

BA-Ist Year (Semester One)
English & Communication Skills

Topic-1

Chapter-1 (The Kabuliwallah)

Que: Narrate in your own words the story “The Kabuliwallah”.

Ans: The story “The kabuliwallah” is written by **Rabindranath Tagore** who is regarded as the prolific writer of India. He has written many poems, short stories, novels and essays. Rabindranath Tagore is awarded the Nobel Prize for his writings.

The kabuliwallah is the story of a poor man who is Pathan from Kabul. His name is Rehman. He comes to sell dry fruits, nuts and grapes in Calcutta every year and after earning some money goes back to his country, Afghanistan. He has a small daughter at home whom he loves so much. There is another character named Mini who is five years old and she is the daughter of narrator. She is very talkative. She is very smart, lively and active. She can't remain silent even for a minute. She is always in search of a person who can patiently listen her talks. In her father, she finds such a listener. In Rehman also, she finds another patient listener. One day she looks out of the window and sees Kabuliwallah in the street. She starts shouting “A Kabuliwallah! A Kabuliwallah!” The Kabuliwallah hears her voice and comes in. Mini is afraid of kabuliwallah because she thinks that he will kidnap her someday. So, she rushes to her mother in a great fear. The narrator Wants Mini to get befriended with kabuliwallah because kabuliwallah has a soft heart. He wants Mini to get rid of her false fear. So, he calls her back. Kabuliwallah offers her some nuts and dry fruits. This is their first meeting.

A few days later, Kabuliwallah again comes to sell nuts and dry fruits. Mini is sitting near the door laughing and talking with Kabuliwallah. Kabuliwallah gives Mini nuts and dry fruits. The narrator gives him money. Kabuliwallah takes the money from the narrator and gives it to Mini. They start joking with each other about the father-in-law's house which has a double meaning. For Mini it means to go to husband's house after marriage. But for the Kabuliwallah, it means a prison where work is done without having to pay.

Kabuliwallah also lends people a small amount of money and takes interest from them so that he can support his family. One day, kabuliwallah is involved in a fight regarding money he has lent. He stabs the man in anger and as a result he is imprisoned for several years. Meanwhile, Mini grows up. The day of her marriage is fixed. After his release from prison, he comes to see Mini. He thinks that Mini will be the same age and he wants to give her nuts and dry fruits. The narrator does not want him to see Mini .Kabuliwallah shows him the print of his daughter's hand. It becomes clear to the narrator that the Kabuliwallah used to come to see Mini.

The narrator allows Kabuliwallah to meet Mini. But Kabuliwallah is surprised to find out that now Mini has grown up and she has become a maiden. She is going to be married on the same day .Mini doesn't even recognize him. Kabuliwallah is disheartened. The narrator understands his feelings. He gives him a hundred rupee note to go back to his home in Kabul and meets his daughter. He starts weeping and thinks that his own daughter will also have grown up and will not recognize her but the narrator consoles him and he understands the feeling of this poor man and helps him .So, this story is quite touching.

This story represents two central themes: - One is the '**Otherness**' means Kabuliwallah is an outsider in the society because of his broken Bengali language and he dresses himself in such a way that situates him outside the Bengali society. Another theme is '**Doubling**' as the narrator and Kabuliwallah are mirror characters of each other. They are both active listeners of Mini's stories. Tagore wants to highlight the fact that they are both the fathers of daughters, the men having bonded over the love they both have for their daughters.

Topic-2

Chapter-1 (The Kabuliwallah)

Ques: Write a character-sketch of Rehman, the Kabuliwallah.

Ans: Rehman is the most important character of the story “**The Kabuliwallah**”. He is a native of Kabul, Afghanistan. He is called by the name of ‘Kabuliwallah’. He is a Pathan and wears loose clothes. He wears a tall turban on his head. He is a poor dry fruit seller from Kabul. He is a tall, bearded man, who carries a sack on his shoulders. He is street hawker and comes to India every year to sell dry fruits and after earning some money goes back to his country, Afghanistan. He has a small daughter at home whom he loves so much. He also lends people a small amount of money and takes interest from them so that he can support his family.

Kabuliwallah befriends a small Bengali girl Mini who reminds him of his own daughter. That’s why he loves her so much. One day she looks out of the window and sees Kabuliwallah in the street. She starts shouting “A Kabuliwallah! A Kabuliwallah!” The Kabuliwallah hears her voice and comes in. Mini is afraid of kabuliwallah because she thinks that he will kidnap her someday. So, she rushes to her mother in a great fear. The narrator Wants Mini to get befriended with kabuliwallah because kabuliwallah has a soft heart. He wants Mini to get rid of her false fear. So, he calls her back. Kabuliwallah offers her some nuts and dry fruits. This is their first meeting.

A few days later, Kabuliwallah again comes to sell nuts and dry fruits. Mini is sitting near the door laughing and talking with Kabuliwallah. Kabuliwallah gives Mini nuts and dry fruits. The narrator gives him money. Kabuliwallah takes the

money from the narrator and gives it to Mini. They start joking with each other about the father-in-law's house which has a double meaning. For Mini it means to go to husband's house after marriage. But for the Kabuliwallah, it means a prison where works are done without having to pay

Rehman, like a typical Pathan, is very honest and does not accept any dishonesty. A man borrows money from him and does not return it. As a result, he loses his temper and stabs the man. He is arrested and sent to prison for several years. Although Rehman is a poor, illiterate person, he is a soft-hearted man. He deeply loves his own daughter. In the same way; he also loves Mini who is of the same age as his daughter. He keeps his daughter's hand print in his pocket. After his release from the prison, he comes to see Mini. He thinks that Mini will be of the same age and he wants to give her nuts and dry fruits. But he is surprised to find out that now Mini has grown up and she has become a maiden. She is going to be married on the same day. Mini doesn't even recognize him. He tries to rekindle their former friendship by telling her an old joke they used to have about her going to her father-in-law's home, but instead of laughing, Mini becomes shy and blushes. Kabuliwallah is disheartened. The narrator understands his feelings. He gives him a hundred rupee note to go back to his home in Kabul and meet his daughter. He starts weeping and thinks that his own daughter will also have grown up and will not recognize her but the narrator consoles him and he understands the feeling of this poor man and helps him. So, he is a pathetic character.

Topic-3

Chapter-“The Eyes Are Not Here”

Ques: What is the theme of the story “The Eyes are not here”?

Ans: “The Eyes are not here” is the name of the story written by **Ruskin Bond** who is an Indian author. He has written many short stories. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for his writings in English. The Eyes are not here is a short story that was published in Indian English Stories. This story is beautiful and delightful. The writer narrates the story in first person narrative.

“The Eyes are not here” tells the story of two blind people who meet in a train. Although the story seems to be a simple one but it has a deeper meaning. In this story, the narrator and the girl are blind but they have a deeper insight of the surroundings. On the other hand, the third man, who boards the bus, has good eyesight. He looks at the things right in front of him casually. That’s why he doesn’t even notice the hair of the departed girl. So, the theme of the story is of kindness, determination, memory, desire and perception. The writer wants to say that “People with eyesight do not see the things; they don’t have any charm to see the beautiful things but those who can’t see properly want to see the things”.

In this story, the narrator is travelling by train. He is a blind man whose eyes are sensitive only to light and darkness. He is going to Dehradun. Up to Rohana, he is all alone in the compartment. He is a keen observer of the surroundings. Then, a girl enters the same compartment. Her Parents bid her goodbye and also give her lots of instructions about what to do and how to behave, not to lean out of the window and to avoid talking to strangers. They are anxious about her well- being. The train leaves the station; the narrator starts a conversation with her. He asks her

if she too is going to Dehradun. The voice of the girl startles as she thinks that she is all alone in the compartment. The girl replies that she is going to Saharanpur where her aunt lives and she will accompany her. She also asks the narrator that the hills of Mussoorie, where he is headed to, presents a lovely scene.

The narrator wants to hide the fact that he is blind. For this purpose, he sits in the dark corner and does not move about. He is clever and shrewd. The writer here wants to reflect that it is too pathetic to think about the blind persons because they both want to hide their blindness from the outer world.

The narrator tries to describe the scenery outside. The girl is pleased when the narrator tells her that she has an interesting face. Then she says she is tired of hearing that she has a pretty face. Actually, in his heart of hearts, he likes the girl. He wants to know more about the girl. Soon, it is the time for the girl to bid goodbye as the train arrives at her destination. He smells her perfume, as she gets up to leave. After her departure, a man enters the compartment. He apologizes for not being as attractive a travelling companion as his predecessor. The narrator asks the man if the girl has long or short hair. The man replies with interest that he has only noticed her eyes, which are beautiful but of no use because the girl was blind. So, this story reflects a very deep meaning. The people who can't see the things have a better understanding of the surroundings and deep insight into the nature of human beings. The writer says that **'Disability does not mean disabled'**. This is the idea that the writer wants to convey through this poem.

Topic-4

Chapter-“The Eyes Are Not Here”

Ques: What is the significance of the title of the story “The Eyes are not here”?

Ans: The Title of the story “**The Eyes are not here**” is very significant because it contains the theme of the story. The title is justified when the writer says that People with eyesight do not see the things; they don't have any charm to see the beautiful things but those who can't see properly want to judge the things and people deeply. So, the title is the most suitable and appropriate.

“The Eyes are not here” is the story of a blind man who is travelling by train. He is a man whose eyes are sensitive only to light and darkness. He is going to Dehradun. Up to Rohana, he is all alone in the compartment. He is a keen observer of the surroundings and a blind girl who enters the same compartment. They are travelling in a train. The first sign of a girl's blindness comes when her parents ask her not to lean out of the window and give her instructions about what to do and how to behave. They are anxious about her well- being. The train leaves the station; the narrator starts a conversation with her. He asks her if she too is going to Dehradun. The next sign of her blindness comes when the girl is startled as she thinks that she is all alone in the compartment. The girl replies that she is going to Saharanpur where her aunt lives and she will accompany her. She also asks the narrator that the hills of Mussoorie, where he is headed to, presents a lovely scene. They both talk with each other before the girl reaches her destination. Before, she exists; the narrator tells her that she has an interesting face. Then she says she is tired of hearing that she has a pretty face. Actually, in his heart of hearts, he likes

the girl. He wants to know more about the girl. Soon, it is the time for the girl to bid goodbye as the train arrives at her destination. He smells her perfume, as she gets up to leave

The true realization of the story comes when the next passenger comes into the compartment. . The narrator asks the man if the girl has long or short hair. The man replies with interest that he has only noticed her eyes, which are beautiful but of no use because the girl was blind.

So, the title of the story shows that the eyes of the girl and the man “are not here” because both are “**blind**”. The irony is also shown here that people who can see are “**blind**” as well. They become absent-minded and fail to see the things in front of them while the blind people are dependent upon their hearing and touch senses to see the things and people around them. . The writer says that ‘**Disability does not mean disabled**’ Hence, the title is the most suitable and justified.

Topic-5

Chapter-“The Death of a Hero”

Que: Write a summary of the story “The Death of a hero”?

Ans: “The Death of a Hero” is a story written by **Jai Nimbkar**. She has written many stories. Her well-known collection of stories is “The Lotus Leaf”. The story “The Death of a Hero” is the story of struggle between the forces of justice and integrity and the forces of injustice and corruption. Jai Nimbkar’s title “The Death of a Hero” echoes the title of an American play by Arthur Miller’s “The Death of a Salesman”.

In this story, there is a main character named Mr. Tagde who is a teacher at a private school. His class is usually disturbed by a boy named Veerendra More, the son of an influential family. His Parents are the members of the school managing committee. All are scared of him. None can complain against him. Even the Principal can’t take any action against him. Mr. Tagde demands his expulsion from the school. However, the Principal wants him to withdraw his report. He says that it is a very harsh punishment. Mr. Tagde describes the misdeeds of the boy. He has broken many window-panes, glasses and benches. He has spoiled benches in his classroom by scratching them with a razor blade. He has made the black-board useless by scratching on it with a piece of tin. Many girls have complained of their books, notebooks and pens stolen. He even teases the girl- students. The Principal looks helpless. At last, the Principal refuses to put the matter on the agenda for the school committee meeting. After that, Mr.Tagde says that if the Principal is not willing to put the matter on the agenda then he will send the report to the

individual members of the committee as well as to the editor of a newspaper .The Principal becomes so serious and agrees to send the report, but without his endorsement.

Mr. Tagde comes back home with mental tension. He realizes that as a result of his action, he may lose his job. But he feels that he is in a position to do something that he feels is right. His children are already well-established. His daughter is married and his two sons are in good jobs. Mr. Tagde makes up his mind to face the consequences. A lawyer comes to him in the evening because the Principal sends him to talk to the teacher. However, no threat has any effect on him. Mr. Tagde is determined not to withdraw his report. Next morning, a Brahmin farmer advises him to withdraw the report. His threats and warnings have no effect upon him. He is also attacked by a few boys on the way. They all beat Mr. Tagde. However, Mr. Tagde remains silent. He is fed up with the system. Now, he feels like a hero. Mr. Tagde's wife is also worried to see him badly injured. The next day, the lawyer again comes to meet him. He says that Veerendra's Parents have decided to take him away from school within three months if he withdraws the report. Mr. Tagde turns pale. He agrees to take back his report. This sudden change is an anti-climax. He has suddenly fallen from the high place of a hero. He just looks ahead to three more years of teaching and then retirement and a pension. The hero in him has died. He has made another compromise in life. Hence, the title depicts the whole story. Here, the writer shows the victimization of a good teacher by the political control of the school.

Topic-6

Chapter-“The Death of a Hero”

Que: Draw a character-sketch of Mr. Tagde?

Ans: Mr. Tagde is the central character of the story “**The Death of a Hero**”. He is a teacher at a private school in a small town. His children are already well-established. His daughter is married and his two sons are in good jobs. He is thin, short, a man of old age. He wears a coat of nondescript colour and a black cap. He looks the same as he has been for the last fifteen years. He is a strict teacher. He is a mature and sensible man .He is very honest. He fights against dishonesty and injustice. The struggle changes the ordinary school teacher into something of a hero.

His class is usually disturbed by a boy named Veerendra More, the son of an influential family. His Parents are the members of the school managing committee. All are scared of him. None can complain against him. Even the Principal can't take any action against him. Mr. Tagde demands his expulsion from the school. However, the Principal calls Mr. Tagde in the Principal's office. The principal asks him to sit down, but he listens while standing. The Principal looks unhappy. He asks Mr. Tagde to withdraw the report against Veerendra More. Mr. Tagde describes the misdeeds of the boy. He has broken many window-panes, glasses and benches. He also even teases the girl- students. He has spoiled benches in his classroom by scratching them with a razor blade. He has made the black-board useless by scratching on it with a piece of tin. Many girls have complained of their books, notebooks and pens stolen. He even teases the girl- students. The Principal looks helpless. At last, the Principal refuses to put the matter on the agenda for the

school committee meeting. After that, Mr.Tagde says that if the Principal is not willing to put the matter on the agenda then he will send the report to the individual members of the committee as well as to the editor of a newspaper .The Principal becomes so serious and agrees to send the report, but without his endorsement.

Mr. Tagde comes back home with mental tension. He decides to follow the voice of his soul. He hopes to win the fight against corruption and injustice. However, the hero in him dies very soon. A lawyer informs him that Veerendra's Parents have decided to take him away from school if he withdraws the report. Mr. Tagde is shocked. He turns pale. He agrees to take back his report. He starts trembling. He is transformed from a hero into a coward. He quietly agrees with the proposal. He gives his consent mechanically. Thus, the hero inside him dies.