

The Plaint of the Camel

- In this poem, Carroll pays a witty tribute to the hardworking camel, which lives and works in hot and uncomfortable places like deserts.

Difficult Words :-

- * Canary-Birds : a domesticated form of the wild canary, a small songbird
- * Poodles : a breed of a water dog.
- * Repose : to sleep / rest
- * Slumber : to sleep
- * Pails : a place for the oysters to sleep.

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Theme of the poem

It is a complaint of a camel. First, it complains about the food given to it by comparing with others. Then, it complains about the place it sleeps. Then, it complains about the name given to it. Furthermore, it complains about people riding on it and at last it complains about its looks. This is the very nature of humans, we never learn to appreciate what we have but we ~~are~~ will always keep complaining by comparing ourselves with others.

Reading :-

(A1) What are the five things, according to the camel, that no one cares about?

Ans => According to the camel, no one cares about where it rests, eats, lives, how much load it carries ~~and~~ or its shape.

2) Which are the things that human beings can help the camel with?

Ans => Human beings can help get the camel better food, more ~~comfortable~~ comfortable places to live and rest. They can also help to reduce the load that the camel carries. The look, shape, size

3) How do human beings look after the living arrangements of other animals?

to the camel, the
... hole.

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Ans ⇒ Human beings let cats rest on chairs, chickens roost upon rails and kettles stay in warm houses. They build stable for puppies, enclosures for lambs, coops for hens and pens for sheep.

4) Which animals does the camel compare itself to?

Ans ⇒ The camel compares itself to canary-birds, parrots, poodles, chickens, puppies, oysters, lambs, hens, kettles, pens, geoffes, oxen, rabbits, foxes, snakes, weasels, alligators and lizards.

5) How are the last lines of every stanza similar? What is the meaning of the word "does" in this context?

Ans ⇒ The last lines of every stanza are similar as they all begin with 'But'..... and say how no one cares very much about the camel. The last line of each stanza is written the style of any place/anything/anywhere/any load/any shape does for me. In all these lines, the camel is saying that no one cares about how it lives, rest or looks. The word 'does' means work here.

(B) Think and Answer

1) How does the camel sound - unhappy, grateful, jealous or something else? Could it be proud? Give examples.

Ans ⇒ The camel may sound unhappy and jealous when it compares itself with other animals and describes how they have better place to live, better things to eat and even better shapes than the camel. It even call

a poor camel because it is not
cared for in the same way as other
animals. The poem is also titled the
'plaint' of the camel. However, the
camel could also be proud that it
can adjust so well to different
conditions. No matter what the place,
food or load, the camel can take care
of itself.

Q) What does this poem say about how
helpful the camel is to human beings

Ans) The poem mentions that the camel
is sometimes ridden by entire families.
This tells us how the camel is useful
to human beings. Also, people do not
bother much about what the camel
eats or where it stays.
This tells us that the camel can live
and work without any special arrange-
ments. People use camels without
having to worry too much about its
food or shelter.

Appreciating the poem

- 1) The first and third lines of each stanza have rhyming words within them. These are Feed/seed, poodles/noodles, aware/chairs, able/stable, enclosed/exposed, treated/heated, laugh/goraffe, habit/rabbit, round/ground, alligator/straighten.
- 2) The fact that the poem is narrated by a camel makes it funny. The camel compares itself to other animals in a funny way. The poem would not be so funny if it were narrated by a person because even if a person talked about the camel's complaints they would not be able to talk about it exactly as the camel can. Only the camel can talk about its problems and yet sound funny.