

Chapter- 10

Tragic story

STUDY NOTES

The poem 'A tragic story' written by William Makepeace Thackeray is a humorous poem which revolves around a foolish act done by a sage. Throughout the poem, the poet laughs at this wise man, who does not have any practical knowledge, but uses his theatrical knowledge and does foolish things. The poet narrates us about a sage, who lived in the past with a beautiful pigtail. He was worried about his pigtail, being hung behind him. He thought about this for a long time and swore that he would change the pigtail's place, which is apparently impossible and funny. He would like to have it at his face and not dangling there behind him. This small thing is a serious problem for this wise man. He said that he had found a solution to change the position of his pigtail. So he turned him round continuously without stopping, throughout the day. He turned in different directions – he turned right and left, out and in, up and down. But the pigtail didn't change a bit. Though his efforts were not slackened, and though he twisted, twirled and tacked, his pigtail hung faithfully and steadily behind him. Thus, this poem is amusing and the poet brings out the theme "How learned man lack practical common sense."

- Long long ago there lived a man, who had a beautiful pigtail.
- He was worried and irritated because it hung behind him.
- He was absorbed in thought to change the pigtail's place, he thought of hanging the pigtail at his face not swinging loosely behind him.
- One day he said that he found the mystery to turn himself round, he did so but still he found his pigtail hung behind him.
- Then he turned round and round, out and in. The puzzled man started spinning around quickly and lightly, in a repeated manner and lastly stitched together but still he found his pigtail hangs behind him.

Get going – pg . no – 98 (Answer)**A. Let us find the answers from the poem.****1. Identify the lines from the poem that have the same meaning as these sentences.**

- (a) Think hard and feel sad about something – muse
- (b) Promise to change the state of something – swear
- (c) I've solved the problem – I have found the mystery
- (d) To continue doing something without stopping – twirl

2. Find words from the poem that have these meanings.

- (a) Something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain – mystery
- (b) Think hard about something because one cannot understand it – muse
- (c) A single plaited lock of hair worn at the back or on each side of the head – pigtail

3. Answer these questions.

(a) What was the cause of the man's misery?

Ans – The man was worried and irritated because his pigtail was hung behind him.

(b) What did the man wish to do with his pigtail?

Ans – The man wished to change the pigtail's place, he thought of hanging the pigtail at his face not swinging loosely behind him.

(c) What did the man do to get the pigtail hang from his face?

Ans - To get the pigtail hang from his face the man turned himself round but still he found his pigtail hung behind him.

(d) What happened to the pigtail at the end?

Ans – The man turned round and round, out and in. The puzzled man started spinning around quickly and lightly, in a repeated manner and lastly stitched together but still he found his pigtail hangs behind him.

B. Let us read between the lines.

1. Why did the man want his pigtail to hang from his face?

Ans – The man wanted his pigtail to hang from his face because he was worried and irritated as it hung behind him.

2. Why is the mystery that the man refers to in the line, 'One day he said, /The mystery I've found!'

Ans - The mystery that the man refers to in the line is one day the man said that he found the mystery to turn himself round, he did so but still he found his pigtail hung behind him.

3. What does 'it' refer to in the line, 'Because it hung behind him'?

Ans - 'it' refer to the pigtail of the man in the above line.

C. Let us go beyond the poem.

1. Do you find the poem humorous? Why?

Ans – Yes, I found the poem humorous. The antics of the man, usage of mock serious tone, absurdity of the man's 'curious case' and his solution, the way the poet organizes his materials and arranges the sentence structures makes the poem humorous.

2. There is another hairstyle that has the name of an animal. Name the hairstyle. What is the difference between it and pigtail?

Ans - Ponytail is another hairstyle that has the name of an animal. The difference between pigtail and ponytail is that a ponytail involves gathering all the hair together and placing it at the back of the head, whereas pigtails are divided into two sections positioned on the opposite sides.

Vocabulary junction(Pg - 100)

1. Complete the analogies by writing the correct words in the blanks.

- (a) An apple is to fruits as a rose is to flowers.
- (b) Crying is to pain as laughter to happiness.
- (c) Walking is to legs waving is to hands.
- (d) Day is to sun as night is to moon.
- (e) Four is to square as three is to triangle.

2. Complete the following analogies with appropriate words.

- (a) A rose is to flower as a fruit is to tree.
- (b) A duck is to duckling as a pig is to piglet.
- (c) A finger is to hand as a toe is to feet.
- (d) A bed is to sleep as a chair is to sit.
- (e) Yellow is to mango as red is to apple.

3. Select the appropriate words from the box to complete the analogies.

- (a) The sky is to blue as grass is green.
- (b) Letters are to postman as milk is to milkman.
- (c) The lamb is to sheep as kid is to goat.
- (d) The knife is to cut as fingers are to touch.
- (e) Lungs are to animals as gills are to fish.
- (f) Ears to hear as pen is to write.

Grammar junction(Pg - 102)

- (a) In the picture, mother, father, Gita and Anmol are having breakfast.
- (b) Mother is sitting beside Gita and father is sitting beside Anmol.
- (c) There is a clock on the wall and a few bottles in the shelf.
- (d) They have their breakfast at 8 o' clock in the morning.
- (e) Gita is passing the butter to father.
- (f) Rockey, the dog is sitting under the table.

Writing junction(Pg - 105)

Write a letter to your friend describing a funny incident of your life.

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Dear Prithvi,

Hope you are keeping well, and everyone at home is keeping safe and healthy. I recently visited Mathura with my family. It is a beautiful place. There, a funny incident happened to me. I and my family were coming out of the temple and a few monkeys were sitting out on the walls near the temple. I was wearing a cap, and one of the monkeys came to me and snatched the cap from my head and wore it. After that, he started mocking me and that was both annoying but funny at the same time.

I heard that you also visited Rajasthan with your family. How was your trip? I will visit you next weekend to discuss more on this more.

Awaiting your reply and hoping to meet you soon.

Love,

Chinsu.