



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (2020-21)

QUESTION BANK – THE TIGER KING

Class: XII

Sub: ENGLISH

Introduction

The story 'The Tiger King' is a satire on the pride and stubbornness of those in power. The writer takes us to the days of autocratic and eccentric kings. These kings lived under the thumb rule of British, hence they fear them. Most of the time the rulers were not interested in serving the people and working for the welfare of the public; instead they spent their time in foolish pursuits. They flouted all laws and bent them to suit their selfish interests. The Maharaja of Pratibandapuram tried to belie what was written in his fate. The chief astrologer had predicted that the cause of his death would be a tiger. The King tried his best to belie the prediction. His campaign of tiger-hunting was very successful. All his strategies and wise plans worked till he killed 99 tigers. But the hundredth tiger eluded him till his death. The irony of fate brings quite an unexpected end of the Maharaja. The hero who killed ninety-nine tigers couldn't kill the only one that was left. The last tiger he thought to be dead survived. The King's bullet had missed its mark. Ironically, the hundredth tiger which caused his death was not a ferocious beast of blood and flesh. It was a wooden tiger. One of the slivers of wood pierced his right hand and caused infection and a suppurating sore. It ultimately led to his death.

Theme

Animals and birds are as much part of the nature as human beings. The destruction or haphazard killing of one species may not only lead to its extinction, but it will adversely affect the ecological balance. Those animals which serve as food for the wild animals, will increase in large number, if the beast of prey are wiped out. Each species, howsoever fierce, deadly, ferocious or poisonous has its role in maintaining ecological balance in nature.

Characters

1. The Tiger King: a hero of the story, the Maharaja of Pratibandapuram, also known as His Highness Jamedar, General Khiledar-Major, Sata-Vyaghra samhari, Maharajadhiraja Visva Bhuvana samrat, Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur, M.A.D., A.C.T.C., or C.R.C.K.

The Tiger King is a typical royal personality. He was born into a royal family and grew up into a strong young man who at the age of 20 was crowned to be the king of Pratibandapuram. At this time, he came to know about a prophecy relating to his death to be caused by a tiger. He decided to kill all the 100 tigers before a tiger could dare to kill him.

The Tiger King symbolises a ruler having power and authority but none of it is directed to the welfare of the state. He behaves like a dictator and his ministers bow before him in mortal fear.

They become a party to his ruthless killing of tigers. He is whimsical and goes to extremes. For example, when he is happy, there are processions, exemption of taxes, etc. but when he is angry, taxes are doubled, punishments become severe. The entire state machinery is misused and manipulated in his pursuit of killing tigers.

Tiger King seems to be crazy, eccentric and inhumane. He starts killing tigers just to prove the prediction wrong. Though he exhibits his valour by killing tigers, he is very coward at heart and is scared of death.

2. Chief astrologer: a royal foreteller of the state.
3. Durai: means “chief, leader” in Tamil.
4. A British high ranking officer & his secretary
5. Dewan: a chief administrative office of the Maharaja.

Dewan: The Dewan is a senior courtier but, in reality, holds no authority. He is very scared of the Tiger King and survives at his mercy. Though he is sensible and experienced but is never listened to or given any respect by the king. His practical knowledge helped the king to save his kingdom. When the tiger king refused the British officer to hunt the tiger, it was Dewan’s idea of gifting diamond rings to his wife to save the kingdom from the wrath of the British officer.

Dewan’s efforts to locate and present the hundredth tiger are very comical. When he got an ultimatum from the King, he brought an old tiger from the circus and placed it in the forest. The Tiger King shoots this tiger and gets the satisfaction of killing the hundredth tiger. Though at times, Dewan appears to be foolish, he is practical enough to save himself.

6. Duraisani: the wife of the high ranking British officer, a greedy woman who takes all the 50 or so diamond rings for herself.

Dramatic twist in the ending

1. The king, pleased with himself at having proved all astrologers wrong by killing a hundred tigers, gets a wooden tiger for his son’s birthday.
2. A wooden sliver pierces his right hand, gets infected, surgeons unable to save his life.

Character sketch of the tiger king

1. Self-centred (decides to deal with matters of the state only when the threat to his life is removed and the 100 tigers are killed).
2. Egoistic (he thinks he can challenge fate, the astrologers and hunt down all the tigers, gloats when he feels he’s succeeded by buying the wooden tiger as a present for his son; likes flatterers, fires anyone who disobeys his orders).
3. Whimsical and irrational (three-year exemption from all taxes, doubles the land tax according to his changing moods).

Irony In the lesson

The fact that one can't defy destiny or fate, the tiger king spends his life in a single-minded pursuit of tigers but finally killed, not by a live tiger but a wooden toy.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS:

- 1. What extraordinary event happened when the Tiger King was merely ten days old?**
When the tiger king was only ten days old the astrologers made an incoherent prediction that the child would grow up and one day meet his death. While others heard them sadly, the baby prince asked a very wise question as to what was new in such a prediction as it is a universal truth that everyone should die. He further asked him to reveal the manner of his death.
- 2. What were the two hurdles that the maharaja had to face during his tiger hunt?**
The two hurdles that the maharaja faced during his tiger hunt for ten years were the extinction of tiger population in his own country and the arrival of the British officer who wished to kill tigers.
- 3. What was the rationale behind the astrologer's prediction that the tiger king would be killed by a tiger?**
According to the astrologers, the Tiger King was born at the hour of the bull-star. Anyone who is born at the time of the bull is killed by tiger because tiger and bull are enemies.
- 4. Why did the Tiger King decide to marry?**
The Tiger King went on a tiger hunt to kill the hundredth tiger to remove his fear of death but the tiger population in his country went dry. To hunt further tigers he married a princess whose father's forest had tigers in it.
- 5. Why did the Tiger King exempt the hillside villagers from their taxes for three years?**
During his tiger hunt, the Tiger King was left with just one tiger to be killed. After his desperate search for a single tiger there came news that there was a tiger in a village in his country. Pleased to hear that, the king announced exemption of tax for that villagers.
- 6. Why did the Devan decide to bring a tiger from the People's Park?**
The hundredth tiger was not very easy to hunt down. The king became furious and mad and dismissed many of the officers. Being a wise man, the Devan knew the country would pass into the hands of Indian National Congress and that he too would lose his position, he decided to bring an old tiger from the People's Park in Madras.
- 7. "At another time he was in danger of losing his throne". How?**
While the Maharaja went on killing tigers one after another and thus reaching his tally of the hundredth tiger, an English officer landed in Pratibandapuram with an intention to hunt tiger. But the maharaja was not happy with this and denied permission to the officer which roused the latter's ill will. The maharaja was firm on his decision and stood at risk of losing his crown by not yielding to an English officer.
- 8. What was the compromise the British officer was ready to make with the king? Why did the king refuse this?**
The British officer was ready for a compromise when he heard that the maharaja was unwilling to let him hunt in his forest. The officer sent his messenger to the king and informed him that he could take the photograph after the tiger was killed by the king. Even though this appeared to be the best solution, the king refused the suggestion fearing that soon other officers also would come to his forest with similar requests.

9. **How did the Maharaja get out of the clash with the British officer?**

By denying permission to the British officer to hunt tigers or at least to get photographed with the carcass of the tiger killed by the maharaja, the king aggravated the fury of the officer. In order to pacify the officer and thereby retain his throne, the maharaja sent a gift of fifty diamond rings to the officer's wife and pleased her and got out of the spat.

10. **How does the maharaja appear to be a satirical character?**

The maharaja of Pratibandapuram deserves to be called a maharaja in every sense. He was strong enough to kill the wild tigers with his bare hands- not one, but 99 tigers. He was bold enough to stand against a British officer by refusing him permission to hunt in his forest. He was wise enough to please the officer by pleasing his wife with expensive gifts. He was even cunning enough to arrange his marriage with a princess whose father's forest had the maximum number of tigers. Yet he appears to be the opposite of what he had done and what he was because this powerful king was finally killed by the sliver of a worthless wooden tiger! His death brought him great shame. His boldness, cunningness, strength and bravery failed miserably at the hands of an insignificant wooden tiger. He can also be laughed at for blindly believing the astrologers, for the dereliction of duty as a king, for imposing tax on the villagers out of rage and for dismissing his officers for no official reason.

11. **What threw the Dewan of the Tiger King to a state of imbecility while standing in front of the king's hunting gun?**

The Diwan, king's chief minister, is the comedian in the story. He was a man of tactics and availed the benefits of his brain only under emergency such as the loss of his office. He was well aware of the king's fury. While standing in front of the king's brandished gun, the old man imagined a bullet piercing his heart and out of this fear he was thrown into a state of imbecility.

12. **What is the irony at the end of the story?**

The powerful tiger king, who had killed 99 tigers, was finally killed by the sliver of a worthless wooden tiger! His death brought him great shame. His boldness, cunningness, strength and bravery failed miserably at the hands of an insignificant wooden tiger. He can also be laughed at for blindly believing the astrologers, for the dereliction of duty as a king, for imposing tax on the villagers out of rage and for dismissing his officers for no official reason.

13. **What gave the astrologers the greatest surprise of their life while they were studying the horoscope of the ten-day old prince? (Foreign 2014)**

Answer. When the astrologers were reading the horoscope of the little prince, they were taken by surprise when the ten-day old infant asked about the manner of his death. When the chief astrologer told him that a tiger would be the cause of his death, the baby retorted with arrogance, "Let the tigers beware!"

14. **How did the Maharaja please a high ranking officer? (Compartment 2014)**

Answer. A high ranking British officer visited the state of Pratibandapuram and sought permission for tiger hunting from the Maharaja. The Maharaja declined his request, but as he did not want to upset the officer, he sent fifty diamond rings to the officer's wife which cost the king three, lakh rupees.

15. Why did the Maharaja ban tiger hunting in the state? (Delhi 2014)

Answer. As the prince was crowned the king, the astrologer's prediction regarding his (the king's) death by a tiger reached his ears. This prompted the Maharaja to kill a tiger but the astrologer informed him that he had to successfully kill hundred tigers to escape the prophecy. Thus, in order to reach that mark, the Maharaja banned tiger hunting in the state except for himself.

16. Why did the Maharaja decide to get married? (Compartment 2014)

or

What is the reason for the Tiger King's sudden decision to marry? (Compartment 2014)

Answer. In order to defeat the astrologer's prophecy, the Maharaja had to kill a hundred tigers. He had already killed seventy tigers and the tiger population in his state neared extinction. For this reason, he wished to marry a girl in the royal family of a state with a rich tiger population, where he would kill the rest of the tigers.

Commented [J1]:

17. Why did the Maharaja double the land tax? (All India 2014)

Answer. The Maharaja had successfully killed ninety-nine tigers but struggled hard to find the hundredth tiger. Once, there came a news of a tiger being spotted at a hillside village but it turned out to be untrue. This infuriated the Maharaja, who ordered the dewan to double the land tax in order to punish the villagers for the false news.

18. How did the Tiger King become the victim of the hundredth tiger? (Foreign 2014)

or

How did the Tiger King meet his end? What is ironical about his fate? (All India 2009)

Answer. The Tiger King met his end through the wooden tiger, which he had bought as a gift for his son on his third birthday. While he was playing with his son, a splinter of the poorly made toy tiger pricked the king's hand. The infection turned into a sore, which spread all over his arm. In spite of the best surgeons, the king's life could not be saved. The irony is in the fact that in spite of killing nearly all the tigers in the area, he had to face his death by a toy tiger.

19. What sort of hunts did the Maharaja offer to organise for the high-ranking British officer? What trait of the officer does it reveal? (All India 2013)

Answer. Tiger hunting was banned in Pratibandapuram. When the British official came with a tiger hunt request, the Maharaja told him that he may conduct a boar hunt, a mouse hunt, even a mosquito hunt, but not a tiger hunt. In reply to this, the British officer said that he only wanted to be photographed holding a gun and standing over the dead body; the tiger could be killed by the Maharaja. This shows the shallowness of character of the officer.

20. Why was the Maharaja so anxious to kill the hundredth tiger? (AR India 2012)

Answer. When the Maharaja was barely ten days old, the chief astrologer had predicted that a tiger would be the cause of his death. When the Maharaja was twenty, he killed one tiger. When he asked his astrologer, the astrologer said that he would kill ninety-nine tigers, but he should be fearful of the hundredth tiger. That was the reason why the Maharaja was so anxious to kill the hundredth tiger.

21. What warning did the astrologer give the Tiger King when he killed the first tiger? Did the prediction of the astrologer come to be true? (Foreign 2011)

Answer. When the Maharaja boasted about killing the first tiger, the astrologer said that he may kill ' ninety-nine tigers, but must be "very careful with the hundredth tiger." Yes, the astrologer was absolutely true in this prediction, because finally the Maharaja was killed by the hundredth tiger.

22.How did the Dewan manage to arrange the hundredth tiger for the Maharaja? (Foreign 2011)

Answer. The Dewan had brought a tiger from the People's Park in Madras and kept it hidden in his house. When the Maharaja threatened him with dire consequences, he understood that the only way to save himself was to 'plant' a tiger for the kill. So, he and his aged wife dragged the tiger to the forest where the king was hunting. The king took aim and the beast soon collapsed.

23. Why was the Maharaja sunk in gloom even after having killed seventy tigers? (Foreign 2011)

Answer. During ten years, the Maharaja had managed to kill seventy tigers. As a result, the tiger population became extinct in his kingdom. This made the Maharaja anxious because he thought he would not be able to achieve his target of killing a hundred tigers and so his life would be in dangSr.

24.What led the Maharaja to start out on a tiger hunt? (All India 2010)

Answer. The Maharaja knew the old saying that killing even a cow in self-defence was no sin. So, in order to save his own life and prove the astrological prediction wrong, he started shooting all his enemies, i.e. the tigers he found in the forests of his state and nearby regions.

25.When did the Tiger King stand in danger of losing his kingdom? (Delhi 2010)

Answer. Once, a high-ranking British officer visited Pratibandapuram. He was very fond of hunting tigers and being photographed with them. However, the Maharaja refused to give him permission to hunt tigers because he feared that other British officers too would turn up with the same request. It was because of his refusal that the Maharaja stood in danger of losing his kingdom.

26.What happened to the tiger provided by the Dewan Saheb? (Delhi 2009)

Answer. The tiger provided by the Dewan Saheb was very old and stood in complete submission. The Maharaja look aim and fired, but-actually the bullet missed the tiger and the tiger only fainted from the sharp sound of the bullet. As nobody wanted the Maharaja to know about it, one of the hunters himself shot the tiger later on.

27.Describe the efforts made by the Tiger King to achieve his target of killing a hundred tigers. (All India 2009)

Answer. The Tiger King made numerous efforts to fulfil his target of killing a hundred tigers. He stayed in the forest for many days. He fired many of his officers for not getting him tigers. He had to spend a ransom of three lakh rupees to impress the British official and discourage him from killing the tigers. He even went to the extent of marrying to kill the population of tigers in

the neighbouring state to meet his target. In a way, he did all he could to achieve his goal , of killing a hundred tigers.

28. Did the Tiger King shoot the hundredth tiger? Give reasons for your answer. (Foreign 2009)

Answer. The Tiger King actually did not shoot the hundredth tiger. The tiger being a weak one, fainted from the shock of a bullet whizzing past him and the ignorant king celebrated his achievement. Later, when the hunters took a closer look at the tiger, it woke up as if from a deep slumber.

29. How did the Tiger King celebrate his victory over the killing of the hundredth tiger? (Delhi 2008)

Answer. When the Maharaja thought that he had killed the hundredth tiger, his joy knew no bounds. The elated king returned to his capital and ordered his staff to bring the dead tiger in a grand procession. The tiger was buried and a tomb was erected over it.

30. What was the Dewan's tiger like? How did he take it into the forest? (Delhi 2008)

Answer. The Dewan's tiger was old and had been brought from the People's Park in Madras. It was kept hidden in the Dewan's house. At midnight, the Dewan with his wife dragged the tiger to his car and thrust it onto the seat. With great difficulty, the tiger was pushed out of the car and planted in the forest to be shot by the Maharaja.

31. Why did the Dewan decide to give up his own tiger to be killed by the Maharaja? (Delhi 2008)

Answer. The Maharaja refused to leave the forest unless he killed the hundredth tiger that had been sighted by the villagers. The Maharaja was furious and sacked many officers. He ordered the Dewan to double the land tax of the village and when the Dewan tried to stop him, the Maharaja asked him to resign. So, to save his job, the Dewan decided to arrange for a tiger to be killed by the Maharaja.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (6 MARKS, 120-150 WORDS)

1. How did the Tiger King stand in danger of losing his kingdom? How was he able to avoid the danger? (Delhi 2012)

Answer. Once a high ranking British officer visited Pratibandapuram. As he was fond of hunting tigers, he expressed his wish of tiger hunting to the king but the king refused permission. Then the British officer requested that he only wanted to be photographed holding gun and standing over the dead body of the tiger; the Maharaja could kill the tiger. However, the Maharaja denied him this permission also, fearing that it would lead to further similar requests from other officers. As the Maharaja did not want to upset the British officer and risk losing his kingdom, he sent a fifty diamond rings to the wife of the officer. The lady kept all the rings and sent him a note of thanks. In this way, the king managed to save his kingdom.

2. The astrologer's prediction about the death of the Tiger King came to be true. Do you agree with this statement? (All India 2008)

Answer. I agree with the statement that the astrologer's prediction about the death of the Tiger King came to be true.

The astrologer had predicted that Tiger King would be killed by a tiger and he should be wary of the hundredth tiger.

This statement of the astrologer forced the king to go on a killing spree. The hundredth tiger was not killed by the king himself but by the hunters, who found out that the old tiger had not died by the bullet of the king but only fainted by the bullet whizzing past him. .

The hundredth tiger was a wooden toy tiger which the king had presented to his three-year old son. It killed the king merely by a sliver of wood protruding from it that pierced his right hand. The wound developed pus and it soon spread all over the arm. The best surgeons failed to save the king and thus, the astrologer's prediction about the death of the Tiger King proved to be correct.

Q1. The story is a satire on the conceit of those in power. Discuss.

Ans. The story satirizes the concept of people in power. They refuse to take no for an answer and their whims become laws for their subjects. This is aptly illustrated by the eccentric behaviour of the Tiger King who wished to disprove an astrologer's prediction about his death.

The Tiger King banned tiger hunting in his state. Only the Maharaja could kill the tigers. He went out on a hunting spree and made it his main occupation. After killing seventy tigers, its population became extinct. He married a princess in a neighbouring kingdom with a large tiger population. The author satirizes the rulers using humour as a tool. The British Officer wanted to be photographed with a tiger as it was a status symbol. The story exposed the fondness of officials in pre-partition days for portraying themselves as brave.

The Tiger King's eccentricity made him whimsical and conceited. He felt happy when he was informed about the presence of tiger that would have completed his mission of killing the hundredth tiger. He immediately announced a three-year exemption from all taxes. When the tiger was not traced for a few days, the king decided to double the taxes, many officers also lost their jobs.

Thus in pre-partition days, though India rulers were scared of the British officers, in their own state, they behaved like autocrats.

Q2. How did the Tiger King meet his end? What is ironical about his death?

Ans. It had been predicted by astrologers that the hundredth tiger would prove to be fatal for the Tiger King. He then set out to hunt all the tigers. He vowed he would attend to all other matters only after he had realized his aim. He managed to kill ninety-nine but the Maharaja's bullet missed the hundredth tiger who had fainted from the shock of the bullet. The ignorant king was jubilant. It is ironical that the brave king did not know that the hundredth tiger had fainted and had been killed by a hunter.

The wooden toy tiger the king got as a birthday present for his son was the cause of his death. It is ironical that the king who killed many tigers with his bare hands died of a 'sliver' from the body of the toy tiger. The sliver caused infection and developed a suppurating sore. The Tiger King died while being operating upon. In this way destiny took its final revenge upon the Tiger King and death ironically came to him from a tiger.

Q3. Give an account of the Maharaja's encounter with the hundredth tiger and his subsequent death.

Ans. The Maharaja was keen to kill the hundredth tiger. All the tigers seemed to have been killed. The Tiger King left for the forest when the villagers informed him of the activities of a tiger near the hillside. Many officers lost their jobs. Even the dewan was asked to resign.

The wise old dewan got an old tiger from the People's Park in Madras. He released it at night in the forest near the Maharaja's camp. In the morning, the infirm tiger wandered into the Maharaja's presence and stood before him as if in humble supplication. The Maharaja took careful aim at the beast. It fell down in a crumpled heap. It had fainted from the shock of the bullet whizzing past. One of the hunters fearing the Maharaja's wrath took aim and shot the tiger dead. The Maharaja could not kill the hundredth Tiger.

It was a wooden tiger from a toy shop that became the cause of the Maharaja's death. One of the slivers of the badly carved wooden toy pierced the Maharaja's right hand. The prick developed into a suppurating sore. A surgical operation was performed on his hand, but the king died. The narrator comments that the hundredth tiger (although a toy one) took its final revenge upon the Tiger King.

4. Even today so many among us believe in superstitions. An astrologer predicted about the Tiger King that he would be killed by a tiger. He 'killed' one hundred tigers, yet was himself 'killed' by a tiger. How did the superstitious belief prevail?

Ans. The entire story is about an astrological prediction that the tiger king is destined to die of a tiger. The king takes it as a mission to kill a hundred tigers. He kills ninety-nine tigers but misses the target while killing the hundredth tiger. Due to fear of losing their jobs, the hunters didn't tell him fact and killed the tiger themselves. At this point, the king thought that he had proved the prediction wrong. But the death of the Maharaja due to a wooden tiger again substantiates the superstitious belief by making the prophecy come true.

5. Giving a bribe is an evil practice. How did the Tiger King bribe the British officer to save his kingdom? How do you view this act of his?

Ans. A British officer had come to visit Pratibandapuram and wanted to go for tiger hunting but the Maharaja did not permit him. He didn't permit him even to be photographed with a dead tiger

so as to stop other officers from getting attracted. There was a fear of a disastrous reaction from this British officer due to the refusal. He could lose his kingdom. So in order to save his kingdom, the Maharaja sent expensive diamond rings to his wife as a bribe. It cost him three lakh rupees. This shows that the king was, in fact, scared of the British official though he pretended to be very powerful. He was whimsical and selfish.

6. How did the Tiger King achieve his target of killing a hundred tigers?

Ans. In order to achieve his target of killing a hundred tigers, the king issued a proclamation that anyone who dared to fling even a stone at a tiger would lose his wealth and property. The tiger hunt was banned in his state except for the king. He started killing the tigers and killed seventy tigers in ten years. By this time, the tiger became extinct in his state. Then he married a girl of a royal family whose kingdom had maximum tiger population. He killed all the tigers in his father-in-law's state. He had killed ninety-nine tigers. Finding the hundredth tiger was a big problem. But his Dewan brought an old tiger from People's Park, Madras, and placed it in the forest. The Maharaja shot at this tiger and fulfilled his mission of killing a hundred tigers.

7. Justify the title of the story 'Tiger King'.

Ans. The story 'The Tiger King' revolves around the king of Pratibandapuram who is given this title due to his obsession for the tiger hunt. From the beginning, it is evident when the royal infant utters first few words, "Let tigers beware." It was predicted by the astrologers that a tiger would be the cause of his death. When the royal prince was made the king at the age of twenty, he decided to kill a hundred tigers to prove this prediction wrong. All-State work was put away. A marriage of the Tiger king was given priority so that more tigers could be found. The entire story is a narrative of the stupid and inhumane mission of the Maharaja who in order to prevent his death, killed a hundred innocent animals. But, ironically, he died thanks to a tiger only though it was a wooden one.

8. Do you think tiger king's life would have taken a different course if he had not heard the prophecy about his future? What kind of a king would he have proved to be?

Ans. The Tiger King was brought up and provided with all the privileges of a royal family. He was given the best education. He was well mannered, cultured and sophisticated. He was a strong young man. Like any other crown prince of the Indian state, he was brought up by an English nanny, tutored in English by an Englishman, saw nothing but English films. Had he not heard the prophecy, he would have been a very great and just king. He would have done a lot for the improvement and upliftment of his state. But due to this prediction, he lost all his interest in the matters of the state and devoted himself to the fulfilment of his mission to kill a hundred tigers.

