

IN THE KINGDOM OF FOOLS SUMMARY IN ENGLISH

The kingdom of fools

In the kingdom of fools the king and the minister were idiots. They ordered all things to be reversed. They decided to change night into day and day into night. They ordered people to do day's work in night and sleep in the day. Anyone not obeying was to be punished with death. So people out of fear did ' as they were asked to do. This delighted the king and the minister.

A guru and disciple see the city

Once a guru and his disciple arrived in the city. They found everyone asleep during the r day. No activity was observed. It amazed them. They wandered till evening. Then the people woke up. They started doing their nightly businesses. Now the two were hungry. They bought some food items. The price of everything was same, a single duddu. This surprised and delighted them. The guru realized that it was really a kingdom of fools.

Guru leaves the city but disciple remains behind

The guru decided to leave the city of fools. He asked his disciple also to leave the place. But the disciple didn't want to do so for cheap food. The guru advised the disciple that nothing could be predicted of fools. But the disciple didn't care. He remained behind. Time passed on. The disciple ate to his fill. As a result he became very fat.

A thief breaks into a rich merchant's house

One day a thief broke into a rich merchant's house. He was taking out the stolen things. Just then the wall of the old house fell on his head. He was killed instantly. The brother of the thief complained to the king about his death. He blamed the owner of the house for his brother's death.

The owner is summoned

The king heard the accused. He accused him of killing the thief. But the owner said that he was innocent. He said that the person who built the wall was responsible. He didn't make the good wall. The king decided to summon the bricklayer.

The king summons the bricklayer

The king asked the bricklayer if he had built the wall. He accused him of killing the thief. Before the king could order his death, the bricklayer pleaded innocence. He told the king that he could not concentrate while building the wall. A dancing girl moved in the street. So she was responsible for it.

The dancing girl is summoned

The king charged the dancing girl of killing the thief. The dancing girl said that the goldsmith was responsible for it. She had given some gold to him. He had to make some jewellery for her. He was lazy. He did not make the jewellery early. So she had to walk up and down the street. So it was the goldsmith's fault.

The goldsmith and his plea

The king now ordered to summon the goldsmith. The goldsmith replied that there was a wedding in the rich man's house. He had to make jewellery for him. So he could not finish the jewellery of the dancing girl in time.

The rich man is summoned before the king

The king declared the rich man to be the murderer. He was also the owner of that house. But he said that his father had ordered the jewellery. The king consulted his minister. He decided that the owner be punished in his father's place. The king asked for a new stake to be made ready for the owner to die. But the owner was very thin. He could not be executed. The king was worried about it. Then he ordered to search a man who was fit for the stake. He should be executed.

The disciple is in trouble

The disciple was found fit for the stake. He was brought to the place of execution. The disciple now remembered his wise guru's words. He prayed to his guru. The guru had magic powers to see the past and the future. He saw everything. He arrived at once to save his disciple. He told his disciple something in a low voice. The disciple understood this.

The guru's trick to save his disciple

The guru and the disciple now started fighting. The guru wanted to die first. The king asked the guru why he wanted to die. The guru told the king in his ears that their city was unique. This was the stake of god of justice. The stake was new. It was never used earlier on criminals. Whoever died on it first, would be born a king. Whoever died next, would be born as a minister.

The king decides to die

The king thought over the whole case. He didn't want to lose the kingdom even in his next birth also. So he talked to his minister. The king said that they would go on stake themselves. Thus they would be reborn as king and minister again. The king and minister went secretly to the prison. They released the guru and the disciple. They put themselves in their places. So they were taken to the stake and executed.

The guru and disciple become the king and the minister

The dead bodies of the king and the minister were taken down. The people mourned their deaths. They discussed the future of the kingdom. Suddenly some people thought of the guru and the disciple.

NCERT SOLUTIONS

Think about it

(Page 27)

Question 1.

What are the two strange things the guru and his disciple find in the Kingdom of Fools?

Answer:

The Guru and the disciple found that in the Kingdom of Fools people used to work during nights and sleep during days. Everything was cheap and cost the same.

Question 2.

Why does the disciple decide to stay in the Kingdom of Fools? Is it a good idea?

Answer:

Everything was cheap in the Kingdom of Fools. The disciple had peculiarity of diet. He was tempted by the cheap food. So, he decided to stay in that kingdom. It was not a good idea to stay there for a long time as one could be in danger any time because of the unpredictable behaviour of fools.

Question 3.

Name all the people who are tried in the king's court, and give the reasons for their trial.

Answer:

The owner of the house i.e. the merchant, the bricklayer, the dancing girl and the goldsmith were tried in the king's court. They all were tried because the thief died when the wall of merchant's house had collapsed. The merchant was tried for building a weak wall. The bricklayer was tried for doing his work carelessly. The dancing girl was tried for disturbing the concentration of the bricklayer. The goldsmith was blamed for making the dancing girl walk up and down to his house a dozen times.

Question 4.

Who is the real culprit according to the king? Why does he escape punishment?

Answer:

The merchant's dead father was held responsible for making the wall weak. But according to the king the rich merchant was the real culprit because he had inherited both sins and riches of his father. He escaped the punishment because he was too thin to fit the stake.

Question 5.

What are the Guru's words of wisdom? When does the disciple remember them?

Answer:

The Guru was full of wisdom and knew well that the unpredictable behaviour of the fools could create danger anytime. The Guru's words were, "They are all fools. This won't last very long, and you can't tell what they'll do to you next". The disciple remembered them when he was arrested by the men of the king to execute merely because he fitted the stake. It was because of the Guru's words of wisdom that the execution was postponed.

Question 6.

How does the Guru manage to save his disciple's life?

Answer:

The Guru arrived on time to save his disciple and created a drama. He told the king that it was not an ordinary stake and whoever went to the stake first would become the king in next life. The second to die would become his minister. The king wanted to avail himself of the opportunity. The Guru and his disciple were released. Thus the Guru managed to save his disciple's life. They were secretly leaving the city. People saw them. They requested them to be their new king and the minister. But they put one condition. It was to change all the old laws. So they changed the laws.

EXTRA QUESTIONS

In the Kingdom of Fools Extra Questions and Answers Short Answer Type

Question 1.

What are the two strange things the guru and his disciple find in the kingdom of fools?

Answer:

Firstly, they find that the whole town, including the animals, slept by day and stayed awake through the night running their businesses. Secondly, everything costs the same, whether it was a measure of rice or a bunch of bananas—they all cost a duddu.

Question 2.

Why was the kingdom called the Kingdom of Fools?

Answer:

It was called so because the King and the minister were idiots. They decided to change night into day and day into night, and ordered everyone to wake at night to till their fields, and sleep during the day.

Question 3.

Why did the people follow the orders of the foolish King?

Answer:

They were forced to do so because they knew that if they disobeyed his orders, they would be punished with death.

Question 4.

What astonished the guru and disciple at the grocer's shop?

Answer:

They were astonished that everything at the shop whether a measure of rice or a bunch of bananas cost the same, i.e., a duddu.

Question 5.

Compare and contrast the feelings of the guru and the disciple about the kingdom they found themselves in.

Answer:

The guru felt that it would not be a great idea to stay in the kingdom, and they should leave the place. On the other hand, the disciple refused to leave, because he felt that everything was so cheap and good, that he could eat to his heart's content.

Question 6.

Why did the guru leave the disciple and go away from the Kingdom of Fools?

Answer:

Since the disciple refused to listen to his guru's wisdom and insisted on staying there, the guru gave up and left.

Question 7.

What made the disciple grow fat?

Answer:

The disciple ate his fill of bananas, ghee, rice, and wheat, which cost only one duddu. As a result, he grew fatter and fatter.

Question 8.

Why does the writer say that 'one bright day a thief broke into a rich merchant's house'? What is strange about this statement?

Answer:

The strange thing is that the theft took place during the daylight hours. In any other place, theft would typically take place during the dark of night. However, the people in the Kingdom of Fools slept during the day and woke at night.

Question 9.

Why did the thief's brother run to the King?

Answer:

He ran to the King to complain about the fact that his brother had been killed because the wall of the house he had gone to rob had fallen on him."

Question 10.

Do you think the plea made by the thief's brother was strange? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer:

Yes, it was strange, because instead of hiding the fact that his brother was a thief, and had died trying to rob the merchant's house, he went to the King without any fear and demanded justice.

Question 11.

Do you think it was normal for the King to have demanded an explanation from the merchant for the death of the thief? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer:

No, because the thief had been doing something illegal, and yet the man he had tried to rob was being put on trial. Even though the thief died because of the wall collapsing, the merchant was not responsible for the death.

Question 12.

How does the merchant try to save his life?

Answer:

He tries to do so by blaming the brick-layer for building a wall that was so weak that it collapsed on the thief, killing him.

Question 13.

Who does the brick-layer blame for the weak wall that he had built?

Answer:

The brick-layer blames the dancing girl for distracting him by walking up and down the road in front of him with her anklets jingling.

Question 14.

Who does the dancing girl blame for her going up and down the road in front of the brick-layer?

Answer:

The dancing girl blames the goldsmith, who had to make some jewellery for her, but had not made it in time. Because of this, she had to visit him several times, thereby walking up and down the street in front of the brick-layer, disturbing him.

Question 15.

How does the goldsmith save himself from the wrath of the King?

Answer:

The goldsmith blamed a rich merchant for pressurising him to make some jewellery for him, thereby not leaving him with any time to complete the dancing girl's jewellery. Therefore, he blames the rich merchant for being indirectly responsible for the thief's death.

Question 16.

How does the blame come back to the rich merchant who had been accused in the first place?

Answer:

On investigating the identity of the rich merchant who had asked the goldsmith to make jewellery for him, it was found to be the father of the merchant who had been blamed for the thief's death in the first place. However, as the father was now dead and the son had inherited his riches, the King decided that the son would also be responsible for taking his punishment.

Question 17.

Why did the King not decide to execute the merchant even though he found him responsible for the death of the thief?

Answer:

He decided not to execute the merchant because he felt he was too thin to be properly executed on the stake. He felt they needed someone fatter to fit the stake.

Question 18.

How did the guru divine that his disciple was in trouble? What did he do?

Answer:

The guru had magical powers. He could see far into the future, the past and the present. When the disciple prayed to him in his heart, he heard him and appeared before him to help him.

Question 19.

Why did the guru pretend to fight with his disciple?

Answer:

He did this to confuse the King about the reason for his eagerness to die instead of the disciple. He knew that the King was stupid and could be fooled into taking his own life.

Question 20.

What reason does the guru give for his eagerness to die?

Answer:

The guru said that if he was the first person to die at the new stake, he would be reborn as the next King of the kingdom.

Question 21.

Why did the King and the minister decide to take the place of the guru and the disciple?

Answer:

The King was not keen to lose his kingdom to someone else, even in the next life. Thus, he decided to die instead of the guru. He then made his minister

agree to go along with him so he could continue to be his minister in the next life as well.

Question 22.

Why did the King and minister disguise themselves as the guru and disciple?

Answer:

They did this so that the executioner would mistake them for the condemned and kill them at the stake.

Question 23.

Why did the people of the kingdom panic at the sight of the bodies of the two executed men?

Answer:

They panicked because they realised that the two who had been executed were the King and the minister, and not the two who had been condemned to death.

Question 24.

Why did the people approach the guru and his disciple?

Answer:

The people realised that they needed a new King and a minister for the kingdom, and approached the guru and his disciple because they had proved to be smarter than the previous King.

Question 25.

On what conditions did the guru and disciple agree to rule the kingdom?

Answer:

They agreed to become the King and minister on the condition that they could change all the old laws. They also insisted that night would be night, day would be day, and one could no longer get everything for one duddu.

In the Kingdom of Fools Extra Questions and Answers

Long Answer Type

Question 1.

Why did the disciple decide to stay in the Kingdom of Fools? Was this a good idea? What does it reveal about his character?

Answer:

The disciple decided to stay in the kingdom because he was tempted by the fact that the place had good and cheap food, and he could eat his fill every day. This was not a good idea, because he grew so fat with all the food he ate that he almost lost his life when the King decided to put him on the stake because he was the right size for it. This shows that the disciple was immature and his greed had overcome his good sense. It also shows that he placed his body's craving for food above his loyalty and obedience to his guru.

Question 2.

Name all the people who are tried in the King's court, and give reasons for each of their trials.

Answer:

A large number of people are tried in the King's court, starting with the rich merchant. It was his house that the thief tried to enter, but died when a wall collapsed on him. He was called for trial when the thief's brother blamed him for the thief's death.

The next person to be tried was the brick-layer, who had built the house. He was put on trial for having built such a weak wall that had collapsed. After that, a dancing girl was put on trial, because the brick-layer accused her of distracting him by walking up and down the street with her anklets jingling while he was building the wall. The girl, however, blamed the goldsmith for not having made her ornaments on time, which caused her to go up and down the street.

The goldsmith was then put on trial, but blamed a rich merchant for pressurising him to make ornaments, because of which he could not complete the dancing girl's jewellery. This rich merchant turned out to be the father of the merchant whose house had been broken into.

Question 3.

Who is the real culprit according to the King? Why does he escape punishment?

Answer:

According to the King, the real culprit was the rich merchant's father, who had ordered the goldsmith to make jewellery. However, since he was dead, his son would have to be punished in his place. He escaped punishment because when the stake for impaling the criminal was sharpened and ready, the minister felt that the merchant was somehow too thin to be properly executed on the stake. He appealed to the King, who agreed with this observation. They thus decided that they needed to find a man fat enough to fit the stake.

Question 4.

What were the guru's words of wisdom? When does the disciple remember them?

Answer:

The guru's wise words were: 'This is a city of fools. You don't know what they will do next. The disciple remembers these words when he is imprisoned just because he was fat enough to fit the stake which had been prepared as a punishment for a crime he had no knowledge about.

Question 5.

How did the guru manage to save his disciple's life? What does it reveal about the King and his minister?

Answer:

The guru appeared at his disciple's prayers, and took control of the situation. He asked the king to put him in the stake before his disciple, because he was

the guru and therefore greater than the disciple. The disciple jumped into the fray and started arguing that he should be put on the stake first. The king was puzzled by their behaviour and asked the guru why he wanted to die instead of his disciple. The guru refused to answer, and continued to ask that he be executed first. The King insisted on being told the reason, until at last the guru took him aside and told him that the stake was actually the stake of justice, and whoever died on it first would be reborn as the king of that country, and the next person to die on it would become the minister.

The king was troubled as he didn't want to lose the kingdom even in the next life. Therefore, he postponed the execution and decided that he and his minister would take the place of the guru and the disciple. This shows how foolish and gullible the king and his minister were, and how easily they were fooled by the guru. It also shows the intelligence of the guru, who not only saved his disciple's life, but also improved the lot of the kingdom.