

CBSE Class –VIII English

NCERT Solutions

Chapter - 5

Princess September

Comprehension Check

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1. How many daughters did the royal couple have?

Ans: The royal couple of Siam had nine daughters who they named after the months name.

2. Why were they named after the months of the year?

Ans: They were named after the months of the year because the King and the Queen had many daughters, and it confused the Queen to have to remember so many names.

3. The King had a peculiar habit. What was it? Why is it called peculiar?

Ans: The King's peculiar habit was that instead of receiving gifts on his birthday, he gave them. It is called peculiar because usually, people receive gifts on their birthdays.

4. (i) What was Princess September's reaction to the loss of her parrot?

(ii) What was her mother's reaction to it?

(iii) What do the reactions indicate about the nature and temperament of each?

Ans: (i) When she locked the bird inside the cage, it died. Princess September burst into a flood of tears at the loss of her parrot. She kept crying and nothing comforted her.

(ii) Her mother who did not understand her feelings declared it as nonsense. Very heartlessly she told her to go to bed without any supper.

(iii) The Princess' reaction indicates that she was a young, sensitive child. That is why she cried over the loss of her parrot. It was a very important thing for her. The loss of her parrot filled her with grief.

Her mother's reaction indicates that she was a little harsh. She did not understand her daughter's grief and console her. She did not think that the dying of the parrot was in any way a significant incident to shed tears.

5. What pulled the Princess out of her gloom?

Ans: The Princess was very depressed and was lying on her bed crying, she saw a little bird

hop into her room. The beautiful song of the little bird brought smile in her face. She wiped her tears and heard its song. This brought the Princess out of her gloom.

6. How did the Maids of Honour come to know that the Princess and the bird had become intimate friends?

Ans: When the Maids of Honour brought in the princess' breakfast the next morning, they found the Princess in a happy state of mind. They found a bird eating rice out of her hand, and having its bath in her saucer. This showed them that the princess and the bird had become intimate friends.

7. The new bird was full of new songs but the old parrots always repeated themselves. What did they say?

Ans: All the old parrots could say what they were taught like 'God save the king' and some of them could even say 'Pretty Polly' in seven languages. But the new bird was singing songs of its own.

8. What is the King's opinion about his Councillors? Why did he form that opinion?

Ans: The King said that the parrots repeating 'Pretty Polly' in seven different languages reminded him of his Councillors who said the same thing in seven different ways, and meant nothing whichever way they said it. This was similar to the way the parrots kept repeating what they had learnt, without knowing the meaning of what they said.

9. (i) The eight Princesses made an offer to Princess September. What was it?

(ii) Why, in your view, did they do it?

Ans: (i) The eight princesses were jealous of Princess September. They offered to buy a lovely green and yellow parrot for Princess September by putting in all their pocket money.

(ii) They did so because they were distressed by the fact that everybody was praising Princess September's bird, which could sing. Their parrots looked sad and repeated the same things. They wanted her to have the same pet as they had.

10. What did the sisters advise the Princess to do about her bird?

Ans: The jealous sisters with the evil intention to harm the bird, advised the Princess to keep her bird in a cage so that she could be sure of where it was.

1. In the following sentence elaborate the parts given in bold. Under the circumstances it was a very unfortunate remark for the bird to make.

Ans: Under the circumstances, After what her sisters advised her to do, the Princess was worried about the bird. She feared that the bird might forget her or start liking someone else. She felt that in such a circumstance, she would lose her little pet.

A very unfortunate remark On returning, the bird said that it very nearly did not come back that night as its father-in-law was giving a party and had wanted it to stay. This was the last thing that the princess wanted to hear as it only confirmed her fears.

2. (i) What did Princess September do to ensure the safety of her pet?

(ii) How did the bird react to it?

Ans: (i) To ensure the safety of her pet, Princess September put it in the cage.

(ii) Bird reacted to it sharply. He didn't want to be in cage. He wanted full freedom. He did not like it. It stopped eating and singing.

3. Why did the bird refuse to be taken out in her cage?

Ans: The bird is a part of nature. So it can stay happy and carefree when it can enjoy nature freely. Inside her cage it would not be able to enjoy it in the same way. The rice fields, the lake and the willow trees would look quite different when seen through the bars of a cage.

4. (i) What persuaded Princess September to give the bird his freedom again?

(ii) How did the bird react to it?

Ans: (i) The Princess found the bird nearly dead in the next morning. He had stopped taking anything. He had stopped singing at all. It didn't open its eyes even. This persuaded the Princess to give the bird freedom again.

(ii) The bird was filled with happiness. He flew away to the far lands promising that he would come back and sing for her whenever she wanted.

5. Princess September kept her window open day and night.

(i) How did it help the bird?

(ii) How did it help the Princess herself?

Ans: (i) Princess September kept her window open day and night. This helped the bird as it could come into her room and leave whenever it felt like.

(ii) Sleeping with the window open proved to be very good for the princess as she grew

extremely beautiful because of this reason. The open window took her closer to nature which helped her to grow naturally

6. The eight sisters kept their windows shut. How did it affect them?

Ans: The eight sisters grew extremely ugly and disagreeable. This was because they kept their windows shut and stayed away from the benefits of Nature.

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Exercise

1. Are the sisters unkind and cruel? Find evidence in the text to support your idea.

Ans: Yes, the sisters were unkind and cruel. When they saw that Princess September's bird could sing and their parrots could only repeat two lines, they became distressed. They even offered to buy a green and yellow parrot for her. When she denied their offer, they convinced her to put it in the cage knowing the fact that it will harm the bird. After she had put the bird into the cage, it stopped eating and singing. When she consulted her sisters, they said it would soon get used to the cage. They even said that she should be firm, and if it died, then it would be very ungrateful of it.

If it was obstinate and died, then it would serve it right. When she set the bird free, they mocked her and said that the bird would never return. All these instances show that they were very unkind and cruel.

2. Which, to you, is the most important idea in this story, and why?

(i) importance of music

(ii) value of freedom

(iii) beauty of nature

Ans: The most important idea in the story is the value of freedom. No one should be denied his freedom. Absence of freedom suffocates a person, and prevents him from enjoying the beauty of life in its fullness. The bird in the story was happy flying. It sang beautifully and ate well. However, when it was caged, it became sad, and did not eat or sing. It said that to sing, it required its freedom, and if it could not sing, it would die. This indicates that the beauty of life is in freedom, and not in captivity.

It is true for everyone. One can work and grow properly when gets free space to work. Restrictions stops the flow of creativity.