

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 2: A GIFT OF CHAPPALS



A GIFT OF CHAPPALS

~Summary~

-by Vasantha Surya

Mridu had visited her cousins **Lalli, Ravi** and **Meena** with her grandmother Tapi. When she entered their house, she noticed an **old, dusty pair of chappals** with **scrawny toe-marks** on it. Ravi drags her hurriedly to the backyard to show her the **cat** that they had saved earlier that morning. He described that the cat belonged to the **Pallava dynasty**, and he related it to the **Rishi-cat statue** he had seen in **Mahabalipuram**. He had named the cat **Mahendra Pallava Poonai**, or **MP Poonai** in short. As they talked, they heard a "**kreech**" sound from the window and Ravi explained it was Lalli's off-pitched violin, which she was learning to play from the music-master.

Next, they heard a **wailing sound** from a beggar at the gate. The harassed Rukku Manni told him to go away because **he had been coming every day**. Meanwhile, the beggar groaned about the **blisters** on his soles due to the **scorching heat** on the **tar road**. Mridu remembered the chappals she had seen when she entered and asked Ravi whose it was. Ravi immediately **decided to give it away** to the beggar. The **music-master** came out and searched for his chappals. Rukku Manni suspected the curiously silent children and asked them. They **confessed** and got scolded by her for donating things **that did not belong to them**.

Rukku Manni got Gopu Mama's **almost-new chappals** and gave it to the music-master. Later she realized she had to answer Gopu Mama when he asked where his chappals were. It is understood that **Rukku Manni also had done the same deed as Ravi**, donating things that did not belong to her!

~Conclusion~

What is the summary of a gift of Chappals? The story is about the mischievous and simplicity of children's behavior. They wish to explore every aspect but act according to their own logic. They gave chappals to the beggar and then to the music teacher without hesitation.

NCERT SOLUTIONS

Questions (Page No. 22) (Comprehension Check I)

Question 1. What is the secret that Meena shares with Mridu in the backyard?

Answer: Meena shares the secret of the kitten that they found in front of the house in the morning. They had kept it in the backyard behind a thick bush.

Question 2. How does Ravi get milk for the kitten?

Answer: Ravi gets milk for the kitten cleverly from the kitchen by pretending that he is hungry. In order to prove that he indeed was hungry, he had to drink most of the milk. He would leave some milk in the tumbler and empty it in the coconut shell kept in the backyard.

Question 3. Who does he say the kitten's ancestors are? Do you believe him?

Answer: Ravi says that the kitten's ancestor was the Pallava Lion, emblem of the Pallava dynasty.

No, I don't believe him.

Question 4. Ravi has a lot to say about M.P.Poonai. This shows that

- a. he is merely trying to impress Mridu.
- b. his knowledge of history is sound.
- c. he has a rich imagination.
- d. he is an intelligent child.

Which of these statements do you agree/disagree to?

Answer: I think that his knowledge of history is sound. Also, he has a rich imagination and he is an intelligent child.

Question 5. What was the noise that startled Mridu and frightened Mahendran?

Answer: The noise that startled Mridu and frightened Mahendran was the 'kreeching' sound of Lalli's violin.

Questions (Page No. 28) (Comprehension Check II)

Question 1. The music master is making lovely music. Read aloud the sentence in the text that expresses this idea.

Answer: The text that expresses this idea is:

The music master's notes seemed to float up and settle perfectly into the invisible tracks of the melody. It was like the wheels of a train fitting smoothly into the rails and whizzing along, as Ravi said.

Question 2. Had the beggar come to Rukku Manni's house for the first time? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer: No, the beggar had not come to Rukku Manni's house for the first time. In fact, he had been visiting Rukku Manni's house for the past one week. He himself admitted that he had survived the past week because of the generosity of the ladies of Rukku Manni's house.

Question 3. "A sharp V-shaped line had formed between her eyebrows." What does it suggest to you about Rukku Manni's mood?

Answer: "A sharp V-shaped line had formed between her eyebrows." This suggests that Rukku Manni was quite angry at the impishness of the children.

Questions (Page No. 29-30) (Working with the Text)

Question 1. Complete the following sentences:

- a. Ravi compares Lalli's playing the violin to _____.

- b. Trying to hide beneath the tray of chillies, Mahendran _____.
- c. The teacher played a few notes on his violin, and Lalli _____.
- d. The beggar said that the kind ladies of the household _____.
- e. After the lesson was over, the music teacher asked Lalli if _____.

Answer:

- a. Ravi compares Lalli's playing the violin to derailing of a train.
- b. Trying to hide beneath the tray of chillies, Mahendran tipped a few chillies over himself. "Mi-a-aw!", he howled miserably.
- c. The teacher played a few notes on his violin, and Lalli stumbled behind him on her violin, which looked quite helpless and unhappy in her hands.
- d. The beggar said that the kind ladies of the household have helped him survive the last week.
- e. After the lesson was over, the music teacher asked Lalli if she had seen his chappals.

Question 2. Describe the music teacher, as seen from the window.

Answer: The music teacher had a lean, bony personality. He was sitting with his back against the window of the room where he was teaching violin to Lalli. He was bald and had some oiled hair around his ears. He was wearing an old-fashioned tuft and had a gold chain around his neck.

He also wore a diamond ring in his hand. He was beating the floor with his thin, malnourished toe.

Question 3.

- a. What makes Mridu conclude that the beggar has no money to buy chappals?
- b. What does she suggest to show her concern?

Answer:

- a. When the beggar showed his feet to the children, they could see blisters on them. This made Mridu conclude that the beggar has no money to buy chappals.
- b. She suggests that they give away a pair of chappals to the beggar.

Question 4. "Have you children..." she began, and then, seeing they were curiously quiet, went on more slowly, "seen anyone lurking around the verandah?"

- a. What do you think Rukku Manni really wanted to ask?
- b. Why did she change her question?
- c. What did she think had happened?

Answer:

- a. Rukku Manni wanted to ask if the children were responsible behind the stealth of the chappals.
- b. She changed her question because seeing the children so serious and quiet, she understood that the children definitely had something to do with the missing chappals.
- c. She thought that the children would have purposely hidden the pair of chappals.

Question 5. On getting Gopu Mama's chappals, the music teacher tried not to look too happy. Why?

Answer: The music teacher tried not to look happy because he wanted to pretend that his chappals were valuable to him. Although in reality, he liked the new chappals of Gopu Mama.

Question 6. On getting a gift of chappals, the beggar vanished in a minute. Why was he in such a hurry to leave?

Answer: I think that the beggar wanted to leave as early as possible because he did not want to lose the gift of chappals. He needed the chappals badly as his feet were full of blisters.

Question 7. Walking towards the kitchen with Mridu and Meena, Rukku Manni began to laugh. What made her laugh?

Answer: The thought about what she would say to Gopu Mama about the chappals when he would ask about them. She wondered what his reaction would be when he gets to know that those chappals were given to the music master.

Questions (Page No. 30-31) (Working with language)

Question 1. Read the following sentences.

- If she knows we have a cat, Paati will leave the house.
- She won't be so upset if she knows about the poor beggar with sores on his feet.
- If the chappals do fit, will you really not mind?

Notice that each sentence consists of two parts. The first part begins with 'if'. It is known as if-clause.

Rewrite each of the following pairs of sentences as a single sentence. Use 'if' at the beginning of the sentence.

E.g. (a) Walk fast. You'll catch the bus.

If you walk fast, you'll catch the bus.

E.g. (b) Don't spit on the road. You'll be fined.

If you spit on the road, you'll be fined.

- Don't tire yourself now. You won't be able to work in the evening.
- Study regularly. You'll do well in the examination.
- Work hard. You'll pass the examination in the first division.

- d. Be polite to people. They'll also be polite to you.
- e. Don't tease the dog. It'll bite you.

Answer:

- a. If you tire yourself now, you won't be able to work in the evening.
- b. If you study regularly, you'll do well in the examination.
- c. If you work hard, you'll pass the examination in first division.
- d. If you are polite to people, they'll be polite to you.
- e. If you tease the dog, it'll bite you.

Question 2. Fill in the blanks in the following paragraph.

Today is Sunday. I'm wondering whether I should stay at home or go out. If I _____ (go) out, I _____ (miss) the lovely Sunday lunch at home. If I _____ (stay) for lunch, I _____ (miss) the Sunday film showing at Archana Theatre. I think I'll go out and see the film, only to avoid getting too fat.

Answer:

Today is Sunday. I'm wondering whether I should stay at home or go out. If I **go** (go) out, I will **miss** (miss) the lovely Sunday lunch at home. If I **stay** (stay) for lunch, I **will miss** (miss) the Sunday film showing at Archana Theatre. I think I'll go out and see the film, only to avoid getting too fat.

Question 3. Complete each sentence below by appropriately using any one of the following:

if you want to/if you don't want to/if you want him to

- a. Don't go to the theatre _____.
- b. He'll post your letter _____.
- c. Please use my pen _____.

- d. He'll lend you his umbrella _____.
- e. My neighbour, Ramesh, will take you to the doctor _____.
- f. Don't eat it _____.

Answer:

- a. Don't go to the theatre if you don't want to.
- b. He'll post your letter if you want him to.
- c. Please use my pen if you want to.
- d. He'll lend you his umbrella if you want him to.
- e. My neighbour, Ramesh, will take you to the doctor if you want him to.
- f. Don't eat it if you don't want to.

Questions (Page No. 31-32) (Speaking and Writing)

Question 1. Discuss in small groups

- If you want to give away something of your own to the needy, would it be better to ask your elders first?
- Is there someone of your age in the family who is very talkative? Do you find her/him interesting and impressive or otherwise? Share your ideas with others in the group.
- Has Rukku Manni done exactly the same as the children? In your opinion, then, is it right for one party to blame the other?

Answer:

Yes, it will be better to ask my elders first if I want to give away something of my own to the needy.

Yes, my sister is a very talkative person. Yes, I find her interesting and impressive.

Yes, Rukku Manni also gave away someone else's belonging. Then, it is not right for her to blame the children. But, she had to save her family from the embarrassing situation, that's why she had to take the decision without discussing it with Gopu Mama.

Question 2. Read the following.

- A group of children in your class are going to live in a hostel.
- They have been asked to choose a person in the group to share a room with.
- They are asking each other questions to decide who they would like to share a room with.

Ask one another questions about likes/dislikes/preferences/hobbies/personal characteristics. Use the following questions and sentence openings.

a. What do you enjoy doing after school?

I enjoy...

b. (ii) What do you like in general?

I like...

c. (iii) Do you play any game?

I don't like...

d. (iv) Would you mind if I listened to music after dinner?

I wouldn't...

e. (v) Will it be all right if I...?

It's fine with me...

f. Is there anything you dislike, particularly?

Well, I can't share...

g. Do you like to attend parties?

Oh, I...

h. Would you say you are...?

I think...

Answer:

a. What do you enjoy doing after school?

I enjoy reading comic books after school.

b. What do you like in general?

I like to read comic books and listen to music.

c. Do you play any game?

I don't like playing games, especially the outdoor games. But it is fun to play video games and chess.

d. Would you mind if I listened to music after dinner?

I wouldn't mind if you listen to music after dinner. In fact, even I would like to join you.

e. Will it be all right if I keep the lights on for some time after 10 o'clock at night?

It's fine with me if you keep the lights on for some time after 10.

f. Is there anything you dislike, particularly?

Well, I can't share my towel, bedsheet and pillow with anyone.

g. Do you like to attend parties?

Oh, I am fond of attending parties!

h. Would you say you are a person who can adjust?

I think, yes, I am a person who can adjust.

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