Chapter 6: A Tiger in the House

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Exercise 6.1 — Comprehension Check I

Q1 "He had the distinction of being the only member of the party to have bagged any game..." The phrase in italics means: (i) Grandfather was the most distinguished member of the party. (ii) Grandfather was the only sportsperson in the party. (iii) Grandfather was the only successful member of the hunting party.

SOLUTION

The phrase 'bagged any game' means to have caught or claimed any animal during the hunt. Grandfather alone brought back something from the forest — the tiger cub — making him the only one who returned with any 'game', dead or alive.

Options (i) and (ii) are not supported by the text; the sentence is specifically about the result of the hunting trip.

Answer: (iii) Grandfather was the only successful member of the hunting party.

Q2 Complete the following sentences. (i) Toto climbed up the curtains when ——— (ii) ———, I became one of the tiger's favourites. (iii) Timothy had clean habits, ———

SOLUTION

(i) Toto would pull the tiger cub by the tail; Timothy would then lose his temper, and Toto would scramble up the curtains to escape.

(ii) The narrator came to live with Grandfather, after which Timothy chose him as one of his play companions.

(iii) The text states Timothy would scrub his face with his paws exactly like a cat.

Answer: (i) Toto climbed up the curtains when Timothy lost his temper. (ii) When I came to live with Grandfather, I became one of the tiger's favourites. (iii) Timothy had clean habits, and would scrub his face with his paws exactly like a cat.

Exercise 6.2 — Comprehension Check II

Q1 Grandmother's prophecy was that the tiger: (i) would prefer Mahmoud's bed to sleep in. (ii) and the cook would disappear together from the house. (iii) would one day make a meal of Mahmoud. Mark the right answer.

SOLUTION

Grandmother said: 'we are going to find Timothy sitting on Mahmoud's bed, and no sign of the cook except his clothes and shoes.'

This clearly means she feared the tiger would eat Mahmoud, leaving only his clothes behind — option (iii).

Option (i) is only half the prophecy; option (ii) misreads it — the cook would not 'disappear together' with the tiger but would be eaten.

Answer: (iii) would one day make a meal of Mahmoud.

Q2 When Timothy was about six months old, a change came over him. The phrase in italics means that: (i) Timothy had grown to his full size. (ii) Timothy grew more friendly. (iii) Timothy grew less friendly, in fact more dangerous.

SOLUTION

The text says he 'grew steadily less friendly' — he would stalk cats, raid the poultry house, and finally stalked Mahmoud 'with what looked like villainous intent.'

This matches option (iii) exactly.

Answer: (iii) Timothy grew less friendly, in fact more dangerous.

Q3 Write 'True' or 'False' against each statement. (i) Timothy and Grandfather went to Lucknow in a special compartment. (ii) The compartment in which Grandfather and Timothy travelled had no other passenger. (iii) Timothy and Grandfather travelled in a first class compartment. (iv) All passengers in the compartment thought that Timothy was a well-fed and civilised tiger.

SOLUTION

(i) The text says Grandfather reserved 'a first class compartment', not a specially arranged compartment — it was a regular first class booking. FALSE.

(ii) The text says 'no one would share a compartment with them', so it had no other passenger. TRUE.

(iii) Grandfather reserved a first class compartment. TRUE.

(iv) Only the zoo authorities — not compartment passengers — described Timothy as 'well-fed and fairly civilised'. No passengers are described as thinking this. FALSE.

Answer: (i) False. (ii) True. (iii) True. (iv) False.

Q4 Grandfather suggested that Timothy should be put in another cage. The reason was that: (i) the tiger had become very bad tempered. (ii) a leopard in the next cage would constantly rush at Timothy. (iii) the cage was too small for a full grown tiger.

SOLUTION

Grandfather says: 'That leopard keeps frightening him. I'll go and see the Superintendent about it.'

The leopard in the adjoining cage kept snarling and rushing at the bars, making Timothy slink away in fear — option (ii).

Answer: (ii) A leopard in the next cage would constantly rush at Timothy.

Q5 The tiger was still licking his arm, with increasing relish. The phrase in italics suggests that Timothy: (i) was good natured. (ii) recognised an old friend. (iii) smelt fresh food.

SOLUTION

Ironically, the tiger licking 'with increasing relish' actually means it found the arm appetising — it was a wild, newly trapped tiger that had never met Grandfather.

The keeper had just revealed this was not Timothy but a dangerous wild tiger trapped last month.

The growing relish implies the tiger smelt fresh food, making option (iii) correct.

Answer: (iii) smelt fresh food.

Exercise 6.3 — Answer the Following Questions

Q1 Where was the tiger cub hiding when Grandfather found him?

SOLUTION

The text states Grandfather discovered a little tiger 'hiding among the intricate roots of a banyan tree' while strolling down a forest path in the Terai jungle near Dehra.

Answer: The tiger cub was hiding among the intricate roots of a banyan tree in the Terai jungle near Dehra.

Q2 (i) What did Toto do to entertain Timothy? (ii) What did he do when Timothy lost his temper?

SOLUTION

(i) Toto would pull the young tiger by the tail to provoke and play with him.
(ii) When Timothy lost his temper at this teasing, Toto would quickly climb up the curtains to safety.

Answer: (i) Toto entertained Timothy by pulling his tail. (ii) When Timothy lost his temper, Toto climbed up the curtains to escape.

Q3 'I became one of the tiger's favourites.' Who is 'I' in the statement? Why did he think so?

SOLUTION

'I' refers to the narrator, the author (Ruskin Bond), who came to live with his grandfather.
He thought so because Timothy would play his favourite stalking game with him — creeping up with a crafty look, dashing at the narrator's feet, rolling over, kicking with delight, and pretending to bite his ankles.

Answer: 'I' is the narrator (the author). He became Timothy's favourite because the tiger loved to stalk and play with him — creeping up, dashing at his feet, and pretending to bite his ankles.

Q4 Where was Timothy most comfortable during the day? Where was he during the night?

SOLUTION

During the day, Timothy's favourite place was the drawing-room, where he would recline on the long sofa with great dignity, snarling at anyone who tried to move him.
At night he slept in the cook Mahmoud's quarters and was always delighted to be let out by him in the morning.

Answer: During the day Timothy was most comfortable reclining on the drawing-room sofa. At night he slept in the cook Mahmoud's quarters.

Q5 What was Grandmother's prophecy about the cook? Did it come true?

SOLUTION

Grandmother prophesied that one day they would find Timothy sitting on Mahmoud's bed, with no sign of the cook except his clothes and shoes — meaning the tiger would eat him.

It never came true; however, Timothy did grow dangerous enough to stalk Mahmoud 'with what looked like villainous intent', which prompted Grandfather to send him to the zoo before any harm was done.

Answer: Grandmother predicted that Timothy would one day eat Mahmoud, leaving only his clothes behind. It never came true, but Timothy did begin stalking the cook dangerously, leading Grandfather to transfer him to the zoo.

Q6 What made Grandfather decide to transfer Timothy to the zoo?

SOLUTION

As Timothy grew older (about six months), he became steadily less friendly and more dangerous.

He would try to stalk cats and pet dogs on walks, raided the poultry house at night, and finally began to stalk Mahmoud around the house with what appeared to be villainous intent.

This last behaviour convinced Grandfather that Timothy was now a threat to people and had to be sent to the zoo.

Answer: Timothy grew increasingly dangerous — raiding the poultry, stalking pets, and finally following the cook Mahmoud around the house with a threatening look. This convinced Grandfather to transfer him to the zoo.

Q7 Why did Grandfather want Timothy to be put in another enclosure?

SOLUTION

A leopard was kept in the cage next to Timothy's.

The leopard kept snarling and rushing at the bars, which frightened Timothy and made him slink back into his corner.

Grandfather felt this was unfair and suggested to the keeper and the Superintendent that Timothy be moved away from the leopard.

Answer: The leopard in the neighbouring cage kept rushing at the bars and frightening Timothy, forcing him to cower in his corner. Grandfather wanted him moved to spare him this constant fear.

Q8 What shocked Grandfather in the end?

SOLUTION

Grandfather had been stroking and slapping the tiger affectionately, believing it to be Timothy.

The second keeper — the one who had been there when Timothy was first brought to the zoo — revealed that the real Timothy had died of pneumonia two months ago.

The tiger Grandfather had been petting was a wild, newly trapped, dangerous tiger from the hills.

Grandfather was shocked to realise he had unknowingly been petting a wild tiger that could have attacked him at any moment.

Answer: Grandfather was shocked to learn that the real Timothy had died of pneumonia two months earlier. The tiger he had been freely petting was a newly trapped wild tiger — extremely dangerous — and not his old pet at all.

Exercise 6.4 — Discuss

Q1 Shoot animals with a camera, not with a gun.

SOLUTION

Hunting wild animals with guns has driven many species close to extinction.
Photography lets us appreciate wildlife without harming it, and wildlife photos raise public awareness about conservation.
Stories like this one show how wild animals, even when raised gently, belong in nature — observing them there, through a lens, respects their wildness and keeps both animals and humans safe.

Answer: Photographing wildlife preserves their lives and memories both. Hunting has pushed many species to extinction, while camera shoots raise awareness and support conservation. Animals like Timothy remind us that wild creatures belong in their natural habitat, best admired from a respectful distance through a lens.

Q2 Keeping pets helps us become more loving and tolerant. It also helps us respect life in any form. Do you agree?

SOLUTION

Caring for a pet teaches responsibility and empathy — you learn to understand a creature that cannot speak and depends on you.
In the story, the whole family — Grandfather, Grandmother, the cook, and the narrator — grew genuinely fond of Timothy, tolerating his naughtiness and worrying about his welfare.
This bond extended their circle of care beyond human beings to another living creature, which is the essence of respecting all life.

Answer: Yes. Caring for Timothy made the entire household more patient, loving, and attentive to a creature's needs. Pets teach us that life in every form deserves care and respect, expanding our empathy well beyond the human world.

Q3 Have you heard of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)? What do they do?

SOLUTION

The SPCA is an organisation dedicated to protecting animals from abuse, neglect, and cruelty.
They rescue injured or mistreated animals, run shelters, facilitate adoptions, and campaign for stronger animal welfare laws.
They also educate the public — especially children — about treating animals kindly.
Their work connects directly to the story's theme: wild animals like Timothy need proper care and, ultimately, appropriate natural or zoo environments rather than domestic settings.

Answer: The SPCA works to protect animals from cruelty and neglect. They rescue and shelter animals, promote adoption, and advocate for animal welfare laws. Their mission — that every animal deserves kind treatment — echoes the care Grandfather's family showed Timothy, and the responsibility we all share toward animals.