
CBSE Class 09 English Language and Literature
NCERT Solutions
Beehive Chapter 05
The Snake and The Mirror

Page No: 60 Think about the Text

I. Discuss in pairs and answer each question below in a short paragraph (30 – 40 words).

1. “The sound was familiar one.” What sound did the doctor hear? What did he think it was? How many times did he hear it? (Find the places in the text.) When and why did the sound stop?

Ans: The Doctor heard the familiar sound of the rats. He thought it was the regular traffic of rats to and from the beam. He heard the sound thrice. The sound stopped when the doctor resumed his seat in the chair with many thoughts passing through his mind. The sound stopped because the rats might have seen the snake.

2. What two “important” and “earth-shaking” decisions did the doctor take while he was looking into the mirror?

Ans: One of the important decisions the doctor took while he was looking into the mirror was to shave daily and grow a thin moustache. The other earth shaking decision he took was to always keep an attractive smile on his face to look more handsome.

3. “I looked into the mirror and smiled,” says the doctor. A little later he says, “I forgot my danger and smiled feebly at myself.” What is the doctor’s opinion about himself when:

(i) he first smiles, and

(ii) he smiles again? In what way do his thoughts change in between, and why?

Ans: (i) The doctor's opinion about himself when he first smiles is that his smile is attractive and he is a handsome bachelor and a doctor too. He has to make his presence felt.

(ii) During the next smile he considers himself poor, foolish and stupid because the snake would have struck him and he had no medicine in his room. At first he seems to be relaxed and was conscious of his handsome appearance because he believed that the sound was of the rats. The second time death lurked him. The snake had coiled around his left arm. This

time he thought he was a foolish man.

II. This story about a frightening incident is narrated in a humorous way. What makes it humorous? (Think of the contrasts it presents between dreams and reality. Some of them are listed below.)

- 1. (i) The kind of person the doctor is (money, possessions)**
(ii) The kind of person he wants to be (appearance, ambition)
- 2.(i) The person he wants to marry**
(ii) The person he actually marries
- 3.(i) His thoughts when he looks into the mirror**
(ii) His thoughts when the snake is coiled around his arm

Write short paragraphs on each of these.

Ans: 1. (i) The reality is that the doctor is not a man of money or possessions. He hardly has any money. He had just set up medical practice and had limited earnings, He stayed in a small rented room which was not electrified. He possessed a black coat and some shirts and dhotis.

(ii) Actually, the doctor dreamt to be a rich person by marrying a woman doctor who had plenty of money with good medical practice. He wanted to make his presence felt among others and look more handsome.

2. (i) The doctor had a dream to marry a woman doctor with good medical practice and a lot of money. She had to be fat so that she can not run after him and catch him.

(ii) But in real life, he marries a thin reedy woman who has the gift of a sprinter.

3. (i) When he looks into the mirror he thinks being an unmarried doctor he has to make his presence felt. He decides to shave daily and grow a thin moustache. Further he decides to always keep his attractive smile on his face to look more handsome.

(ii) He seems to have turned into a stone when the snake coiled around his arm. He felt the presence of the great creator. He thinks that suppose the snake strikes him he doesn't have any medicines in his room. Thus he considers himself a poor, foolish and stupid doctor. All these incidents show a contrast in his life which makes this story a humorous one.

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I. 1. Here are some sentences from the text. Say which of them tell you that the author:
(a) was afraid of the snake (b) was proud of his appearance (c) had a sense of humour

(d) was no longer afraid of the snake

1. I was turned to stone.

2. I was no mere image cut in granite.

3. The arm was beginning to be drained of strength.

4. I tried in my imagination to write in bright letters outside my little heart the words, 'O God'.

5. I didn't tremble. I didn't cry out.

6. I looked into the mirror and smiled. It was an attractive smile.

7. I was suddenly a man of flesh and blood.

8. I was after all a bachelor, and a doctor too on top of it!

9. The fellow had such a sense of cleanliness...! The rascal could have taken it and used it after washing it with soap and water.

10. Was it trying to make an important decision about growing a moustache or using eye shadow and mascara or wearing a vermilion spot on its forehead?

Ans:

	(a) was afraid of the snake	(b) was proud of his appearance	(c) had a sense of humour	(d) was no longer afraid of the snake
1.	I was turned to stone.			
2.				I was no mere image cut in granite.
3.	The arm was beginning to be drained of strength.			
	I tried in my			

4.	imagination to write in bright letters outside my little heart the words, 'O God'.			
5.	I didn't tremble. I didn't cry out.			
6.		I looked into the mirror and smiled. It was an attractive smile.		
7.				I was suddenly a man of flesh and blood.
8.		I was after all a bachelor, and a doctor too on top of it!		
9.			The fellow had such a sense of cleanliness...! The rascal could have taken it and used it after washing it with soap and water.	
10.			Was it trying to make an important decision about growing a moustache or using eye shadow and mascara or wearing a vermilion spot on its	

		forehead.	
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II. Expressions used to show fear

Can you find the expressions in the story that tell you that the author was frightened?

Read the story and complete the following sentences.

1. I was turned _____.
2. I sat there holding _____.
3. In the light of the lamp I sat there like _____.

Ans: 1. I was turned to stone.

2. I sat there holding my breath.

3. In the light of the lamp I sat there like a stone image in the flesh.

III. Match the meanings with the words/expressions in italics, and write the appropriate meaning next to the sentence. The first one has been done for you.

1. I knew a man was following me, I was *scared out of my wits*. (very frightened)
2. I *got a fright* when I realised how close I was to the cliff edge.
3. He *nearly jumped out of his skin* when he saw the bull coming towards him.
4. You really *gave me a fright* when you crept up behind me like that.
5. Wait until I tell his story — it will *make your hair stand on end*.
6. *Paralysed with fear*, the boy faced his abductors.
7. The boy hid behind the door, *not moving a muscle*.

Ans: 1. I knew a man was following me, I was *scared out of my wits*. (very frightened)

2. I *got a fright* when I realised how close I was to the cliff edge. (sudden feeling of fear)

3. He *nearly jumped out of his skin* when he saw the bull coming towards him. (to be extremely startled)

4. You really *gave me a fright* when you crept up behind me like that. (sudden sensation of fear)

5. Wait until I tell his story — it will *make your hair stand on end*. (to make someone very frightened)

6. *Paralysed with fear*, the boy faced his abductors. (unable to move or act)

7. The boy hid behind the door, *not moving a muscle*. (to stay completely still)

IV. Report these questions using *if / whether* or *why / when / where / how / which / what*
Remember the italicised verbs change into the past tense.

- 1. Meena asked her friend, “Do you *think* your teacher will come today?”**
- 2. David asked his colleague, “Where *will* you go this summer?”**
- 3. He asked the little boy, “Why *are* you studying English?”**
- 4. She asked me, “When *are* we going to leave?”**
- 5. Pran asked me, “Have you finished reading the newspaper?”**
- 6. Seema asked her, “How long *have* you lived here?”**
- 7. Sheila asked the children “Are you ready to do the work?”**

Ans: 1. Meena asked her friend if she thought her teacher would come that day.

2. David asked his colleague where he would go that summer.
3. He asked the little boy why he was studying English.
4. She asked me when we were going to leave.
5. Pran asked me if I had finished reading the newspaper.
6. Seema asked her how long she had lived there.
7. Sheila asked the children if they were ready to do the work.