NCERT Solutions for Class 9 English Chapter 5 Poem A Legend of the Northland

Thinking about the Poem

I.

Question 1. Which country or countries do you think “the Northland” refers to?

Answer: The “Northland” may refer to any of the countries among Greenland, Norway, Russia, Canada, etc.

Question 2. What did Saint Peter ask the old lady for? What was the lady’s reaction?

Answer: Saint Peter asked the old lady for a piece of cake.

She was very selfish and kept reducing the size of the cake as to her it seemed too big to give away.

Question 3. How did he punish her?

Answer: He cursed her to become a woodpecker as a punishment for being so selfish.

Question 4. How does the woodpecker get her food?

Answer: The woodpecker needs bore all day in the hard, dry wood to get itself some food.

Question 5. Do you think that the old lady would have been so ungenerous if she had known who Saint Peter really was? What would she have done then?

Answer: I don’t think the old lady would have been so ungenerous if she had known who Saint Peter really was. She would have given him as large a piece of cake she could so as to please him in order to get rewarded.

Question 6. Is this a true story? Which part of this poem do you feel is the most important?

Answer: No, this is not a true story. It is a legend.

The part of the poem that, according to me, is the most important is:

And he said, “You are far too selfish

To dwell in a human form,

To have both food and shelter,

And fire to keep you warm.

This shows that we must do go things for the humanity as we are capable of doing so in our human form. We should have gratitude for having food, shelter and fire. We should be generous to people.

Question 7. What is a legend? Why is this poem called a legend?

Answer: A legend is a folklore that is believed to be true by tellers and listeners but it has not been proven to have happened. It usually imparts some morals or message.

This poem is called a legend because it also imparts the message of generosity.

Question 8. Write the story of ‘A Legend of the Northland’ in about ten sentences.

Answer: *A Legend of the Northland*

Once, Saint Peter was feeling very hungry and he asked for alms from an old lady. He asked if she could give him a piece of cake to eat. The lady was very selfish. She kept reducing the size of the

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cake as she felt that the size of the cake was too big to be given away as alms. At last she did not give him any cake.

Saint Peter grew angry and cursed her to become a woodpecker. He said that from now on, she will have to bore dry, hard wood in order to get food. All her clothes got burnt in the chimney and till this day, woodpeckers bore all day long for food and water.

II.

Question 1. Let's look at the words at the end of the second and fourth lines, viz., 'snows' and 'clothes', 'true' and 'you', 'below' and 'know.' We find that 'snows' rhymes with 'clothes', 'true' rhymes with 'you' and 'below' rhymes with 'know'.

Find more such rhyming words.

Answer: Here are more such rhyming words from the poem:

earth-hearth, done-one, lay-away, flat-that, myself-shelf, faint-saint, form-warm, food-wood, word-bird and same-flame.

Question 2. Go to the local library or talk to older persons in your locality and find legends in your own language. Tell the class these legends.

Answer: Do it yourself.

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