

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 9: A BICYCLE IN GOOD REPAIR



A BICYCLE IN GOOD REPAIR

~Summary~

-by Jerome K. Jerome

"A Bicycle in Good Repair" is a humorous tale written by **Jerome K. Jerome**, which in turn, is an extract from the novel "**Three Men in a Bummel**". There are **two** central characters in the lesson. They are the **narrator** and a **man**. The lesson tells the narrator's **experience** with a man who had suggested that they should go on a **bicycle ride**. When the day of the plan came, the narrator woke up **early**, got ready on time, and waited for the man in his garden. However, the man reached half an hour **late**. Then, the man decided to **take a look** at the bicycle. He claimed that the front wheel of the bicycle **wobbled**, and hence decided to **fix** it. He took the **front** wheel out. Later, he dropped several of **screws** and **bearings**. He also removed the **gear-case** from the bicycle despite the narrator's warning that it was **expensive**. Later, the man ended up getting in a **tug-of-war** between the **bicycle**. Although the narrator was **displeased** with the events, he remained quite because he didn't want to **hurt** the **man's feelings**.

Eventually, the men tried putting the bicycle back together. However, unfortunately, the bicycle started to **wobble** by then. Around 12:45 in the afternoon, the man **gave up** his repair work. He looked **dirty** and had **cuts** and **bruises** from his battle with the bicycle. The latter also had a significant share in the misfortune. In the end, the man **cleaned** himself, and the narrator **sent** him **home** without taking the trip they had intended.



A Bicycle in Good Repair

~Conclusion~

His bicycle which was until now in good condition was now lying scattered divided in many parts. Author wanted to stop his friend from causing further troubles, but he admits that he is weak at hurting others. Then it was the time for the chain which he tightened to an extent that it stopped moving.

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NCERT SOLUTIONS**Questions (Page No. 128)
(Comprehension Check)**

Question 1. "I got up early, for me." It implies that

- a. he was an early riser.
- b. he was a late riser.
- c. he got up late that morning.

Mark the correct answer.

Answer:

- b. he was a late riser.

Question 2. The bicycle "goes easily enough in the morning and a little stiffly after lunch." The remark is _____.

- c. humorous.
- d. inaccurate.
- e. sarcastic.
- f. enjoyable.
- g. meaningless.

Mark your choice(s).

Answer:

- a. humorous

Question 3. The friend shook the bicycle violently. Find two or three sentences in the text which express the author's disapproval of it.

Answer: The sentences in the text which express the author's disapproval of it are:

"Don't do that; you'll hurt it."

"It doesn't if you don't wobble it."

"Don't you trouble about it anymore"

Question 4. "...if not, it would make a serious difference to the machine." What does 'it' refer to?

Answer: "...if not, it would make a serious difference to the machine."

It refers to the ball bearings of the bicycle.

Questions (Page No. 132-133) (Working with the text)

Answer the following questions.

Question 1. Did the front wheel really wobble? What is your opinion? Give a reason for your answer.

Answer: No, the front wheel did not wobble much. We can say so because the author says "It didn't wobble, as a matter of fact—nothing worth calling a wobble."

Question 2. In what condition did the author find the bicycle when he returned from the tool shed?

Answer: When the author returned from the tool shed, he saw that his friend was sitting on the ground with the front wheel of the bicycle between his legs. He was playing with it twiddling it round between his fingers and the rest was lying on the gravel path beside him.

Question 3. "Nothing is easier than taking off the gear-case." Comment on or continue this sentence in the light of what actually happens.

Answer: The author's friend says, "Nothing is easier than taking off the gear-case."

The author warns him that he had heard by one of his experienced friends that, "If anything goes wrong with your gear-case, sell the machine and buy a new one; it comes cheaper."

The author's friend doesn't take it seriously and continues to take off the gear-case. Later, he struggles and is unable to put back the gear-case in its proper place.

Question 4. What special treatment did the chain receive?

Answer: The author's friend tightened the chain so much that it stopped moving completely. Then he began to loosen it. He loosened it until it became twice as loose as it was before.

Question 5. The friend has two qualities — he knows what he is doing and is absolutely sure it is good. Find the two phrases in the text which mean the same.

Answer: The two phrases in the text which mean the same are:

- Cheery confidence
- Inexplicable hopefulness

Question 6. Describe 'the fight' between the man and the machine. Find the relevant sentences in the text and write them.

Answer: The author's bicycle did not need any treatment. It was in a good condition but the friend of the author made it a big deal and messed it up. He actually made it such that now it would need a lot of repair.

The fight between the man and the machine can be understood by the following paragraph in the text:

One moment the bicycle would be on the gravel path, and he on top of it; the next, the position would be reversed—he on the gravel path, the bicycle on him. Now he would be standing flushed with victory, the bicycle firmly fixed between his legs. But his triumph would be short-lived. By a sudden, quick movement it would free itself and, turning upon him, hit him sharply over the head with one of its handles.

Questions (Page No. 133-136)

(Working with language)

Question 1. Read the following sentences.

- We should go for a long bicycle ride.
- I ought to have been firm.
- We mustn't lose any of them.
- I suggested that he should hold the fork, and that I should handle the wheel.

The words in italics are modal auxiliaries. Modal auxiliaries are used with verbs to express notions such as possibility, permission, willingness, obligation, necessity, etc. 'Should,' 'must' and 'ought to' generally express moral obligation, necessity and desirability.

Look at the following.

- We should go on a holiday. (Suggestion: It is a good idea for us to go on a holiday.)
- He is not too well these days. He must see a doctor before he becomes worse. (Compulsion or necessity: It is absolutely essential or necessary for him to see a doctor.)
- You ought to listen to me. I am well over a decade older than you. (more emphatic than 'should': Since I am older than you, it is advisable that you listen to me.)

Note: 'Should' and 'ought to' are often used interchangeably.

Rewrite each of the following sentences using should/ ought to/must in place of the italicized words. Make other changes wherever necessary.

- a. You are obliged to do your duty irrespective of consequences.
- b. You will do well to study at least for an hour every day.

- c. The doctor says it is necessary for her to sleep eight hours every night.
- d. It is right that you show respect towards elders and affection towards youngsters.
- e. If you want to stay healthy, exercise regularly.
- f. It is good for you to take a walk every morning.
- g. It is strongly advised that you don't stand on your head.
- h. As he has a cold, it is better for him to go to bed.

Answer:

- a. You **must** do your duty irrespective of consequences.
- b. You **should** study at least for an hour every day.
- c. The doctor says it is **a must** for her to sleep eight hours every night.
- d. You **ought to** show respect towards elders and affection towards youngsters.
- e. If you want to stay healthy, you **must** exercise regularly.
- f. You **should** take a walk every morning.
- g. It is **a must not** to stand on your head.
- h. As he has a cold, he **should** go to bed.

Question 2: Use should/must/ought to appropriately in the following sentences.

- a. People who live in glass houses _____ not throw stones.
- b. You _____ wipe your feet before coming into the house, especially during the rains.
- c. You _____ do what the teacher tells you.

- d. The pupils were told that they _____ write more neatly.
- e. Sign in front of a park: You _____ not walk on the grass.
- f. You _____ be ashamed of yourself having made such a remark.
- g. He left home at 9 o'clock. He _____ be here any minute.
- h. "Whatever happened to the chocolate cake?"
"How _____ I know? I have just arrived."

Answer:

- a. People who live in glass houses **should** not throw stones.
- b. You **must** wipe your feet before coming into the house, especially during the rains.
- c. You **must** do what the teacher tells you.
- d. The pupils were told that they **should** write more neatly.
- e. Sign in front of a park: You **must** not walk on the grass.
- f. You **ought to** be ashamed of yourself having made such a remark.
- g. He left home at 9 o'clock. He **should** be here any minute.
- h. "Whatever happened to the chocolate cake?"
"How **should** I know? I have just arrived."

Question 3: Two or more single sentences can be combined to form a single sentence.

Read the following.

I made an effort, and was pleased with myself.

This sentence is in fact a combination of two sentences.

- I made an effort.
- I was pleased with myself.

Now read this sentence.

I did not see why he should shake it.

This is also a combination of two sentences.

- I did not see (it).
- Why should he shake it?

Divide each of the following sentences into its parts. Write meaningful parts. If necessary, supply a word or two to make each part meaningful.

- I went to the tool shed to see what I could find. (3 parts)
- When I came back he was sitting on the ground. (2 parts)
- We may as well see what's the matter with it, now it is out. (3 parts)
- He said he hoped we had got them all. (3 parts)
- I had to confess he was right. (2 parts)

Answer:

- I went to the tool shed to see what I could find. (3 parts)

I went to the tool shed.

I went (there) to see.

What I could find.

b. When I came back he was sitting on the ground. (2 parts)

I came back.

He was sitting on the ground.

c. We may as well see what's the matter with it, now it is out. (3 parts)

We may as well see.

What is the matter with it.

Now it is out.

d. He said he hoped we had got them all. (3 parts)

He said.

He hoped.

We had got them all.

e. I had to confess he was right. (2 parts)

I had to confess.

He was right.

Question 4: 'en' acts as a prefix (put at the beginning) or as a suffix (put at the end) to form new words.

en + courage = encourage

weak + en = weaken

'en' at the beginning or at the end of a word is not always a prefix or a suffix. It is then an integral part of the word.

ending

barren

- a. Now arrange the words given in the box under the three headings — prefix, suffix and part of the word.

encourage dampen listen

barren endanger soften

fasten enclose weaken

even enable enclave

en (prefix) en (suffix) en (part of word)

- b. Find new words in your textbook and put them under the same headings.

Answer:

a.

en (prefix) en (suffix) en (part of word)

encourage dampen listen

endanger soften barren

enable weaken even

enclose fasten enclave

b. evening garden enough when between dozen tighten loosen end ten open forgotten sudden

en (prefix): endangered, enact, entrap.

en (suffix): tighten, loosed, forgotten.

en (part of word): evening, garden, enough, when, dozen, end, ten, open, sudden.

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