

A Village Cricket Match

Comprehension I: A Village Cricket Match

Question 1:

Name the two teams.

Answer:

The two teams were the Scottish team and the English team.

Question 2:

Name the fielders in the field mentioned in paragraph 1.

Answer:

The fielders mentioned are Mr. Shakespeare Pollock, Mr. Southcott, and Mr. Hodge.

Question 3:

What behaviour of Livingstone, Pollock, and Southcott shows that they are tense?

Answer:

Livingstone was balancing himself on his toes, Pollock hopped excitedly almost onto the batsman, and Southcott was chewing on a piece of grass steadily, showing signs of tension.

Question 4:

What is the humorous reference to the Major in the first paragraph?

Answer:

The humorous reference to the Major is that he had already consumed a quart and a half of drinks, making him appear overindulged and less capable.

Question 5:

Why didn't Sexton and the postman take a run when it was possible?

Answer:

The Sexton was old and cautious, while the postman, a government official, preferred not to take risks. Therefore, neither took the run when it was possible.

Question 6:

How does the writer take a dig at the government officials?

Answer:

The writer mocks government officials by suggesting they never take any initiative or risks, humorously portraying them as overly cautious.

Question 7:

The ball struck powerfully by the Sexton went straight and hit Boone's stomach.

a. What comparison does the writer make

Answer:

The writer compares the ball striking Boone's stomach to a thunderbolt hitting him in the midriff like a red-hot cannonball striking a Spanish galleon.

b. What is humorous about the comparison?

Answer:

The comparison of a cricket ball to a red-hot cannonball is humorous because it exaggerates the impact of the ball in an unexpected and dramatic way.

Question 8:

Why was Boone angry after catching the ball?

Answer:

Boone was angry because, although he caught the ball, it had struck his midriff painfully, causing him significant discomfort.

Question 9:

a. What is the chief invention of Sir Isaac Newton referred to here?

Answer:

The chief invention of Sir Isaac Newton referred to here is the Theory of Gravity.

b. What does the "ball in the sky battling against the chief invention" mean here?

Answer:

This phrase means that according to the Theory of Gravity, the ball should have fallen quickly, but it seemed to defy gravity and stayed suspended in the air longer than expected.

Question 10:

Who ran like "a pair of high-stepping hackneys"?

Answer:

The blacksmith and the baker ran like a pair of high-stepping hackneys.

Question 11:

a. Why were the three batsmen running for a run?

Answer:

The ball hit by the blacksmith went high into the air and descended slowly, prompting the batsman, the blacksmith, his substitute runner (the baker), and Joe to run for a run.

b. How were they running?

Answer:

They were running with their heads turned towards the ball and not noticing the other batsmen running from the opposite end. As a result, they collided and fell down.

Question 12:

What fatal mistake did Hodge make?

Answer:

Hodge initially ordered Livingstone to catch the falling ball but then, recalling Livingstone's previous missed catches, reversed his decision and yelled at Bobby to catch it. This was a fatal mistake because Livingstone did not hear the change in order and continued running, causing the collision.

Question 13:

How did Mr. Pollock finally catch the ball?

Answer:

The ball hit the professor's head, bounced into the air, and then landed on Boone's head before slowly trickling down the wicketkeeper's back. Mr Pollock, with a loud roar, leapt and grabbed it off the seat of the wicketkeeper's trousers just before it hit the ground.

Question 14:

The writer says that Mr. Hodge disagreed with Napoleon's dictum.

a. What was Napoleon's dictum?

Answer:

Napoleon's dictum stated that it was impossible to have too many men on a battlefield, as he believed in calling up every available man for battle.

b. How did Mr Hodge disagree with the dictum?

Answer:

When Mr. Hodge saw his fielders preparing to catch the ball, he disagreed with Napoleon's dictum, feeling that having too many men in the field was detrimental.

Question 15:

Who won the match?

Answer:

Neither team won the match; it ended in a tie.

B. Close Study: A Village Cricket Match

Read the following extracts carefully. Discuss in pairs and then answer the questions given below.

Question 1.

The thunderbolt struck him in the midriff like a red-hot cannonball upon a Spanish galleon and the sound of a drumstick upon an insufficiently stretched drum.

a. What does "thunderbolt" refer to?

Answer:

The "thunderbolt" refers to the cricket ball.

b. Who did it strike?

Answer:

It struck Boone.

c. In the simile, what are the two things compared?

Answer:

The cricket ball is compared to a red-hot cannon-ball.

d. How is the comparison humorous?

Answer:

It is humorous because a small, harmless cricket ball is being compared to a destructive and dangerous cannonball.

e. What are the sounds referred to?

Answer:

The sounds referred to are the sound of a thunderbolt and the sound of a drumstick hitting an insufficiently stretched drum.

f. Bring out the humour in this comparison.

Answer:

The humour lies in the exaggeration—the comparison of the sound of the cricket ball hitting Boone's stomach to the loud, startling noise of a drumstick hitting a drum, making the situation seem more dramatic than it is.

Comprehension II: A Village Cricket Match

Question 1:

The approach of the Sexton, the postman, the blacksmith, and the baker to the game is typical of their profession. Elaborate.

Answer:

The Sexton, a church officer; the Postman, a government official; the Blacksmith, who works with iron; and the Baker, who makes food using an oven, are all local, older, and cautious individuals who avoid taking risks. Their cautious nature is reflected in their behaviour on the field.

The writer humorously points out how the government official, in particular, avoids any risk-taking. These men, typical of their professions, played slowly, avoided taking aggressive actions, and refrained from attempting risky runs. This caused the match to progress slowly, with mis-hits and cautious runs dominating the game, creating a lull in the action.

Question 2:

How does the 'uncertainty and disorganization among the ranks of the invaders' add to the humour?

Answer:

The fielders displayed a complete lack of coordination and organization. When the blacksmith hit the ball high into the air, all the fielders began running towards it, but none of them was aware of the other's positions.

They all kept their eyes on the ball, running blindly, which led to them crashing into each other. This chaos was further amplified by Hodge's contradictory instructions. The sight of so many players running into each other in confusion, all trying to catch the same ball, added a humorous touch to the scene.

Question 3:

Write a short note on the status quo episode.

Answer:

Mr. Hodge, the captain of the English team, was frustrated with the disorganized state of the game. The fielders were uncertain and lacked coordination, and there were too many men on the field, none of whom were aware of each other's movements.

Amid the confusion, Hodge made a mistake by instructing Livingstone to catch the ball, but then, recalling Livingstone's past errors, he quickly reversed his decision and called for Southcott to catch it. This moment highlighted the chaotic state of the game, with Captain Hodge's actions symbolizing the disorder on the field.

Question 4:

This extract contains many humorous situations.

a. Pick out any three situations and write them down.

Answer:

1. The team consisted of twelve members, which caused chaos on the field. The players were either overly cautious or completely confused about the game, often crashing into each other and causing injuries.
2. The umpire, who was tipsy, made calls that added to the confusion of the match.
3. The field was uneven, and the ball took unexpected directions, surprising the players.

b. Narrate any one of them in detail to your partner.

Answer:

The twelve players on the field created utter chaos. Most of them had no idea what the others were doing, either being overly cautious or unsure of the next step. This confusion led to constant collisions and injuries. For instance, the blacksmith, despite his limping, attempted a wild swing and sent the ball

flying into the air. This caused all the fielders to run after it, oblivious to one another, resulting in a hilarious pile-up.

c. Write it in a paragraph.

Answer:

The match was filled with humorous situations, particularly due to the large number of players on the field, causing total chaos. The players, unsure of each other's actions, were either too cautious or entirely confused. The blacksmith, for example, despite his limp, swung wildly at the ball, sending it soaring into the air. This triggered a mad dash from the fielders to catch it, but in their haste, they ran into each other, leading to a comical collision that brought the game to a standstill.

Question 5

The characters are humorously pictured. What is humorous about the following characters in the extract? Discuss it in groups of 4 or 5 each and then write a paragraph on each of them

a. Boone:

Answer:

Boone, a large and mighty character, is humorously depicted when the ball strikes him in the midriff after being hit by the sexton. The ball hits him with the force of a "red-hot cannon-ball" and produces a sound "like a drumstick upon an insufficiently stretched drum." The exaggeration of the impact and the description of Boone's astonished reaction, as he massages his stomach while others cheer his "catch," adds to the humour.

b. The Blacksmith:

Answer:

The blacksmith's character is portrayed humorously through his dramatic entrance onto the field, limping heavily and leaning on the baker's shoulder. He is full of rage and aggression as he takes his guard, clearly still upset. However, when the first ball is bowled to him, he forgets his injury and runs to the other end, only to crash into Joe, who was running from the opposite direction. His over-the-top reactions and the chaos he creates make him a funny character in the match.

c. Mr. Harcourt:

Answer:

Mr. Harcourt, a fielder from Mr. Pollock's team, is humorously depicted when he attempts to catch the high ball hit by the blacksmith. He is so confused that he loses sight of the ball entirely. Instead of focusing on the ball, he runs around Boone and giggles foolishly, adding a ridiculous element to the scene. His inability to track the ball and his childish behaviour make him a comically absurd character in the match.

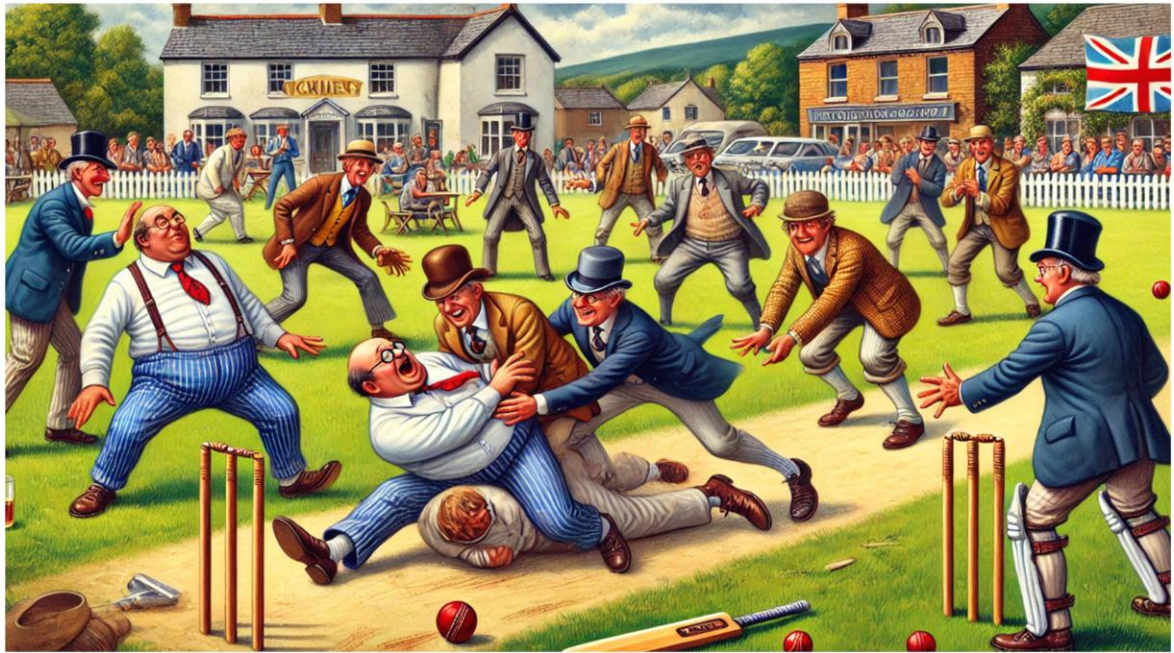
IV. Vocabulary: A Village Cricket Match

Fill in the blanks with the antonyms of the words underlined. (You need to pick the word from the lesson).

1. We live on the terrestrial sphere: heavenly bodies are on the celestial sphere.
2. The Traian team was very hopeful of winning, but their defeat left them hopeless.
3. The young have vitality, but the old have to cope with their lethargy.
4. The heroic mood was lost after the unheroic battle.
5. Don't be reckless: be straight.
6. Joshua remains imperturbable even in highly perturbable situations.
7. Don't be crooked: be open and straightforward.

8. Peter, a highly indis disciplined chap, could never be a part of the highly disciplined residential school.

A Village Cricket Match Summary



In this light-hearted narrative, a Scotsman humorously observes and mocks English society through the lens of a village cricket match. The game takes place in the village of Fordendan, where players are not professional cricketers but rather local businessmen, government officials, and shopkeepers from England and Scotland.

The match is described ball-by-ball, resulting in a tie. What stands out in the account is the vividness and humour with which the events unfold. The narrator offers witty insights into the players, adding comical remarks about each one, as well as the spectators.

Capt. Fledge directs his team to be ready to catch the ball. However, three fielders charge simultaneously, colliding in the middle of the pitch and tumbling over one another. A fourth fielder manages to grab the ball, which had fallen onto another

player's trousers. Meanwhile, all three batsmen run in unison, frantically attempting to score runs. In the end, the match concludes in a tie, and both teams gather at the local pub to enjoy the rest of the evening.