

Footprints without Feet

Answers to NCERT Questions

READ AND FIND OUT

1. How did the invisible man first become visible?

Ans: The invisible man (Griffin) first became visible after he slipped into a big London store for keeping warm and overslept there while wearing some clothes taken from the store. The clothes made him visible to the shop assistants when the shop opened in the morning. To escape from there, he had to shed all his clothes to become invisible again.

2. Why was he wandering the streets?

Ans: Though he was a brilliant scientist, he was a lawless person. His landlord disliked him and wanted to evict Griffin. In revenge, he set fire to the house. To escape, he removed his clothes, becoming invisible. Thus, he became homeless and was wandering the streets of London.

3. Why does Mrs Hall find the scientist eccentric?

Ans: Mrs Hall found the scientist eccentric because of his strange appearance and also, when she tried to be friendly with him, he rebuffed her by saying that he has come there for solitude and did not wish to be disturbed in his work.

4. What curious episode occurs in the study?

Ans: Very early one morning, a clergyman and his wife were awakened by noises coming from their study. Then they heard the sound of coins being taken from the desk there. However, when they entered the study, they did not find anybody there, which was curious.

5. What other extraordinary things happen at the inn?

Ans: At the inn, Mrs Hall and her husband went into the scientist's room on finding its door open. However, he was not seen in the room, but Mrs Hall heard a sniff and the hat on the bedpost leapt up and dashed into her face. Then the bedroom chair sprang into the air and pushed them both out of the room. This made Mrs Hall think that her furniture was haunted.

THINK ABOUT IT

1. "Griffin was rather a lawless person." Comment.

Ans: Griffin was not bothered if he had harmed anybody in the fulfilment of what he wanted. He set his landlord's house on fire because the landlord tried to make him leave. Then his robberies at shops and later in the village indicate that he was a lawless person. When he encountered the landlady of the inn, he threw a chair at her and her husband. Lawless persons like Griffin never think about the safety and well-being of others. They are only concerned about themselves.

2. How would you assess Griffin as a scientist?

Ans: Griffin is a brilliant scientist, as he discovers how to make himself invisible. But he seems to enjoy the feeling of power which he gets out of his invisibility. The power to hurt anybody without getting noticed can give sadistic pleasure to some people. A true scientist should make discoveries for the larger benefit of society, not just for his own benefit.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Would you like to become invisible? What advantages and disadvantages do you foresee, if you did?

Ans: It can be an exciting idea for most people. Like two facets of a coin, invisibility can have many advantages and disadvantages. For a child, invisibility may mean a licence for all kinds of pranks without getting caught. Like a Hindi movie, invisibility can help you beat all the villains black and blue, and get rid of them. Once you become invisible, nobody would notice you. Within no time, the sadness of isolation will take over the excitement of being invisible. You will have no friend. You will tend to behave like the eccentric scientist in this story.

2. Are there forces around us that are invisible, for example, magnetism? Are there aspects of matter that are 'invisible' or not visible to the naked eye? What would the world be like if you could see such forces or such aspects of matter?

Ans: Magnetic forces and electrostatic forces are examples of invisible forces. The atoms and molecules in a matter are so small that they are not visible to the naked eye. Similarly, heat energy is invisible. Similarly, sound is invisible to us. While the idea of seeing invisible things can be very exciting, their visibility would create too many problems. For example, if we are able to see all the sound around us, that would be too irritating for us.

3. What makes glass or water transparent (what is the scientific explanation for this)? Do you think it would be scientifically possible for a man to become invisible, or transparent? (Keep in mind that writers of science fiction have often turned out to be prophetic in their imagination!)

Ans: The fact that light can pass through glass or water makes them transparent. When light falls on an object, the reflected light from that object makes it visible to us. If some

device can be made which can prevent reflection of light from the human body, then the human body can be made invisible.

Additional Questions

Short Answer Questions (30-40 words)

1. Why was Mrs Hall angry with Griffin, the strange scientist?

Ans: Griffin had attacked Mr and Mrs Hall, and even threw her mother's chair at her. Moreover, Griffin had not paid the rent for a long time. This made Mrs Hall angry.

2. How did Griffin try to get rid of Mrs Hall's accusations?

Ans: Griffin got furious with Mrs Hall's accusation of stealing money and of not paying her rent. He threw off his bandages, spectacles and became invisible. He hit everyone and escaped from there.

3. Why did Griffin set the landlord's house on fire?

Ans: Griffin was not liked by his landlord. He decided to take revenge on him, so one day he set his house on fire. Moreover, he did not want anyone to know about his secret discovery.

4. How did Griffin escape from the London store?

Ans: When two attendants of the store discovered Griffin, they chased him. Hence, in order to protect himself, he threw away his clothes and became invisible and escaped from the London store.

5. How did Griffin become invisible?

Ans: Griffin swallowed a concoction of certain rare drugs that made his body transparent like glass, and also, solid as glass.

6. Why were the landlord and his wife surprised to see the scientist's door open?

Ans: They were surprised because typically the door to the scientist's room was shut and locked, and he would be very angry if anyone entered it.

7. Why did Griffin go inside a big London store?

Ans: Griffin went inside a big London store to gain some warmth, find a place for the night, and also to put on some clothes.

8. Why did Griffin not get a suitable house to live in?

Ans: Griffin was a lawless person, who was largely disliked by all. When his landlord tried to evict him, he set fire to the house and escaped due to his invisibility. Thereafter, it became difficult for him to find a proper place to live in.

9. How did Griffin try to become visible?

Ans: Griffin went into a shop in Drury Lane, the heart of the theatre world, with the aim of finding something to wear, and becoming visible. He emerged from the shop wearing bandages around his forehead, dark glasses, a false nose, bushy sideburns and a large hat.

10. Why were the two boys surprised when they saw the imprints of a pair of bare feet?

Ans: The two boys could see muddy footprints on the steps of a house in central London, descending towards the street. It was surprising to see the footprints without seeing anybody making them.

11. How did he save himself from the chasing staff of the store?

Ans: When Griffin saw that the salesmen of the store were coming near him, he took off all his clothes and became invisible. He did not have any other choice to save himself.

12. What was so strange about the furniture of Mrs Hall?

Ans: When Mrs Hall went to see the invisible man in his room, she found the bedroom chair became alive, springing into the air, it charged straight into her. Then the chair pushed both husband and wife out of the room. She felt that spirits have entered into her furniture and she became hysterical.

13. What did he do inside the London store?

Ans: Inside the London store, Griffin wore woollen clothes. He wore shoes, an overcoat and a hat. He ate cold meat and drank coffee. He enjoyed sweets and wine also. Then he slept on a pile of quilts.

14. What happened when Griffin didn't wake up in time?

Ans: Griffin entered a big London store. There he slept on a pile of quilts. The next morning, he did not wake up in time. The shop assistants opened the door. They found Griffin sleeping.

15. How did he escape from the London store?

Ans: Griffin got up and tried to escape. The assistants ran after him. But Griffin took off his clothes one by one. He became invisible and escaped.

16. What did Griffin do in the shop of a theatrical company?

Ans: Griffin entered the shop of a theatrical company. He wore bandages around his forehead. Then he wore dark glasses, a false nose and a big hat. He put side whiskers also. Then he attacked the shopkeeper. He robbed him of his money and came out.

17. Why were the landlord and his wife surprised to see the scientist's door wide open?

Ans: The scientist always kept his room locked. He got angry if anybody tried to enter his room. So, the landlord and his wife were surprised when they found his door wide open. It was an unusual thing.

18. What did the scientist do when he became furious? Why were the people in the bar horrified?

Ans: The scientist became angry. He took off his bandages, false nose and side whiskers. But he was still wearing his clothes. The people in the bar were horrified when they saw a headless man.

19. What happens to the constable?

Ans: The policeman tried to catch Griffin. But he looked a headless man. Griffin hit the constable. Then Griffin took off his clothes and became totally invisible. The constable was hit by unseen blows. Griffin knocked him unconscious.

20. Why did Griffin set the house of the landlord on fire?

Ans: Griffin was a lawless man. His landlord disliked him. He tried to eject him from his house. Griffin became angry. He wanted to take revenge upon him. So he set fire to his house.

21. What reason did Griffin give to Mrs Hall for coming to Iping?

Ans: Griffin told Mrs Hall that he had come to Iping for having rest. He said that he did not want to be disturbed in his work. He told her that his face had been affected in an accident.

22. What did Griffin do in the house of the clergyman?

Ans: Griffin ran short of money. He decided to steal it from the clergyman's house. He entered the house invisibly and stole money from his desk.

23. How did Griffin become a homeless wanderer without clothes?

Ans: Griffin was a lawless scientist. He wanted to take revenge on his landlord. He set his house on fire. Then, he took some rare drugs. He became invisible. He took off his clothes and came out. Thus, he became a homeless wanderer without clothes.

24. Why was the time bad for Griffin, the scientist, to become invisible?

Ans: Griffin removed his clothes and became invisible. It was the month of January. The air was very cold. He started shivering with cold. Thus, the time was bad for Griffin to become invisible.

25. How did Griffin save himself from the cold of January?

Ans: Griffin was shivering with cold. He entered a big store. After some time, the store was closed. Griffin wore warm clothes. Then he slept on a pile of quilts. Thus, he saved himself from the cold.

26. Why was there an empty space above the shoulders even when Griffin was fully clothed?

Ans: Griffin's body had become totally invisible. He became fully clothed. But the space over his shoulders remained uncovered. Therefore, there was an empty space above his shoulders.

27. What discovery did Griffin make?

Ans: Griffin was a brilliant scientist. He made some experiments to show that the human body could be made transparent. At last, he discovered a rare drug. He took this drug and his body became as transparent as a sheet of glass.

28. Why were the two boys in London surprised and fascinated?

Ans: The two boys in London saw the muddy footprints. The footprints were fresh. But they could not see any man. The footprints moved on. Soon these prints disappeared. So, the two boys were surprised and fascinated.

Long Answer Questions (100-150 words)

1. How would you assess Griffin as a scientist and a human being? What qualities or values would you suggest will make him a better person?

Ans: Griffin was an eccentric scientist who had discovered a rare drug which could make him invisible. Griffin became invisible not for the welfare of the society, but to satisfy, his own ego and carry out satanic deeds. He was a brilliant scientist but not a law abiding person. He was a criminal scientist who had no respect for humanity. He stole money from the clergyman's house, set the landlord's house on fire and even killed his father for his own benefit. He was not also a good human being. He was rude to everyone. When everyone asked about his secret, he hit them and escaped becoming invisible. I would like to suggest him to imbibe empathy, kindness, helpfulness, honesty, generosity, social responsibility, etc. These values will make him a better person. He should have used his discovery for the benefit of society and his country.

2. Mrs Hall found the scientist rather eccentric. How can he be helped to lead a normal life?

Ans: Griffin was an eccentric scientist who had come to Iping in a desire for solitude. He did not wish to be disturbed and moreover, he had come to the town at that time of winter when no one comes. Mrs Hall found him eccentric because of his looks. He was overdressed with all parts of his body covered. He was wearing dark glasses, big bushy side whiskers and a large hat all the time, even at night. He could be helped to lead a normal life by guiding him patiently. He should be counselled to work for the welfare of society.

3. Griffin was his own enemy. What typical traits of his character led to his downfall?

Ans: Griffin was truly his own enemy. He was short-tempered, violent and lawless. Being a person prone to anger, and a scientist, proved to be a dangerous combination, he would attack without provocation, as he did the Drury Lane shopkeeper. Despite being invisible, he was careless enough to be 'discovered' stealing at the clergyman's house. Thus, all these character flaws, i.e., inexplicable anger, aggression, hostility, restlessness, vexation and uncontrolled behaviour led to his downfall.

4. Griffin's unlawful activities devalue his scientific discovery. What are some of the qualities that he should develop?

Ans: Griffin was a scientist who had actually made a major discovery, that of invisibility. However, his illegal activities greatly undermined his discovery. People were afraid of him and did not recognise his achievement due to his anger and violent nature. Griffin ought to have been more tolerant and patient. Instead of terrorising people with his discovery, he should have exercised discretion, and gradually revealed himself to the world. Patience would have been an asset for him, as would have common sense!

5. How did Griffin steal money from the clergyman's house? How did he escape arrest?

Ans: Griffin came to live at village Iping. One day, he ran short of money. He had to pay the rent to the innkeeper. He made himself invisible. He entered the clergyman's house. He took money from the desk. When he was taking away the money, the clergyman and his wife heard the sound. They came downstairs to look into the matter. They opened the door and looked into the room. But nobody was there. Griffin came back to his room and paid the dues to the landlady. But the neighbours suspected Griffin. Mrs Hall called a policeman. He tried to arrest Griffin. But Griffin made himself invisible and escaped arrest.

6. What was the curious episode that took place in the clergyman's study?

Ans: One day, early in the morning, some sounds came from the study. The clergyman and his wife were awakened. They came downstairs. They heard the chink of money

from the study. It was clear that someone was taking away money from the clergyman's desk. The clergyman took a poker in his hand. He carefully opened the door. He expected to find a thief in the room. So he shouted and asked the man to give in. But he found the room empty. They were surprised. He and his wife looked under the desk. They looked behind the curtains. They even checked the chimney. But they did not find anybody. However, the desk had been opened. They found that money was missing from the desk. This was really a curious episode.

7. Describe Griffin's adventures in the London store.

Ans: Griffin set fire to his landlord's house. Then he took a drug and became invisible. But he had to remove his clothes. It was the middle of winter. The air was very cold. He reached a London store. Before the closing time, he entered the store. After some time, the store was closed. Now he was free. He broke and opened boxes and wrappers. He took out some clothes and wore them. He was feeling hungry. So he went into the kitchen. He ate cold meat and drank coffee. Then he lay on a pile of quilts. The next morning, he did not get up in time. The shop assistants reached. They found Griffin sleeping on quilts. He woke up and tried to run away. The servants ran after him. Griffin again took off his clothes one by one. He became invisible once again. Thus, he was able to save himself.

8. Why was the arrival of the stranger in a village is an unusual event? Give two reasons.

Ans: Griffin was a scientist. He reached the village inn in winter. He was a stranger in that village. It was not a proper time to visit the village. People did not come here in winter. So the event was unusual. Secondly, Griffin looked very strange. He was wearing dark glasses, a false nose and a big hat. His forehead was covered with bandages. He did not talk to anyone in the village. He said that he wanted to live alone. He asked Mrs Hall not to disturb him. The people of the village were attracted towards his strange appearance and habits. Thus, his coming to the village was an unusual event.

9. Describe the policeman's fight with the invisible man.

Ans: One day, Griffin stole money from the clergyman's house. The people of the village suspected Griffin. They thought that he had stolen the money. Mrs Hall called a policeman. When the policeman reached there, he was surprised. Griffin had removed his spectacles, false nose and side whiskers. Now, he looked headless. The policeman was surprised as he had to arrest a headless man. He tried to catch Griffin. But Griffin started taking off his clothes one by one. He was becoming more and more invisible. In the end, he became totally invisible. The constable tried to fight with him. Some villagers also tried to help the policeman. But they received blows from nowhere. Then Griffin hit the policeman. He fell unconscious. Then, Griffin became free and walked out.

Self-Assessment Test

Short Answer Questions

1. Why was Mrs Hall hysterical and fell down the stairs?
 2. Why did Griffin slip into a big London Store?
 3. Who was Griffin? Why did he become a homeless wanderer?
 4. What does Griffin do at London Store?
 5. What makes you think that Griffin was a lawless person?
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Long Answer Questions

1. Narrate the adventure of Griffin in the village Iping.
2. Describe the scene when Mr Jaffers tries to arrest "a man without a head".
3. Why did Griffin enter the big London Store? What did he do there? How was he finally obliged to have it?