

TEXTBOOK: VISTAS

LESSON: THE TIGER KING

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LESSON PLAN 2

Hope you have followed the steps given in Lesson Plan 1, understood the text and underlined the key ideas and words while reading the text!

STEP 4: Enjoy the animated recapitulation!

Follow the link: https://youtu.be/_uiLCGOWWik

STEP 5: Revise the text through the following notes.

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The story 'The Tiger King' is a satire on the pride and stubbornness of those in power. The writer takes us to the days of autocratic and eccentric kings. These kings lived under the thumb rule of British, hence they feared them. Most of the time, the rulers were not interested in serving the people and working for the welfare of the public; instead they spent their time in foolish pursuits. They flouted all laws and bent them to suit their selfish interests.

The Maharaja of Pratibandapuram tried to belie what was written in his fate. The chief astrologer had predicted that the cause of his death would be a tiger. The King tried his best to disprove the prediction. His campaign of tiger-hunting was very successful. All his strategies and wise plans worked till he killed 99 tigers. But the hundredth tiger eluded him till his death. The irony of fate brings quite an unexpected end of the Maharaja. The hero who killed ninety nine tigers couldn't kill the only one that was left. The last tiger he thought to be dead survived. The King's bullet had missed its mark. **Ironically**, the hundredth tiger which caused his death was not a ferocious beast of blood and flesh. It was a wooden tiger. One of the slivers

of wood pierced his right hand and caused infection and a suppurating sore. It ultimately led to his death.

QUICK GIST

- The Maharaja Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bhadur was called “Tiger King”. When he was just 10 days old, he asked intelligent questions to the astrologers and was told that he would be killed by a tiger. He uttered “Let tigers beware!”
- No other miracle took place; the child grew like any other royal child drinking English cow’s milk, taught by an English tutor, looked after by an English nanny and watched English films.
- When he was 20, he was crowned as the king. It was then that the prediction of his death by the tiger reached the Maharaja’s ear and he, in turn to safeguard himself, killed a tiger. Being thrilled, he told the astrologer about it, who replied that he could kill 99 tigers but should be careful of the 100th .
- From then on, he started killing tigers and none was allowed to hunt tigers. A high ranking British officer visited the state. He was fond of hunting tigers but his wish to do so was declined.
- The officer requested for getting a photograph with a tiger killed by Maharaja and this request too was rejected.
- To please the officer’s wife, he sent 50 diamond rings expecting that she would take 1 or 2; instead she kept all the rings costing 3 lakh rupees and sent ‘thanks’ to the Maharaja. But his state was secured.
- In 10 years, he killed 70 tigers and didn’t find any in Pratibandapuram; so he decided to marry a girl from a royal state which had more tigers. Whenever he visited his in-laws, he killed 5-6 tigers to complete his target. So, he killed 99 tigers and was feverishly anxious to kill the 100th but couldn’t find it. The news about the presence of a tiger near a village proved disappointing.
- The Maharaja got furious on not finding the 100th tiger and threatened the dewan. So, the dewan brought an old tiger from ‘People’s Park in Madras’ and placed it in the forest and informed the Maharaja.

- The Maharaja took great care and shot the tiger and left the place with great triumph. The bullet did not hit the tiger but out of fear, the tiger had collapsed. Then, the staff killed the tiger and brought it in a grand procession. It was the 3rd birthday of the Maharaja's son and he wanted to buy a present from the toyshop. A wooden tiger was bought. It was poorly carved.
- While the Maharaja was playing with the prince, a tiny sliver of the wooden tiger pierced his right hand which later on caused his death. Thus, the hundredth tiger took its final revenge upon the "Tiger King".

THEMES:

1. Animals and birds are as much a part of the nature as human beings are. The destruction or haphazard killing of one species may not only lead to its extinction, but it will adversely affect the ecological balance. Each species, howsoever fierce, deadly, ferocious or poisonous has its role in maintaining the ecological balance in nature.
2. The eccentric, dominating kings of the olden times. Impulsive, whimsical, irrational, arrogant.
3. Use of **Satire**- the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.
 - Here, those people who are in power such as the Tiger king are being satirized.
4. Use of **Irony**-
 - a) **Irony**- A state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often wryly amusing as a result.
 - b) **Dramatic Irony**- a literary technique, originally used in Greek tragedy, by which the full significance of a character's words or actions is clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character.
 - The Tiger King gets killed by a tiger (100th), and ironically, by a mere wooden tiger.
 - A mere sliver of wood kills the king.

The Tiger King thinks that he has killed the tiger, but ironically, he hasn't. This information is known only to the readers, and not the character.

CHARACTERS:

The Maharaja or The Tiger King: The Tiger King is a typical royal personality. He was born into a royal family and grew up into a strong young man who at the age of 20 was crowned to be the king of Pratibandapuram. At this time, he came to know about a prophesy relating to his death to be caused by a tiger. He decided to kill all the 100 tigers before a tiger could dare to kill him.

The Tiger King symbolises a ruler having power and authority but none of it is directed to the welfare of the state. He behaves like a dictator and his ministers bow before him in mortal fear. They become a party to his ruthless killing of tigers. He is whimsical and goes to extremes. For example, when he is happy, there are processions, exemption of taxes, etc. but when he is angry, taxes are doubled, punishments become severe. The entire state machinery is misused and manipulated in his pursuit of killing tigers.

Tiger King seems to be crazy, eccentric and inhumane. He starts killing tigers just to prove the prediction wrong. Though he exhibits his valour by killing tigers, he is very coward at heart and is scared of death.

Dewan: The Dewan is a senior courtier but, in reality, holds no authority. He is very scared of the Tiger King and survives at his mercy. Though he is sensible and experienced but is never listened to or given any respect by the king. His practical knowledge helped the king to save his kingdom. When tiger king refused the British officer to hunt the tiger, it was Dewan's idea of gifting diamond rings to his wife to save the kingdom from the wrath of the British officer.

Dewan's efforts to locate and present the hundredth tiger are very comical. When he got an ultimatum from the King, he brought an old tiger from the circus and placed it in the forest. The Tiger King shoots this tiger and gets the satisfaction of killing the hundredth tiger. Though at times, Dewan appears to be foolish, he is practical enough to save himself.

STEP 6: ATTEMPT THE GIVEN QUESTIONS.

Short Questions: 30-40 words.

1. What gave the astrologers the greatest surprise of their life while they were studying the horoscope of the ten-day old prince?
2. How did the Maharaja please a high ranking officer?
3. Why did the Maharaja ban tiger hunting in the state?
4. Why did the Maharaja decide to get married?
5. Why did the Maharaja double the land tax?
6. How did the Tiger King meet his end? What is ironical about his fate?
7. What sort of hunts did the Maharaja offer to organise for the high-ranking British officer? What trait of the officer does it reveal?
8. Why was the Maharaja so anxious to kill the hundredth tiger?
9. How did the Tiger King stand in danger of losing his kingdom? How was he able to avoid the danger?
10. What warning did the astrologer give the Tiger King when he killed the first tiger?
Did the prediction of the astrologer come to be true?
11. How did the Dewan manage to arrange the hundredth tiger for the Maharaja?
12. Why was the Maharaja sunk in gloom even after having killed seventy tigers?
13. What led the Maharaja to start out on a tiger hunt?
14. When did the Tiger King stand in danger of losing his kingdom?
15. What happened to the tiger provided by the Dewan Saheb?
16. Did the Tiger King shoot the hundredth tiger? Give reasons for your answer.
17. How did the Tiger King celebrate his victory over the killing of the hundredth tiger?
18. What was the Dewan's tiger like? How did he take it into the forest?
19. Why did the Dewan decide to give up his own tiger to be killed by the Maharaja?

Long Question: 120-150 words

1. The story is a satire on the conceit of those in power. How does the author employ the literary device of dramatic irony in the story?

Value Points:

- Tiger king- autocratic dictator, wanted to fulfill his mission of killing 100 tigers.
- The writer ridicules the ways the Maharaja adopts to fulfil his vow.
- Bribes the British officer's wife to save his kingdom.
- Marries a girl from a royal state for the purpose of killing tigers.
- Arrogance, eccentricity- exempts everybody from taxes, then doubles the land tax.
- Irony- his death happens not at the hands of a live tiger, but by a mere wooden tiger.