



ST. LAWRENCE HIGH SCHOOL
A JESUIT CHRISTIAN MINORITY INSTITUTION



CLASS - IX
ENGLISH TEXT STUDY MATERIAL

TOPICS: A DAY IN THE ZOO

DATE:12.05.2020

A DAY IN THE ZOO

AUTHOR

Gerald Malcolm Durrell, British naturalist (1925 - 1995), gained international stature among conservationists for his pioneering yet sometimes controversial role in preserving and breeding [endangered species](#) by housing them in zoos with the intention of eventually returning them to the wild. He was also a [prolific](#) author, producing more than 35 amusing and informative books about the animal kingdom and his adventures in pursuit of threatened species. He founded the “Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and the “Jersey Zoo” (now known as “ Durrell Wildlife Park) on the Channel Island of Jersey in 1958.

PLOT – SUMMARY

The author explains how different is it to live in a zoo and look at it from the inside than visiting a zoo for a few hours as an outsider. A day in the zoo starts just before dawn very early in the morning. One can hear the birds singing and the peahens getting ready to dance. At eight o’clock the zoo staff arrives. They shout greetings to one another and get ready with their buckets and brushes to clean the whole place. One can find a lot of activity going on in the long, two-storied granite house where the mammals live. The gorillas are let out of their cage during the cleaning session and they gallop about happily with high spirits. Stephen, a zoo staff stands and guards them while Mike, another staff cleans all the mess up from floor and scatter fresh white sawdust. They assure that everything is fine. Upstairs in house the birds salute. A number of birds are found there like the parrots and parakeets, mongoose, a hairy armadillo, touracos etc. Once out of the bird house one can walk to the reptile house. Here the reptiles doze at a temperature of eighty degrees. Snakes, lizards and frogs also laze around here.

At ten’ o clock the zoo gate is opened for the visitors and they all rush in. All the zoo staff has to be alert during this time. This is not to ensure that the animals don’t hurt the humans but to ensure that the humans don’t hurt the animals. The uncivilized behaviour of some humans has to be seen to be believed. Some of these include prodding the animals and throwing stones at them if they are asleep and giving lighted cigarettes and razor blades to animals.

Towards the evening the visiting crowd thins out from the zoo. During this time while the other animals and birds go to rest themselves the owls that have spent all day pretending to be grey tree stumps and open their large golden eyes and get ready for their time.

Lying on bed one can see the moon separating itself from the shadows of the trees as it moves up the sky. The lion can be heard coughing. Soon it would be dawn and the chorus of the birds would take over and soon it is time for another day in the zoo.

IMPORTANT WORD-MEANINGS

hoarse - rough-sounding

touracos – a species of bird originally from southern Africa

wrench – to twist something with force.

fluorescent – producing bright light

cacophony - a mixture of loud, unpleasant sounds

patter – a repeated, quick and light sound

armadillo – a mammal with claws found in America

prod – to push with a finger or with appointed object

QUESTION – ANSWER

1. How does the sky look as one is awakened by the bird song?

Ans: The sky will be slightly tinged with yellow when one is awakened by the bird song.

2. What do the animals do at the start of the new day?

Ans: At the start of a new day the robin would sing, along with the touracos and the blackbird. The thrust would burst into an excited cry. A group of peahens can be seen on the green velvet lawn and a male peahen would be dancing with its tail raised.

3. What work do Jeremy and Mike do in the gorillas' cages?

Ans: Jeremy and Mike, with their smiling faces would clean up the mess on the floor and scatter fresh white sawdust.

4. What would one see and hear while lying in bed at night?

Ans: While lying on bed, one can see the moon separating itself from the shadows of the trees and hear the lions cough.

5. Describe the uncivilized behaviour of some humans?

Ans: Some humans behave in a most uncivilized manner with the animals in the zoo. They throw stones at animals who are asleep or prod them with sticks to make them move. Some visitors give chimpanzees lighted cigarettes and razors.

6. What do the reptiles do?

Ans: In the reptile house, the reptiles doze in a pleasant temperature of eighty degrees. Snakes regard calmly with their lidless eyes, frogs make gulping sounds and lizards lie draped over rocks and tree trunks.

7. What happens at ten o'clock in the morning?

Ans: At ten o'clock in the morning the first rush of visitors arrive at the zoo. As they come flooding into the grounds, everyone has to be alert. This is not to ensure that the animals do not hurt people but to make sure that the people do not hurt the animals.

Teacher's Name: Somashree Hazra Sarkar