## **Mijbil the Otter**

**Oral Comprehension Check  
Page 106**

Question 1.  
What ‘experiment’ did Maxwell think Camusfearna would be suitable for?  
Answer:  
The writer had gone to Southern Iraq in the year 1956. He took a fancy to the idea that instead of keeping a dog as a pet, he would go for an otter. Camusfearna was surrounded by water, so it would be an eminently suitable spot for this experiment.

Question 2.  
Why does he go to Basra? How long does he wait there, and why?  
Answer:  
The writer went to Basra to collect and answer his mail from Europe.  
He had to wait there for 5 days as his mail did not arrive.

Question 3.  
How does he get the otter? Does he like it? Pick out the words that tell you this.  
Answer:  
His friend bought the otter for him and sent it to the place where he was staying.  
The author liked it. This is seen in “The second night Mijbil came on to my bed in the small hours and remained asleep in the crook of my knees….” “ I made a body-belt for him…”.

Question 4.  
Why was the otter named ‘Maxwell’s otter’?  
Answer:  
The otter was named by zoologists as Lutrogale Perspicillata Maxwelli. Hence, it was called Maxwell’s otter in short.

Question 5.  
Tick the right answer. In the beginning, the otter was  
1. aloof and indifferent  
2. friendly  
3. hostile  
Answer:  
What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? What did it do two days after that?  
In the beginning, the otter was aloof and indifferent.

Question 6.  
What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? What did it do two days after that?  
Answer:  
When the author first took Mijbil to the bathroom, the otter first went wild with joy in the water. He plunged and rolled in it. He jumped up and down the length of the bathtub. He made enough slosh and splash. After two days, the otter suddenly disappeared and went to the bathroom to play in the water and opened the tap on his own.

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Question 1.  
How was Mijbil transported to England?  
Answer:  
Mijbil was packed in a box as the airlines had directed the author. As British airlines did not allow pets on board the author had to book a ticket on a different airline from Iraq to Paris and then Paris to London.

Question 2.  
What did Mij do to the box?  
Answer:  
The box was lined with a metal sheet. Mij didn’t feel comfortable in the box and tried to escape. In his attempt to escape, Mij tore into the metal lining of the box and in the process hurt himself.

Question 3.  
Why did Maxwell put the otter back in the box? How do you think he felt when he did this?  
Answer:  
As there was no other way to carry Mij to London, Maxwell put in the box again. He must have felt pity on the way the otter hurt himself. Moreover, he must be worried as well.

Question 4.  
Why does Maxwell say the airhostess was “the very queen of her kind”?  
Answer:  
The airhostess was very sympathetic after listening to Maxwell’s story. She understood how he might be feeling and then gave him permission to take the otter out of the box. Due to all this, Maxwell referred her as “the very queen of her kind”.

Question 5.  
What happened when the box was opened?  
Answer:  
As soon as the box was opened, Mij ran out. Then it ran all over the place scaring all the passengers. It created a claos and most of the people in the plane got scared.

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Question 1.  
What game had Mij invented?  
Answer:  
Mij invented a game of playing with the ball in a unique way. One of the author’s suitcase was damaged and had a slope on the top part. Mij would put the ball on the high end and run to catch it as it slided to the lower end.

Question 2.  
What are ‘compulsive habits’? What does Maxwell say are the compulsive habits of  
1. school children  
2. Mij?  
Answer:  
Compulsive habits are usually strange act or behaviour which a person does without clear reason. For example a cricket player may put on his right shoes first as he believes it would bring him good luck or a kid jumping over a fence, instead of going through the passage way. Usually compulsive beahviour of children are full of childhood mischief and those of adults are of incorrigible type.  
1. As per this story, children must place their feet squarely on the centre of each paving block; must touch every seventh upright of the iron railings, or pass to the outside of every second lamp post.  
2. Mijbil while on its way to home would jump over the boundary wall railing and run at full speed throughout its length.

Question 3.  
What group of animals do otters belong to?  
Answer:  
Otters belong to a comparatively small group of animals called Mustellines. The other animals of this group are badger, mongoose, weasel, stoat, mink and others.

Question 4.  
What guesses did the Londoners make about what Mij was?  
Answer:  
As otters are not found in England so Londoners made the wildest possible guesses about Mij. Their guesses ranged from a baby seal, a squirrel, a hippo to a brontosaurus.

**MADAM RIDES THE BUS**

**Oral Comprehension Check  
Page 119**

Question 1.  
What was Valli’s favourite pastime?  
Answer:  
Valli’s favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house and looking at the street outside.

Question 2.  
What was the source of unending joy for Valli? What was her strongest desire?  
Answer:  
The sight of the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town, filled each time with a new set of passengers, was a source of unending joy for Valli. Her strongest desire was to ride the bus.

Question 3.  
What did Valli find out about the bus journey? How did she find these details?  
Answer:  
Valli found out that the bus journey to the town took 45 minutes and the one-way fare costed 30 paisa. She listened carefully to the conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus and asked a few discreet questions here and there. This way she picked up various small details about the bus journey.

Question 4.  
What do you think Valli was planning to do?  
Answer:  
Valli was planning to go to the town and then return back by the same bus. The fare was 30 paise one way and the ride took forty five minutes. In this way, she planned that she would be back by 2:45 pm if shf took the bus at 1:00 pm.

**Page 122**  
Question 1.  
Why does the conductor call Valli ‘madam’?  
Answer:  
The conductor called Valli ‘madam’ because she behaved like a woman. She declined his help and was very quick in her answers to the conductor’s questions. This made the conductor call him madam.

Question 2.  
Why does Valli stand up on the seat?  
(or)  
What does she see now?  
Answer:  
Valli wanted to look outside the bus. She found her view blocked by the canvas blind that covered the lower part of the window. In order to have a better view she stood up on the seat and peered over the blind. She saw a canal, palm trees, grassland, mountains, green fields and the sky.

Question 3.  
What does Valli tell the elderly man when he calls her a child?  
Answer:  
Valli replied that there was nobody in the bus who was a child. She told her that she had paid her fare of 30 paise like

Question 4.  
Why didn’t Valli want to make friends with the elderly woman?  
Answer:  
Valli did not wanted to make friends with the elderly woman because she looked quite repulsive. She had big earholes and was wearing ugly earrings. Apart from this, she was chewing betel and her mouth was also filled with betel juice.

**Page 125**

Question 1.  
How did Valli save money for her first journey?\Was it easy for her?  
Answer:  
Valli had very painstakingly saved every stray coins that came her way by resisting every temptation to buy peppermints, toys, balloons, etc. It had been very difficult for her. Even at the village fair she resisted the temptation to be on the merry-go-round. Thus, she had been able to save sixty paise for her first bus journey.

Question 2.  
What did Valli see on her way that made her laugh?  
Answer:  
Valli saw a young cow, tail high in the air running very fast right in the middle of the road in front of the bus. The driver sounded his horn again and again so that the cow moves away. But the more he honked, the more frightened the animal became and faster it galloped. This all seemed very funny to Valli and she laughed and laughed till there were tears in her eyes.

Question 3.  
Why didn’t she get off the bus at the bus station?  
Answer:  
Valli had planned that she only wanted to ride on the bus. She would spend thirty paise on her fare, go to the town and then come back by the same bus before her mother woke up. She didn’t 1 time or money to go to see the town.

Question 4.  
Why didn’t Valli want go to the stall have a drink? What does this tell yo about her?  
Answer:  
Valli had saved only sixty paise for the trip.  
She didn’t want to waste any money on the as she had to come back by the same bus at any cost. So, when the conductor suggested her to get down and have a drink she refused. He offet bring one for her but she still refused. This i that she was a well-mannered girl.

**Thinking About The Text  
(Page 127)**

Question 1.  
What was Valli’s deepest desire? Find the words and phrases in the story that tell you this.  
Answer:  
Valli’s deepest desire was to go on a bus ride. The words and phrases in the story that tell this are ‘source of unending joy’, ‘stare wistfully’, and ‘kindle in her longings, dreams and hopes’.

Question 2.  
How did Valli plan her bus ride? What did she find out about the bus, and how did she save up the fare?  
Answer:  
Over many days and months, Valli listened carefully to conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus and asked a few discreet questions here and there. She came to know that the town was six miles from her village, the bus fare was thirty paise and the bus trip took forty-five minutes. She also thought that if she stayed in the bus and came back by the same bus it would only cost her sixty paise. She painstaking saved each and every penny she got, resisting all temptation to buy peppermints, toys, etc and even a ride on the merry-go-round at the village annual fair so as to save sixty paise. It was a secret trip which she had planned without the knowledge of her parents.

Question 3.  
What kind of person is Valli? To answer this question, pick out the following sentences from the text and fill in the blanks. The words you fill in are the clues to your answer.  
Answer:  
Valli was a confident girl who did not think that her age was a limitation to her travelling alone to the town. She considered herself a grown up and acted like one.

Question 4.  
Why does the conductor refer to Valli as ‘Madam’?  
Answer:  
The conductor called Valli ‘Madam’ as she behaved like a grown up and did not think that she was a child. She also refused his help and told him that she can manage on her own.

Question 5.  
Find the lines in the text which tell you that Valli was enjoying her ride on the bus.  
Answer:  
Valli thoroughly enjoyed her ride in the bus. The following lines from the text tell us about it. She saw so many things on her way-a canal, palm trees, grasslands, distant mountains. “Oh! it was all so wonderful,” that’s what she felt. “Sometimes the bus seemed on the point of gobbling up another vehicle that was coming towards them or a pedestrian crossing the road. Somehow it passed smoothly, leaving all obstacles behind and then she saw a cow running very fast, infront of the bus. This all seemed very funny ro Valli and she laughed and laughed till tears flowed from her eyes.”

Question 6.  
Why does Valli refuse to look out of the window on her way back?  
Answer:  
Valli refused to look out of the window on her way back as she saw the dead body of the cow who was running towards the bus when she was going to town. This made her sad and frightened.

Question 7.  
What does Valli means when she says… “I was just agreeing with you what you said about things happening without our knowledge”.  
Answer:  
While making this statement, Valli was trying to hide the fact about her bus ride. She was also feeling elated at making a successful attempt at her plan.

Question 8.  
The author describes the things that Valli sees from an 8 years old’s point of view. Can you find evidence from the text for his statement?  
Answer:  
Yes, for example when the author says, ‘she was fascinated by the bus’ and ‘watching the bus fill with a new set of people each time was a source of unending joy for her’. When the author describes the bus, he stresses on the colour and look of the new bus ‘like silver’ because a child is attracted towards colour. ‘The seats were soft and luxurious’. The description that the author gives when Valli looked outside are also typical of a 8 year old. ‘The blue sky’ and ‘acres and acres of green field’, show the enthusiasm a child. A cow running in front of the bus fascinated the child whereas the sight of dead cow brought tears in her eyes and she refused to look outside the window on her return journey. This’also describes the behaviour of an 8 year old child aptly.

**Writing  
(Page 128)**

Question 1.  
Have you ever planned something entirely on.your own, without taking grown ups into your confidence? What did you plan and how? Did you carry out your plan?  
Answer:  
It was during my summer vacations. I wanted to plan a special birthday for my mother. So, I roped in my younger sister in my plan to celebrate her birthday. We saved our pocket money and didn’t go for our weekly outings for some time. In this way, we were able to save five hundred rupees for the birthday party. Now, we had to arrange everything without our mother’s knowledge. On her birthday we pretended as if we didn’t remember her birthday at all. Instead we requested our father to take her to the market. In the meantime, we arranged everything like cake, decorations, flowers and even invited two of her best friends. When she came back she was surprised. It was the best birthday she ever had in her life.

Question 2.  
Have you made a journey that was unforgettable in some way? What made it memorable?  
Answer:  
I have gone on many trips and excursions, but one journey which I can’t forget is my trip to Hemkund and Badrinath. The scenery over there was mesmerising and as you leave Delhi, you enjoy cool fresh air and see breath taking lush green fields. The bus ride takes you on winding narrow roads, with river flowing on one side and mountains on the other side. To reach Hemkund Sahib, one has to travel 14 kms by foot. Everywhere there are crowds of devotees, chanting holy names and moving up the hill. When I reached the shrine, it was enveloped in clouds. The water in the holy tank was ice cold. The moment you step in it your tiredness vanishes. After that we went to Badrinath by bus. It was also a very nice place. There were many hot springs over there.

Question 3.  
Are you concerned about traffic and road safety? What are you concerns? How would you make road travel safer and more enjoyable?  
Answer:  
India has a wide network of roads. Everyday crores of Indians travel on these road by bus, car, cycle, cycle rickshaw, scooter, moped, truck, etc. Even pedestrians use these roads. As people don’t follow road safety rules, every year many people lose their lives due to fatal road accidents. It is also seen that 90 per cent of these fatal accidents involve youngsters who like to drive at very high speed, don’t wear helmets and seat belt, talk on mobiles while driving or love to do stunts inspired by movies. Despite many directions issued by the traffic police all their advice falls on deaf year. It is our duty to follow all the rules and regulations and to keep safety measures in our mind while driving. Safe driving is best driving and the rules are framed keeping our security in mind:

## **The Sermon at Benares**

**Thinking About the Text  
(Page 135)**

NCERT Books

Question 1.  
When her son dies, Kisa Gotami goes from house to house? What does she ask for? Does she get it? Why not?  
Answer:  
After the death of her only son, Kisa Gotami was overcome with grief. She carried the dead body of her son in her arms and went from door to door asking for medicine to cure her child, but nobody could provide any medicine. For there is no such medicine available which can bring a dead person back to life.

Question 2.  
Kisa Gotami again goes from house to house after she speaks with the Buddha. What does she ask for? Does she get it? Why not?  
Answer:  
Gautama Buddha asks Kisa to bring a handful of mustard seeds from a house where death had never knocked at the door. Kisa Gotami went from door to door, but couldn’t find a single house where death had not taken a beloved away. She could not get it as death is ineritable and anyone who is born is bound to die one day.

Question 3.  
What does Kisa Gotami understand the second time that she failed to understand the first time? Was this what Buddha wanted her to understand?  
Answer:  
After failing to procure a handful of mustard seeds from a house where death had never knocked at the door, she sat down by the roadside feeling helpless. She saw the lights of the city that flickered and were extinguished. At last, it was darkness everywhere.  
She realised that death was common to all and she was being selfish in her grief. Yes, this is what Buddha wanted her to understand, that everyone who is born has to die one day.

Question 4.  
Why do you think Kisa Gotami understood this only the second time? In what way did Buddha change her understanding?  
Answer:  
Earlier, she could see only her grief. When she went from door to door the second time, she understood that everyone was dealing the with the loss of a beloved one. There was not a single house in the town, where death had not taken a father, a mother, a sister, a brother, son or a daughter. Everyone, at some point or the other, have experienced the death of their loved ones. Gautama Buddha helped her to understand all this, as he told her to bring a handful of mustard seeds from a house where death had never knocked at the door. This way she got aware that death is common to all human beings.

Question 5.  
How do you usually understand the idea of selfishness? Do you agree with Kisa Gotami that she was being selfish in her grief?  
Answer:  
A selfish person is one who only thinks about himself or herself, and to some extent Kisa Gotami was being selfish because we are humans and it is natural for us to die. We do not easily accept the death of our loved ones. Same has happened with Kisa Gotami. As it was her only child, she did not want him to die finally went to Buddha to ask for help.