Chapter 5: Glimpses of India

CONTENTS 7 exercises · 23 questions

5.1	A Baker from Goa — Oral Comprehension Check 1 (Page 64)	4 Q
5.2	A Baker from Goa — Oral Comprehension Check 2 (Page 65)	5 Q
5.3	A Baker from Goa — Thinking about the Text	3 Q
5.4	Coorg — Oral Comprehension Check / Thinking about the Text	4 Q
5.5	Coorg — Thinking about Language (Collocations)	1 Q
5.6	Tea from Assam — Thinking about Language	2 Q
5.7	Thinking about the Poem — The Trees (Adrienne Rich)	4 Q

Exercise 5.1 — A Baker from Goa — Oral Comprehension Check 1 (Page 64)

Q1 What are the elders in Goa nostalgic about?

SOLUTION

The elders in Goa are often heard reminiscing nostalgically about the good old Portuguese days.

They fondly recall the Portuguese rule and their famous loaves of bread, which were a special feature of that time.

Answer: They are nostalgic about the good old Portuguese days and the famous Portuguese loaves of bread.

Q2 Is bread-making still popular in Goa? How do you know?

SOLUTION

Yes, bread-making is still popular in Goa.

The narrator tells us that though the eaters of loaves might have vanished, "the makers are still there." The mixers, moulders and bakers still exist, and the age-old, time-tested furnaces are still in use — "the fire in the furnaces has not yet been extinguished."

The thud and jingle of the traditional baker's bamboo can still be heard, and the son carries on the family profession after the father.

Answer: Yes; the makers, the traditional furnaces and the sound of the baker's bamboo still survive, and the son continues the family profession.

Q3 What is the baker called?

SOLUTION

The traditional baker of Goa is called a pader.

The text states that these bakers are, even today, known as pader in Goa.

Answer: The baker is called a pader.

Q4 When would the baker come everyday? Why did the children run to meet him?

SOLUTION

The baker used to come at least twice a day — once in the morning when he set out on his selling round, and again in the afternoon when he returned after emptying his huge basket.

The children ran to meet him not for the love of the loaf but for the bread-bangles they chose carefully, and sometimes for the sweet bread of special make.

Answer: He came twice a day (morning and afternoon); the children ran to him for the bread-bangles and sweet bread, not the loaves.

Exercise 5.2 — A Baker from Goa — Oral Comprehension Check 2 (Page 65)

Q1 Match the following. What is a must (i) as marriage gifts? (ii) for a party or a feast? (iii) for a daughter's engagement? (iv) for Christmas?

SOLUTION

Match each occasion with the item that is a must for it, based on the text:

(i) as marriage gifts — bread
(ii) for a party or a feast — sweet bread called bol
(iii) for a daughter's engagement — sandwiches
(iv) for Christmas — cakes and bolinhas

Answer: (i) bread; (ii) sweet bread called bol; (iii) sandwiches; (iv) cakes and bolinhas.

Q2 What did the bakers wear: (i) in the Portuguese days? (ii) when the author was young?

SOLUTION

(i) In the Portuguese days the baker wore a peculiar dress known as the kabai — a single-piece long frock reaching down to the knees.

(ii) When the author was young, bakers wore a shirt and trousers that were shorter than full-length ones and longer than half pants.

Answer: (i) A kabai — a single-piece long frock reaching the knees; (ii) a shirt and trousers shorter than full-length and longer than half pants.

Q3 Who invites the comment — “he is dressed like a pader”? Why?

SOLUTION

Anyone who wears a half pant that reaches just below the knees invites the comment that he is dressed like a pader.

This is because the pader of the old days wore trousers of that particular length, so such a dress reminds people of the traditional baker.

Answer: Anyone wearing a half pant reaching just below the knees, because that is how the pader used to dress.

Q4 Where were the monthly accounts of the baker recorded?

SOLUTION

The baker usually collected his bills at the end of the month.

The monthly accounts used to be recorded on some wall in pencil.

Answer: The monthly accounts were recorded on some wall in pencil.

Q5 What does a ‘jackfruit-like appearance’ mean?

SOLUTION

The baker and his family never starved; baking was a profitable profession, so they always looked happy and prosperous. Their plump physique was an open testimony to this.

A 'jackfruit-like appearance' therefore means a plump, fat and well-fed physical appearance — the kind that showed the baker's prosperity.

Answer: It means a plump, fat and prosperous-looking physique, like that of a well-fed baker.

Exercise 5.3 — A Baker from Goa — Thinking about the Text

Q1 Which of these statements are correct? (i) The pader was an important person in the village in old times. (ii) Paders still exist in Goan villages. (iii) The paders went away with the Portuguese. (iv) The paders continue to wear a single-piece long frock. (v) Bread and cakes were an integral part of Goan life in the old days. (vi) Traditional bread-baking is still a very profitable business. (vii) Paders and their families starve in the present times.

SOLUTION

Judge each statement against the text:

(i) Correct — the pader was an important person in the village.
(ii) Correct — paders still exist in Goan villages.
(iii) Incorrect — the makers are still there; the paders did not go away with the Portuguese.
(iv) Incorrect — the long frock (kabai) belonged to the Portuguese days; later bakers wore shirt and trousers.
(v) Correct — bread and cakes were an integral part of Goan life in the old days.
(vi) Incorrect — the text speaks of baking being profitable "in the old days"; it does not say it is still very profitable today.
(vii) Incorrect — the baker and his family never starved.

Correct statements: (i), (ii) and (v).

Answer: Correct statements are (i), (ii) and (v).

Q2 Is bread an important part of Goan life? How do you know this?

SOLUTION

Yes, bread is a very important part of Goan life.

Marriage gifts are meaningless without the sweet bread known as bol, and a party or feast loses its charm without bread. The lady of the house must prepare sandwiches for her daughter's engagement, and cakes and bolinhas are a must for Christmas and other festivals.

Thus the presence of the baker's furnace in the village is absolutely essential, which shows how central bread is to Goan life.

Answer: Yes; bread and its varieties are essential to every Goan celebration — weddings, feasts, engagements and Christmas — so the baker's furnace is indispensable.

Q3 Tick the right answer. What is the tone of the author when he says the following? (i) The thud and the jingle of the traditional baker's bamboo can still be heard in some places. (nostalgic, hopeful, sad) (ii) Maybe the father is not alive but the son still carries on the family profession. (nostalgic, hopeful, sad) (iii) I still recall the typical fragrance of those loaves. (nostalgic, hopeful, naughty) (iv) The tiger never brushed his teeth. Hot tea could wash and clean up everything so nicely, after all. (naughty, angry, funny) (v) Cakes and bolinhas are a must for Christmas as well as other festivals. (sad, hopeful, matter-of-fact) (vi) The baker and his family never starved. They always looked happy and prosperous. (matter-of-fact, hopeful, sad)

SOLUTION

Identify the author's tone in each sentence:

(i) nostalgic
(ii) hopeful
(iii) nostalgic
(iv) funny
(v) matter-of-fact
(vi) matter-of-fact

Answer: (i) nostalgic; (ii) hopeful; (iii) nostalgic; (iv) funny; (v) matter-of-fact; (vi) matter-of-fact.

Exercise 5.4 — Coorg — Oral Comprehension Check / Thinking about the Text

Q1 Where is Coorg?

SOLUTION

Coorg, or Kodagu, is the smallest district of Karnataka.

It lies midway between Mysore and the coastal town of Mangalore, in a land of rolling hills.

Answer: Coorg (Kodagu) is the smallest district of Karnataka, midway between Mysore and Mangalore.

Q2 What is the story about the Kodavu people's descent?

SOLUTION

The fiercely independent people of Coorg are possibly of Greek or Arabic descent.

As one story goes, a part of Alexander's army moved south along the coast and settled here when their return became impractical. These people married among the locals, and their martial traditions, marriage and religious rites still reflect this origin.

The theory of Arab origin draws support from the long, black coat with an embroidered waist-belt (kuppia) worn by the Kodavus, which resembles the kuffia worn by the Arabs and the Kurds.

Answer: They are believed to be of Greek or Arab descent — possibly descendants of Alexander's soldiers who settled there, a theory supported by their dress and customs.

Q3 What are some of the things you now know about (i) the people of Coorg? (ii) the main crop of Coorg? (iii) the sports it offers to tourists? (iv) the animals you are likely to see in Coorg? (v) its distance from Bangalore, and how to get there?

SOLUTION

(i) The people of Coorg are a proud, fiercely independent, martial race, possibly of Greek or Arabic descent. They are hospitable and love recounting tales of valour; the Coorg Regiment is one of the most decorated in the Indian Army, and General Cariappa, the first Chief of the Indian Army, was a Coorgi. Kodavus are the only

people in India allowed to carry firearms without a licence.

(ii) The main crop of Coorg is coffee; it is 'coffee country' with many coffee estates and plantations.

(iii) The sports it offers are river rafting, canoeing, rappelling, rock climbing, mountain biking and trekking along the walking trails.

(iv) The animals one is likely to see include Mahaseer (a large freshwater fish), kingfishers, squirrels, langurs, elephants, macaques, Malabar squirrels and slender loris.

(v) Coorg is around 250–260 km from Bangalore. One can reach it by air (nearest airports Mangalore and Bangalore), by rail (railheads at Mysore, Mangalore and Hassan) or by road (two routes from Bangalore, the one via Mysore being the most frequented).

Answer: The people are proud, martial and hospitable; the main crop is coffee; the sports include rafting, canoeing, rappelling and trekking; animals include mahaseer, kingfishers, langurs and elephants; it is ~250–260 km from Bangalore, reachable by air, rail or road.

Q4 Here are six sentences with some words in italics. Find phrases from the text that have the same meaning. (i) During monsoons it rains so heavily that tourists do not visit Coorg. (para 2) (ii) Some people say that Alexander's army moved south along the coast and settled there. (para 3) (iii) The Coorg people are always ready to tell stories of their sons' and fathers' valour. (para 4) (iv) Even people who normally lead an easy and slow life get smitten by the high-energy adventure sports of Coorg. (para 6) (v) The theory of the Arab origin is supported by the long coat with embroidered waist-belt they wear. (para 3) (vi) Macaques, Malabar squirrels observe you carefully from the tree canopy. (para 7)

SOLUTION

Find the matching phrase from the indicated paragraph:

(i) "it pours enough to keep many visitors away"
(ii) "As one story goes, a part of Alexander's army moved south along the coast and settled here"
(iii) "they are more than willing to recount numerous tales of valour"
(iv) "The most laidback individuals become converts to the life of high-energy adventure"

(v) "The theory of Arab origin draws support from the long, black coat with an embroidered waist-belt"
(vi) "keep a watchful eye from the tree canopy"

Answer: (i) it pours enough to keep many visitors away; (ii) as one story goes...settled here; (iii) more than willing to recount numerous tales of valour; (iv) become converts to the life of high-energy adventure; (v) draws support from...; (vi) keep a watchful eye from the tree canopy.

Exercise 5.5 — Coorg — Thinking about Language (Collocations)

Q1 Complete the following phrases from the text. For each phrase, can you find at least one other word that would fit into the blank? (i) tales of ___ (ii) ___ coastal (iii) a piece of ___ (iv) evergreen ___ (v) ___ plantations (vi) ___ bridge (vii) wild ___

SOLUTION

Complete each phrase as it appears in the text, and suggest another word that fits:

(i) tales of valour — (also: tales of courage/woe)
(ii) coastal town — (also: coastal area/region)
(iii) a piece of heaven — (also: a piece of cake/land)
(iv) evergreen rainforests — (also: evergreen trees/forests)
(v) coffee plantations — (also: tea/rubber plantations)
(vi) rope bridge — (also: cattle-bridge/railway bridge)
(vii) wild creatures — (also: wild elephants/animals)

Answer: tales of valour; coastal town; a piece of heaven; evergreen rainforests; coffee plantations; rope bridge; wild creatures.

Exercise 5.6 — Tea from Assam — Thinking about Language

Q1 Look at these words: upkeep, downpour, undergo, dropout, walk-in. They are built up from a verb (keep, pour, go, drop, walk) and an adverb or a particle (up, down, under, out, in). Use these words appropriately in the sentences below. (i) A heavy ___ has been forecast due to low pressure in the Bay of Bengal. (ii) Rakesh will ___ major surgery tomorrow morning. (iii) My brother is responsible for the ___ of our family property. (iv) The ___ rate for this accountancy course is very high. (v) She went to the Enterprise Company to attend a ___ interview.

SOLUTION

Fill each blank with the correct word:

(i) downpour
(ii) undergo
(iii) upkeep
(iv) dropout
(v) walk-in

Answer: (i) downpour; (ii) undergo; (iii) upkeep; (iv) dropout; (v) walk-in.

Q2 Now fill in the blanks in the sentences given below by combining the verb given in brackets with one of the words from the box as appropriate. (over, by, through, out, up, down) (i) The Army attempted unsuccessfully to ___ the Government. (throw) (ii) Scientists are on the brink of a major ___ in cancer research. (break) (iii) The State Government plans to build a ___ for Bhubaneswar to speed up traffic on the main highway. (pass) (iv) Gautama's ___ on life changed when he realised that the world is full of sorrow. (look) (v) Rakesh seemed unusually ___ after the game. (cast)

SOLUTION

Combine the given verb with a word from the box:

(i) overthrow
(ii) breakthrough
(iii) bypass
(iv) outlook
(v) downcast

Answer: (i) overthrow; (ii) breakthrough; (iii) bypass; (iv) outlook; (v) downcast.

Exercise 5.7 — Thinking about the Poem — The Trees (Adrienne Rich)

Q1 (i) Find, in the first stanza, three things that cannot happen in a treeless forest. (ii) What picture do these words create in your mind: “... sun bury its feet in shadow...”? What could the poet mean by the sun's ‘feet’?

SOLUTION

(i) In a treeless forest three things cannot happen: no bird can sit, no insect can hide, and no sun can bury its feet in shadow.

(ii) The words "sun bury its feet in shadow" create the picture of sunlight filtering through trees and falling on the shaded forest floor. The sun's 'feet' are its rays or beams of light — when they reach the ground beneath the trees, it is as if the sun is standing there with its feet buried in the shadow cast by the leaves. In a treeless forest there is no shadow, so this cannot happen.

Answer: (i) No bird can sit, no insect can hide, no sun can bury its feet in shadow. (ii) It pictures sunlight reaching the shaded forest floor; the sun's 'feet' are its rays of light.

Q2 (i) Where are the trees in the poem? What do their roots, their leaves, and their twigs do? (ii) What does the poet compare their branches to?

SOLUTION

(i) The trees are inside the house. All night their roots work to disengage themselves from the cracks in the veranda floor; their leaves strain toward the glass; and their small twigs grow stiff with exertion as the trees struggle to break free and move out into the forest.

(ii) The poet compares the long-cramped boughs (branches) to newly discharged patients — "like newly discharged patients, half-dazed, moving to the clinic doors."

Answer: (i) The trees are inside the house; the roots disengage from the floor cracks, the leaves strain toward the glass, and the twigs stiffen with exertion. (ii) The branches are compared to newly discharged patients moving to the clinic doors.

Q3 (i) How does the poet describe the moon: (a) at the beginning of the third stanza, and (b) at its end? What causes this change? (ii) What happens to the house when the trees move out of it? (iii) Why do you think the poet does not mention “the departure of the forest from the house” in her letters?

SOLUTION

(i) (a) At the beginning of the third stanza the whole moon shines in a sky still open — it is full and bright. (b) At the end the moon is broken like a mirror, its pieces flashing in the crown of the tallest oak. The change is caused by the tall trees moving out into the night, so that their branches now break up the view of the moon and it seems shattered when seen through them.

(ii) As the trees move out, the glass of the house breaks and the trees stumble forward into the night. The house is left empty, losing the greenery, the smell of leaves and lichen, and the whispers that had filled it.

(iii) The poet scarcely mentions the departure of the forest in her letters probably because we are often silent about important happenings that are so unexpected and overwhelming that they embarrass us or leave us unable to put them into words. The event is too momentous and strange to be described in an ordinary letter.

Answer: (i) At first the whole moon shines; at the end it is broken like a mirror, because the trees moving out break up the view. (ii) The glass breaks and the house is left empty. (iii) Because we often stay silent about happenings too unexpected and overwhelming to describe.

Q4 Now that you have read the poem in detail, we can begin to ask what the poem might mean. Here are two suggestions. Can you think of others? (i) Does the poem present a conflict between man and nature? Compare it with A Tiger in the Zoo. Is the poet suggesting that plants and trees, used for ‘interior decoration’ in cities while forests are cut down, are ‘imprisoned’, and need to ‘break out’? (ii) On the other hand, Adrienne Rich has been known to use trees as a metaphor for human beings; this is a recurrent image in her poetry. What new meanings emerge from the poem if you take its trees to be symbolic of this particular meaning?

SOLUTION

(i) Yes, the poem can be read as a conflict between man and nature. Just as the tiger in 'A Tiger in the Zoo' is caged and longs to be free in the wild, the trees here are trapped indoors, used for 'interior decoration', while real forests are cut down. Confined inside the house, they are 'imprisoned' and must struggle — breaking the glass — to break out and return to the forest where they belong. The poet suggests that nature cannot be caged and will assert its freedom.

(ii) If the trees are taken as a metaphor for human beings, the poem becomes a picture of people (especially women) breaking free from the confinement of the home and the restrictions imposed on them. The struggle of the roots, leaves and boughs to move out then stands for the human urge for liberation, self-expression and freedom — fitting Adrienne Rich's identity as a feminist and radical poet. Their escape into the open night becomes a symbol of the human spirit refusing to be imprisoned.

Answer: (i) Yes — like the caged tiger, the indoor trees are 'imprisoned' and must break out; nature resists confinement. (ii) Read as a metaphor for humans (especially women), it becomes a poem about breaking free from confinement toward liberation and self-expression.