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Class 12 English (Vistas) Notes

THE TIGER KING



Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

VISTAS

The Tiger King

By Kalki

The story 'The Tiger King' is a satire on the conceit of those in power. The writer tries to tell us how kings, not interested in the welfare of the people, circumvented all laws to suit their own selfish interests.

The Story is about the Maharaja of Pratibandhpuram about whom the chief astrologer had predicted that the cause of his death would be a tiger. In order to prove the prophecies of the astrologer wrong, the Maharaja killed ninety nine tigers, but the hundredth tiger escaped his bullet. Later, one of the hunters killed it by shooting at it from a close range. The King thought that the hundredth tiger had been killed by him. However, an inanimate wooden tiger became the hundredth tiger that ultimately caused his death. The prophecy of the astrologer proved to be true, despite the king's best efforts to prove it wrong.

Points to Remember

1. Maharaja Pratibandhpuram born as an extra-ordinary child
2. Prediction about his death due to a tiger.
3. Ten day old child surprised all by his intelligent questions.
4. The child was brought up like an English child.
5. The Prince grew up and becomes a great king.
6. The king decided to kill a tiger.
7. But the chief astrologer warned him that he will be killed by the hundredth tiger.
8. He started killing tigers and thus killed seventy tigers.
9. He married a princess whose kingdom boasted of tigers.
10. He killed ninety nine tigers.
11. But he was unable to find one more tiger.
12. The Dewan brought an old and feeble tiger from the zoo.

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13. The tiger king aimed at it but it fainted. The king thought that he had killed the hundred tigers.
 14. After the king went away the tiger opened its eyes.
 15. One of the hunters killed it.
 16. The tiger was honoured and taken in a procession.
 17. The king purchased a wooden tiger for his son.
 18. Its sliver pierced the hand of the king.
 19. The king died.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What was the miracle that took place in the royal palace?
Ans. When the Maharaja was a 10 day old infant, he spoke and asked intelligent questions about his death. After knowing that he would be killed by a tiger he uttered saying, Let tigers beware."
2. How was the Tiger King brought up?
Ans. As a child the Tiger King was brought up by an English nanny and tutored in English by an Englishman. He was given the milk of an English cow. He watched only English movies.
3. What did the State astrologer say he would do 'if the hundredth tiger were also killed'?
Ans. The State astrologer was so sure of his prediction that he announced that he would cut off his ceremonial tuft, crop his hair short and become an insurance agent in case the king was able to kill the 100th tiger too.
He was sure that the Maharaja's death would be caused by the 100th tiger.
4. What did the high-ranking British officer wish to do? Was his wish fulfilled?
Ans. The high-ranking British Officer wanted to kill a tiger. He was denied the permission for hunting. He sent a word to the king that he would be

happy if he was allowed to get photographed with the carcass of a tiger killed by the King. His wish remained unfulfilled.

5. How did the Maharaja get more tigers to kill, when he had killed all the tigers in his kingdom?

Ans. Left with no other alternative, the king thinking thought of getting married into a royal family. His only criteria for selecting a bride was that his-in-laws' estate should have sufficient number of tigers. Finally, he found his desired match. He pursued his one point program of meeting the tally of hundred tigers.

6. How and why was the hundredth tiger honoured?

Ans. King had ordered that the hundredth tiger should be brought in the city in a procession and a tomb should be built over its mortal remains. It was to commemorate the killing of the hundredth tiger, his sole motive of life. After killing the hundredth tiger the king was very much relieved and had a sense of achievement.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. How did the 'duraiani' behave on receiving the gifts?
2. Why did the Maharaja's tiger killing mission come to a sudden halt?
3. Why did Maharaja order the Dewan to double the tax?
4. What did the Maharaja buy as a birthday gift for his son?
5. How did the king's hand become seriously infected?
6. How did the Tiger King acquire his name?
7. What predictions did the astrologers make at the birth of the Tiger King?
8. What steps were initiated by the Maharaja in order to ban tiger killing in his state?
9. How was Maharaja able to save his kingdom?
10. Why did the Maharaja decide to marry?
11. Why did the Dewan take the tiger to the forest? How?
12. How did the tiger taken by the Dewan meet its end?

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13. How did the tiger king celebrate his victory over the killing of the hundredth tiger?

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How did the Tiger King meet his end? What is ironical about his death? How did the prediction of the chief astrologer come true, though he had killed the hundred tigers?

Ans. It was the 3rd birthday of the Maharaja's son and he wanted to buy a present from the toy shop. He bought a wooden tiger which was poorly carved by an unskilled carpenter. It had a rough surface with tiny slivers of wood standing up like quills all over it, his arm got infected. In four days, it developed into a suppurating sore and spread all over the arm. The King died while being operated upon. The King's death is ironical but not surprising. Having 'killed' the 100th tiger, the king was thrilled for he had fulfilled his vow and disproved the prediction of the royal astrologer. He was at ease for he thought he would not die of a tiger's attack. No wonder, he ordered the 'dead' tiger to be taken in a procession through the town and get a tomb erected over it. All this while he did not know that the 100th victim was not killed by him but by other hunters. That is indeed quite ironical. Death was lurking around him and the king was unaware of it. Again, it is ironical that a king who had killed 100 tigers and was bold and fearless died of a mere sliver on the body of a wooden tiger. Thus, ironically death does come to him from a tiger.

2. How flattery is eating into roots of our society and polity ? Explain taking reference from 'The Tiger King ?

Ans. Flattery is evident in almost all places. It basically satisfies the ego of person who is being treated in lofty terms. With words and gestures a false world is created around so as to befool that fellow. Actually the person frames unrealistic ideas about himself and falls prey to the sweetened pills. Wrong deeds are committed so as to meet the self interest. The genuine people are ignored at the cost of fake ones. It checks the healthy growth of relationships and hence the development of society. The real cause and issues are left behind and pretensions prevail. This whole idea unfolds in The Tiger King in humorous manner - to appease the king, the courtiers did not spare a chance to fulfill his whims and fancies. Such sort of administration leads to the ultimate fall of a state. The King met his end on the operation table at the hands of his saviors i.e. the doctors.

Long Answer Questions for Practice

1. Write down the character sketch of 'The Tiger King'.
2. What efforts did the maharaja make to save his life from the tigers?
3. How did the Dewan help the Tiger King in killing hundredth tiger?
4. The story, "The Tiger King" is a satire on the conceit of those in power." Do you agree with this statement ? Explain with reference to the lesson that you have read.
5. Giving a bribe is an evil practice. The Tiger King bribed the British officer to save his kingdom. Why is it wrong to take or give a bribe?
6. Now a day you must have noticed animals being made to work for long hours mercilessly. They carry heavy sacks, ferry passengers etc. They are beaten mercilessly too. Taking references from the above facts, write a paragraph on "Curelty Towards Animals" and sugges ways to prevent it.
7. Many animals are on the verge of extinction due to rampant killing and poaching by the greedy people. Plan an Awareness Campaign for the students of your school to save animals.
8. In order to save animals like tigers, lion etc. we keep them in the zoo. Do you think the animals are safe in the zoos ? Why or Why not.

