

NCERT QUESTIONS WITH SOLUTIONS

1. In what way is Iswaran an asset to Mahendra?

Ans. Iswaran was a good domestic assistant for Mahendra. Apart from cooking and doing household chores he was a great entertainer for his master. He was good at managing resources as he could find vegetables out of nowhere. Also he never had any complains while accompanying his master.

2. How does Iswaran describe the uprooted tree on the highway? What effect does he want to create in his listeners?

Ans. Iswaran describes the uprooted tree on the highway with eyebrows suitably arched and hands held out in a dramatic way. He would begin by saying that the road was deserted and he was all alone. Suddenly he spotted something that looked like an enormous bushy beast lying sprawled across the road. He was half inclined to turn and go back. But as he came closer he saw that it was a fallen tree, with its dry branches spread out. The effect he wants to create is suspense and a surprise ending to every small incident that he narrates to his readers.

3. How does he narrate the story of the tusker? Does it appear to be plausible?

Ans. Iswaran is a good storyteller. He makes his stories vivid by telling them in a unique style. He narrates an incident involving a tusker. One day an elephant goes mad and becomes uncontrollable. He enters the school ground where students were playing. Iswaran was also one of them. Seeing the wild elephant, all the children ran into their classrooms. Iswaran takes courage and decides to control the animal. He takes a cane and moves towards the elephant. He hits the elephant on his third toenail. He collapses. This is how Iswaran tackles the wild, mad elephant.

This incident does not appear to be plausible. It is difficult to believe that a student of junior class can control a wild, mad elephant.

4. Why does the author say that Iswaran seemed to more than make up for the absence of a TV in Mahendra's living quarters?

Ans. Mahendra does not have a TV in his quarters but Iswaran is more than a TV. He is a good storyteller. He entertains Mahendra by telling him thrilling and mysterious stories. He creates suspense in everything. His stories are full of suspense, horror and adventure. Mahendra always enjoys his stories and never feels the absence of a TV in his quarters.

5. Mahendra calls ghosts or spirits a figment of the imagination. What happens to him on a full-moon night?

Ans. Mahendra calls ghosts or spirits a figment of the imagination because Iswaran informed him that they were living on a burial site and kept narrating to him stories of various ghosts he himself had encountered. On one full moon night, Mahendra was woken up from his sleep by a low moan close to his window. At first he thought that it was a cat prowling around for mice. But the sound was too deep and guttural for a cat. He resisted looking outside as he did not want to witness a sight that might stop his heartbeat. But the crying became louder and less subtle. He could not resist the temptation any more. Lowering himself to the level of the windowsill, he looked out at the white sheet of moonlight outside. There, not too far away, was a dark cloudy form clutching a bundle. He broke into a cold sweat and fell back on the pillow, panting.

6. Can you think of some other ending for the story?

Ans. The story could have ended on a more positive note. Instead of resigning from his job, Mahendra could have been shown as a real courageous man and proving the ghost theory wrong. Another ending can be of both Mahendra and Iswaran leaving the place together and in turn continuing their bond which is depicted earlier in the story. Iswaran has been explained as a man of all seasons for Mahendra.