

CLASS XII- ENGLISH (CORE)

TEXTBOOK: VISTAS

LESSON: THE TIGER KING

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MODULE

STEP 1: Watch a **short movie ‘Old India: Maharajah on tiger hunt in 1938’** through the given link: <https://youtu.be/7NnuPk4-0Ak>, to understand the context of the lesson.

The movie shows how the kings of the princely states and the British had great obsession with the hunting of tigers, during the pre-independence era. This activity was carried out with big fanfare and the entire kingdom/state would be involved in tiger-killing.

STEP 2: Read the text and underline important words and ideas. (Refer to the **dictionary** to find the meaning of difficult words.)

STEP 3: Watch a **pictorial summary** of the text through the given link: <https://youtu.be/dqNm8jUZaJc>

Hope you have followed the steps given above, understood the text and underlined the key ideas and words while reading the text!

STEP 4: Enjoy the **animated recapitulation!**

Follow the link: https://youtu.be/_uiLCGOWWik

STEP 5: Revise the text through the following notes.

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

- The story ‘The Tiger King’ is a satire on the pride and stubbornness of those in power.
- The writer takes us to the days of autocratic and eccentric kings. These kings lived under the thumb rule of British, hence they feared them. Most of the time, the rulers were not interested in serving people and working for the welfare of the public; instead they spent their time in foolish pursuits. They flouted all laws and bent them to suit their selfish interests.
- The Maharaja of Pratibandapuram tried to belie what was written in his fate. The chief astrologer had predicted that the cause of his death would be a tiger. The King tried his best to disprove the prediction.

- His campaign of tiger-hunting was very successful. All his strategies and wise plans worked till he killed 99 tigers. But the hundredth tiger eluded him till his death.
- The irony of fate brings quite an unexpected end of the Maharaja. The hero who killed ninety nine tigers couldn't kill the only one that was left. The last tiger he thought to be dead survived. The King's bullet had missed its mark.
- **Ironically**, the hundredth tiger which caused his death was not a ferocious beast of blood and flesh. It was a wooden tiger. One of the slivers of the wood pierced his right hand and caused infection and a suppurating sore. It ultimately led to his death.

QUICK GIST

- The Maharaja Sir Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur was called "**Tiger King**". When he was just 10 days old, he asked intelligent questions to the astrologers and was told that he would be killed by a tiger. He uttered "Let tigers beware!"
- No other miracle took place; the child grew up like any other royal child drinking English cow's milk, was taught by an English tutor, was looked after by an English nanny and watched English films.
- When he was 20, he was crowned as the king. It was then that the prediction of his death by the tiger reached the Maharaja's ear and he, in turn to safeguard himself, killed a tiger. Being thrilled, he told the astrologer about it, who replied that he could kill 99 tigers but should be careful of the 100th.
- From then on, he started killing tigers and none was allowed to hunt tigers. A high ranking British officer visited the state. He was fond of hunting tigers but his wish to do so was declined. The officer requested for getting a photograph with a tiger killed by the Maharaja, but this request too was rejected.
- To please the officer's wife, he sent 50 diamond rings expecting that she would take 1 or 2; instead she kept all the rings costing him 3 lakh rupees, and sent 'thanks' to the Maharaja. This way, his state was secured.
- In 10 years, he killed 70 tigers and didn't find any in Pratibandapuram; so he decided to marry a girl from a royal state which had more tigers. Whenever he visited his in-laws, he killed 5-6 tigers to complete his target. So, he killed 99 tigers and was feverishly

anxious to kill the 100th but couldn't find it. The news about the presence of a tiger near a village proved disappointing.

- The Maharaja got furious on not finding the 100th tiger and threatened the dewan. So, the dewan brought an old tiger from 'People's Park in Madras' and placed it in the forest and informed the Maharaja.
- The Maharaja took great care and shot the tiger and left the place with great triumph. The bullet did not hit the tiger but out of fear, the tiger had collapsed. Then, the staff killed the tiger and brought it in a grand procession.
- It was the 3rd birthday of the Maharaja's son and he wanted to buy a present from the toyshop. A wooden tiger was bought. It was poorly carved.
- While the Maharaja was playing with the prince, a tiny sliver of the wooden tiger pierced his right hand which later on caused his death. Thus, the hundredth tiger took its final revenge upon the "Tiger King".

THEMES:

- Animals and birds are as much a part of the nature as human beings are. The destruction or haphazard killing of one species may not only lead to its extinction, but adversely affect the ecological balance also. Each species, howsoever fierce, deadly, ferocious or poisonous, has its role in maintaining the ecological balance in nature.
- Eccentric, dominating kings of the olden times. Impulsive, whimsical, irrational, arrogant.
- Use of Satire- the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.

Here, those people who are in power such as the Tiger king are being satirized.

- **Use of Irony-**

Irony- A state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often wryly amusing as a result.

Dramatic Irony- a literary technique, originally used in Greek tragedy, by which the full significance of a character's words or actions is clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character.

- ✓ The Tiger King gets killed by a tiger (100th), and ironically, by a mere wooden tiger. A mere sliver of wood kills the king.
- ✓ The Tiger King thinks that he has killed the tiger, but **ironically**, he hasn't. This information is known only to the readers, and not the character.

STEP 6:

ACTIVITY SESSION

ACTIVITY-1

Find out whether the following statements are True or False.

- 1) The royal infant spoke when he was ten day old. ()
- 2) The crown prince was brought up differently from the crown princes of other states. ()
- 3) The Maharaja took a vow that he would attend to all matters of his state as well as kill the tigers. ()
- 4) The fifty diamond rings were sent by a famous British company of jewellers in Calcutta. ()
- 5) Within ten years, the Maharaja was able to kill ninety tigers. ()
- 6) The dewan had brought the tiger from the People's Park in Madras. ()
- 7) The hundredth tiger was killed by the Maharaja. ()
- 8) The wooden tiger was very costly. ()
- 9) The operation on the Maharaja was conducted by two surgeons. ()
- 10) The prediction of the astrologer regarding the Maharaja proved right. ()

ACTIVITY-2

Vocabulary: Make a word by placing the letters in the right order.

1. r a e s t r g o l o
2. n c o i t a r b e l e

3. l a t p u p o n i o

4. e n x e i o t p m

5. n e d w o o

ACTIVITY-3

Try to find out who/ what is being referred to in the following expressions/sentences.

- 1) ...a great miracle took place.
- 2) "Let tigers beware!"
- 3) ... it was celebration time for all the tigers.
- 4) Though he had lost three lakh rupees, he had managed to retain his kingdom.
- 5) An unseen hurdle brought his mission to a standstill.
- 6) It seemed easier to find tiger's milk than a live tiger.
- 7) The tiger launched his satyagraha.
- 8) "A bargain at three hundred rupees!"
- 9) "The operation was successful. The Maharaja is dead."
- 10) The hundredth tiger took its final revenge.

STEP 7: ATTEMPT THE GIVEN QUESTIONS.

Short Questions: 30-40 words

- How did the Maharaja please a high ranking officer?
- Why did the Maharaja decide to get married?
- Why did the Maharaja double the land tax?
- How did the Tiger King meet his end? What is ironical about his fate?
- What sort of hunts did the Maharaja offer to organise for the high-ranking British officer? What trait of the officer does it reveal?
- How did the Tiger King stand in danger of losing his kingdom? How was he able to avoid the danger?

Long Question: 120-150 words

- The story is a satire on the conceit of those in power. How does the author employ the literary device of dramatic irony in the story?

Value Points:

- ✓ Tiger king- autocratic dictator, wanted to fulfill his mission of killing 100 tigers.
- ✓ The writer ridicules the ways the Maharaja adopts to fulfil his vow.
- ✓ Bribes the British officer's wife to save his kingdom.
- ✓ Marries a girl from a royal state for the purpose of killing tigers.
- ✓ Arrogance, eccentricity- exempts everybody from taxes, then doubles the land tax.
- ✓ Irony- his death happens not at the hands of a live tiger, but by a mere wooden tiger.