A Triumph of Surgery

**Read and Find Out  
(Page 1)**  
Question 1.  
Why is Mrs Pumphrey worried about Tricki?  
Answer:  
Mrs Pumphrey is worried about Tricki because he is unwell. He has refused to eat food and had bouts of vomiting. She feels that he is suffering from a serious health issue such as malnutrition.

Question 2.  
What does she do to help him? Is she wise in this?  
Answer:  
Mrs Pumphrey starts giving him extra snacks like malt, cod-liver oil and Horlicks, apart from his main meals, to improve his condition. She also continues to satisfy his sweet tooth with cream cakes and chocolates. She does not give him any exercise, considering his listlessness as well. She is not wise in doing so because overfeeding Tricki is worsening his conditions instead of improving it. It has made him very fat and lazy.

Question 3.  
Who does ‘I’ refer to in this story?  
Answer:  
‘I’ refers to the narrator, Mr James Herriot, a veterinary doctor.

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Question 4.  
Is the narrator as rich as Tricki’s mistress?  
Answer:  
No, the narrator is not as rich as Tricki’s mistress, Mrs Pumphery. We can say so because the narrator seems fascinated by how lavishly Mrs Pumphrey spends on the well-being and maintenance of her pet. He is unusually surprised by the enriching items she sends for Tricki, as he cannot afford them for himself.

Question 5.  
How does he treat the dog?  
Answer:  
James Herriot treats Tricki just like he would treat an overweight and lazy dog, which Tricki is. He cuts down his food intake and keeps him under strict observation for the initial days at hospital. He gradually increases Tricki’s food and sets him free for physical activities to improve his health.

Question 6.  
Why is he tempted to keep Tricki on as a permanent guest?  
Answer:  
Mr Herriot is tempted to keep Tricki on as a permanent guest because of the good food and wine he is enjoying in Tricki’s name. He does not want to lose the luxurious inflow of fresh eggs, wine and brandy.

Question 7.  
Why does Mrs Pumphrey think the dog’s recovery is ‘a triumph of surgery’?  
Answer:  
Mrs Pumphrey thinks that Tricki’s recovery is a triumph of surgery because his illness was very serious. She was of the opinion that there were very few chances of Tricki to improve and he needed immediate medical attention. Thus, his revival without any medicinal treatment was a great achievement, according to her.

**Think About It  
(Page 6)**

Question 1.  
What kind of a person do you think the narrator, a veterinary surgeon, is? Would you say he is tactful as well as full of common sense?  
Answer:  
The narrator, a veterinary surgeon, is a capable and wise doctor. He handles Tricki properly which shows that he is sincere about his profession.  
He does not operate upon the dog unnecessarily and cures him by altering his diet and activities.

Question 2.  
Do you think Tricki was happy to go home? What do you think will happen now?  
Answer:  
Tricki was happy to go back home as he really loved his mistress and the comfort of his lavish life. He didn’t have any friends at home like in the hospital, but he seemed equally excited at the sight of Mrs Pumphrey. I think that Mrs Pumphrey will now be careful about Tricki’s diet and health. She may also give him exercise daily as prescribed by the vet earlier.

Question 3.  
Do you think it is a real-life episode or mere fiction? Or is it a mixture of both?  
Answer:  
The story seems to be a mixture of both. It may be possible for rich persons to overfeed their pets due to love. It is not unusual for them to maintain a vast wardrobe for them either. But it is unlikely for a veterinary doctor to go out of the way and lie in order to save an animal. It is also unusual for anyone to consume food which is given in the name of a pet’s health.

**Talk About It  
(Page 7)**

Question 1.  
This episode describes the silly behaviour of a rich woman who is foolishly indulgent, perhaps because she is lonely. Do you think such people are merely silly or can their actions cause harm to others?  
Answer:  
Mrs Pumphrey’s actions had a harmful reaction on Tricki’s health. She was overparenting’ and overfeeding Tricki in the name of love. This worsened his condition to an extent that he had to be hospitalised. People like Mrs Pumphrey are not just merely silly but their actions can definitely have dangerous consequences for others.

Question 2.  
Do you think there are also parents like Mrs Pumphrey?  
Answer:  
Yes, there are some parents like Mrs Pumphrey who spoil their children by pampering them. They overfeed their children/pets despite being aware of the harmful effects on their health. Parents like Mrs Pumphrey should maintain a healthy lifestyle of their family and pets.

Question 3.  
What would you have done if you were :

1. a member of the staff in Mrs Pumphrey’s household,
2. a neighbour? What would your life have been like, in general?

Answer:

1. If I were a member of the staff in her household I would have not followed Mrs Pumphrey’s command to feed Tricki blindly. In fact, I would have fed him according to the vet’s advice. I would have also skipped sending the unnecessary stuff like toys, cushions etc to the hospital. My life would have been a very busy one, as I would have had to take care of the household chores and meet Tricki’s demands on time.
2. If I were Mrs Pumphrey’s neighbour, I would have advised her to consult a vet and follow his advice strictly keeping in mind Tricki’s deteriorating health. I would have also been supportive in their hard time when Tricki was hospitalised. My life as Mrs Pumphrey’s neighbour would have been full of surprises and gifts as Mrs Pumphrey was a loving lady.

Question 4.  
What would you have done if you were in the narrator’s place?  
Answer:  
If I were in the narrator’s place, I would have treated Tricki with a similar amount of compassion and love. I would have been equally caring as Mr James Herriot towards Tricki. I would have just been a little more stern while advising Mrs Pumphrey to put Tricki on a strict diet knowing her way of showing love. I would have also not consumed Tricki’s share of eggs, wine and brandy sent by Mrs Pumphrey.

**Short Answer Type Questions [2 Marks each]**

**Question 1.**  
What made James Herriot expect a call from Mrs Pumphrey? **[CBSE 2015]**  
**Answer:**  
James Herriot’s encounter with Mrs Pumphrey and Tricki made him expect a call for help. He was sure that the extra diet and no physical activity would soon put Tricki’s health in danger. And just as anticipated, Mrs Pumphrey called the vet a few days afterwards.

**Question 2.**  
What ‘extra’ did Mrs Pumphrey start to give Tricki and why?  
**Answer:**  
Mrs Pumphrey thought that Tricki was suffering from malnutrition, as he was weak and listless. So, she started to give him extra snacks like cod-liver oil and malt between the main meals and Horlicks after dinner to make him stronger. She aslo continued his cream cakes and chocolates.

**Question 3.**  
What made Mrs Pumphrey call the vet?  
**Answer:**  
Tricki’s condition made Mr» Pumphrey call the vet for help. Tricki had become fat and lazy. He just used to lie on his rug and pant. He also refused to eat food, even his favourite dishes. His bouts of vomiting added to Mrs Pumphrey’s worry. That is why, she called James Herriot.

**Question 4.**  
How can you say that it was hard for Mrs Pumphrey to part with her doting pet?  
**Answer:**  
Mrs Pumphrey treated Tricki as her own child. She loved him very much. It was very difficult for her to see Tricki in such a situation. She was distraught when she had to make the decision to hospitalise Tricki, for her love for him knew no bounds. It was a terrible and tearful moment for her but she agreed to Herriot’s suggestion for the betterment of her pet.

**Question 5.**  
What kind of treatment was given to Tricki? Did it help in his recovery?  
**Answer:**  
Tricki was given a non-medicinal treatment. His diet regimen was altered depending upon his body’s response to it. He was kept on liquid diet for the first two days and then his diet was gradually increased. Yes, this treatment did help Tricki as it built up energy in him. He had transformed to an energetic, hard-muscled dog in just a fortnight.

**Question 6.**  
Was Tricki suffering from any ailment in reality? If not, then what made him inactive and lethargic?  
**Answer:**  
No, Tricki was not suffering from any ailment. It was his greed for food and the love of his mistress that spoilt his health to such an extent. He was being overfed everyday and that made him obese and lethargic. That is why his health showed rapid improvement when his diet was controlled.

**Question 7.**  
Briefly describe Herriot’s days of content.  
**Answer:**  
The time of Tricki’s stay at the hospital was a period of content for Herriot. He used to enjoy the treat that arrived in the name of Tricki, as he could not afford all this for „ himself. Herriojj used to relish the fresh eggs in breakfast, wine before and during lunch and brandy in the night.

**Question 8.**  
Do you think Tricki was enjoying his stay at the hospital? [CBSE 2011]  
**Answer:**  
Yes, Tricki was definitely enjoying his stay at the hospital. He had befriended the gang of shabby household dogs. He had found a new joy in being bowled over, trampled on and squashed. He had also become very energetic. He used to play and run all day long with the dogs. He was having a great time.

**Long Answer (Value Based) Type Questions [8 Marks each]**

**Question 1.**  
Excess of everything is bad. Comment in the wake of Mrs Pumphrey’s love for Tricki.  
**Answer:**  
Mrs Pumphrey was a rich woman who loved her dog very much. She loved to live a comfortable and lavish life and also wanted her dog to spend a similar one. She had maintained a wardrobe full of fancy fur coats, dresses, beds etc for Tricki. Apart from this, she used to overfeed Tricki out of her love and concern. She used to serve him cod-liver oil and malt between the main meals and Horlicks after dinner to give him strength. She never realised that Tricki was a greedy dog and this would spoil his health. She could not even refuse to answer Tricki drooling for cream cakes and chocolates. Her overfeeding worsened Tricki’s condition. This made the dog lazy, inactive and obese. He used to lie on his rug and pant all day long. Mrs Pumphrey fed him excessively, spoiling Tricki’s health to such an extent that he had to be hospitalised. Even in the hospital she continued to convey Tricki her love through eggs, wine and brandy. Her fondness and care for Tricki proved that excess of everything made him fall sick.

**Question 2.**  
Pen down incidences in support of values one should inculcate from Mr James Herriot. **[CBSE 2015]**  
**Answer:**  
Mr Herriot was a capable veterinary surgeon who treated Tricki. He was a very compassionate doctor and a wise and sympathetic human being. He showed his capabilities almost immediately when he advised Mrs Pumphrey to put Tricki on a strict diet after understanding his symptoms. He can also be said to be an understanding and tactful person as he knew exactly how to free Tricki from the spoiling love of Mrs Pumphrey for his betterment. He does not operate upon the poor dog unnecessarily and adopts a practical approach to treat him. Mr James was a caring and polite individual as he successfully allays Mrs Pumphrey’s anxiety about Tricki’s recovery patiently. He was in all a good human being and a successful professional.

**Question 3.**  
Do you think parents like Mrs Pumphrey exist? If yes, is it a good thing to pamper children? Why or why not? **[CBSE 2012]**  
**Answer:**  
Yes, parents like Mrs Pumphrey definitely exist. These people spoil their children by ptaking sure all their demands are met. They spoil their children in the name of love and care. They not only feed them junk but also spoil their social habits. This kind of a behaviour is very harmful for children. Such overprotective parental behaviour hinders their growth as adults. In fact it sows the seeds of greed and dependency in them They become stubborn and do not learn to value anything. For them, hard work is a myth as they get everything easily. Over pampered children often fail to face the hardships of life later, as for them life has been a cakewalk. Pampering children in moderation is healthy, but excess of it is harmful. It is not just bad for humans but also for animals, as we see in the story ‘A triumph of Surgery’.