

Class VIII

The Best Christmas Present in the World

Part 3

NCERT SOLUTIONS

COMPREHENSION CHECK (page15)

1. Why did the author go to Bridport ?

2. How old was Mrs. Macpherson now ? Where was she ?

Answer

1. The author went to Bridport in search of Mrs. Jim Macpherson. He wanted to give her back her important letter.

2. Mrs. Macpherson was now 101 years old. She was in a nursing home.

COMPREHENSION CHECK (Page 16)

- 1. Who did Connie Macpherson think her visitor was ?**
- 2. Which sentence in the text shows that the visitor did not try to hide his identity ?**

Answer

1. Connie Macpherson thought that her visitor was her husband Jim Macpherson.
2. The sentence in the text is—"I explained about the desk, about how I found it, but I don't think she was listening."

WORKING WITH THE TEXT (Page 16)

Question. 1.

For how long do you think Connie had kept Jim's letter ? Give reasons for your Answer.

Answer.

Connie had kept Jim's letter for a long time. She had received it on January 25, 1915. Jim had written it

on December 26, 1914. At that time Jim was an officer, a captain in the English army. A captain in the army is always a young man. It means that Jim's wife Connie must have also been young. In the story she is 101 years old. It means the letter was about 70-75 years old.

There are hints also. The table containing the letter was found in a junk shop. Again it indicates its oldness.

Question. 2.

Why do you think the desk had been sold, and when ?

Answer.

The desk must have been sold when Connie's house had burnt. The table had been damaged by fire as well as water.

Question. 3.

Why do Jim and Hans think that games or sports are good ways of resolving conflicts ? Do you agree ?

Answer.

Both Jim and Hans are soldiers so both of them experienced the suffering of war. As a result it was natural for them to hate war. They favoured a peaceful solution to settle disputes. Games or sports, they said, were good ways of resolving conflicts. I also quite agree with them.

Question. 4.

Do you think the soldiers of the two armies are like each other, or different from each other ? Find evidence from the story to support your answer.

Answer.

All human beings are alike in many ways. They love peace and hate war. They want to live together for example ,” Then they were calling out to us from across no man’s land. Happy Christmas, Tommy! Happy Christmas! When we had got over the surprise some of us shouted back “ same to you, Fritz! Same to you!”

Question. 5.

Mention the various ways in which the British and the German soldiers become friends and find things in common at Christmas.

Answer.

It was the Christmas that made the British and German soldiers friends. The Germans waved a white flag and wished the British a happy Christmas. The British responded with 'same to you.' They were surprised when the Germans moved further towards them without arms. The British captain was alarmed that it might be a trick. But it wasn't so.

Then they came close. They shook hands. The Christmas and the ways of celebrating it were common between the two. They played, they ate and they sang carols. The two captains talked of their families. They talked of their own fields of activity when there was no war. They had the same tender feelings about life. They did not want to fight. They wanted peace. They wanted to be with their families as soon as possible.

Question. 6.

What is Connie's Christmas present ? Why is it "the best Christmas present in the world" ?

Answer.

Connie's Christmas present was the letter which the author had brought for her. However, in her muddled state she thought that it was not the author but her husband Jim. She called the author Jim and made him sit beside her. She kissed him on the cheek. For her, her husband had returned after such a long time. So she said that it was the best Christmas present she had ever got.