chatter is electrical because \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) It is mysterious because \_\_\_\_\_

**Ans.** (i) it is electric power that rotates the motor and the blades. For want of oiling old fans start making sound.

(ii) The sound of the fan is non-stop. It is mysterious because we cannot make any sense out of it.

3. What do you think the talking fan was demanding?

**Ans.** The talking fan had, in fact run dry. It demanded oiling so as to run smoothly and noiselessly.

**4. How does an electric fan manage to throw so much air when it is switched on?**

**Ans.** An electric fan has three or four blades. These are a little curved. On one side, the blades move fast and send the air around with force.

**5. Is there a talking fan in your house? Create a dialogue between the fan and a mechanic.**

**Ans.** *Do yourself.*

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