

The Book That Saved the Earth

READ AND FIND OUT

1. Why was the twentieth century called the 'Era of the book'?

Ans: There were books for everything, from anteaters to Zulus. Books taught people what to do, how to do, when to do and why to do. They explained, educated, directed and decorated. No wonder that it was called the era of books.

2. Who tried to invade the earth in the twenty-first century?

Ans: Martians tried to invade the earth in the twenty-first century.

3. What guesses are made by Think-Tank about the books found on earth?

Ans: Think-Tank first guesses them to be sandwiches. Then he calls them communication devices. After that he thinks them to be some kind of eye communication devices that have to be devices watched.

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Noodle avoids offending Think-Tank but at the same time he corrects his mistakes. How does he manage to do that?

Ans: Noodle avoids offending Think-Tank while correcting his mistakes by presenting his own thoughts, but referring to them as being of no particular importance. Whenever he had to say something contrary to what Think-Tank said, he would do this. In this way, he would correct Think-Tank's errors without making Think-Tank feel that he was being corrected.

2. If you were in Noodle's place, how would you handle Think-Tank's mistakes?

Ans: If I were in his place, I would do the same. I would politely and gently suggest the corrections.

3. Do you think books are being replaced by the electronic media? Can we do away with books altogether?

Ans: Yes, these days online reading has replaced traditional books to a large extent. Internet, Facebook, Twitter, etc. have decreased interest in reading. But the truth is that books cannot be totally replaced. Books can never go out of life although they may exist in a different form.

4. Why are books referred to as a man's best companion? Which is your favourite book and why? Write a paragraph about that book.

Ans: A book is a man's best companion because it is always there. It never leaves us alone. It is there with us even when everyone else is gone. Books guide us, instruct us, make us laugh, inform us, inspire us and are always true to us. My favourite book is Peter Pan. It is a fairy tale. I love the character of Peter. He lives in fantasies. He is a child who never wants to grow up and he never does. He enjoys thrills and adventures and even takes the kids from earth on a merry adventure. The book inspires as it shows that one can remain a child at heart forever. The sense of wonder, innocence, purity and joy can stay in the human heart forever.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. In what ways does Think-Tank misinterpret innocent nursery rhymes as threats to the Martians? Can you think of any incidents where you misinterpreted a word or an action? How did you resolve the misunderstanding?

Ans: The words like 'shell' and 'silver' make Think-Tank think that humans grew them in farms. Then, there is a line about 'cow' and 'moon'. Also, the picture of Humpty-Dumpty and the rhyme of 'great fall' make Think-Tank think that humans were about to invade Mars. Yes, I had a similar misunderstanding with a friend. But I was fortunate as I got to know the actual truth just in time. I did not believe what I had heard earlier.

2. The aliens in the play speak English. Do you think this is their language? What could be the language of the aliens?

Ans: No, English was not their language. If it had been so, they would not have misinterpreted the nursery rhymes. They could be speaking some Martian language.

Additional Questions

Short Answer Questions (30-40 words)

1. How did the children's book transform his life?

Ans: The children's book transformed his life as he had to leave his kin and evacuate the entire planet. He had to go Alpha Centauri, a hundred million miles away to save his life.

2. Why did Think-Tank react in alarm to the third passage read?

Ans: Think-Tank reacted in alarm as he misunderstood the meaning of the poem and thought that they can actually grow crops of rare metals and even explosives also, which are dangerous for him.

3. What different guesses were made by the Martians about what books are?

Ans: In the process of Martian invasion on earth, they landed in a library. They took the books as sandwiches and tried to understand the meaning of the code. And for that, they had to take vitamins given by the chemical department. They thought it would increase their intelligence.

4. What steps did the crew take to decipher the code in the sandwich?

Ans: Martians reached the library in the process of invasion on earth. They had never seen books before that. They did not understand where they are and what are the things placed in different racks. Firstly, they thought that they were sandwiches and tried to eat them. Then they misunderstood that sandwiches are used as some sort of communication device. Later, they took them as eye communication and not ear communication, and understand that they had to take vitamins to understand all these codes.

5. Why did Think-Tank send his crew on the earth?

Ans: Think-Tank, the ruler of Mars regarded the earth as a mass of mud, and earthlings as ugly, tiny-headed creatures. He planned to invade earth and expand his domain. He sent Probe One to earth to get more information about the earthlings.

6. How did Think-Tank interpret the poem, 'The Cat and the Fiddle'.

Ans: The second rhyme was about the cat and the fiddle, wherein the cow jumped over the moon, the dog laughed to see it and the dish ran away with the spoon. Think-Tank misinterpreted it. He thought that earthlings had taught their domesticated animals musical culture and space techniques. They might be launching an interplanetary attack on millions of cows!

7. How does Think-Tank describe the people on earth? Why does he command Noodle to contact the space probe?

Ans: Think-Tank thought earthlings were weak, ignorant, uncivilised persons and hence, planned to invade earth. He sent his commander Noodle to make contact with the crew of the manned space probe, now on earth to seek more information about the earth.

8. What do the historians speak about the books?

Ans: The historians tell that the twentieth century was called — The Era of Books. They motivate them when they are the man's best friends and companions. They inspire disheartened. They give us pleasure and knowledge.

9. What does Noodle suggest to Think-Tank about the books?

Ans: Noodle tells Think-Tank that the earthlings did not listen to the sandwiches, they opened and watched them. Think-Tank had thought that the books were sandwiches. He told that they use these books as a device of communication.

10. Who was Omega? Why did he try to eat the book?

Ans: Omega was the captain of the space control Probe One, on earth. Think-Tank asked him to pick up the most colourful sandwich (book) and report him about his observation on it.

11. Why is book referred to as a man's best companion? Which book saved the earth from Martian invasion?

Ans: Books are our best friends and companions. They are never demanding but always giving knowledge and pleasure. They give us company. The book that saved the earth from Martian invasion was 'Mother Goose.'

12. Why did Think-Tank decide to evacuate the Mars?

Ans: Think-Tank misinterpreted the rhymes and thought earthlings were a threat to him as well as to Mars. He got scared and called back Probe One, dropped the idea of invading and escaped to Alpha Centauri, a hundred million miles away from Mars.

Long Answer Questions (100-150 words)

1. 'Pride has a fall'. Justify this statement giving relevant points from how Think-Tank reacted to the readings from Mother Goose.

Ans: Martians invaded the earth and reached in a library. Think-Tank was their boss. He was very proud of his wisdom, as he was having a big balloon like head. He thought that he was the wisest person on Mars. Nobody could disobey him, or even dare to speak against him. He claimed that he had a quick mind. He had no respect for anyone and regarded other views as trifling. He was also fickle-minded.

He misinterpreted the rhymes in a complete verbal manner. The rhyme mistress Mar made him ponder over the discovery of the earth. From the poem, diddle-diddle he was more alarmed and from the poem Humpty-Dumpty, he was so frightened that he decided to leave his kingdom and run away to Alpha Centauri. Thus, his great wisdom was defeated and had a great fall.

2. Attempt a character sketch of Noodle highlighting the values projected by him.

Ans: Noodle is one of the crew members of the invasion team that came to invade earth. He is known as Apprentice Noodle. He is the co-coordinator between Think-Tank and the invasion team. He echoes Think-Tank in every manner. He is a very clever creature. He knows that Think-Tank being commander-in-chief has to be obeyed. So he keeps on praising Think-Tank and also passing sarcastic remarks. It is only Noodles who think practically and differently about the books which were considered as sandwiches to eat. But Think-Tank took over the idea as his own. But Noodle is not sad at all. He is a blind and true follower of Think-Tank.

3. Historians speak highly about books. How can books help you in preventing a catastrophe?

Ans: The Historian is placed in the twenty-fifth century. He is trying to clear of the twentieth century. He calls it as the Era of the Book and speaks highly about the books. According to him, books control all life. Books teach children. Books teach people how to and when to and where to and why to. They illustrate, educate, punctuate and even decorate the life of the people.

According to Historian, only the books saved the earth from Martian invasion, for the Martians had misunderstood the meaning of the poems and got frightened of them. So they left the earth in a hurry and even evacuated the Mars and headed over to Alpha Centauri. Even in our day to day life, we get all our solutions from books whether it is health related or anything else. So we can say that books help us in preventing a catastrophe.

4. In what ways does Think-Tank misinterpret innocent nursery rhymes as a threat to the Martians?

Ans: The old, dusty book of nursery rhymes was 'Mother Goose'. Think-Tank wanted to invade earth. He had sent Probe One to get more information about the earthlings. The crew enters a library. Thereafter taking vitamins, they take out 'Mother Goose' and decipher the rhymes.

The rhymes are misinterpreted as threats by Think-Tank. After listening to the first rhyme, 'Mistress Mary,' he concluded that earthlings had discovered how to combine agriculture and mining. The second rhyme, 'Hey Diddle, Diddle', seemed to suggest to him that the earthlings might be launching an interplanetary attack on millions of cows. The third rhyme, 'Humpty Dumpty' wherein Humpty had a great fall and its picture that resembled him threatened him and his planet Mars, he got so scared that he dropped the idea of invading earth, and escaped to Alpha Centauri. Thus, a book of nursery rhymes saved earth from Martian invasion.

5. Justify the title of the play, 'The Book that Saved the Earth'.

Ans: A good title should reflect the theme, idea or the traits of a character. It should revolve around any of the above. The story or the play should be woven around any one of them.

In the play — 'The Book that Saved The Earth', a book of nursery rhymes of 'Mother Goose' is responsible for stopping the Martian invasion on earth. Think-Tank, the ruler of Mars plans to invade earth before lunch and sends Probe One to get more information about the earthlings. They enter a library but can't figure out what items books are. They take vitamins, increase their intelligence then read the rhymes from 'Mother Goose'. Think-Tank misinterprets the rhymes, takes them as threats to him and the Mars. Scared, he calls back Probe One, drops the idea of invading and escapes

with his subjects to Alpha Centauri, a hundred million miles away from Mars.

Self-Assessment Test

Short Answer Questions

1. Why was the twentieth century called the 'Era of the book'?
 2. What does the Historian say about the book that saved the earth?
 3. What report is given by Omega to Think-Tank?
 4. What was Oop's opinion about the 'sandwiches' he had eaten?
 5. What was the plan of Martians?
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Long Answer Questions

1. How did the three nursery rhymes frighten Think-Tank?
2. Who was Think-Tank? What did he mean? Who were his companions?
3. Noodle was the true Think-Tank. Comment.