

GLIMPSES OF INDIA

A BAKER FROM GOA

Theme of the story

The writer presents a pen-portrait of a traditional Goan village baker who still has an important place in its society.

Elders still think fondly of the famous Portuguese loaves of bread. The family tradition is still cherished on even today by the new generation of bakers or PAPERs in Goa. Even today marriage gifts are meaningless without sweet bread or bol, just as a party or a feast loses its charm with Goan bread.

Vocabulary

Reminiscing nostalgically - thinking fondly of past

Heralding - announcing

rebelle - an expression of disapproval, a scorn

foregname - scent

plump physique - pleasantly fat body

Open testimony - public statement about a character or quality

Oral comprehension Check

1. Match of the following

- (i) as marriage gifts → sweet bread called bol
- (ii) for a party on a feast → bread
- (iii) for a daughter's engagement → sandwiches
- (iv) for Christmas → cakes and bolinhos

2. What did the ballees wear:

- (i) In the portuguese days → peentabi dress (Kabal)
- (ii) when the author was young → shirt and trousers

3. who writes the comment - 'he is dressed like a paper?'

Any person who is wearing a half pant which reaches just below the knee writes this comment. This is because the balloon, known as a paper, used to dress like that.

4. where were the monthly accounts of the balls recorded?

Monthly accounts of the balls were recorded on some wall in the house with a pencil.

5. what does a 'jackfruit-like appearance' mean?

It means having a plump physique, like a jackfruit.

Thinking About the Text

1. which of these statements are correct?

(i) The paper was an important person in the village in old times.

- (i) Padres still exist in Goa villages (correct)
- (ii) The padres went away with the portuguese (correct)
- (iii) The padres continue to wear a single piece long frock. (correct)
- (iv) Bread and cakes were an integral part of Goan life in the old days (correct)
- (v) Traditional bread-baking is still a very profitable business. (correct)
- (vi) Padres and their families survive in the present times. (correct)

2. Is bread an important part of Goan life? How do you know this?

Yes, bread is an important part of Goan life. It's needed for marriage gifts, parties and feasts. Bread is also needed to make sandwiches during new daughter's engagement. It's necessary for every occasion.

8. What is the tone of the author when he says the following?

(i) The thud and the ping of the traditional bamboo can still be heard in some places
→ nostalgic

(ii) Maybe the father is not alive but the son still carries on the family profession.
→ hopeful

(iii) I still recall the typical fragrance of these loaves
→ nostalgic

(iv) The tiger never brushed his teeth. Hot tea could wash and clean up everything so nicely
→ funny

(v) Cakes and buns here are a must for Christmas as well as other festivals.
→ matter of fact

(vi) The baker and his family never started. They always looked happy and prosperous
→ matter of fact