

The Proposal

Lomov is received in Chubukov's house

It is Chubukov's house. Lomov enters. Chubukov meets him. Chubukov is extremely happy to meet him. He asks him to sit down. He also asks him where he is going in the evening dress.

Lomov tells him the purpose of his visit

Lomov tells him that he has come to see him with a request. He wants to say but gets excited. Chubukov feels that he has come to borrow money. Lomov starts speaking. But he talks of this thing or that thing. At last he says that he has come to ask Natalya's hand. Chubukov is greatly excited to hear it as he is worried about his daughter's marriage.

Chubukov consents

Chubukov embraces and kisses Lomov for it. He says that he always wanted that. He is so happy that he behaves idiotically. Lomov asks him if he should think that he gives his consent. Chubukov okays it. He tells him that Natalya also is in love with him.

Lomov thinks of Natalya and his own life

Lomov trembles due to great excitement. He says that if he looks for an ideal love he would never get married. He gets cold. However, he feels that Natalya is a good housekeeper. She is beautiful and well-educated. He is already 35. He should lead a quiet and regular life. But he now has palpitations. He can't sleep. He starts jumping like a mad person.

Natalya and Lomov together

Natalya enters. She asks Lomov why he hasn't come there for a long time. She tells him about the harvest. She asks him why he is in the evening dress. She further asks if he is going to a ball.

Lomov starts talking of his land

Lomov tries to tell her the purpose behind the visit. But he is off the point. He tells that he has known her family for long. He tells how he inherited his land and how he respects Natalya's father. He also tells her that his Oxen Meadows touch Natalya's birchwoods. (But he never tells that he has come to propose to her.)

Lomov explains the ownership

Hearing this Natalya gets serious. She tells him that Oxen Meadows are not Lomov's but theirs. Lomov clarifies that he is referring to Oxen Meadows. They are between her birchwoods and the Burnt Marsh. Natalya says that they are theirs. Lomov refuses it. He says that his aunt's grandmother gave those Meadows to Natalya's father's grandfather. The peasants used the land for forty years. But they regarded them their own.

Argument continues

Natalya refuses Lomov's claim. She says that Oxen Meadows are theirs. Lomov says that he will show the documents. But Natalya says that they had the land for nearly three hundred years. She can't stand unfairness though the Meadows are worth 300 roubles. Lomov states that the peasants of Natalya's father's grandfather baked bricks for his aunt's grandmother... . Both start fighting over the

ownership. Lomov offers to make a present of them to Natalya. But she also says that she can make a present of them to him.

Shouting starts

Natalya gets angry. She comes to a low level. She starts accusing Lomov. She says that they lent him their threshing-machine. Lomov feels that Natalya has called him a landgrabber. He repeats that Oxen Meadows are his. Natalya repeats they are theirs. They start shouting at each other.

Chubukov sides with Natalya

Chubukov enters. Natalya asks him to tell Lomov that Oxen Meadows are theirs. Lomov refuses this. Chubukov clarifies that by shouting Lomov won't prove the ownership. He accuses Lomov of speaking disrespectfully as he is twice his age. Lomov adds that good neighbours don't behave like that. At the same time he calls Chubukov a landgrabber.

Abuses exchanged

Lomov threatens to take Chubukov to courts. They exchange abuses calling that Lomov's grandfather was a drunkard. His younger aunt Nastasya ran away with an architect. Lomov wants to say something. But he feels that he is dying. He says so.

Accusations continue

Natalya calls Lomov 'a rascal'. Chubukov calls him the Villain' and 'the scarecrow'. He calls him a monster who has the courage to propose.

Chubukov tells the purpose behind Lomov's visit

Hearing 'propose' Natalya asks what proposal. Chubukov tells her that Lomov had come to propose to her for marriage. Hearing this she starts weeping. She calls Chubukov to bring him back at once. She is in hysterics. He laments that it is a great burden to be a father of a grown up daughter.

Fighting over dogs

Lomov enters. He has a palpitating heart. Natalya begs to be excused. She tells him that the Meadows are his. The talk now centres on dogs. Lomov tells Natalya that his best dog Guess cost him 125 roubles. Natalya calls it too much as her father gave 85 roubles for his Squeezer. Squeezer is better than his dog. Lomov refutes it. He states that his lower jaw is shorter than the upper. Natalya defends saying that their Squeezer is of the finest pedigree.

Fighting continues

Both Lomov and Natalya start fighting over their dogs. Lomov calls his Guess better. Natalya calls hers better. Lomov's heart gets palpitating. He says that his heart is going to pieces. Chubukov enters. He asks what the matter is. Chubukov also adds that Lomov's dog Guess is old and short.

Personal accusations

Lomov cites some facts for his dog's superiority. He cites the dog race with the Count's dog. In that Squeezer was left behind. Dogs ran but Squeezer ran after a sheep. Lomov speaks about the condition of his heart. Natalya asks him what sort of hunter he is. He should go to the kitchen and not go after foxes.

Abuses hurled

Chubukov sides with Natalya. He adds that Lomov should sit at home. He changes the subject to avoid losing his temper. Lomov and he exchange abuses calling one another 'intriguer', 'pup', 'rat' etc. Lomov tells that Chubukov's late wife beat him. He falls down.

Lomov's physical condition

Natalya asks her father what has happened to Lomov. Chubukov also feels sick as he can't breathe. Chubukov asks what the matter is. Natalya says that Lomov is 'dead'. At this Chubukov calls for water and a doctor.

Chubukov as a father and his helplessness

Chubukov starts accusing himself. He calls himself the most unhappy of men. He demands for a knife or a pistol. Lomov is reviving.

Chubukov calls them to marry

Lomov says he sees stars. He asks where he is. Chubukov asks him to hurry up and get married. Natalya is also willing to marry him. Chubukov asks them to kiss each other. Lomov asks whom he should kiss. He then says that he understands. Natalya is also happy. Chubukov feels that a weight has come off his shoulders. He offers some champagne for this occasion.

NCERT Solutions

Thinking About the Play (Page 157)

Question 1.

What does Chubukov at first suspect that Lomov has come for? Is he sincere when he later says 'And I've always loved you, my angel, as if you were my own son'? Find reasons for your answer from the play.

Answer:

At first Chubukov suspected that Lomov had come to borrow money as he was in his evening dress. He was not sincere when he told Lomov that he had always loved him and that he was like his own son, because he had decided to not give any money to Lomov. It was only when Lomov asked for his daughter's hand in marriage that his attitude changed and he rushed out to call his daughter, Natalya.

Question 2.

Chubukov says of Natalya: "..... as if she won't consent! She's in love; egad, she's like a lovesick cat....." Would you agree? Find reasons for your answer.

Answer:

Yes, Natalya is in love. This is clear by the way she behaves when she gets to know that Lomov came to propose to her. She starts weeping and asks her father to bring Lomov at once.

Question 3.

1. Find all the words and expressions in the play that the characters use to speak about each other, and the accusations and insults they hurl at each other. (For example, Lomov in the end calls Chubukov an intriguer; but earlier, Chubukov has himself called Lomov a "malicious, doublefaced

intriguer.” Again, Lomov begins by describing Natalya as “an excellent housekeeper, not bad-looking, well-educated.”)

2. Then think of five adjectives or adjectival expressions of your own to describe each character in the play.

3. Can you now imagine what these characters will quarrel about next?

Answer:

The words and expressions that have been used to describe each other by various characters of the play are Chubukov: intriguer, grabber, old rat Natalya: a lovesick cat, an excellent housekeeper, not bad-looking’ well-educated. Lomov: a good neighbour, impudent, pettifogger, malicious, double faced intriguer, rascal, blind hen, turnip ghost, a villain, scare crow, stuffed sausage, etc.

Extra Questions

Very Short Answer Type

Question 1.

Why did Lomov visit Chubukov?

Answer:

Lomov visited Chubukov’s house to propose to Natalaya.

Question 2.

What does Chubukov suspect?

Answer:

Chubukov suspects that Lomov has come to borrow money from him.

Question 3.

What does Lomov think about Natalaya?

Answer:

He thinks that Natalaya is an excellent housekeeper, not bad looking, and well-educated.

Question 4.

How old was Lomov?

Answer:

Lomov was already thirty-five years old.

Question 5.

Where was the Oxen Meadows situated?

Answer:

Oxen Meadows were wedged in between Chubukov’s Birchwoods and the Burnt Marsh.

Question 6.

What does Natalaya guess on seeing Lomov?

Answer:

She thinks that he is perhaps going to a ball for dancing.

Question 7.

Why is Lomov not able to answer properly?

Answer:

Lomov is nervous and confused as he is going to propose to Natalya, so he is not able to answer properly.

Question 8.

What does Natalaya say about Oxen Meadows?

Answer:

Natalaya says that Oxen Meadows belong to her.

Question 9.

What does Lomov say on his part?

Answer:

Lomov says that Natalaya can see from the documents.

Question 10.

Who is a land grabber?

Answer:

A land grabber is a person who grabs the land of others.

Question 11.

What threatening was given by Lomov?

Answer:

Lomov told him to go to the court for a decision.

Question 12.

What is the last threatening to Lomov?

Answer:

Chubukov warned Lomov never to set foot in his house again.

Question 13.

What was felt by Lomov?

Answer:

Lomov felt heart-palpitation.

Question 14.

How does Chubukov behave in the end?

Answer:

Chubukov gives Lomov's hand into Natalaya's hands and advises them for a kiss.

Question 15.

Write down the final advice of Chubukov?

Answer:

Chubukov advised Natalaya and Lomov to start their family bliss.

Short Answer Type

Question 1.

What is the play "The Proposal"?

Answer:

The play "The Proposal" is about Lomov's visit to his neighbor's Chubukov house. Lomov is wearing a formal dress. He has come with the intention of making a marriage proposal to Chubukov's daughter, Natalaya.

Question 2.

What does Lomov think when he is alone?

Answer:

Lomov thinks that Natalaya is an excellent housekeeper, not bad looking, well educated. It is impossible for him not to marry. In the first place, he is already thirty-five. He ought to lead a quiet and regular life. He suffers from palpitations. He is excitable and always getting upset. There are some other problems too which trouble him.

Question 3.

Why does Lomov wish to propose to Natalaya?

Answer:

Lomov wishes to propose to Natalaya because he feels she is an excellent housekeeper, not bad looking, and is also well-educated. Moreover he feels that he is already thirty-five, which is a critical age and he ought to lead a regular and settled life.

Question 4.

Justify, in brief, the title of the play "The Proposal".

Answer:

The title of the play "The Proposal" is apt. Lomov comes to Chubukov's house to propose to his daughter. He talks to Chubukov about his intention and the old man is very happy to have Lomov as the husband of this ageing daughter. When Natalaya comes and there begins an argument. It reminds us of a married couple.

Question 5.

Who is Lomov? Why does he visit Chubukov?

Answer:

Lomov was a young wealthy landowner and an unmarried man of thirty-five. He was anxious to get married as he had already reached a critical age. So he decided to propose Natalaya, a girl of twenty-five years old. He visited Chubukov to ask for his daughter Natalaya's hand in marriage.

Question 6.

How does Natalaya react when she comes to know that Lomov had come to propose for her hand?

Answer:

When she knows that Lomov came to propose to her, she starts weeping. She calls her father to bring him back at once. He has gone out after the quarrel. She also accuses Chubukov that he drove Lomov out. She becomes hysterical.

Question 7.

What makes Chubukov misunderstand the purpose of Lomov's visit?

Answer:

Chubukov misunderstands that Lomov has come to borrow money. He does not reveal his purpose of coming directly instead he says that he has come to trouble him with a request for help.

Long Answer Type

Question 1.

Neighbours must have a cordial relationship that Lomov and Natalaya do not have. Describe/ Justify/ Explain the first fight between them.

Answer:

Neighbours must have a cordial relationship but in the case of Lomov and Natalaya, it was different. Lomov and Natalaya were rich people. They were wealthy people and had a competition between them on the subject of wealth. Both were neighbours. Lomov, at a critical age of thirty-five, thought that he had to marry and found Natalaya not bad looking, an excellent housekeeper. So he decided to propose to her.

Lomov, in a well-dressed manner, wearing coat and gloves, one evening went to Chubukov's house. Chubukov was Natalaya's father. When he came there and said that he wanted a help, the help which could only be done by him. Chubukov, for first time suspected that he had come for asking money. But after a long struggling and shivering, Lomov uncovers his need. He had come to propose to Natalaya. Chubukov was mistaken and he was filled with extreme joy and called Natalaya. Lomov asked then, whether Natalaya would agree for it or not. Then, Chubukov said that, she would be ready to accept it because she was a lovesick cat.

When Natalaya arrived, she actually did not know that Lomov had come to propose to her. They started talking and when they were talking about land, Lomov stated "Our Oxen Meadows". Then Natalaya said, "Our Oxen Meadows", it is not your Oxen Meadows', it is their. Lomov did not agree. But Natalaya initiated a heated argument. By arguing with each other, they did not solve any problem. They got trapped in a long argument just because of their lack of tolerance towards each other and their desire to keep their pride. Neighbours must have a cordial relationship which Lomov and Natalaya do not have.

Question 2.

Anton Chekov has used humour and exaggeration in the play to comment on courtship in his times. Illustrate with examples from the lesson, "The Proposal". Also mention the values, you think, any healthy relationship requires.

OR

The principle 'forgive and forget' helps a lot in maintaining cordial relations with our neighbours. Do you think Chubukov conveys this message in the play "The Proposal"?

Answer:

Lomov and Natalaya meet for a serious purpose, i.e., to talk about marriage that decides the progress of one's life as a member of the conventionally established society. But the purpose of their meeting gets lost on two consecutive occasions because Lomov's faith in the values of his society disrupts his approach to the topic of marriage. He learns that the girl and her father like him, but, instead of proposing to marry her and discussing how their marriage should be organised, he goes

on to talk about properties, relations, family histories, and pets, draws them into an unnecessary argument, and antagonises both of them.

Finally, Chubukov marries Lomov and Natasha by force before another problem crops up. Thus the play ends in a comic note, just because the couple gets together with their father to celebrate their marriage while the dispute over the pets is still continuing. For any healthy relationship there should be mutual understanding and respect. Quarreling over trivial issues like dog cannot guarantee longevity of a relationship.

Question 3.

Is Natalaya really a lovesick cat as called by her father? If it is so, why does she quarrel with Lomov?

Answer:

Natalaya was a young unmarried girl of twenty five years. She lived in the neighbourhood of Lomov, a young unmarried man. She was an excellent housekeeper and was not bad looking. She wanted love in her life. Her father called her a lovesick cat. Lomov said that she was well educated, but she did not seem to be so.

She was very quarrelsome and abusive by nature. She began a bitter quarrel with Lomov over a piece of land that had little value. She said that those meadows were not much worth to her but she could not stand unfairness. But when she learnt that Lomov had come to propose to her, she forgot all fairness and unfairness.

She began to wail over the lost chance. She forced her father to call him back. But in no time, she started quarrelling with him again. It was on their dogs. Both claimed their respective dogs to be of a superior breed.

Question 4.

What type of person is Natalaya? Give two examples to show her quarrelsome nature.

Answer:

Natalaya is also rather hypocritical, and she is obstinate and argumentative. When Natalaya first enters the room, she greets Lomov with warmth and is very gracious as she permits him to smoke and compliments him upon his appearance. However, when Lomov speaks of "my meadows," she abruptly interrupts and contradicts him. An argument then ensues over who own what land.

Even when Lomov offers them to her as a gift, she continues to insist upon her ownership of them in the first place, reigniting the argument until Lomov leaves. When her father finally reveals to Natalaya that Lomov has actually come to propose marriage; she is infuriated, blaming her father for causing the neighbour to depart.

Question 5.

The principle 'Forgive and Forget' helps a lot in maintaining cordial relations with our neighbours. Do you think the author proves this message in the play "The Proposal"?

Answer:

Life is a journey which is often compared to the roller coaster ride. It means life is full of ifs and buts and ups and down. But the path of life can be smoothened by virtues of our actions, attitudes and behaviour. And the principle of forgive and forget comes from these virtues. Letting go of anger and bitterness can work wonders both for our attitude and for our health.

Anger may spoil anything like poison. One cannot afford to remain wallowing in the marsh of anger or sad feelings. Life has to move on and if one wants to get ahead one has to imbibe “forgive and forget”. Only sensitive and great people can follow this gospel.

In the present play “The Proposal” we find that Lomov visits the house of Chubukov with a proposal to marry his daughter Natalaya. Chubukov’s joy knows no bound to hear this. But in course of their common talk, they pick up nonsensical issue and stand fighting and abusing each other.

Even Natalaya also jumps into the ring of verbal quarrel. When things become normal after the sudden departure of Lomov, Natalaya comes to know about the proposal, She asks her father to call Lomov back. When he comes back this time he and Natalaya starts abusing each other and have heated oral fight over dogs. But in the end, they compromise, they forget their issue and forgive each other. The proposal changes into marriage. Hence we see that the principle helped them unite.

Question 6.

What does Chubukov at first suspect that Lomov had come for? Is he sincere when he later says, “And I’ve always loved you, my angel, as if you were my own son”? Find reasons for your answer from the play.

Answer:

Chubukov has often helped Lomov with money whenever he requested for it. So he thinks and suspects that Lomov will ask for money. But this time the case is different. He requests a proposal to get Natalaya’s hand for marriage. Since long, Chubukov wanted match for his daughter. Finding fact in his favour, Chubukov changes and uses sweet words and becomes ready for the match.

Question 7.

Chubukov says of Natalaya, “... as if she won’t consent! She’s in love; egad, she’s like a lovesick cat...” Would you agree? Find reasons for your answer.

Answer:

In reality Natalaya has got the fittest age for the marriage. She wants a life partner. On the other hand, Chubukov also desires that his daughter should be married. Lomov is the most suitable match in every respect. In order to say something outwardly, Chubukov happens to pour out these words. It is an acceptable fact that Natalaya loves Lomov from the core of her heart.

Question 8.

(i) Find all the words and expressions in the play that the characters use to speak about each other, and the accusations and insults they hurl at each other. (For example, Lomov in the end calls Chubukov an intriguer; but earlier, Chubukov has himself called Lomov a “malicious, doublefaced intriguer. Again, Lomov begins by describing Natalaya as “an excellent housekeeper, not bad looking, well-educated.)

(ii) Then think of five adjectives or adjectival expressions of your own to describe each character in the play.

(iii) Can you now imagine what these characters will quarrel about next?

Answer:

(i) There are so many words and expressions that the characters use, to accuse and insult each other.

Some can be given as under. Chubukov calls Lomov: pettifogger, lunatic, drunkard, guzzling gambler, backbiters, villain, scarecrow, blind hen, stuffed-sausage, wizen-faced frump, turnip ghost. Lomov calls Chubukov and his family members: hump-backed, grabber.

(ii) Adjectival expression: Some of the adjectives can be thought as under: proud, industrious, treasure, darling, love, decent, well-educated, sensible and lovable, etc.

(iii) Natalaya, the daughter of Chubukov has got hand of Lomov. Both embrace and kiss each other. Chubukov blesses them to start a family. But like a lie, a Quarrel can be done on any issue.

Reference to Context

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow:

Question 1.

Chubukov: We just get along somehow, my angel, thanks to your prayers, and so on. Sit down, please do... Now you know, you shouldn't forget all about your neighbours, my darling. Me dear fellow, why are you so formal in your get-up! Evening dress, gloves, and so on. Can you be going anywhere, my treasure?

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) Who do 'my darling' and 'my Angel' refer to?
- (iii) Do you think Chubukov means all the nice words he speaks?
- (iv) What is antonym of 'formal'?

Answer:

- (i) Chubukov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) 'My darling' and 'my angel' refer to Lomov.
- (iii) Not at all, he is a bit hypocritical and shows excess hospitality to Lomov.
- (iv) 'informal'.

Question 2.

Lomov: Well, you see, it's like this. (Takes his arm) I've come to you, honoured Stepan Stepanovitch, to trouble you with a request. Not once or twice have I already had the privilege of applying to you for help, and you have always, so to speak... I must ask your pardon, I am getting excited. I shall drink some water, honoured Stepan Stepanovitch.

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) What was he hoping for?
- (iii) Why is he so excited?
- (iv) Pick out the word from the passage that means the same as 'opportunity'.

Answer:

- (i) Lomov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) He was hoping for marriage proposal for Natalaya.
- (iii) He is excited because he had to propose to his daughter, Natalaya.
- (iv) 'privilege'.

Question 3.

Chubukov: [Interrupting] Me dear fellow... I'm so glad, and so on... Yes, indeed, and all that sort of thing. [Embraces and kisses Lomov] I've been hoping for it for a long time. It's been my continual desire. [Sheds a tear] And I've always loved you, my angel, as if you were my own son. May god give you both—His help and His love and so on, and so much hope... What am I behaving in this idiotic way for? I'm off my balance with joy, absolutely off my balance! Oh, with all my soul... I'll go and call Natasha, and all that.

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) What was he hoping for?
- (iii) Why is he excited?
- (iv) What does the speaker wish for the listener?

Answer:

- (i) Chubukov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) Chubukov was hoping for the marriage proposal for his daughter from Lomov.
- (iii) Chubukov is excited because Lomov had come with marriage proposal for his daughter.
- (iv) Chubukov wishes for Lomov that God may give him His help and His love.

Question 4.

Lomov: It's cold... I'm trembling all over, just as if I'd got an examination before me. The great thing is, I must have my mind made up. If I give myself time to think, to hesitate, to talk a lot, to look for an ideal, or for real love, then I'll never get married. Brr... It's cold! Natalaya Stepanovna is an excellent housekeeper, not bad-looking, well-educated. What more do I want? But I'm getting a noise in my ears from excitement.

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) Who is feeling cold her?
- (iii) Why did he feel cold?
- (iv) Pick out the word from passage that means the same as 'to decide'.

Answer:

- (i) Lomov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) Lomov is feeling cold here.
- (iii) He feels cold as he has come to propose Natalaya. He is not sure how she would react.
- (iv) 'Mind made up' means to decide.

Question 5.

Natalya: Then smoke. Here are the matches. The weather is splendid now, but yesterday it was so wet that the workmen didn't do anything all day. How much hay have you stacked? Just think, I felt greedy and had a whole field cut, and now I'm not at all pleased about it because I'm afraid my hay may rot. I ought to have waited a bit. But what's this? Why, you're in evening dress! Well, I never! Are you going to a ball or what? Though I must say you look better... Tell me, why are you got up like that?

- (i) Who is speaking these words and to whom?
- (ii) Why is she not pleased?
- (iii) What does she offer him?
- (iv) Pick out the word from the passage that means the same as 'managed in a pile'.

Answer:

- (i) Natalaya is speaking these words to Lomov.
- (ii) Natalaya is not pleased because she thinks her hay might rot. She had a whole field cut and hay stacked but unfortunately it had rained the previous day.
- (iii) She offers him a cigarette to smoke.
- (iv) 'stacked'.

Question 6.

Lomov: I shall try to be brief. You must know, honoured Natalaya Stepanovna, that I have long, since my childhood, in fact had the privilege of knowing your family. My late aunt and her husband, from whom, as you know, I inherited my land, always had the greatest respect for your father and your late mother. The Lomovs and the Chubukovs have always had the most friendly, and I might almost say

the most affectionate, regard for each other. And, as you know, my land is a near neighbour of yours. You will remember that my Oxen Meadows touch your birchwoods.

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) Who is being addressed?
- (iii) What type of relations they had in the past?
- (iv) What is common between the Lomovs and Chubukovs?

Answer:

- (i) Lomov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) Lomov is being addressed to Natalaya.
- (iii) They had good relations in the past. Both the families had respect and affection for each other.
- (iv) Lomov's Oxen Meadows touch Chubukov's birchwoods.

Question 7.

Lomov: ...Oxen Meadows, it's true, were once the subject of dispute, but now everybody knows that they are mine. There's nothing to argue about. You see my aunt's grandmother gave the free use of these Meadows in perpetuity to the peasants of your father's grandfather, in return for which they were to make bricks for her. The peasants belonging to your father's grandfather had the free use of the Meadows for forty years, and had got into the habit of regarding them as their own, when it happened that.

- (i) Who is the speaker of these lines?
- (ii) What are they arguing about?
- (iii) Who gave the Meadows and to whom?
- (iv) What were they supposed to do?

Answer:

- (i) Lomov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) They are arguing about the ownership of the Oxen Meadows.
- (iii) The Oxen Meadows were given by Lomov's aunt's grandmother to the peasants belonging to Chubukov's father.
- (iv) They were supposed to make bricks for her aunty.

Question 8.

Natalya: No you're simply joking, or making fun of me. What a surprise! We've had the land for nearly three hundred years, and then we're suddenly told that it isn't ours! Ivan Vassilevitch, I can hardly believe my own ears. These Meadows aren't worth much to me. They only come to five dessiatins, and are worth perhaps 300 roubles, but I can't stand unfairness. Say what you will, I can't stand unfairness. (Page 148)

- (i) Who is the speaker? Who is being addressed?
- (ii) How much are the Meadows worth.
- (iii) What does she find 'unfair'?
- (iv) Pick out the word from the passage that means opposite to 'gradually'.

Answer:

- (i) Natalaya is the speaker. She is speaking to Lomov.
- (ii) The Meadows are worth 300 roubles.
- (iii) Natalaya finds Lomov claim that Oxen Meadows are his as unfair.
- (iv) 'suddenly'.

Question 9.

Natalya: Ours! You can go on proving it for two days on end, you can go and put on fifteen caress jackets, but I tell you they're ours, ours, ours! I don't want anything of yours and I don't want to give

anything of mine. So there!

- (i) Who is speaking these words and to whom?
- (ii) What are they arguing over?
- (iii) Pick out the word from the passage that means the same as “confirm”.
- (iv) What does the speaker offer to prove two days on end?

Answer:

- (i) Natalaya is speaking these words for Lomov.
- (ii) They are arguing over the ownership of Oxen Meadows.
- (iii) ‘prove’(PROVE)
- (iv) The Natalya offer to prove for two days on end to ownership of oxen meadows.

Question 10.

Natalya: I can make you a present of them myself, because they’re mine! Your behaviour, Ivan Vassilevitch, is strange, to say the least! Up to this we have always thought of you as a good neighbour, a friend; last year we lent you our threshing-machine, although on that account we had to put off our own threshing till November, but you behave to us as if we were gypsies. Giving me my own land, indeed! No, really, that’s not at all neighbourly! In my opinion, it’s even impudent, if you want to know.

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) Who is being addressed?
- (iii) What does the speaker offer?
- (iv) What does the speaker remind the listener?

Answer:

- (i) Natalaya is the speaker.
- (ii) Natalaya is addressing Lomov.
- (iii) She offers that she can give Lomov her Oxen Meadows as a gift.
- (iv) She reminds Lomov that they were good friends and her family gave him their threshing machine last year.

Question 11.

Lomov: But, please, Stepan Stepanovitch, how can they be yours? Do be a reasonable man! My aunt’s grandmother gave the Meadows for the temporary and free use of your grandfather’s peasants. The peasants used the land for forty years and got accustomed to it as if it was their own, when it happened that...

- (i) Who is the speaker?
- (ii) Who is being addressed?
- (iii) What do ‘They’ stand for?
- (iv) Pick out the word from the passage that means the same as “familiar”.

Answer:

- (i) Lomov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) Lomov is addressing Chubukov.
- (iii) ‘They’ refer to the ‘Meadows’. Each one is trying to prove that the Meadows belong to them.
- (iv) ‘accustomed’.

Question 12.

Natalya: There’s some demon of contradiction in you today, Ivan Vassilevitch. First you pretend that the Meadows are yours; now, that Guess is better than Squeezer. I don’t like people who don’t say what they mean, because you know perfectly well that Squeezer is a hundred times better than your silly Guess. Why do you want to say he isn’t?

- (i) What does Natalaya blame Lomov for?
- (ii) What do Natalaya and Lomov first argue about?
- (iii) Who are Guess and Squeezer?
- (iv) Pick out the word from the passage that means the same as "opposition".

Answer:

- (i) Natalaya blames Lomov for opposing whatever she says.
- (ii) Natalaya and Lomov first argue about the ownership of Oxen Meadows.
- (iii) Guess and Squeezer are the names of their dogs.
- (iv) 'contradiction'.

Question 13.

Chubukov: It's not true! My dear fellow, I'm very liable to lose my temper, and so, just because of that, let's stop arguing. You started because everybody is always jealous of everybody else's dogs. Yes, we're all like that! You too, sir, aren't blameless! You no sooner begin with this, that and the other, and all that... I remember everything!

- (i) Who is the speaker of these lines?
- (ii) Who give this advice to whom?
- (iii) Who is not blameless? Why?
- (iv) Pick out the synonym of innocent or guiltless' from the passage.

Answer:

- (i) Chubukov is the speaker of these lines.
- (ii) Chubukov gives this advice to Lomov.
- (iii) According the Chubukov, Lomov is not blameless because he had tried to prove that Guess, his dog is superior to Squeezer.
- (iv) blameless.