

## NCERT Solutions for Class 8 English (Poorvi)

### Chapter 13 : Feathered Friend

#### Let us discuss

I Answer the following questions briefly.

1. Why did the narrator think Sven had sneaked a bird aboard? What was Sven's scientific reason?

Answer: The narrator had some reasons to think so. It was the bird's unusual behaviour, like her seemingly effortless flight in a space station and lack of concern for the absence of gravity. On the other hand, Sven's scientific reason for bringing the bird aboard was to observe how a bird would function in a weightless environment. He wanted to experience how a bird could operate and navigate without the effects of gravity.

2. How did Claribel adjust to the new surroundings?

Answer: Claribel learnt to operate without using her wings or much efforts. She learnt to simply hang in the air, motionless with her wings folded. This adaptation allowed her to thrive and even gain weight in the unique conditions of her new surroundings.

3. What made the narrator mistake the musical whistle for a sound from the intercom?

Answer: The narrator heard the whistle near his ear. He expects an announcement to follow the whistle, that is typical of intercoms. The melody of the whistle, rather than a human voice, hence leads him to realize it wasn't the intercom.

4. Do you think the presence of the canary would lead the spacers into trouble? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Answer: Especially during a long mission, the presence of canaries on the spacecraft could lead to some challenges for the spacers. While they can be valuable as early warning indicators for certain gases, they also have some particular needs and vulnerabilities that could be difficult to manage in a confined space environment.

#### Let us discuss

I Identify whether the following statements from parts I and II are true or false. Share your answers with your classmates and teacher.

1. The alarm at the space station failed to work properly because they were not connected.
2. Claribel was brought to the space station for an official experiment on animal behaviour in space.

3. The canary's suffering helped the crew discover a problem with the air purifier.
4. The air purifier froze because there was a rare eclipse.
5. Claribel could fly gracefully in the space station, performing loops in the air.
6. The space station crew was uninterested in Claribel and hardly noticed her presence after she was discovered.
7. Claribel had fainted and had to be revived with oxygen supply. Answer:
  1. False
  2. False
  3. True
  4. True
  5. True
  6. False
  7. True

### Let us think and reflect

I Read the given extracts and answer the questions that follow.

1. Sven was one of our best construction men, and excelled at the tricky and specialised work of collecting assorted girders as they floated around in free fall, making them do the slow-motion, three-dimensional ballet that would get them into their right positions, and fusing the pieces together when they were precisely dovetailed into the intended pattern: it was a skilled and difficult job, for a space suit is not the most convenient of garbs in which to work.

- (i) What can be inferred about Sven's abilities from his job description?
- A. He is good at following instructions but lacks creativity.
  - B. He possesses a strong understanding of working in space.
  - C. He struggles with the complexities of construction in space.
  - D. He prefers working on simpler tasks rather than complex jobs. Answer: B. He possesses a strong understanding of working in space.

(ii) How can we conclude that Sven was working in zero gravity?

Answer: Sven was working in space. His job was to collect assorted girders as they floated around in a free fall. He had to make them do the slow-motion that would get them into their right position and then, fuse the pieces together into the required pattern

(iii) Select the option that is correct for both (Assertion) A and (Reason) R.

(A): Sven's job required him to make girders perform a 'three-dimensional ballet' in space.

(R): Working in zero gravity allows objects to float, making precise positioning more challenging.

- A. Both (A) and (R) are true, and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
- B. Both (A) and (R) are true, but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
- C. (A) is true, but (R) is false.
- D. (A) is false, but (R) is true.

Answer: A. Both (A) and (R) are true, and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).

(iv) Replace the underlined word with a word similar in meaning from the extract.

During the festival, people wore colourful outfits that represented their culture. Answer: Garbs

2. "Jim!" There's something wrong with the air! That's why Claribel's passed out. I've just remembered that miners used to carry canaries down to warn them of gas."

"Nonsense!" said Jim. "The alarms would have gone off. We've got duplicate circuits, operating independently."

"Er—the second alarm circuit isn't connected up yet," his assistant reminded him. That shook Jim; he left without a word, while we stood arguing and passing the oxygen bottle around like a pipe of peace.

"Er—the second alarm circuit isn't connected up yet," his assistant reminded him. That shook Jim; he left without a word, while we stood arguing and passing the oxygen bottle around like a pipe of peace.

(i) Fill in the blank by selecting the correct option from those given in the brackets.

The narrator references canaries and miners in order to \_\_\_\_\_. (highlight the historical use of canaries as warning systems/explain the reason that caused Claribel to faint suddenly)

Answer: highlight the historical use of canaries as warning systems

(ii) Complete the following sentence with a suitable reason.

Jim initially dismisses the warning about the air because \_\_\_\_\_. Answer: the alarms would have gone off.

(iii) What does the phrase 'shook Jim' mean in the context of the information in the extract?

Jim was \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. physically pushed by someone
- B. startled by unexpected information
- C. cold and needed to warm up
- D. trying to shake off sleepiness

Answer: B. startled by unexpected information

(iv) What does the crew's action of passing the oxygen bottle around 'like a pipe of peace' suggest about their response to the situation?

This phrase suggests that the crew is sharing a valuable, life-saving resources equally and perhaps even peacefully during a difficult situation. It also indicates that they are not either selfish or greedy.

II Answer the following questions.

1. What was the purpose of the alarm? What had caused its failure?

Answer: The purpose of the alarm was to warn the crew of low oxygen levels in space. The alarm failed because an eclipse caused part of the air purifier to freeze. The freezing prevented the air purifier from properly functioning, which in turn prevented the alarm from triggering.

2. How does the crew's reaction to Claribel change over the course of the story?

Answer: The crew's initial reaction to Claribel is one of the curiosity and perhaps even a bit of amusement. They are surprised to see a pet onboard the space station. However, as the story progresses, their feelings towards Claribel evolve, becoming one of deep

concern and eventually affection. This shift is largely due to Claribel's unexpected ability to alert the crew to a dangerous situation, saving their lives.

3. What does the last part of the story tell us about the significance of unusual ways of problem solving?

Answer: The unusual ways of problem solving revolves around a canary bird named Claribel. She detects air quality issue on a space station. When she passes out due to poor air quality, the crew realizes a malfunction in the air purifier has caused this problem. This shows reliance on a living organism to act as an early warning system for dangerous conditions, a method that might not be immediately obvious or conventional in space.

4. Justify the appropriateness of the title of the story.

Answer: The title of the story, 'Feathered Friend' is appropriate. The story directly related to the core theme of friendship and the bond between humans and animals, particularly birds. The title evokes the image of a bird as a companion and a source of joy, that supports the narrator's focus on the relationship between Sven and Claribel, who is a canary bird.

5. 'Without Claribel, we should soon have been slightly dead.' What does this line suggest about uncertainty of life in space?

Answer: This quote highlights the crucial role of Claribel in alerting the space station crew to a potentially deadly situation, caused by a malfunctioning air purifier. They would have suffered from the poisonous atmosphere, without Claribel's sensitivity to changes in the air.

6. Explain how has the writer presented science fiction with a touch of humour.

Answer: The narrator's disbelief in the canary's ability to thrive in space, and his causal attitude towards breaking rules, creates a comedic contrast with the serious nature of their mission. The over-exaggeration of the space station's equipment, like the alarm that failed to function, and the crew's reactions, especially the narrator's initial sluggishness add a layer of comedic absurdity to the story. Sven is a crew member, and brings Claribel aboard. He is presented as a somewhat eccentric and unpredictable figure, that adds to the overall humorous tone of the story. Moreover, the unexpected way in which Claribel revives and the subsequent events, such as the air purifier freezing, provides moments of light hearted amusement to the story.

7. How would Sven reflect on his experience of almost losing Claribel and for saving the lives of the entire crew

Answer: Sven would likely reflect on the tragic loss of Claribel and acknowledge her role in saving the lives of the entire crew member. The loss of Claribel would be mourned as a personal and profound tragedy, in the light of the affectionate bond she shared with the crew. However, the story also emphasizes the profound impact of her alertness, that highlights her accidental yet significant contribution to their survival.