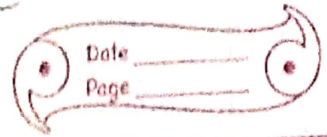


The Song of the Whale



Heavy morning

Heaving mountain in the sea,

Whale, I heard you

Quieting.

Great whale, crying for your life,

Crying for your kind, I knew

How we would use

Your dying:

Lipstick for our painted faces,

Polish of our shoes.

Tumbling mountain in the sea,

Whale, I heard you

Calling.

Bird - high notes, keening,

Howling:

At their edge a tiny drum

Like a heartbeat.

We ~~would~~ make you

Dumb.

In the forest of the sea,

Whale, I heard you

Singing.

Singing to your kind.

We'll never let you be.

Instead of life we choose

Lipstick for our painted faces,

Polish for our shoes.

:- Kit Wright

10. Read the passage carefully.

- I was born on 30th November 1835 in the almost *invisible*¹ village of Florida, Missouri. My parents moved to Missouri in the early 'thirties'; I do not remember just when, for I was not born then and cared nothing for such things. The village contained a hundred people and I increased the population by one per cent. It is more than the best men in history doing as much, not even Shakespeare. But I did it for Florida.
- Recently some one in Missouri has sent me a picture of the house I was born in. Heretofore I have always stated that it was a palace but I shall be more careful now.
- The village and two streets, each a couple of hundred yards long, covered with stiff black mud in wet times, deep dust in dry. Most of the houses were of logs. There were none of bricks and none of stones. There was a Church, which was a school house on week days. There were two stores in the village. My uncle owned one of them. It was very small with a few rolls of cloth; a few barrels of salt fish, coffee and sugar, brooms, axes and other tools here and there; a lot of cheap hats and tin pans strung from the walls. At the other end of the room, there was a barrel or so of whisky. If a boy bought five or ten cents; worth of anything he was *entitled*² to a handful of sugar from the barrel; if a woman bought a few yards of cloth, she was entitled to some thread; if a man bought something, he was at liberty to swallow as big a drink of whisky as he wanted.
- My uncle was also a farmer and his place was in the country four miles from Florida. I have not *come across*³ a better man than he was. I was his guest for two or three months every year, from the fourth year after we moved to Hannibal until I was eleven or twelve years old.

VALUE POINTS

About the passage

The writer's old village. It describes the village and a store in detail.

Para 1

- the writer's birth in a small village

Para 2

- the writer got a picture of his old house

Para 3

- dirty/muddy village streets, houses of logs, a church, two stores
- uncle's store

Para 4

- uncle, a farmer
- a good man, a good host

GLOSSARY

- invisible* : (here) very small, insignificant
- entitled* : had the right to
- come across* : meet by chance

(a) Write the most appropriate option out of the ones given below :

1. How was the church utilized on week days ?

- (a) as a theatre for conducting cinema (b) as a vegetable market
 (c) as a school (d) kept idle on week days

2. The houses in Florida were made of _____ .

- (a) bricks (b) stones
 (c) marble (d) logs

3. When did the author decide not to describe his house as a palace ?

- (a) the day he was born in the invisible village
 (b) when someone in Missouri had sent him a picture of the house

- (c) when he saw a dream of his house
(d) when someone told him not to boast of his house
4. The author was born
✓(a) in a village of Florida in Missouri (b) in a busy village
(c) in a village located near a river (d) in a village in Mississippi
5. The writer's uncle was a
✓(a) businessman (b) shrewd businessman
(c) liberal businessman (d) stupid businessman
- (b) (i) Find out a word in the passage which has the same meaning as 'before this time'. (para 1)
(ii) Find out a word in the passage which has the opposite meaning of 'sold'. (para 3)

Space for Answers

bought

Worksheet

11

Reading : Comprehension Passage

Date

Name

Class & Sec.

Roll No.

Marks OBT.

11. Read the passage carefully :

1. The Gonds are highly cultured people and a great tribe. They are distributed all over central India, now Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Their culture survives in their memories of the past, for they have an *extensive*¹ mythology, in the legendary history of their old kings and heroes, and in the dance and song at which they are still expert. They have royal blood in their veins and even the poorest and simplest of them has a strength of purpose, a dignity, a *redeeming*² sense of humour. They have a courage in face of the *disasters*³ of life that anyone may envy. The honest peasant in his field, the devotee of Mother Earth, drawing strength from the elemental forces of Nature, is in this sense as truly cultured as the most sophisticated intellectuals. Gonds are known for their art and culture, and for their simplicity.
2. Gond poetry is simple and symbolic, free of all literary conventions and allusions. It is a poetry of earth and sky, of forest, hill and river, of the changing seasons and the varied passions of men, a poetry of love, naked and unashamed, unchecked by any *inhibition*⁴ or restraint. The bulk of the poems are songs of the dance and the most poetic of them are perhaps the songs of the great Karma dance, which is common to many of the *primitive*⁵ tribes of central India. This dance symbolizes the growth of the green branches of the forest in the spring; sometimes a tree is set up in the village and the people dance round it. The men leap forward to the rapid roll of drums and the women sway back before them. Then bending low to the ground the women dance, their feet moving in perfect rhythm, until the group of singers advances towards them like the steady urge of wind coming and going among the tree-tops, and the girls swing to and fro in answer. This is the one great cultural interest of the people. A girl dancer is compared by the Gonds to a lovely tree moving to the unseen power of nature.

(a) Choose the appropriate option out of the given ones.

1. The Gonds in Madhya Pradesh are mostly _____ .
(a) illiterate (b) literate
✓ (c) cultured (d) boorish
2. They are by nature _____ .
(a) dare-devils (b) timid
✓ (c) peaceful (d) lethargic

VALUE POINTS

About the passage

The Gonds, a highly cultured tribe with their distinct art and culture, are praised for their simplicity of poetry.

Para 1

- Gonds, highly cultured people, now living in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, having extensive mythology and legendary kings and heroes, known for their simplicity, art and culture.

Para 2

- Gonds have simple, symbolic poetry, about earth and sky, songs of the great Karma dance.

GLOSSARY

1. extensive : far-reaching
2. redeeming : having a quality that compensates
3. disasters : failures, catastrophes
4. inhibition : a shy or nervous feeling that stops you from expressing your thoughts or feelings.
5. primitive : belonging to an early stage

3. The Gond poets are greatly inspired by _____ .
 (a) their past
 (b) their present
 (c) nature
 (d) their ancestors
4. The Gond dances reveal that the Gonds are _____ .
 (a) dull people
 (b) lively and energetic
 (c) humorous
 (d) satirical
5. The Gond dance has a rhythm which is reminiscent of _____ .
 (a) rhythm in different objects of nature
 (b) rhythm in seasons
 (c) our common life
 (d) advanced civilization

(b) Complete the following Statements :

1. The Gonds have royal blood in their veins
2. The Gonds are known for their art & culture
3. Gond poetry generally deals with _____
4. Karma dance symbolizes growth of green branches
5. The Gonds compare a girl dancer to a lovely tree

Space for Answers