

CBSE Class –VIII English

NCERT Solutions

Chapter - 9

The Comet-I

Comprehension Check

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1: Why does Indrani Debi dislike Duttada's "hobnobbing" with Dibya?

Ans: Duttada, spends more time with his telescope trying to find a comet. Indrani Debi dislikes Duttada's "hobnobbing" with Dibya because for her, that telescope is like a designing woman who has ensnared her husband.

2: She is complaining and smiling. Why is she smiling?

Ans: She is smiling at the forgetful nature of Duttada. He used to overlook the practical problems of living. His doctor has told him to take special precautions against the cold. However, he would not remember to put on a sweater even if it is lying on his bedside chair.

3: (i) What was Duttada's secret ambition?

(ii) What did he do to achieve it?

Ans: (i) Being an amateur astronomer Duttada's secret ambition was to discover a new comet one day. He was sure that the professionals would miss out such an insignificant thing like comet as they must be busy exploring nebulous galaxies.

(ii) He sat every night with his small 8-inch telescope and gazed at the stars, believing that he would discover a comet one day. He was sure that the scientist would ignore the things happening in

4: What is the difference between a planet and a comet, as given in the story?

Ans: Like planets, comets also orbit round the Sun, but their orbits are highly eccentric. Once in a while, a comet comes close to the Sun. It has a longish tail that is lit brilliantly by the sunlight, and then it recedes into darkness, not to be seen again for years or for centuries.

5: Why was Duttada hopeful that he would discover a new comet soon?

Ans: Duttada was hopeful that he would discover a new comet soon because he knew that the professionals with their pre-assigned programmes would be looking at faint stars and hazy galaxies. They might miss such an insignificant thing as a comet, which they would not be expecting to see. Amateurs had often discovered new comets, which the professionals had missed.

6: Why does Duttada say - “I almost wish I had not discovered this comet.”?

Ans: Duttada says that he almost wish he has not discovered the comet because it has brought in unwelcome publicity for him. There are numerous receptions and functions which he has to attend. He is an introvert and such a lifestyle is not to his liking.

7: Why is his wife unhappy about the discovery?

Ans: His wife is unhappy about the discovery because she believes that comets bring ill-luck, and she wishes a good man like Duttada is not associated with such a discovery.

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1: How did Sir John get hold of James' original manuscript?

Ans: James' original manuscript was to be published in 'Nature'. Sir John got hold of it as the editor of 'Nature' was his friend.

2: What is the important point the paper makes?

Ans: The important point that the paper makes is that Comet Dutta would collide with the earth.

3: Why does Sir John say that James' paper should not be published?

Ans: Sir John said that the paper should not be published because if the news of the inevitable collision became known to the world, it would result in panic.

4: What do the two men finally decide to do?

Ans: Two men decide to call a secret meeting of experts within a week's time to think over and find the solution to the imminent problem.